

# **The Chinese Communist Regime is Currently Committing Ethnic Genocide on the Uyghurs in East Turkestan**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Uyghurs are the indigenous people of East Turkestan located in the Central Asia. East Turkestan has been under occupation by the communist Chinese since 1949. It borders China and Mongolia to the east, Russia to the north, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India to the west and southwest, and Tibet to the south. The landmass of East Turkestan is bigger than the whole of Western Europe. Its colonial name is “Xinjiang”, which means “the new territory” or “the new frontier.” China officially designated the East Turkestan an Uyghur autonomous region in 1955, but in reality it has never become a true autonomous region. After the 2010 Chinese census, the Chinese government put the number of the Uyghur population in East Turkestan to be 10,000,370, but some Uyghur sources put the real population of Uyghurs around 20 million. The systematic assimilation of the Uyghurs as part of the Chinese government’s national strategy has been going on for a long time, but it had intensified since July 2009, after the July 5<sup>th</sup> massacre that took place in Urumchi, the capital of East Turkestan, and has become an ethnic genocide policy since Chen Quanguo took office as the Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in East Turkestan. In this report, we describe some of the facts about such ethnic genocide practices currently being faced by the Uyghur people in East Turkestan.

## **1. CONTACTS BETWEEN THE UYGHURS IN EAST TURKESTAN AND ABROAD HAVE BEEN CUTOFF**

At the moment, several types of contacts, including money sending-receiving, between the Uyghurs in East Turkestan and in China, and those abroad are completely cut-off. Also, most Uyghurs abroad cannot call and/or send text messages to parents and siblings back home due to the fear that their loved ones be put either in jails or Nazi-style “political re-education concentration camps”, because of the fact that the parents and/or close relatives of many Uyghurs living abroad are being held either in jails or in “re-education camps” in East Turkestan, for no reason other than their relatives being abroad. We have recently learned from some sources back home that the number of the Uyghurs currently being held in jails and in “re-education camps” is more than 800,000. This is an official estimate and actual number could be much higher than this. We have also learned that the Uyghurs who travelled to one of the 26 Muslim countries in Chinese government’s list and returned to China, regardless of their age and gender, are being sentenced to 10 years of jail time right at the airport and being taken directly to a jail from the airport. We have credible information about several cases involving actual victims as mentioned above. Chinese exiled billionaire Guo Wengui exposed Chinese regime’s abuse of the Uyghurs and said: “To speak honestly, people always say Chinese citizens are treated like pigs and dogs, but the people of Xinjiang and Tibet don’t even have the opportunity to be treated like pigs and dogs. I feel great pity for them.”

The current situation is severely damaging the mental health and wellbeing of the Uyghur people abroad. Some students studying abroad have reached to a level of mental breakdown, without being able to pay their tuitions and living costs, and without being able to know if their parents and/or siblings are still alive – most Uyghurs abroad have not been able to communicate even once with their parents and/or siblings in East Turkestan for more than 8 months. The Uyghur people outside China started the year of 2018 with deep frustration, worries, fear and depression, because they have no way of knowing the current status of, or getting news about their parents and siblings: If they are still alive or dead, and if they are in prison or in concentration camps.

As part of the Uyghurs studying and living abroad, we ask the Chinese government to stop its inhuman policies forced upon the Uyghurs in East Turkestan, China, and abroad. We demand the Chinese government to:

1. Close the “political re-education camps”; they are in violation of the China’s relevant laws and the relevant international laws and regulations;
2. Stop the policy that prohibits the Uyghurs in East Turkestan to travel a foreign country and the Uyghurs abroad to travel to East Turkestan;
3. Guarantee that the Uyghurs abroad can receive money from, send money to and communicate with their parents and/or siblings in East Turkestan;
4. Stop the surveillance of the Uyghurs who have relatives abroad, and allow them to communicate with relatives overseas;
5. Stop the surveillance and the remote control of the Uyghurs living abroad;
6. Stop examining the home computers and mobile phones of all the Uyghurs living in East Turkestan;
7. Stop the arbitrary search of Uyghur homes, and mandatory assignment of Han-Chinese “relatives” to every Uyghur family.

## **2. ONE MILLION UYGHUR DETAINEES HELD ILLEGALLY IN NAZI-STYLE CONCENTRATION CAMPS**

Many media organizations around the world have recently reported that a large portion of the Uyghur population is being detained either in jails or in so-called “re-education camps”, while their children are being kept in countless orphanages in the East Turkestan. Recently, we have learned from official sources inside East Turkestan that the number of the Uyghurs currently being held in these Nazi-style political “re-education” concentration camps is more than 800,000. That is a number known officially inside East Turkestan, but all the unofficial numbers we obtained from various sources exceed one million. According to the 2010 Chinese census, the Uyghur population in East Turkestan was 10,000,370 (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinjiang>). This means that about 10% of the current Uyghur population has been locked up. The conditions of the concentration camps are horrific because of the fact that such a large number of Uyghurs are locked up in relatively small and crowded spaces. We were told by several people who fled China recently that people even cannot lie down during the night with their backs on the floor; instead, they have to sleep sideways with all the adjacent bodies touching one another. We have also learned from some Uyghurs who recently lost their close relatives in the concentration camps that a significant number of Uyghurs are losing their lives in those camps every day. The families of the victims are just receiving their dead bodies from those overcrowded concentration camps. The local authorities are not giving back the bodies of the younger Uyghurs died, instead, just burying them in the nearby empty fields. These are just a few of the many examples of the horrible conditions in these concentration camps.

How did those more than one million people end up in jails, concentration camps and orphanages? It is extremely difficult to obtain such information in China, but we have managed to get information on some individual cases from the relatives of those victims’ living outside China (see the report titled “Political persecution of the Uyghurs – Brief description of some individual cases” at <http://freedomsherald.org/ET/unb/>).

The Uyghurs are one of the ancient peoples living in the heart of Asia. They have a long and proud history, and a rich culture. Throughout the history, the Uyghurs have been a great contributor to the world peace and prosperity. Due in part to their geographical location along the famous Silk Road, they have been a major force in the cultural exchange between the East and the West. We strongly believe that the Uyghurs are an indispensable part of the wider international community and will continue providing such contribution to the world’s ethnic and cultural diversities in the future. Similarly, the Uyghurs will contribute to the world’s peace and prosperity, just as they have done in the past. Therefore, the Uyghurs have every right to live in peace with dignity, and to continuously prosper, as any other nations on the surface of our mother Earth.

However, in the recent decades, the Chinese government has banned the Uyghur language from its use at all levels of education in East Turkestan, outlawed Uyghur literature (by banning and burning historical and literature books written in the Uyghur language), restricted, criminalized and attempted to eliminate Uyghurs’ religious belief and practice, and has systematically flooded East Turkestan with Han Chinese migrants in the name of “developing the West”, and thereby marginalized the Uyghurs in their own homeland. And now the Chinese government is openly killing the Uyghur people, too, in those Nazi-style Chinese concentration camps by implementing a state-sponsored ethnic genocide policy.

If we don't get help immediately from the United Nations and from the international community to stop the Chinese government from what they are doing towards the Uyghurs in East Turkestan, the Uyghurs will keep dying and disappearing in large numbers in those Chinese concentration camps, and will soon face an unprecedented threat to their very existence. Therefore, we appeal to all the international communities and human rights organizations not to ignore the Chinese government's crimes against humanity – the crimes currently being committed against the innocent Uyghur people. We appeal to the United Nations and other international human rights organizations to ask the Chinese government to release those 1 million Uyghurs, or at least send investigation teams to East Turkestan and find out:

- Where are those jails, concentration camps and orphanages?
- Why and where those one million Uyghurs are being detained?
- What are they eating and where and how are they sleeping?
- What are they doing during the day?
- What are their current health conditions?
- What are the current death rates among the detainees?
- What is happening to the children/siblings/parents of the people held in jails and concentration camps?

### 3. LARGE NUMBER OF UYGHUR PRISONERS OF INFLUENCE

We have stated above that more than 1 million Uyghurs, or more than 10% of the Uyghur population living in East Turkestan (refer to the 2010 Chinese census) are currently being held illegally in jails, Nazi-style political “re-education” concentration camps and orphanages. The arrest of the Uyghurs in large numbers has been going on for a long time, but it intensified since July 2009, after the July 5<sup>th</sup> massacre that took place in Urumchi, the capital of East Turkestan, and has reached to a record level since Chen Quanguo took office as the Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in East Turkestan. The Uyghur detainees came from all spans of life, as exemplified in our recent report titled “Political Persecution of the Uyghurs — Brief Description of Some Individual Cases” (<http://freedomsherald.org/ET/unb/>). Among them, there is a special category of people, namely, prominent Uyghurs or Uyghurs of influence. They represent a group of people in various areas of life and profession, who have prominent influence among the Uyghurs, or play leading roles in the Uyghur society or in their own fields of profession, such as intellectuals, writers, lecturers, poets, website owners and administrators, business owners, entrepreneurs, leading community activists, actors-actresses, religious figures, sports professionals, and even some rich people. Therefore, they can be collectively called “*the Uyghur prisoners of influence*”. They are very similar to the “*prisoners of conscience*” that are common to Han Chinese and the other ethnic groups in China, including the Uyghurs. But the Uyghur prisoners of influence were jailed or detained in concentration camps for a different reason, that is, for being famous and/or influential among their own community or in their own professional fields. If we imagine the whole Uyghur population as a person, these prisoners of influence can be considered as his/her head, and the Chinese government is now slowly cutting the head off.

Recently, several media outlets have reported on the arrests of several prominent Uyghurs and leading Uyghur intellectuals. They include **Halmurat Ghopur** (a leading intellectual), **Abdurehim Heyit** (a famous singer and musician), **Yasinjan Moydin** (a businessman and restaurant owner; got ill in a jail, and recently died in a hospital), **Ahmatjan Heyder** (a religious figure; got released from a jail after getting seriously ill, but died shortly thereafter), **Muhammed Salih** (a religious leader and scholar; he did the modern translation of the Holy Quran from Arabic to Uyghur language; he was taken into a concentration camp recently, and died on Jan. 24 at 82. His two daughters and a son-in-law also got arrested), **Hebibullah Tohti** (returned from Egypt after getting a doctor's degree, and sentenced to a 10-years prison term shortly thereafter), **four wealthiest Uyghurs in Kashgar**, and **some Uyghurs who studied abroad**. The charges mentioned included “having nationalist tendencies”, “acts against the state”, “having extremist or politically incorrect views”, “being two-faced” and “undertaking unapproved, private hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca)”. Some of such reports can be found at <http://freedomsherald.org/ET/unb/>. Previously, the jailing of the Uyghur scholar **Ilham Tohti** received wide coverage in the international media. However, the most cases in such nature still remain unnoticed and unreported, even though such action of the Chinese government is having devastating impact on the Uyghur society and on the lives of all the Uyghur people in East Turkestan and abroad.

We have obtained information on many more cases of the arrested and the detained influential and/or prominent Uyghurs from people who fled China recently, but we restrained ourselves from presenting such cases in this report. The reason is, the Chinese government is currently using one of their ancient tactics in oppressing the whole Uyghur population, namely, “not only cut the grass, but also destroy the roots” (斩草除根). Based on this tactic, if the Chinese government suspects the loyalty of an Uyghur on themselves, they not only arrest and in some cases kill with some fake charges that person, but also they do the same to his/her extended family members. So it is very common that a lot of Uyghur families have lost more than 10 extended family members to jails, concentration camps and orphanages. Several examples of such cases are presented in the above report.

We have learned that the Chinese regime in East Turkestan has issued “arrest schedules”, “look-up tables” and printed verdicts with two blank spaces, the first for the name and the second for the jail time of the future “criminals”, to local government officials and airport administrators. These documents are issued from the top at the provincial government level down to the heads of all villages. According to such directives, the Uyghurs who “committed” crimes are divided into 3 categories: (1) 6 months to 3 years jail term (副管 in Chinese). People belonging to this category are ordinary, innocent ones who were arrested to fill some quota came down from the top. For example, in 2017, Urumchi police issued an order to all its branches to arrest 3000 Uyghurs and Kazakhs in this category within a week. This was reported by the Radio-Free Asia (USA). (2) 7 – 10 years jail term (严管). It is for people who have relatives abroad, who were found to have stored forbidden contents in their smartphones, and activists. (3) 10 - 15 years jail term (强管). It is for people who returned from abroad, who were forcibly returned from abroad, “political criminals”, and people with religious knowledge. When “catching” an Uyghur “criminal”, a local government official first determines which category that “criminal” belongs to, fills out a pre-printed verdict mentioned above, and gives that verdict to that “criminal” right at the spot.

For example, since 2016 the CCP regime in East Turkestan pressured the parents of the Uyghur students studying in different parts of the world, often using jail terms as a threat. As a result, some unknown number of Uyghur students (the number is in the thousands in our estimate) went back to East Turkestan to save their parents from trouble. However, many of those students were sentenced to 3 – 7 years of jail terms and were taken to jails directly from the Urumchi airport upon their return. In many cases their parents had never seen them after returning from abroad. They just simply disappeared in East Turkestan or somewhere else in China.

According to the accounts of a close friend who talked to us, **Behtiyar**, an Uyghur man in his 20s, decided to visit his parents and other relatives in Kashgar in the summer of 2016. Because restrictions and punishments are much more severe in Kashgar than in Urumchi, he decided to protect himself from all the potential troubles by having his smartphone “cleaned up” in a police “black market” in Urumchi. The police servicemen there asked him to pay 500 Yuan (more than \$80) for the service. He paid them and thought he had made his smartphone “safe” to travel to Kashgar. He was thoroughly checked after he got off the airplane in Kashgar, including his smartphone. At that time, one of the police officers told him that he found prohibited contents in Behtiyar’s phone, including a photo of Turkish president Erdogan and another photo of a Turkish national flag. But Behtiyar explained to them what he did in Urumchi before starting this trip. However, they told him that they can retrieve all the deleted contents from a smartphone. The police called Behtiyar’s parents and told them to pay the police 30,000 Yuan (about \$5,000) to get their son back, otherwise their son will be jailed. It took 3 days for Behtiyar’s parents to come up with such money. When they finally came to the airport with the money, the police told them that their son had been arrested, given a 7-year prison term and sent to a jail whose location was unknown to them. Behtiyar was simply disappeared this way. The person who told us the above real story also told us that one prohibited content found in someone’s smart phone earns him or her a minimum 7-year jail term. That is consistent with Bahtiyar’s 7-years prison term.

Behtiyar is not a prominent Uyghur nor a leading intellectual. He is just an average Uyghur. But we told the above story so that you would understand how a jail term is now easily handed out to an innocent Uyghur in East Turkestan.

There was a young Uyghur bodybuilder in southern East Turkestan. He was well-known to the Uyghur youth with his well-developed and very good-looking body. He is good in bodybuilding but not known in anything else. However, the Chinese government targeted him as a suspect because of his influence among the young Uyghur people. One day the police came up with a fake crime for him and threw him in a jail with a 5-year prison term. In East Turkestan, jailing an influential Uyghur figure is as simple as that. That is, being prominent or being influential among the Uyghurs is a serious

crime in East Turkestan, and thousands of innocent Uyghurs were jailed and detained for such a “crime”. That is part of the reasons why more than 1 million young and adult Uyghurs are currently being held either in jails or in concentration camps, and their small children are in the orphanages.

The English-language service of the Voice of America (VOA) reported that “Recently, the U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has drawn attention to increased restrictions on the ability of Uighurs in China to express and practice their religion. The State Department’s annual Human Rights Report also has highlighted repression of Uighurs’ freedoms of speech, movement, association, and assembly.” US Congressional-Executive Commission on China stated in their 2017 press release the following: “The Commission’s 2017 Annual Report highlighted intensified restrictions on religious freedom and oppressive security controls, particularly in ethnic minority regions, including the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). The situation has only further deteriorated since the Report’s release in October. Today, Senator Marco Rubio and Representative Chris Smith, the chair and cochairman respectively of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (the Commission), expressed alarm about the human rights crisis in Xinjiang.” We, the Torchlight Uyghur group, thank the US government, as well as the governments of the other countries and various international organizations for their support towards the Uyghur people. In the mean time, we appeal to the United Nations, foreign governments, and other international human rights and humanitarian organizations to demand the Chinese government to unconditionally release those thousands of Uyghur prisoners of influence.

#### **4. “INNOCENT PRISONERS” AND CHEN QUANGUO’S CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN EAST TURKESTAN**

Chen Quanguo is the Communist Party Secretary of East Turkestan. He was promoted to this post in August 2016, after subduing another heavily oppressed region — Tibet. Since then, he has initiated a series of unprecedented repressive measures against the Uyghur people, and ideological purges against so-called “two-faced” Uyghur officials as well as Uyghurs who earned high-respect and/or have strong influence in their own professional fields or careers (The “two-faced” is a term applied by the regime to describe the Uyghurs who do not willingly follow directives and exhibit signs of “disloyalty.”). His regime is now treating all the Uyghurs as criminals, and all the Uyghurs with religious faith as terrorists.

We have learned that Chen Quanguo’s regime issued “arrest schedules”, “look-up tables” and printed verdicts to local government officials and airport administrators, and assigned quotas to all the districts in East Turkestan about how many people to arrest within a given period of time. Some details of such illegal and inhuman practices were presented in Section 3 of this report. Using such administrative processes outside the China’s legal system, Chen’s regime has arrested tens of thousands of Uyghurs, mostly men at the ages of 18 – 50, in the last two years. As a result, massive numbers of women have become “widows”, and similarly massive numbers of children have become “orphans”. Consequently, the Uyghur societies everywhere lost their male residents, and Uyghur farms lost their male laborers. Anyone who visits East Turkestan nowadays can see “streets without Uyghur men” everywhere. Adding to the above misery, the Chen’s regime has assigned Han-Chinese “relatives” to most Uyghur families in every cities and towns all around East Turkestan. These families include those whose remaining family members are only the mothers and the children. We have obtained information about some cases in which Han male “relatives” sexually abused Uyghur mothers and/or their daughters in front of the mothers; when the female Uyghur victims complained to local government officials about this, they too were arrested under the charges of “causing disturbances”.

Chen’s regime not only jailed a huge number of innocent Uyghurs (in some estimates this number is between 50,000 to 100,000), they also put far more people into Nazi-style concentration camps. The total number now exceeds one million, constituting more than 10% of the total Uyghur population (according to China’s 2010 census) in East Turkestan. Even more horribly, the Chen’s regime is treating those one million Uyghur men and women in very inhuman ways both in prisons and in concentration camps. In prisons, those innocent “prisoners” are tortured in a way that people living in any civilized society cannot imagine. For example, the torture includes water cells, burning female victims’ faces and bodies with cigarettes and telling them “Call your God to rescue you”, hanging by the wrists, beating with police batons, electric batons or other objects, kicking, exposure to sustained cold, blinding with a hot, bright light, forcing a prisoner to maintain a stress position for prolonged periods, prolonged deprivation of sleep, water and food, restraining for days in so-called “tiger chairs” (used to immobilize suspects during interrogations), handcuffs, and leg irons. In most cases, such abuses have resulted in deaths, or physical and/or mental disabilities.

For example, we have learned the following from an Uyghur victim who just recently got released from a prison, and told his close friends what he had gone through in the jail, even if he knew the danger that he might be executed for disclosing such tightly safeguarded information: He did not know the rules when he first arrived in the jail, and got beaten by the guards with batons for whatever he did. He had to say “I am a terrorist” every time when the guard beat him, otherwise he got even more hits. When he asked for a permit to go to the toilet, he had to say “I am a terrorist and I would like to use the toilet”. The guards beat him if he did not ask in that way. His right hand was tied to his left ankle with a metal object all the time: during the day, during the eating, when using the toilet, and during the sleep, such that his right hand stayed touching his left ankle all the time. It was impossible for him to stand straight even once during the day. After living this way for more than a year, his body was completely deformed or physically disabled, thus becoming a person who can only crawl but cannot stand straight and walk. At the moment, it is very rare in East Turkestan for an Uyghur prisoner to come out of a jail as a normal person like before he or she was jailed. We have heard many cases in which the Uyghurs who came out of jails died shortly thereafter because some of their internal organs were missing.

**Omurbek Ali** was born and grew up in East Turkestan, and became a citizen of Kazakhstan 12 years ago. He was arrested on 26 March 2017 when he went to Pichan County in East Turkestan to visit his parents after conducting an official business in Urumchi. He was held in several concentration camps and prisons, and was finally released on 4 November 2017. He was interviewed three times on Jan. 23 – 25 of 2018 by the Uyghur-language service of Radio Free Asia (RFA) (<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/kazakh-01302018161655.html>). The following is his partial accounts as told to RFA:

“I was travelling back and forth between Kazakhstan and Xinjiang since I became a Kazakh citizen 12 years ago. I had never become a member of any organization, never carried out any political activity, and never assisted anybody who might belong to some sort of organizations. I worked in a travel agency from 2016 to 2017. I went to Urumchi to attend a 2-day business meeting in March 2017. After the meeting, I went to Pichan County on 25 March 2017 to visit my parents. My plan was to go back to Kazakhstan on March 27. At around 10am the next day, five policemen wearing uniforms came to my parents’ home and arrested me with a charge that “you are suspicious”. They did not have any legal documents on their hands, such as an arrest warrant. After taking me to a village police station, they charged me with more “crimes”, including “intimidating, organizing and protecting terrorists”. I was interrogated for about 2 hours in that police station. Then I was handcuffed, my head and face were covered with a black sack, and was taken to a county police station in Pichan city. There, the police took my fingerprints and blood samples, and carried out thorough physical exams on my body, without taking off the handcuffs and the black sack on my head. I was terrified, and thought that they might start taking my internal organs soon. Later on the same day, I was taken to a prison. There were around 15 young Uyghur men in my cell, all with metal chains on their hands and feet. Before going to the prison cell, I had all of my clothing taken away and replaced by a set of prison uniform. After staying 8 days in that prison cell, I was taken to Karamay (one of the largest cities in northern East Turkestan), still handcuffed and chained. I was deprived from sleep for two days before the police started their interrogation on me. Since that day up until mid June, I did everything, including eating, sleeping, and using the toilet, in a prison cell with my right foot tied to a bed with a heavy metal chain. The chain was less than a meter long, so I did not have any room to move around.”

“During my 8 months in jail, I lost 40kg of weight, and caught several illnesses, including high blood pressure. I thought I would die in the prison.”

“I was taken from the prison to a political re-education center on 4 November 2017, and was given political education for 20 days before being let go to Kazakhstan.”

Recently, **Abdurahman Hasan**, an Uyghur businessman from Kashgar who is currently living in Turkey, appealed to the Chinese government by saying “China: Execute my mother and my wife instead! I will pay for the bullets”, after learning about the inhuman tortures to which his mother and his wife are being subjected in two different concentration camps in East Turkestan. He was interviewed by the Uyghur language service of RFA in this regard.

As we described above, Chen Quanguo and his regime have put at least 10% of the Uyghur population of East Turkestan in jails and concentration camps. At the same time, the regime is torturing those Uyghurs in such inhuman ways that they end up either dying in jails or concentration camps, dying shortly after being released, or becoming permanently disabled,

physically and/or mentally. We, the Torchlight Uyghur Group, believe what Chen Quanguo and his regime are doing to the Uyghur people can be considered as crimes against humanity. We appeal to the United Nations, foreign governments and other international human rights and humanitarian organizations to demand Chen Quanguo to immediately stop committing such crimes against the Uyghur people in East Turkestan.

## **5. COLLECTION OF DNAS OF ALL UYGHURS**

Uyghur people had started to live under the state policies of ethnic discrimination and assimilation after our homeland, East Turkestan, was occupied by the Communist Chinese in 1949. Over time, the communist regime changed the way of treating the Uyghurs to severe oppression, and the Uyghurs have been living as the second-class citizens in their own homeland ever since. However, the Chinese government has stepped up their repressive policy towards the Uyghurs further to a state terror since July of 2009, after the July 5<sup>th</sup> massacre that took place in Urumchi, the capital of East Turkestan, and such state terrorism has reached to its peak since Chen Quanguo took office as the Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in East Turkestan. Under the heavy-handed rule of Chen Quanguo, all Uyghurs are now being treated like criminals, and all the Uyghurs with religious faith are now being treated like terrorists. One of the prominent aspects of such treatments is the collection of the DNA data of the entire Uyghur population in East Turkestan without legal protection and without the knowledge of the people whose DNAs are being collected.

It was reported by various media sources in 2017 that the local government in East Turkestan had spent more than 10 million dollars to purchase 12 DNA sequencers to test and analyze DNA samples. Some of them are ‘next generation’ DNA sequencers, which could be used to determine ancestry, eye color and other physical characteristics from genetic samples. Several biologists estimated that, if used at full capacity, the new equipment could be used to profile up to 10,000 DNA samples a day and several million a year. We have learned from several witnesses who fled China recently and also from some Chinese media reports that the local government had already started the collection of the DNA samples from a large number of Uyghurs, and the Chinese authorities are planning to continue this process until the DNA samples of all Uyghurs are collected.

Many countries use DNA fingerprinting to solve and prevent crimes, but most Uyghurs living abroad are extremely worried about how the DNA is being collected in East Turkestan. In March of 2017, Chinese state media detailed the conclusion of a 4-month program during which 17.5 million people — who were predominantly Uyghurs — were given health checks, including blood tests. Last year, other reports emerged that most of the people who underwent these examinations had been forced to do so.

The whole Uyghur population in East Turkestan is currently under attack from all directions by the communist Chinese regime. One reason is that East Turkestan is a key strategic point in China’s “One-Belt, One-Road (OBOR)” initiative, and the whole Uyghur population has become an inconvenience for that initiative. It is not clear where or when this ends, or if it ends at all. More than 10% of the Uyghur population is currently being held illegally in jails, Nazi-style political “re-education” concentration camps and orphanages. We were told that the largest construction project currently underway in East Turkestan is the building of new jails and new concentration camps throughout its territory. Some international organizations such as Human Rights Watch warned that the collection of the Uyghurs’ DNAs could be used as a way for the authorities to intensify their political control. U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, has recently raised concerns with Thermo Fisher Scientific, an American company supplying DNA sequencing equipment to China, regarding its business in East Turkestan. But, because the Uyghurs have no legal representation and virtually no institutional support in China, the Chinese government is practically unrestricted in conducting any types of human experiments on the Uyghur people. For that reason, many Uyghurs living abroad are worried that the biodata of the entire Uyghur people might be used for something far worse, such as to selectively harvest the organs of the Uyghurs, as thousands of Uyghurs have already been disappeared behind “the black gate” of the Chinese mass detention system.

We, the Torchlight Uyghur Group, appeal to the United Nations, foreign governments and all international humanitarian and human rights organizations to demand the Chinese government to stop the collection of the DNA and the other biodata of the whole Uyghur population, and to disclose to the world what they are truly doing with the Uyghurs’ DNA data that they have already collected.

## 6. ORGAN HARVESTING FROM THE UYGHUR PEOPLE

The Uyghur people have been the victims of state-sponsored criminal policies carried out by the Chinese government for many decades. We have exposed some of the antihuman crimes of the Chinese government committed against the Uyghurs in East Turkestan in our previous petitions. In this petition, we are exposing one of the most heinous crimes of the Chinese government, namely, organ harvesting from the Uyghur people.

Organ harvesting in China started in the 1960s and it became a systematic state-sponsored crime by 2015. It is hard to estimate the official number of victims of organ harvesting, however, based on the Chinese media, there are some ten thousand people who participate in visceral transplant surgery each year (although according to some estimates this number varies from 60-100 thousand). “Harvested Alive - 10 Years of Investigations” ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s84avaf0l4&t=903s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s84avaf0l4&t=903s)) – a Chinese documentary film about organ harvesting reports that “tens of thousands of people are secretly executed in China and their organs are harvested for the transplant surgery. Who are these victims? These people are mostly Uyghurs, Tibetans, underground Christians and Falun Gong practitioners, who are locked up for political and religious reasons by the Chinese government”. The same documentary also stated that the organ harvesting crime is supported by the Chinese government’s Law and Supervision organizations. Since 1999, many Nazi-style labor camps have been built throughout China to detain such “state criminals” who can be executed without trial and without any legal basis in order to harvest their organs. In March, 2006, Anne and Peter testified against the organ harvesting crimes committed by the Chinese government in the court and revealed that the main victims of such heinous crimes were the Uyghurs, Tibetans, underground Christians, and Falun Gong practitioners ([www.epochweekly.com/b5/271/10685.htm](http://www.epochweekly.com/b5/271/10685.htm)). The same crimes were also reported in a two-volume documentary film “Cast-Iron Evidences” produced by Wang Jiyuan, MD, who worked for the 4th division of the People’s Liberation Army Hospital and arrived in the United States in 1995. Dr. Wang produced this documentary after 10 years of independent research ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpHz9RUgp-c&t=3425s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpHz9RUgp-c&t=3425s)), revealing the ugly truth behind the organ harvesting and its victims in China and documenting how the organ harvesting business rapidly grew after the year of 2000, although it started long before that in East Turkestan. According to the film, since 2000 organ harvesting has increased by more than 5000 times annually. Between 2000 and 2006, the organ harvesting and transplant surgeries became such a huge business in China that almost all of the hospitals were involved. Their advertisements covered a wide range of services, claiming to provide sufficient and quality organs for their patients.

Enver Toxti, a medical doctor who worked at the Urumchi Railway Hospital, in East Turkestan, said that he witnessed organ harvesting operations when he was in China. He accepted an invitation from British Channel 4 reporters when he was visiting Turkey in 1998, and returned to East Turkestan to participate in collecting evidences for the documentary “Death on the Silk Road”. This documentary exposed the 30 years of nuclear weapons testing by the Chinese Government in Lopnur, in East Turkestan and its health consequences on Uyghur populations ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=-PRb8Xcdxp8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-PRb8Xcdxp8)). He arrived in England in 1999 and testified against China’s organ harvesting crimes in the European Parliament, Canada, Israel, and in the United States. He also published several reports in the international media regarding this issue. According to his writings, human organs from the anonymous sources provide the Chinese human organ markets with strong and stable resources. To make it more convenient for this market, Chinese airlines created special VIP boarding passes as the hospitals opened up new emergency organ transplant departments. Patients have to wait only 1-2 weeks for the surgery; some hospitals even advertised free organ transplant surgery for its patients to spread the word. Enver Toxti tells a painful and unforgettable story about his first organ harvesting operation. He was ordered to take the inner organs of a still-alive person (inmate) as quickly as possible. He remembers that “When I was working at the hospital in the 1990s, some Uyghur parents would express their concerns about their detained children after they were released from the prisons and would ask us to make some checks on their physical health, as their children started exhibiting abnormal physical conditions after their release. As a result, we found some scars on them from the surgeries operated without the knowledge of their parents.” He reported that the Chinese government started organ harvesting experiments on Uyghurs, but it wasn’t reported internationally for the reasons that the Uyghurs and their misfortunes were not well-known since they were considered as “internal matters” of China. Another reason was that, after the Falun Gong movement, their crackdown by the Chinese government was widely known in the international community, and the news and media reports were mainly concentrated on the stories of organ harvesting from the Falun Gong members, completely neglecting the Uyghur population. There was an article published in the December 5th, 2011 issue of the Weekly Standard on this topic, titled “The Xinjiang Procedure - Beijing’s ‘New Frontier’ is ground zero for the organ harvesting of political



prisoners” (<http://www.weeklystandard.com/the-xinjiang-procedure/article/610145>). In this article, the authors reported the misfortunes of Uyghur people under the CCP dictatorship since 1949, the environmental pollution as a result of the nuclear weapons testing in East Turkestan since 1960 and the increased cancer rates as a result, and the speculation over the 1997-Ghulja massacre, and the people who died and disappeared as well as their relationship with the Chinese government’s organ harvesting program. The article also told the vivid story with strong evidence of an executed Uyghur criminal whose organs were harvested while he was still alive after the execution and concluded that organ harvesting started in East Turkestan much earlier than the other places in China. On the 26th of March, 2006, Huang Jiefu, the Deputy Minister of the Chinese Health Ministry, gave a speech at “The Second Conference of Liver Transplant” and stated that “at present, there are more than 500 hospitals around the country that operate about 3500 liver transplant surgeries each year.” In November of the same year, he concluded in another speech at the “The Clinical Application of the Human Organ Transplant and its Control” conference that from 2000 to 2004, there were 28736 kidney transplant surgeries, 5642 liver transplant surgeries and 273 heart transplants performed in China, resulting in an average of 5747 kidney, 1128 liver, and 54.6 heart transplants in each year. Another paper published in the “Journal of Chinese Medicine Theory” in 2009 reported the statistical data on the organ transplants from 2000 to 2008; the authors concluded that during this period, there were 86800 kidney, 14643 liver, and 707 heart transplant surgeries took place in China, which means an average of 9644 kidney, 1627 liver, and 78.5 heart transplants in each year. From these data it is not very hard to see that organ transplant surgeries in China almost tripled between 2005 and 2008.

After China’s crimes of organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners were exposed by the international media, the Chinese authorities eventually admitted that the sources of human organs were executed criminals, even though the Chinese government has constantly denied the existence of illegal organ harvesting crimes in China. The sad fact is that, although the number of people executed for their crimes has been decreasing each year by 10% and less people are being executed in recent years (<http://www.ntdtv.com/xtr/gb/2017/10/07/a1345629.html>, <http://www.china.com.cn/chinese/health/666587.htm>), the thrive of the organ harvesting market in China shows that even those people who are not scheduled to be executed but detained are the main targets of the organ harvesting. An article published on the 26th of October, 2006 on the Xin Hua Net stated that China ranks number two in the world for the number of the organ transplants, and the transplant techniques have been much improved since the first organ transplant operation in 1966, becoming the mainstream method for the patients with organ failures. It was also stated that in order to ensure a healthy development of the organ harvesting market, it is necessary to make relevant laws and regulations. (<http://health.sohu.com/20061026/n246010278.shtml>).

[Sina.com](http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2017-12-17/doc-ifyptfcn1510600.shtml) (<http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2017-12-17/doc-ifyptfcn1510600.shtml>) estimated on their December 27, 2017 report that China will become the world’s number 1 organ transplant country by 2020. When compared to a country like the United States, which has a large number of organ donors, one can’t help but question how come China with such a low number of donors can become the world’s top ranking country in organ transplant in such a short time? Are they saying it with such a confidence because they consider the estimated 1 million Uyghurs detained in China’s Nazi-style concentration camps in East Turkestan as their organ harvesting target? Many reports have been published on the Chinese government’s collection of the biological samples, such as blood, from the whole Uyghur population without informing them and without their consent, and making the “physical checkups” mandatory for the entire Uyghur population between the ages of 12 and 65 since 2016. One can’t stop but speculate the interrelations of these events and the hidden truth behind them.

In 2017, the prominent Chinese dissident Guo Wengui revealed a shocking news of killing of 5 Uyghurs to perform a liver transplant for the son of Jiang Zemin, the former General Secretary of the CCP. Mr. Guo also exposed that Meng Jianhong and his girlfriends also used Uyghur’s organs for their organ transplants. Mr. Guo further revealed the detainment of a 21-year Uyghur male from a hotel in Beijing without any reason and his killing for the organ harvesting for the CCP leaders and their family members. He informed the world that he holds real evidences for the above-mentioned crimes (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x9s9-6Ueqg>), (<https://freedomsherald.wordpress.com/2017/11/22/chinese-exiled-billionaire-guo-wengui-exposes-chinas-abuse-of-the-uyghurs>).

We, the Torchlight Uyghur Group, consider the organ harvesting from Uyghurs as a state terrorism and a heinous act that is being carried out by a coordinated effort between the Chinese government and the Chinese hospitals. We also consider this crime as a genocide targeting the innocent and helpless Uyghur people in East Turkestan.

## 7. TENS OF THOUSANDS OF UYGHURS WENT MISSING

“Dear uncle, my situation has been very bad emotionally recently. I haven’t talked to my parents in Urumchi for 2 months now. Before that, I learned that the local government officials were giving hard times to them because I went abroad. I don’t know their current situations. I cannot get connected when I call them – their phonenumber is dead. Recently, one of my friends went to Urumchi from inner China. I told her to check out our house while she was in Urumchi. I learned from her later through Wechat (Chinese mobile phone messaging app) that she went to our home but there was nobody inside; and the door was sealed off with red tapes. I have barely slept in the last three days, after hearing what my friend told me. I just cannot fall asleep. I have not eaten much either—It is hard for me to swallow something. I cry all the time. Even if I fall asleep during the night, I frequently wake up with nightmare. Every time when I read something in WhatsApp about the tortures that some Uyghur people are currently going through in Chinese jails or concentration camps, I lose all of my physical strength, and cannot even get up afterwards for a while. My father’s health is not that good. He is physically very weak and has some illnesses. I am extremely worried about him. I am so worried that the government officials may kill him in a detention center or in a jail very soon. When I contacted my mother two months ago with text message, she told me: “My sweetheart, have a good life there, and forget us completely.” I did not know then that this would become my last communication with my mom. What this world has changed into? My parents are still fairly young and alive, but I cannot talk to them even by phone, don’t mention seeing them in person. I don’t know what to do. I am really scared. I am so worried about my father, my mother and my young brother. I don’t know where they are now. I also don’t know if they are still alive or dead.”

Given above is a text message one of our members received from a 20+ year old Uyghur female living abroad. This is just one example of the similar messages that we read and hear every day nowadays. We hear this kind of cries everyday from the Uyghurs currently living abroad. As we learned from various sources and witnesses, thousands of Uyghurs, mostly Uyghur males aged 15 – 35, have disappeared from the streets in East Turkestan, and thousands of Uyghurs have disappeared from their homes. In the prefecture-, county- and village-level cities in East Turkestan, one can find empty homes everywhere, and nobody knows how they’ve gone missing, where they are now, and if they are still alive or not. Some of these disappeared Uyghurs can account for part of the more than one million innocent Uyghurs who were initially detained (or placed) in Nazi-style concentration camps and in jails in East Turkestan. Right now, thousands of Uyghur mothers are waiting for their missing sons, and thousands of wives are waiting for their missing husbands, hoping that one day they might show up in their front doors. However, among the one million plus Uyghurs detained and/or put in jails so far, there is almost no news about someone who has been released from any detention centers or jails.

The Chinese government has forced some unknown number of Uyghur students to return home from the countries they were studying, by threatening to jail their parents and/or siblings in case they do not come back. But most of those returned students went missing just at the airports upon their arrival. Some aspects of this kind of Uyghur disappearances were described in an article titled: “China's Uighur minority shackled by digital technology as thousands are detained for 'vocational training'” (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/thousands-china-xinjiang-uighur-beijing-disappear-fears-authorities-thought-police-personal-safety-a8115421.html>).

Many Uyghur witnesses and victims who fled China after the July 5th, 2009, Urumchi Massacre revealed that at least 3,000 Uyghurs died, and 5,000 – 7,000 went missing after the Chinese government’s brutal crackdown of the peaceful demonstration of the Uyghur students carried out in Urumchi on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Uyghur leader Rebiya Kadeer also told the foreign reporters that 10,000 Uyghurs went missing on that one night (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-xinjiang/uighur-leader-says-10000-went-missing-in-one-night-idUSTRE56S1O020090729?sp=true>). Human Rights Watch conducted a research in the aftermath of

the July 5<sup>th</sup> protest, and documented the enforced disappearances of at least 43 Uyghur men and teenage boys (<https://www.hrw.org/report/2009/10/20/we-are-afraid-even-look-them/enforced-disappearances-wake-xinjiangs-protests>). It was stated in that report that “The actual number of ‘disappeared’ persons is likely significantly higher than the number of cases documented by the Human Rights Watch, as our ability to collect information was limited. Out of fear of retaliation, few witnesses or family members were willing to come forward with their stories.”

In our estimate, the actual number of the Uyghurs went missing as victims of the Chinese government’s enforced disappearances is indeed greater than 10,000. However, after the July 5, 2009, Urumchi Massacre, the Chinese government reported that a total of 197 people died during that incident, and most of them were Han Chinese. This is very similar to what had happened in 1989 during the Tiananmen Square Massacre: After they brutally put down the June 4, 1989 student demonstration in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, the Chinese government reported that only 3 people died, and two of them were military personnels. But the International Red-Cross recorded more than 2,500 students who died and went missing during that crackdown.

As we can see, the Chinese government lies, and lies very bluntly and openly. And their actions of lying are incomparably much more severe when it comes to the Uyghur people in East Turkestan. As a result, the actual situation in East Turkestan is very different from the Chinese government’s accounts, as partially revealed in the following report:

Guo Wengui is a Chinese billionaire businessman who later became a political activist. Since January 23, 2017, he has been unveiling the corruption of top Chinese officials. His accounts have been widely covered by many media organizations, including Mingjing, VOA, BBC, Forbes, Financial Times and NY Times. Given below are some excerpts from what he said about the Uyghurs and East Turkestan:

--"I have been good friends with the former Vice-Minister of China’s Ministry of State Security Mr. Ma Jian for a long time. He was also in charge of Xinjiang affairs. He shared a great amount of classified information about the real situation in Xinjiang with me. The events that have occurred in Xinjiang are much much more horrifying than what the outside world – that is the general Chinese public and Western media – know about the Uyghurs."

--"to celebrate your new position as the Minister of Public Security, you (Mengjianzhu) ordered the killing of more than 1000 Uighurs under the pretext of a crackdown on terror. How many people did you bury in Xinjiang?"

--"You know this Mr. Meng Jianzhu. You killed so many people in Xinjiang. You’ve buried so many people alive in Xinjiang."

--" The miserable people of Xinjiang lead a life of suffering. I can’t describe how pitiful it is. The number of deaths unaccounted for are incredibly high. You don’t have access to information about it...crowds of people were buried one after another. "

--"Xinjiang is a hell, a hell 24 hour a day, 360 days a year. It is a frightening tragedy."

--"Why are Mengjianzhu’s family members so healthy?... organ transplants? Where did MengjianZhu get the organs for his family members? What’s your blood source? How did you get it? Where did their livers, kidneys, come from? You killed a 21-year-old boy from Xinjiang in Beijing. He came to Beijing for just a few days and you framed him for rape. If he actually committed rape, then who’s the victim? Tell me, who is

the victim of that rape? You killed him for his organs. Why have so many Uyghur people disappeared in Beijing? Who did it? Where did their livers and kidneys go? Who did this?"

--"You quarreled with the Xinjiang Party Secretary about a bloody event there. You wanted to kill 500 people – including the family members of the people involved in the incident there. You ordered them to be buried alive. This is your doing Mengjiangzhu... and you shifted the blame on the Uyghurs for the bloody event that happened there."

## **8. CHINA FROM BURNING MILLIONS OF UYGHUR BOOKS**

According to a report by ChinaAid on April 2nd, 2018 ([http://www.chinaaid.net/2018/04/blog-post\\_2.html?m=1](http://www.chinaaid.net/2018/04/blog-post_2.html?m=1)), the Chinese government started confiscating and burning Uyghur-language books in various parts of East Turkestan. The regime ordered the Uyghur students and their parents to bring the Uyghur-language books from their houses, and warned them that they will be arrested if there are any books found when their houses are searched. Although similar policies have been implemented in East Turkestan over the years, the more recent confiscations and burnings focused especially on the books about the pre-1949 history of East Turkestan, and the Uyghurs who kept those books were heavily prosecuted.

As one of the ancient peoples in the heart of Central Asia, Uyghurs have rich cultural heritage and literary tradition. During the 19th and the early 20th centuries, Western explorers travelled to East Turkestan, the homeland of Uyghurs, and collected vast amount of cultural and literary relics, some of which are currently in display in prominent museums and libraries in various European countries. However, Uyghurs are now facing unprecedented and unimaginable ethnic oppression and cultural genocide by the Chinese government. Indeed, Uyghurs are the most culturally oppressed people in the world today, in the 21st Century.

The Chinese communist regime has carried out numerous large-scale book burning and cultural heritage destruction policies after its occupation of East Turkestan in 1949. Since 2017, another wave of large-scale book confiscation and book burning is being carried out as part of the Chinese regime's cultural genocide policy against Uyghurs in East Turkestan.

According to the Chinese chronicles, the first book burning started during the reign of Qin Shihuang ("The First Emperor of China") in order to purge his dissents. After occupying East Turkestan in 1949, the Chinese communist regime has been carrying out cultural genocide against Uyghurs in order to keep Uyghurs culturally backward and to eliminate their ethnic identity. During the so-called "Cultural Revolution" (1966-1976), most of the historical documents and literary treasures of the Uyghurs were destroyed. The thousand-year old Uyghur Arabic alphabet was outlawed and replaced by an alphabet based on the Chinese Pinyin system. At the same time, the books in the Uyghur Arabic Alphabet were labeled as "reactionary" and were confiscated and burned. After a brief period of revival of Uyghur culture and literature during the 1980s, the Uyghur language books once again started facing inspection and confiscation since the 1990s.

According to a 2002 report by the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) (<http://unpo.org/article/101>), the Chinese regime confiscated and burned more than 730 types of books in Kashgar, East Turkestan. Those books included such works as "A Brief History of the Huns" and "Ancient Uyghur Literature" by famous Uyghur author and historian Turghun Almas. Among the hundreds of thousands of books burned, there were 32,320 copies of a single book titled "Ancient Uyghur Craftsmanship". This book was deemed "dangerous" and banned just because it contained historical documents about traditional Uyghur hand craftsmanship, such as paper making. In the same year, Uyghur language books published by the Kashgar Uyghur Publishing House were inspected and 330 types of books

were deemed “problematic”. Those books were stopped from future re-printing and were confiscated and burned.

After banning and burning of Uyghur history books by Turghun Almas in the 1990s, the Chinese regime has continued its attack on Uyghur cultural heritage in the name of so-called “fight against separatism, terrorism” and “maintaining stability”. Since 2000, the Chinese regime has replaced the Uyghur language instruction in education by Chinese in the name of “Bilingual Education” policy and excluded the Uyghur language from all educational, governmental and financial fields in East Turkestan. After the appointment of Chen Quanguo as the Communist Party Secretary in East Turkestan, the Uyghur language was outlawed as a medium in the entire educational field in 2017. Meanwhile, the Chinese regime started openly attacking religious freedom of Uyghurs without any restraints and expanded confiscation and burning of Islamic religious books, including the Holy Qur’an. Currently, a historically unprecedented book burning and cultural purging operation is ongoing in East Turkestan: not only the Chinese regime is banning and burning the Uyghur language books, but it also giving out 5 to 20 year jail terms for those Uyghurs who either read or kept the banned books. More than one million Uyghurs are currently being detained in so-called “Re-Education” concentration camps or jails, and most of those Uyghurs were detained because of their religious beliefs and/or because they were highly educated.

According to Chinese democracy activists, the more recent book burning being carried out by the Chinese regime in East Turkestan can be considered as the re-enactment of the so-called “Cultural Revolution” among the Uyghurs. According to a report by Nicholas Bequelin and published by the Human Rights in China (HRIC) ([https://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/PDFs/CRF.1.2004/b1\\_Criminalizing1.2004.pdf](https://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/PDFs/CRF.1.2004/b1_Criminalizing1.2004.pdf)), in 2002, the Chinese regime banned 52 out of the 118 magazines published in East Turkestan at the time because of their “sensitive” contents. According to a November 2, 2006 report by Tangritagh (Tian’shan) Net, an official Chinese propaganda website, so-called “Autonomous Regional” Government in East Turkestan organized a “One Hundred-Day Crackdown Against Illegal Publications” special meeting and burned 215,943 copies of Uyghur-language books.

Among the blacklisted, banned and confiscated materials, the vast majority is books about Uyghur history, culture and Islam, and the rest includes Uyghur-related pictures, audio-video materials, praying rugs, etc. At the beginning, Uyghurs were ordered to hand in those banned items. Later, the Chinese regime started searching the Uyghur houses for those items. After the spread of the news of house-to-house search and confiscation of the Holy Qur’an in Urumchi in 2017, some people reported seeing thousands of discarded Qur’an in the Urumchi River and in the Uyghur Cemetery outside Urumchi. The most recent book banning and burning by the Chinese regime reached to a new extreme with the arrests of authors, editors, singers, artists, and religious scholars. Some of the retired editors were also arrested for the work that they did before their retirement. In June, 2017, the Chinese regime broke into the house of 80-year old Uyghur author/writer Mirzahid Kerimi and confiscated historical novels he authored and other books in his house.

In addition to destroying the Uyghur language books and cultural heritage of the Uyghurs, the Chinese regime is now conducting another form of cultural genocide – Digital Book Burning. After the 2009 Urumchi Massacre, more than 100 Uyghur language websites were closed down and their administrators were arrested. Starting from 2017, some of the Uyghur language websites that were operational since 2011 were once again completely shut down. A significant numbers of Uyghurs were investigated and/or arrested after their personal information got leaked by the confiscated websites. In addition, unknown numbers of Uyghurs were arrested because of the “illegal” information stored in their phones and laptops. Uyghurs are now forced by the Chinese regime to install surveillance software on their cell phones and other personal devices. Those who refuse to install will be severely punished. (<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/report-uyghurs-in-china-forced-to-install-surveillance-app-that-leaves-their-data-unsecured-04102018164341.html>).

In this day and age, there are not many places in the World other than East Turkestan, where people can be arbitrarily detained, arrested and severely punished just because they have read a book. The Uyghur people in East Turkestan, under the fascist and racist policy of the Chinese regime, is facing such a savage and inhuman treatment just for reading a book and having a thought. The burning of the Uyghur language books, the eradication of the Uyghur cultural heritage and the punishment of the Uyghur authors are not only an affront to Uyghurs, but also an unforgivable insult to any human being who loves and cherishes freedom and knowledge. Such criminal action of the Chinese regime against Uyghurs is also a cultural genocide against humanity.

## 9. CULTURAL GENOCIDE AGAINST UYGHURS

Uyghurs are one of the ancient nations residing at the heartland of the Central Asia. Uyghur civilization possesses long and rich cultural heritage and traditions. Uyghurs play important economic, cultural and historical role between the East and West because of the geographic location of their homeland—East Turkestan, also known as Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region under the current Chinese regime. The multi-ethnic, multi-cultural population of East Turkestan is a proof of the Uyghur people's tolerant and harmonious ways of life and their attitude towards other cultures and civilizations. During their more than 2000 years of history, the Uyghurs have developed their own language, literature, religious identity and their distinctive culture as well as their independent states. Unfortunately, after the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) invasion to East Turkestan in 1949, the CCP has launched a series of systematic cultural assimilation and genocide policies targeting the Uyghur population in East Turkestan. The goal is to prevent the Uyghur people from rebelling against the CCP regime. The implementation pace, scope and strength of such brutal policies have peaked in recent years, and have brought serious damages to the Uyghur culture and the Uyghur people, as briefly described below:

(1)**The destruction of the Uyghur language.** In the past 60 years, the CCP has modified the Uyghur alphabet for 3 times, such as the use of Chinese Pinyin based alphabet instead of using the Uyghur alphabet in Uyghur literature and education, as well as the complete ban of the Uyghur language in all forms of communication including education and workplace. See, for example:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-muslim-minority-school-language-ban-han-xinjiang-uyghur-hotan-hetian-government-communist-a7873446.html>.

One of the sad consequences of these destructive measures is the difficulty of communication between different generations in an Uyghur family as they do not understand each other effectively. Another result is the gradual elimination of the Uyghur language in all layers of formal education, despite the fact that the Uyghurs have developed a successful educational system in their own language from preschool to university levels. The discrimination of the Uyghurs in job opportunities is so open that many companies say in their job ads that they don't hire Uyghur people even though they have all the qualifications for a position. The discrimination against the Uyghur language reached such a height that even many Uyghur school teachers, civil servants and company workers were laid off only because they speak Uyghur but not Han Chinese, even in places where the jobs do not require a person to speak Han Chinese.

(2) **The strict control of the Uyghur language publications.** The Chinese government's control has always been very strict on the publication of Uyghur books and on the censorship of authors. Over the years, large numbers of historical and religious books, novels, poems, and even the essays published online that encourage Uyghurs to keep their ethnic identity or those with any hidden or symbolic contents have been confiscated, banned, burned, and taken down, because the Chinese government suspected that these publications hold ideas against the communist ideology. The authors of such publications were fined heavily

and majority of them were sentenced to 5-15 years of prison terms. More details about this kind of oppression faced by the Uyghur people can be found in one of our previous petitions that calls the international community to stop China from burning the Uyghur books (<https://www.change.org/p/united-nations-stop-china-from-burning-millions-of-uyghur-books>).

(3) The forced brainwashing of Uyghur intellectuals. Most of the gifted Uyghur writers and artists have long been used by the Chinese government for its propaganda. They have not been allowed to utilize their knowledge and talents for general public. Since 2017, the Chinese government has forced all the Uyghur intellectuals, civil servants and artists, especially those who became popular and well respected among the Uyghur communities, to write various types of pledges describing their loyalty towards CCP and the Chinese state. This campaign included the Uyghurs who held key positions in local governments, universities and other public sectors. Also, some well-known Uyghur artists were forced to participate in organized trips to the Chinese communist revolutionary bases to increase their knowledge about the Chinese communist ideology and the history of the Chinese communist revolution. They were forced to wear some pre-1949 era uniforms of the Chinese Liberation Army (PLA) and to sing patriotic songs that praise the communist China and its policies. These activities are widely promoted on the Chinese propaganda machines and on social media to support the propaganda of the Chinese government and to “educate” the Uyghurs to become more grateful to the communist party.

See, for example: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-30722268> and

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-asia-china-39297026/the-uighur-pop-singer-trying-to-build-bridges>.

(4) **The banning of the traditional Uyghur attires.** The Chinese government made it illegal for the Uyghurs to wear their traditional dresses in work places and schools. In schools, Uyghur children are being taught in Chinese language-only and are encouraged to dress up in traditional Han-Chinese costumes, especially in official performances. As a result, the Uyghur traditional costumes are now barely worn on stages or in the propaganda activities organized by the government or in schools. Furthermore, following the enforcement of the China's anti-terror law in 2016, the local government came up with strict regulations regarding the dress codes of the Uyghur men and women. The regulations require the Uyghur women to take off their headscarves, and to wear short and open styled dresses in public places. They require the Uyghur men to shave their beards and moustaches. Both gender groups are not allowed to enter any public places, such as hospitals, banks, shopping malls, and ride a bus if not dressed up according to those regulations. The Uyghurs are now required to wear Chinese-style dresses as one of the symbols of civilization even in most heavily populated Uyghur areas. The Uyghurs who dare to challenge the authority about such regulations are either fined or sentenced to long prison terms.

See, for example: <https://livingotherwise.com/2018/02/23/images-red-han-culture-uyghur-performers-chinese-new-year/>.

(5) The de-legitimization of Halal foods. About foods, the Chinese government has criminalized the usage of “*halal*” labels in East Turkestan and banned the use of such differentiation in food and drinks sector since 2017, under the name of war against terror. They merged the canteen and cafeterias in schools and workplaces to encourage Han Chinese and Uyghurs or other Muslim people to eat together. The shops and restaurants owned by Uyghurs, who previously did not sell alcohol and cigarettes, were forcefully closed or fined. Their owners were sent to concentration/re-education camps or sentenced to jail terms, even though they did not commit any crimes. See, for example: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/use-of-halal-logo-in-restaurants-restricted-in-china-s-xinjiang/story-bbTsSmLLHVn51p0aZI0vnM.html>.

(6) **The Chinese government has speeded up its assimilation policies towards the Uyghurs by introducing so-called “becoming a family” campaign in the Uyghur populated areas.** The aim of such campaign is described as "helping Uyghurs to improve their lives and improve the understanding between the

Han and Uyghurs". With this campaign, Han Chinese officials are placed in Uyghur and Kazakh households regardless of their difference in culture, religion and other backgrounds. Therefore, the Uyghurs are forced to live with the assigned Han Chinese officials and share every aspects of their lives with them for a week, in order to show the harmonious picture of both sides to the government. Most importantly, the Han officials have to keep a close eye on and make record of their "Uyghur relative's" political views as well as all their behaviors inside their own homes. Some photos and news related to such special relationships became available on various social media, more frequently around the Chinese New Year period. To follow the government orders, Uyghur families were forced to adjust their life styles to their "assigned relatives", decorate their homes with celebration banners written in Chinese, and prepare Chinese traditional foods to eat together. Furthermore, it is not a hidden fact that the Uyghurs were encouraged to marry Han Chinese nationals. The benefits of such inter-marriage is being widely publicized, including financial assistance to build homes for the couples, children's education and future job opportunities. Therefore, forced inter-marriages have also been used as a propaganda tool by the Chinese government to assimilate the Uyghurs by force. See, for example: <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/14/asia/china-xinjiang-home-stays-intl/index.html>.

**(7) The Chinese government has been trying to destroy some other aspects of the Uyghur culture too.**

For instance, local governments have banned Islamic names for Uyghur newborns and the kids of ages up to 16 years, and ordered the Uyghurs to change their kids' names if they are among one of the 28 names specified by the government, including Mohammed and Islam, etc.. Also, the Chinese government has eliminated the Uyghur traditional wedding ceremonies by banning the Nikah (the Islamic marriage contract), using so called "de-radicalization" act. The Uyghurs are now not allowed to read religious texts from Qur'an when an Uyghur passes away. This is particularly true when an Uyghur communist party member gets married or died. This type of extreme regulations of the Chinese government has reached to a point that portraits of Xi Jinping and other top Chinese government leaders were hung up at most visible walls of many mosques, and imams were required to praise the communist leaders in place of the God in everyday prayers. See, for example: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-27/china-bans-list-of-islamic-names-including-muhammad-in-xinjiang-region> and <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/special/uyghur-oppression/ChenPolicy2.html>.

**(8) The demolishing of historical Uyghur buildings.** The Chinese government has demolished many thousand years old historical buildings in the Uyghur city of Kashgar to erase the Uyghur history, and tried to minimize their importance among the Uyghurs. Many Uyghur families were forced to move from cities to country-sides with little or no reimbursement to their financial losses. Thus, many Uyghur communities have now got scattered and disconnected from one another. Also, some traditional Chinese style tombs and buildings are being built in many cities intentionally to show tourists that these Uyghur areas have been the integral parts of China for very long time. See, for example: <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1913166,00.html>.

To conclude, every aspect of the Uyghur lives is now under serious threat because of China's "Strike Hard" campaign, the increasingly harsh anti-human regulations, ethnic assimilation and cultural genocide policies, and the all-time surveillance arranged by the Chinese government. We ask all human rights organizations and individuals around the world to stand up for justice for Uyghurs, to pay attention to the above-mentioned devastating situations in the Uyghur homeland, and end the world-wide silence over the China's genocide against the Uyghurs and their rich culture. It is an alarming fact that China is not only exporting its cheap goods to the West and other countries through "One Belt, One Road" or OBOR strategy, but also transporting its self-centered and hegemonic ideology to those developed and developing nations for their own future.



## 10. RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION AGAINST THE UYGHURS

According to one European researcher, at this very moment, “at least several hundred thousand, and possibly just over one million (Uyghurs), are or have been interned in political re-education facilities” in East Turkestan (known as Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China). That means one out of every Uyghur family has likely been taken forcibly into one of these centers. The crackdown has focused on young Uyghur men, so if you’re a male and between the age of 20 and 40, the odds are you will find yourself locked up in a center.

(<https://www.dailyo.in/politics/china-islam-uyghurs-xinjiang-pakistan/story/1/24358.html>) In these Nazi style concentration camps, Uyghurs are being forced to denounce their religious belief and to eat pork. In addition to these Uyghurs held in the concentration camps, more than half a million Uyghurs were imprisoned since April 2017 for keeping religious contents on their phones or reading religious books .

The Chinese authorities are convinced that the religious belief of the Uyghurs is one of the main obstacles to assimilate them, and thus now openly launched anti-religion campaign against the Uyghur people in East Turkestan, reaching the highest level ever seen since the Cultural Revolution. Fasting in Ramadan is a serious crime and not having alcoholic drinks is a sign of extremism for the Uyghurs now in East Turkestan. The campaign targets all Uyghur population and it actually is part of China’s ethnic cleansing policy against the Uyghurs. The Chinese government has frequently been condemned by the Uyghur people and global rights groups for committing genocide against the Uyghurs and crimes against humanity.

Now in East Turkestan:

- More than one million Uyghurs are languishing in China’s Nazi style concentration camps and forced to give up their religious belief.
- Uyghurs are not allowed to say some Arabic words such as “ Allah” and “Assalamu alaykum” etc, anymore.
- Most community mosques are being demolished or turned into entertainment facilities.
- Traditional customs like naming children and marriage ceremony with Islamic way are prohibited.
- Some Uyghurs girls are forced to marry Chinese men by the arrangement of the Chinese authorities.
- Chinese men are installed in Uyghur homes whose male family members have been detained.
- Islamic clothing and beards are forbidden as a sign of extremism.
- The usage of “Halal” labels for food production has been criminalized.
- The Uyghur government officials are being forced to sign for cremation instead of Islamic burial.
- Islamic books including Holy Qur’an and praying mats were burned. Praying and Fasting are banned.
- Chinese national flag and the portraits of Xi Jinping are placed in mosques.
- Most Uyghurs in diaspora are unable to communicate with their family members in East Turkestan

A large number of Uyghurs who studied abroad or visited some Islamic countries such as Egypt were imprisoned in 2017 without any trial. The Chinese government requested all Uyghur students studying abroad, especially those in Turkey and Egypt, to come back to China immediately. The authorities arrested returned students in airports and their whereabouts are still unclear. The Chinese government arrested family members of the students who did not return. Also, the Chinese government carried out an operation for hunting thousands of Uyghur students in Egypt at the end of 2017 and many students fled to other countries for saving their lives. Thousands of religious scholars and influential public figures have been arrested and some of them, such as Muhammed Salih, a prominent Uyghur religious scholar, is known to have died during the interrogation.

(<https://uhrp.org/press-release/uyghur-human-rights-project-condemns-death-custody-scholar-muhammad-salih-hajim.html>)

“The Chinese government’s restrictions on Uyghur Muslims are an attempt to assimilate a besieged religious and ethnic minority,” said United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Chairman Daniel Mark. “By installing Communist Party cadres in Uighur homes and detaining countless innocent Uyghurs in extrajudicial ‘re-education camps’, the Chinese government has created a culture of fear, suspicion, and mistrust throughout Xinjiang. Indeed, the government’s actions are disrupting entire communities as they try to live their lives and practice their faith in peace.”

(<http://www.uscifr.gov/news-room/press-releases-statements/china-uscifr-deeply-concerned-about-increasing-repression-uyghur>)

“What is happening?” questions Jay Nordlinger, An American journalist and senior editor of National Review, “Up to a million Uyghurs have been rounded up, thrown into a gulag — an archipelago of ‘reeducation’ camps — with no due process whatsoever. Many have simply been ‘disappeared’.” He also says that “there has not been mass killing yet, but many Uyghurs have been tortured to death. Lots of people fear that this is a pre-genocidal situation — that the mass incarceration is a prelude to mass murder, and to organ harvesting, in particular. (This is one of the evil specialties of the Chinese Communist Party.) The entire Uyghur population, incarcerated or not, has been DNA-sampled.”

(<https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/an-emergency/>)

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) conference that took place at the US Congress on February 26, 2018 highlighted the Chinese government’s draconian restrictions on Uyghurs cultural and religious freedoms. (<http://unpo.org/article/20647>) Since April 2017, Uyghurs accused of harboring “extremist” and “politically incorrect” views have been detained in political re-education camps throughout East Turkestan. Authorities have relied on a list circulated in early 2017 of “75 Signs of Religious Extremism” to detain Uyghurs amid a string of harsh policies attacking their legitimate rights and freedoms enacted since Communist Party secretary Chen Quanguo was appointed to run the region in August 2016. (<http://unpo.org/article/20625>)

By analyzing information “from 73 government procurement and construction bids valued at around RMB 680 million (approximately \$108 million),” Adrian Zenz, a researcher at the European School of Culture and Theology, conclude in a recent paper that the bids revealed a massive plan to build these massive concentration camps, focusing on Uyghur-majority areas of East Turkestan.

Life inside these centers is horrifying, according to rare accounts of those who were able to leave and speak to the media. One such account came from a Kazakh national who was swept up into one center, and then returned to Kazakhstan. Daily brainwashing sessions were held “about the dangers of Islam”. “Do you obey Chinese law or your God?” instructors asked. “Do you understand why religion is dangerous?” Other prisoners were forced to praise Xi Jinping’s greatness instead of God. Before every meal, inmates were forced to chant: “Thank the Party! Thank the Motherland! Thank President Xi!” Daily Mail reported shocking details of the methods revealed by former inmates in these camps that were employed by Chinese agencies to make Muslims in East Turkestan align with communist ideals and give up their Islamic beliefs. According to these former inmates, Muslims in the camps are made to eat pork and drink alcohol among other punishments when they refuse to follow orders from the camp authorities. Upto a million Muslims, mainly from East Turkestan, are reportedly detained in such camps in China. (<https://swarajyamag.com/insta/china-forcing-muslims-to-eat-pork-drink-alcohol-as-punishment-in-its-re-education-camps>)

Zenz pointed out that “China’s pacification drive in Xinjiang is, more than likely, the country’s most intense campaign of coercive social re-engineering since the end of the Cultural Revolution. The state’s ‘war on terror’ is arguably more and more a euphemism for forced ethnic assimilation.” (<https://www.dailyo.in/politics/china-islam-uyghurs-xinjiang-pakistan/story/1/24358.html>)

A US commission on China had last month described the program as ‘the largest mass incarceration of a minority population in the world today’. (<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2018/05/16/world/asia/ap-as-china-xis-era-mass-internment.html>)

The unforgettable human tragedies of Nazi concentration camps and Soviet gulags taught enough lessons for humanity to vow to prevent similar tragedies from happening again. And yet, under the watchful eyes of the world, the Chinese government has deprived more than a million Uyghurs of their basic rights by placing them in these heinous camps. (<https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/uyghurs-victims-of-21st-century-concentration-camps/>)

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

We are constantly adding new information/contents to this report. Please visit <http://freedomsherald.org/ET/unb/> for its up-to-date version. Thank you!

## **ABOUT TORCHLIGHT UYGHUR GROUP**

Torchlight Uyghur Group is an independent, fact-finding and advocacy group. Its members consist of some Uyghur scholars and Uyghur professionals living abroad. Its main goal is to carry out independent research on ways for the Uyghur people to live like normal human beings in East Turkestan, and for the Uyghur people to preserve their unique ethnic identity. It also tries to inform the international communities about the issues currently faced by the Uyghurs in East Turkestan, and how the Uyghur people are being brutally oppressed with China’s whole sale assimilative and ethnic genocide policies. All of the Group’s reports are available at <http://freedomsherald.org/ET/unb/>. Torchlight Uyghur Group is currently not funded by any person or by any institute; it operates merely with the help of its members.

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