

UYGHUR
RIGHTS
ADVOCACY
PROJECT



PROJET DE
DÉFENSE DES
DROITS DES
OUÏGHOURS

For Immediate Release

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URAP Commends CORE's Announcement to address forced labour complaints against two Canadian companies

URAP applauds today's [announcement by the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise](#) (CORE) to address forced labour complaints against two Canadian companies – Ralph Lauren Canada LP (Ralph Lauren Canada) and GobiMin. Today's decision was in addition to CORE's earlier announcement from July 11 this year to launch a probe into Nike Canada Corp. and Dynasty Gold Corp. These are welcomed responses to a complaint filed in April 2022 by a URAP-led coalition of 28 organizations, calling on CORE to investigate 14 Canadian companies for their alleged ties with Uyghur forced labour in their supply chain.

As stated in our complaint to the CORE, there is credible evidence that Ralph Lauren is linked to numerous Chinese companies that use Uyghur forced labour in their supply chains. Forced labour is an integral pillar in the Chinese Communist Party's genocide against Uyghurs, serving as a mechanism through which absolute control can be exerted over Uyghurs. The forced labour mechanism encompasses forced migration, surveillance and disciplining of Uyghur people inside and outside factories which Canadian companies operate. The perpetuation of forced labour with impunity renders complicit companies an agent in the orchestration of the ongoing genocide against Uyghurs, as well as a contributor to the hardening of autocratic governance in the PRC.

We further welcome the decision of the CORE to provide recommendations to GobiMin. The CORE found, as part of its assessment, that Canadian mining companies operating abroad “*need to ... prioritize transparency across their business activities ... exercise heightened caution in doing business or investing in high-risk areas such as Xinjiang [and] take appropriate steps to ensure responsible exit in order to avoid or minimize any human rights impacts.*”

Mr. Mehmet Tohti, the Executive Director of the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project (URAP), said the world is watching how Canada handles these investigations. He said to his knowledge this year marks the first time a government-affiliated body anywhere in the world has decided to investigate Nike and Ralph Lauren over its alleged ties to forced labour in China

Mr. Tohti elaborated further by adding *“Canadians are more vigilant about their daily purchase practices and are no longer ready to subsidize China’s systematic policy of enslaving Uyghurs.”*

CORE’s announcement is a valued step in the right direction to hold Canadian companies accountable for their human rights violations abroad, specifically those which profit the CCP’s diminishment of Uyghurs’ basic human rights and their policies of genocide. It is action time for CORE, the Canadian Government, Canadian Border Service Agency and crucially, Canadian corporations to conduct due diligence and educate themselves and their customers on their supply chains. The onus falls on these stakeholders to ensure that goods being sold in Canadian stores do not have a hand in the Uyghur genocide.