

IMUN 2025 Research Report

Security council Issue #2: The question of the Uyghur internment camps in Xinjiang, China.

Introduction:

As of today over half a million of the muslim minority are faced with punishment and harsh labour due to their religious belief in Xinjiang, China otherwise known as the Uyghur detention centres or Xinjiang internment centres. The reason behind them being masked with “reeducation” by the government of the People's republic of china which has only resulted in malicious intent of indoctrination of political views and religious suppression. Targeting muslim minorities including Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and more have been held charged for expressing religious identity. As of 2022, the United Nations themselves declared these camps as “serious human rights violations”, shutting down China’s reasoning to “vocational education centres” (United Nations, 2022). Keeping in mind these violations, addressing this issue demands high cooperation, understanding, and an effective plan to ensure safety and religious freedom.

Background information:

The establishment of the detention centers is rooted in longstanding tension between the Chinese state and its ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. The area itself belonged to the Uyghur people, who predominantly follow Islam and Turkic language and culture, which was tackled as a threat to the unity and sovereignty of China (Amnesty International, 2021). After the Chinese government took control over Xinjiang in 1949, it began implementing policies to encourage Han Chinese people to migrate into the region, aiming to gradually reduce the Uyghur majority. In response, the Uyghur people retaliated by forming resistance groups, which were also handled with military and political repression by the Chinese government. Therefore, after the 1990s and early 2000s, the Chinese government classified the Uyghur people as guilty of religious extremism and terrorism, which only led to more conflict, the 2009 Urumqi riots being one of them (Maizland, 2022).

This tension and attacks increased on the Uyghur “extremists”, such as the 2014 Kunming train station stabbing; the Chinese government implemented a "people's war on terror," again endangering the Uyghur people’s safety. This implementation launched policies that allowed constant surveillance, mandatory apps to have, and facial recognition. This is what led to the establishment of the Xinjiang intermittent camps in 2017, justified as “vocational education and training centers” by the Chinese government for legislation purposes (BBC, 2020). Undoubtedly, the conditions within the camps were extremely improper, where individuals were subjected to political and religious indoctrination by the Chinese government and

mandatory Mandarin language instruction, with the sole aim of erasing the Uyghurs identity, which is a constant threat to Chinese culture (Fergus Shiel,2019).

Recently, reports outline and identify that these camps are not only used for the reeducation of Chinese culture but also resemble prisons where individuals are exposed to forced labor sites, repression through surveillance, separation of families, and restriction of freedom (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2022). As previously mentioned, the UN OCHR officially declared this as a crime against humanity case, which is evident through the primary reason for the establishment of this center – eliminating the identity of Uyghur and implementing Han Chinese values and culture.

Focus of debate:

Debate should concentrate on addressing the pervasive human rights abuses that take place in Xinjiang's Uyghur detention facilities, especially those related to forced detention, repression of religion and culture, and state monitoring. Delegates must evaluate how current UN procedures can be improved to guarantee accountability and take into account the international legal ramifications, particularly in light of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention Against Torture.

The role of member states in encouraging openness, assisting with independent investigations, and averting future infractions should also be discussed. The discussion should strike a balance between national sovereignty and international responsibility, highlighting the importance of multilateral cooperation, safeguarding religious and ethnic minorities, and the long-term effects of inaction on international human rights standards.

Recommendation for research:

Secondly, delegates must familiarize themselves with the stance of their assigned country on alliances, formal policy toward human rights and minority protection, and how China's handling of the Uyghur minority in Xinjiang plays into everything. The delegates should establish their country's voting record in the UN Human Rights Council, addresses presented at the relevant General Assembly or Security Council session, and involvement in any former resolutions or diplomatic initiatives regarding the issue. Additionally, understanding their nation's reception of international human rights treaties—such as the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights—will become essential to effective negotiation and resolution drafting.

Furthermore, the delegates are encouraged to research international accountability mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and the international fact-finding mission. Their implication in addressing systematic abuse should be critically analyzed. Delegates ought to research how economic and political blocs influence human rights implementation. Reviewing documents and reports from institutions such as the UN OHCHR, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch will

provide information on the scope of abuses alleged, judicial classifications such as "crimes against humanity," and reactions in the international arena to such violations in the past.

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