



UYGHUR
RIGHTS
ADVOCACY
PROJECT

“Intended and Unending”

A Report on China’s Transnational Harassment and Intimidation Campaign Against Uyghur-Canadians



February 2022

UYGHUR RIGHTS ADVOCACY PROJECT



About the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project

The Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project (URAP) is a non-governmental organization based in Ottawa, Canada. URAP's work is supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) foundation in Washington, D.C. (USA). URAP works to document the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) policies targeting Uyghurs both within the People's Republic of China (PRC), as well as globally, while also bolstering human rights advocacy by developing and sharing resources with Uyghur organizations and activists worldwide.

Cover page photo: Uyghur community support rally on February 22, 2021, the day the Canadian Parliament recognized the Uyghur Genocide / URAP

Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project

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Contents

About the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project	1
Executive Summary	3
Introduction	6
Methodology	9
China’s Ongoing Genocide of the Uyghurs	10
Canadian and International Recognition of the Genocide	14
Canada’s Relationship with China and Response to the Uyghur Genocide	16
China’s Interference in Canada’s Domestic Affairs	20
The worldwide harassment and repression campaign against diaspora Uyghurs	22
The Chinese Government’s Campaign of Uyghur Harassment in Canada	25
1. Intimidation	25
2. Intelligence and data gathering, and informant recruitment	29
3. Cyberattacks and online trolling	32
4. Restrictions on movement and travel	37
5. Contact with family cut off, family members threatened	39
Policy Recommendations	41
Conclusion	43



*November 23, 2021 – The three-day “Awareness, Acknowledgement and Action” event on Parliament Hill
– Uyghur assembly / URAP*



Executive Summary

After speaking with Uyghurs across Canada for this report on diaspora harassment and repression, the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project (URAP) found that not a single of these community members has escaped the long arm of the Chinese state’s campaign of transnational repression, intimidation, harassment and even direct threats. Time after time, Uyghurs described in great detail how despite residing half a world away from China and their homeland of East Turkistan—where a genocide is being carried out against their people—the ruling Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) vast security and military apparatus has still managed to reach into their and their family’s lives to remind them that they are never fully free of its repressive grip. In this way, URAP’s findings confirm that what numerous other reports have observed regarding the Chinese state’s harassment of Uyghur diasporas in the United States and other liberal democracies, is also happening in Canada.

Not a single of these community members has escaped the long arm of the Chinese state’s campaign of transnational repression, intimidation, harassment and even direct threats.

Specifically, URAP found that:

1. Uyghur-Canadians with relatives in China-occupied East Turkistan are suffering in a state of psychological torment¹, left to worry day after day about missing relatives who have been sent to the Chinese state’s sprawling system of concentration camps, where since 2017 over one million Uyghurs have been, or still remain imprisoned. Deprived of news about their relatives and denied the ability to freely communicate with them, numerous diaspora members described their desperate and still unanswered hope for any update about their loved ones.

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2. Faced with the ferocity of the Chinese government’s multi-front global attack on Uyghurs, many Uyghurs URAP spoke to described their transformation into “accidental” activists, seeing no choice but to courageously speak up in response to the CCP’s enduring effort to repress Uyghur society and destroy their families.

3. In response to this activism, the CCP has redoubled its targeted harassment efforts against Uyghurs abroad, including those residing in Canada. The Chinese state’s goal: to silence and terrorize Uyghurs, in blatant disregard of their rights to free speech, protest, and gather as a community, as guaranteed to them by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

1. <https://foref-europe.org/blog/2020/09/07/who-are-the-uyghurs-canadian-scholar-gives-profound-insights/>



4. China has targeted not only Uyghurs offering testimony about what they witnessed in China or those asking for help regarding missing family members—even those working to establish a mosque and community centre for their Uyghur community were viewed as inherently threatening and worthy of harassment.

5. CCP repression against Uyghurs in Canada comes in many forms. Our interviews found these to include:

- Intimidation in the form of harassing robocalls, threats meant to curtail their right to free speech, and aggressive demands that Uyghurs return to China where they likely face imprisonment.
- Intelligence-gathering operations that seek to collect Uyghurs’ personal information, including their present location, their place of work and the identity of their friends and family members; as well as inducements and threats to incite Uyghurs to betray the trust of their community by becoming informants for the Chinese security apparatus, reporting on Uyghur diaspora activities in Canada.
- Cyberattacks targeting organizational websites, as well as the smart phone and email accounts of Uyghurs and those seeking to assist them in their fight against the CCP; social-media troll campaigns; as well as interviewees receiving a steady stream of suspicious Facebook friend requests from unknown individuals (a Facebook operation by Chinese hackers to trick Uyghurs in Canada into installing malware on their phones was exposed in 2021²).
- The denial of visas and passport renewals, with the goal of denying Uyghurs either the ability to remain in Canada, or for others, the ability to visit their families in East Turkistan; leveraging access to family members as way to coerce Uyghurs into doing the CCP’s bidding.
- Contact with family members in China being suddenly cut off or substantially curtailed, leaving Uyghurs in Canada with no news of their relatives’ whereabouts; direct calls from Chinese officials threatening their families with ever greater punishment if they do not cease their anti-CCP activism.

The PRC’s genocidal policies in China, as well as its repressive activities in Canada are unacceptable, demanding an immediate and effective response. As such, URAP urges swift action by the Government of Canada on its policy recommendations, including:

- **Recognizing the Uyghur Genocide**, so as to respect the will of Canadians, specifically the unanimous voice of their Parliament and representatives.
- **Acting without further delay to publicly condemn the PRC’s use of concentration camps**, where millions of innocent Uyghur, Kazakh and other Turkic-speaking people are imprisoned in China based on arbitrary charges, including raising the issue in international venues such as the United Nations, the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.

2. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-uyghur-canada-espionage-1.5962221>



- **Establishing mechanisms to track and address instances of the CCP’s campaign of direct intimidation, harassment and repressive threats** targeting Uyghurs and other anti-CCP activists residing in Canada, including Tibetans, Hong-Kongers, Chinese pro-democracy advocates and Falun Gong practitioners.
- **Prioritizing the case of Huseyin Celil**, an Uyghur-Canadian torn away from his wife and children by the Chinese government and unjustly detained for the past 16 years.
- **Creating an exceptional refugee streamflow for Uyghurs** and other Turkic-speaking refugees, while also facilitating their resettlement into Canada.
- **Enhancing its mechanisms of control and revising its inefficient advisory guidelines on imports entering Canada from China’s Uyghur region**, given they are overwhelmingly likely to be tainted by the use of Uyghur forced labour.



November 23, 2021 – The Parliamentary Uyghur Friendship Group at the three-day “Awareness, Acknowledgement and Action” event on Parliament Hill / URAP



Introduction

Although the Chinese government's present all-out push to repress, imprison, indoctrinate and ultimately reduce its Uyghur population has increasingly come to the international community's attention in recent years, this war on Uyghurs and their culture is only the latest iteration of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) historical effort to contain and control the group, both domestically and abroad. As a growing number of governments come to recognize the Chinese government's domestic actions as constituting genocide, the ruling CCP and its leader President Xi Jinping continue to work, via the PRC's domestic security and military apparatus, to terrorize and torment Uyghurs abroad who speak up about the horrors occurring in their homeland, regardless of the country they now reside in. Canada is not an exception. In this way, the CCP's ever-expanding project of Uyghur repression can accurately be described as global in scope.

The Uyghurs are a Turkic people possessing a rich cultural and linguistic heritage dating back thousands of years. They are predominantly Muslim, followers of the Hanafi strain of Sunni Islam. Having founded kingdoms in the 9th century AD, and later served as civil servants to Genghis Khan's Mongol Empire beginning in the 13th century, they are historically, anthropologically, racially and geographically distinct from China's Han majority, a fact that, especially over the past decade, has increasingly come to be a primary preoccupation for the central government of the People's Republic of China.

The majority of the approximately 12 million³ Uyghurs currently living in China reside in the western area of the country (known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region or XUAR, referred to hereafter by its historic title, East Turkistan—see *methodology*). Beginning in 1949, following the PRC's annexation of the Second East Turkistan Republic, but especially picking up in the early 1990s, the CCP has encouraged Han settlers to move to East Turkistan in an effort to shift the region's demographic composition via millions of new residents loyal to the PRC's central government. As a result, the demographic proportion of ethnic Chinese residents dramatically increased from 6.7% of East Turkistan's population in 1949, to 40% by 2010⁴. Resentment borne of both the lack of independence afforded to the East-Turkistan Uyghur majority, as well as the CCP leadership's repression and violent crackdowns, including arrests and extrajudicial killings, led most prominently to riots in July 2009 in the city of Urumqi in East Turkistan⁵.

In response to such events, the Chinese government's increasingly aggressive crackdown was officially formalized in 2014 with the launch of the "People's War on Terror," under the direct order of president Xi Jinping. As part of this crackdown, the "Strike Hard Campaign Against Violent Terrorism" was targeted at Uyghurs and other smaller Turkic Muslim popula-

3. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/8/uyghurs-timeline>

4. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228471180_Migration_and_Inequality_in_Xinjiang_A_Survey_of_Han_and_Uyghur_Migrants_in_Urumqi;

<https://www.cecc.gov/publications/commission-analysis/xinjiang-reports-high-rate-of-population-increase>

5. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jul/06/china-uyghur-urumqi-riots>



tions residing in East Turkistan. The CCP's ever-more invasive securitization and surveillance efforts have since continued to push into every aspect of Uyghur life, and have increasingly been paired with assimilationist policies centred on mass internment, imposed indoctrination and Uyghurs' enforced denial of their national, ethnic and religious affiliations⁶. Focused on containing the alleged three evils—terrorism, separatism and religious extremism—falsely attributed to Uyghurs, these policies were further accelerated following the 2016 appointment of Chen Quanguo (陈全国) as the new Xinjiang Communist Party secretary. A campaign of mass internment began in 2017 and is still ongoing today⁷. It is the cornerstone of the ongoing multi-pronged Chinese state genocide being committed against Uyghurs, matched in its growing intensity by an international CCP campaign targeting Uyghurs residing abroad with repression⁸.

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This international campaign is part of a broader effort by the CCP to control former Chinese populations critical of the government, including exiled Uyghurs, Tibetans, Hong-Kongers, Chinese pro-democracy advocates and Falun Gong practitioners. This broad campaign, which includes Canada among its targets⁹, is characterized by Freedom House as "the most sophisticated, global and comprehensive campaign of transnational repression in the world¹⁰," due to its expansive list of targets, including human rights activists and ethnic and religious groups; the wide range of employed tactics, including renditions, mobility controls, direct harassment and coercion-by-proxy; and its unmatched breadth and global scale.

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This report focuses on the shape and impact of the CCP's international anti-Uyghur repression campaign within Canada. Specifically, the many ways in which China's domestic security and

6. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jul/06/china-uyghur-urumqi-riots>

7. <https://asiaexpertsforum.org/james-leibold-chinas-assimilationist-turn-xi-jinpings-china/>

8. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/11/16/world/asia/china-xinjiang-documents.html>

9. https://uhrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Transnational-Repression_FINAL_2021-06-24-2.pdf

<https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Canadian%20Coalition%20on%20Human%20Rights%20in%20China%20-%20Harassment%20Report%20Update%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf> ;

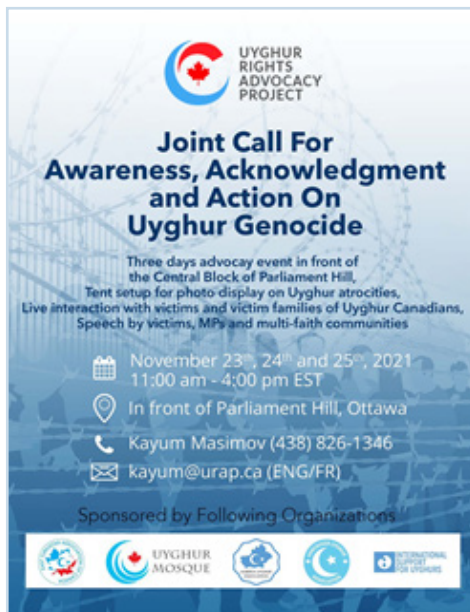
<https://globalnews.ca/news/7734158/china-pressure-activists-canada-uyghur-hong-kong-tibet-spying/>

10. https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/Complete_FH_TransnationalRepressionReport2021_rev020221.pdf



military apparatus continues to target this diaspora community, comprised of the approximately 2,000 Uyghurs who emigrated to Canada over the past 20-plus years¹¹. This report builds on Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project’s (URAP) first report, titled “Uyghur Family Destruction: China’s Continual Instrument of Genocide¹².” Published in May 2021, the report details a key component of the ongoing genocide: the Chinese government’s wide range of policies aimed at “erasing the conventional Uyghur family structure and replacing it with the new ‘Sinicized’ exemplary family.” This second URAP report also builds on reports from groups including the Uyghur Human Rights Project and Amnesty International detailing Uyghur diaspora repression by the CCP that is occurring across the globe¹³, including in the United States and Europe¹⁴, the Indo-Pacific region¹⁵, and in Canada¹⁶. It provides the most in-depth and detailed accounting of Uyghur-Canadian harassment by the CCP yet, while also providing details about the broader global context in which this campaign is occurring. Through its included first-hand accounts and testimonies, URAP intends to demonstrate the severity of the issue, as well as the urgent need for an adequate and prompt response from the Canadian government.

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11. <https://foref-europe.org/blog/2020/09/07/who-are-the-uyghurs-canadian-scholar-gives-profound-insights/>
12. <https://www.urap.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Uyghur-Family-Destruction.pdf>
13. https://www.amnesty.nl/content/uploads/2020/02/Nowhere-feels-safe_Final.pdf?x57424
14. https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_RepressionAcrossBorders.pdf ; <https://uhrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UHRP-Your-Family-Will-Suffer-Report.pdf>
15. https://uhrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Transnational-Repression_FINAL_2021-06-24-2.pdf
16. <https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Canadian%20Coalition%20on%20Human%20Rights%20in%20China%20-%20Harassment%20Report%20Update%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf>



Methodology

The testimonies presented in this report are first-hand accounts gathered by URAP. Initially, URAP spoke with approximately 40 Uyghurs residing across Canada as an exploratory step. Subsequently, in-depth interviews for this report were conducted with 18 of these individuals in late 2020, as well as between June and October 2021, both in person and via videoconference. Interviews were conducted with Uyghurs

across Canada, including in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. In addition, supplemental data regarding CCP repression in Canada was gathered via four detailed surveys filled out by Uyghurs attending a November 2021 event in Ottawa. Statistics in this report are based on this group of 22 respondents, from which more detailed harassment and repression-specific accounts were gathered. Though most Uyghurs who provided testimony welcomed the report's use of their real names, two preferred to remain anonymous given the potential risk of CCP reprisals. In the case of such respondents, pseudonyms are provided and clearly labeled as such.

Interviews were conducted with Uyghurs across Canada, including in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. In addition, supplemental data regarding CCP repression in Canada was gathered via four detailed surveys filled out by Uyghurs attending a November 2021 event in Ottawa.

This report employs "East Turkistan" when referring to the "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region" of China (XUAR). Uyghurs refer to their native homeland as East Turkistan, i.e. "the Land of Turkic people," a name first assigned to the territory in the 7th century AD. Representing approximately 17% of China's territory and sharing a border with numerous neighbouring countries, East Turkistan represents a strategic route for Chinese export and trade, helping explain China's historic desire to control the region¹⁷. Having never voluntarily ceded their historic homeland to China, **Uyghurs reject both the XUAR title, designated in 1955 by Mao Zedong, as well as the "new [Chinese] domain" and control it signifies.** By extension, **URAP wishes to emphasize that Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic people categorically reject being labelled as "minority populations in China," as per the CCP's official narrative.** Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic people in East Turkistan are the original owners of their ancestral homeland and as such, can only be recognized as a colonized nation or people(s).

URAP also wishes to specify that the genocide, repression and harassment referenced in this report are the work of China's authoritarian government leadership, specifically the state's security, military and diplomatic apparatus. As such, this report alternately refers to the CCP, the PRC, and the Chinese state or government when referencing these activities.

17. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/FAAE/Reports/RP11164859/sdirrp04/sdirrp04-e.pdf>



China's Ongoing Genocide of the Uyghurs

Increasingly, China's present-day treatment of the Uyghurs and other Turkic populations has come to be recognized as constituting genocide. A March 2021 report from the Montreal-based Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights and the Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy concluded that the PRC bore state responsibility for committing "genocide against the Uyghurs in breach of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide¹⁸." This analysis, conducted by dozens of independent experts, including two former Canadian Ministers of Justice and a former Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, found evidence of both "intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a [protected group]," as well as "high-level statements of intent and a general plan" to do so on the part of the CCP and its leader, Xi Jinping. Taken together, the PRC leadership's anti-Uyghur campaign, exposed via a growing body of documented evidence, including most recently leaked government documents directly tying Xi Jinping and CCP leadership to the policies in question¹⁹, point to the clear and unassailable conclusion that China's actions constitute genocide against the Uyghur people.

The genocidal policies in question include, but are not limited to:

1. The internment of over one million Uyghurs based on dubious and arbitrary charges under the pretext of "re-education" and "fighting religious extremism." A comprehensive Amnesty International report²⁰ published in June 2021 based on interviews with over 50 former detainees framed this CCP effort as "massive and systematic abuse" centred on severe violence and intimidation aimed at "rooting out Islamic religious beliefs and Turkic Muslim ethno-cultural practices" in order to forcibly replace them with the "secular state-sanctioned views and behaviours" of mainstream Chinese culture. Uyghur detainees are held within China's expanding network of prisons and interment camps, which includes hundreds of carceral structures, together representing "a vast and permanent infrastructure for mass detention²¹."

While interred, Uyghur detainees are bombarded with pro-PRC/CCP propaganda, forced to converse in Mandarin and subjected to multiple forms of severe mistreatment. This includes being subjected to 24/7 surveillance and deprived of healthy living conditions (in regard to nutrition, healthcare and free movement²²). In addition, detainees face a constant stream of psychological and physical torture, including "an organized system of mass rape and sexual abuse²³", at times leading to detainee death.

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18. <https://newlinesinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/Chinas-Breaches-of-the-GC3-2.pdf>

19. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/29/leaked-papers-link-xinjiang-crackdown-with-china-leadership> ; <https://uyghurtribunal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/The-Xinjiang-Papers-An-Introduction-1.pdf>

20. https://xinjiang.amnesty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ASA_17_4137-2021_Full_report_ENG.pdf

21. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/meghara/china-new-internment-camps-xinjiang-uighurs-muslims>

22. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/04/12/surviving-the-crackdown-in-xinjiang>

23. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55794071>



As exposed in a February 2020 report by the *Financial Times*²⁴, the 20+ justifications the Chinese government employs to justify this interment of Uyghurs are highly arbitrary. They include a wide range of benign activities, religious or otherwise, including breaking family planning laws, being an “untrustworthy” individual, making an overseas phone call, visiting banned websites using a virtual private network (VPN) and having travelled to one of 26 countries deemed sensitive.

2. Comprehensive mass surveillance that has transformed East Turkistan into a police state²⁵, in the form of biometric data collection (iris scans, fingerprints, DNA)²⁶, arbitrary interrogations and security checkpoint stops²⁷, communication monitoring²⁸ and facial recognition-equipped security-camera networks that blanket cities in East Turkistan²⁹.

3. A wholesale effort to suppress and eliminate Uyghur culture, including any practice of Islam, specifically via the destruction of mosques, shrines and cemeteries in East Turkistan³⁰, the elimination of Uyghur-language instruction in schools³¹ and the targeted imprisonment of Uyghur community leaders. Among the millions subjected to arbitrary detention are hundreds of doctors, university professors, journalists, publishers, poets, writers and other intellectuals³², reflecting the CCP’s intent to eradicate Uyghur culture.

In addition, virtually every form of practice associated with Islam has been criminalized, including having previously gone on a hajj pilgrimage, bringing religious texts home from a mosque for the purpose of prayer, growing a beard, donating money to a mosque, or praying in a public place³³. This policy’s ultimate goal has been described as “the ‘Sinicization’ of indigenous cultures, and ultimately, the complete ‘transformation’ of the Uyghur community’s thoughts and behaviour³⁴.”

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24. <https://www.ft.com/content/e0224416-4e77-11ea-95a0-43d18ec715f5>

25. <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/>

26. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/21/business/china-xinjiang-uyghur-dna-thermo-fisher.html>

27. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-22278037>

28. <https://theintercept.com/2021/01/29/china-uyghur-muslim-surveillance-police/>

29. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/30/uyghur-tribunal-testimony-surveillance-china>

30. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/07/revealed-new-evidence-of-chinas-mission-to-raze-the-mosques-of-xinjiang>

31. <https://apnews.com/article/world-news-race-and-ethnicity-beijing-china-national-security-e4d7a915a2e3eb-b6c6f50778a2aec81a>

32. https://shahit.biz/supp/list_003.pdf (from the Xinjiang Victims Database)

33. <https://www.ft.com/content/e0224416-4e77-11ea-95a0-43d18ec715f5>

34. <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/cultural-erasure>



4. A range of invasive policies aimed at forcibly restricting and reversing Uyghur population growth. Beyond criminalizing births exceeding family planning restrictions³⁵, policies targeting Uyghur females have included mass coerced sterilization campaigns, forced abortions and involuntary insertions of intrauterine birth-control devices (IUDs)³⁶. A 2020 report by researcher Adrian Zenz, based on leaked Chinese government documents, found that as a result of these campaigns in East Turkistan, the expected population growth rates “fell by 84 percent in the two largest Uyghur prefectures between 2015 and 2018,” while “population growth rates in a Uyghur region where Han constitute the majority were nearly eight times higher than in the surrounding rural Uyghur regions³⁷.” According to Zenz, China’s coerced population-control policies could result in as many as 4.5 million Uyghur lives being lost³⁸ by 2040³⁹.

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5. The destruction of existing Uyghur familial and cultural roots both within China and abroad, as highlighted in URAP’s first report. Perhaps most troublingly, the PRC has taken Uyghur children temporarily orphaned, due to their parents being imprisoned and/or exiled, and placed them into state-run boarding schools⁴⁰. Based on Chinese government documents, the number of Uyghur children separated from their families in this way as of 2019 numbered at least 880,500⁴¹. Removed from their families, who are routinely denied any information about the children—and by extension removed from their Uyghur cultural roots—the young “orphans,” much like their imprisoned parents, are subjected to isolation and a process of pro-PRC/CCP assimilation and indoctrination⁴².

35. <https://apnews.com/article/ap-top-news-international-news-weekend-reads-china-health-269b3de1af34e-17c1941a514f78d764c>

36. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/world/asia/china-xinjiang-women-births.html>

37. <https://www.gwern.net/docs/history/2020-zenz.pdf>

38. “Assessed as the difference between projected natural population growth without substantial government interference and reduced growth scenarios in line with population ‘optimization’ requirements.”

39. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02634937.2021.1946483> ; <https://phys.org/news/2021-08-uyghur-population-policies-million-lost.html>

40. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/28/world/asia/china-xinjiang-children-boarding-schools.html>

41. <https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/mccuaig-johnston-whats-happening-to-uyghur-children-in-china-is-despicable/wcm/7f438d27-551b-4bed-bc4e-a973564eb25b/amp/> ;

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/16/thousands-of-uighur-children-orphaned-by-chinese-detention-papers-show>

42. <https://www.jpolorisk.com/break-their-roots-evidence-for-chinas-parent-child-separation-campaign-in-xinjiang/>



Removed from their families, who are routinely denied any information about the children—and by extension removed from their Uyghur cultural roots—the young “orphans,” much like their imprisoned parents, are subjected to isolation and a process of pro-PRC/CCP assimilation and indoctrination⁴².

Additionally, Uyghur women whose husbands are imprisoned are being forced to take state-appointed Han male cadres to live in their homes for extended periods of time, putting them at risk of sexual abuse⁴³. Uyghur-Han inter-marriage is also actively being promoted by the state⁴⁴, at the same time that Uyghurs are being forced to divorce exiled partners⁴⁵. The confiscation of, and refusal to issue passports and travel visas allowing Uyghurs to reunite with family members abroad, is equally widespread⁴⁶.

6. The forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of working-age Uyghurs into forced labour facilities across China, often located thousands of kilometres away from their homes⁴⁷. This practice, often falsely framed as a “poverty-alleviation” effort, results in products whose manufacture is tainted by the involvement of Uyghur forced labour (a fact the PRC intentionally obscures) infiltrating international supply chains. Tainted products include cotton (East Turkistan accounts for more than 20% of global production) and its derivatives, such as clothing and textiles; tomatoes⁴⁸ and their derivative products; electrical machinery; solar panels; and various plastic-based products⁴⁹. Uyghur forced labour has been found to be working in factories that are part of the supply chains of major global brands including Amazon, Apple, Dell, the Gap, Nike and Samsung. Captive Uyghur workers are kept under surveillance, subjected to political indoctrination, denied freedom of movement, threatened with imprisonment if they refuse to partake, and forced to work long hours under abusive conditions⁵⁰.

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43. <https://www.urap.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Uyghur-Family-Destruction.pdf> ; <https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/08/asia/china-xinjiang-ethnic-unity-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>

44. <https://apnews.com/article/ap-top-news-international-news-prayer-weddings-occasions-9ca1c29fc-9554c1697a8729bba4dd93b>

45. <https://www.urap.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Uyghur-Family-Destruction.pdf>

46. https://www.docs.uhrp.org/pdf/Weaponized_Passports.pdf

47. <https://newlinesinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/20201214-PB-China-Zenz-1.pdf>

48. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/marketplace-tomato-products-investigation-1.6227359>

49. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/addressing-forced-labor-xinjiang-uyghur-autonomous-region-toward-shared-agenda>

50. <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>



Canadian and International Recognition of the Genocide

In light of such overwhelming evidence, on February 22, 2021, the Canadian House of Commons became the world's first parliamentary body to recognize that China was committing genocide against the Uyghurs and Kazakhs. The motion, put forth by the Conservative Party of Canada, received a unanimous vote of 266-0 across party lines, with support from the Conservatives, Liberals, the Bloc Quebecois and the New Democratic Party. Regrettably, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his cabinet opted to abstain from the vote⁵¹. In the wake of this historic vote, the Parliament of Canada's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development released *The Human Rights Situation of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, China report in March 2021*⁵², based on testimony gathered since 2018 from Uyghurs, including former detainees who fled the PRC, as well as detained individuals' relatives, non-governmental organizations, academics and human rights experts⁵³. The report highlighted the Chinese state's mechanisms of repression, including the mass internment of Uyghurs, the enforced birth control measures imposed on Uyghur females, the orphaning of Uyghur children, Uyghur forced labour, the Chinese government's system of mass surveillance, as well as Canada's international obligations in response to the mass atrocities being committed, while again recognizing that the Chinese state's actions constitute genocide.

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Earlier in 2021, the US State Department in January also recognized that China was committing crimes against humanity and genocide via its "wide-scale repression" of Uyghurs and other Muslim populations in East Turkistan⁵⁴. This announcement by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in the final days of Donald Trump's administration was met with agreement by Joe Biden's Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, demonstrating continuity into the United State's current administration regarding this crucial issue. Subsequently, in April 2021, United Kingdom (UK) lawmakers also unanimously declared China's ongoing activities in East Turkistan a genocide⁵⁵. The motion followed a formal legal opinion, based on a six-month assessment of publicly available evidence published in the UK in February 2021, which additionally specified Xi Jinping (习近平) as being "credibly responsible" for the genocide⁵⁶. Later in 2021, the UK played host to the Uyghur Tribunal⁵⁷, which set as its goal to "review evidence in order to reach an impartial and considered judgment on whether international crimes are proved

51. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-parliament-declares-china-is-conducting-genocide-against-its-muslim/>

52. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/FAAE/Reports/RP11164859/sdirrp04/sdirrp04-e.pdf>

53. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-2/FAAE/news-release/11171639>

54. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/us/politics/trump-china-xinjiang.html>

55. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/22/world/uk-china-uyghur-genocide-motion-gbr-intl/index.html>

56. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-55973215>

57. <https://uyghurtribunal.com/>



to have been committed by the PRC⁵⁸." Following testimony from Uyghur advocates and survivors, as well as academic experts, the Tribunal in December 2021 ruled that the PRC was indeed committing genocide against Uyghurs and other Turkic people in East Turkistan, while pinning "primary responsibility" for the genocidal acts on China's leadership, including Xi Jinping (习近平) and Chen Quanguo (陈全国)⁵⁹.

Elsewhere, the Dutch parliament became the first European legislature to acknowledge the Uyghur Genocide, also in February 2021⁶⁰. The Lithuanian parliament passed a similar motion in May 2021⁶¹, while the Czech Republic's Senate in June 2021 unanimously passed a motion condemning the abuses against the Uyghurs as constituting both genocide and crimes against humanity. Belgium's parliament in June 2021 recognized China's treatment of Uyghurs in East Turkistan as crimes against humanity, while warning of a serious risk of genocide⁶², with France's parliament in January 2022 also adopting a resolution denouncing the genocide being committed against Uyghurs⁶³.

Notably, the Government of China has primarily responded to this expanding number of motions and conclusions, each based on a growing body of irrefutable evidence pointing to the responsibility it bears for the ongoing genocide in East Turkistan, with protestations and name-calling, labelling the conclusions as an "anti-China farce⁶⁴," "simply a lie⁶⁵," and an effort to meddle in China's internal affairs⁶⁶. China's leaders have yet to produce convincing or independently verifiable evidence to counter the conclusion of genocide, instead relying on highly dubious framings of mass internment as "vocational training," and "anti-terrorism efforts," and of its invasive and violently coercive birth-control policies as part of a process of emancipating the minds of Uyghur women, while liberating them from their roles as "baby-making machines⁶⁷." China, despite being a signatory to the UN's Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide⁶⁸, also continues to refuse the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet meaningful access to visit East Turkistan to independently investigate its treatment of Uyghurs.

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58. <https://uyghurtribunal.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/201014-UT-Funding-Brochure-FINAL.pdf>

59. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/09/china/uyghur-tribunal-judgment-intl/index.html>

60. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-netherlands-china-uyghurs-idUSKBN2AP2CI>

61. <https://www.axios.com/lithuania-parliament-china-uyghur-genocide-ef0382b4-6fec-44a5-80b4-793d2618e094.html>

62. <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/genocide-declarations-06152021171101.html>

63. https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2022/01/19/l-assemblee-nationale-francaise-se-penche-sur-le-genocide-ouigour_6110134_3210.html

64. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-parliament-declares-china-is-conducting-genocide-against-its-muslim/>

65. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/us/politics/trump-china-xinjiang.html>

66. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-netherlands-china-uyghurs-idUSKBN2AP2CI>

67. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/10/twitter-removes-china-us-embassy-post-saying-uyghur-women-no-longer-baby-making-machines>

68. <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide-convention.shtml>



Canada's Relationship with China and Response to the Uyghur Genocide

Viewed through the lens of concrete actions taken, Justin Trudeau, leader of the Government of Canada since November 2015, has thus far responded to the Chinese state's expansive authoritarianism and the growing evidence and recognition of the Chinese government's genocide with a mostly "stick to the status quo" approach best characterized as predominantly hesitant, with occasional flashes of strategically deployed boldness. This stance has largely been echoed by the relatively prudent and pro-business statements of his government's representatives.

Among actions taken, in response to human rights abuses in East Turkistan, **Global Affairs Canada in January 2021 issued an advisory banning the import of goods produced with any involvement of forced labour, while notably remaining vague as to the steps that would be taken to enforce this measure⁶⁹. In March 2021, Canada**

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joined the US, UK and the European Union (EU) in financially sanctioning two leading Chinese officials, Wang Junzheng (王君正) and Chen Mingguo (陈明国), for serious human rights abuses against Uyghurs and other Turkic People residing in East Turkistan⁷⁰. Earlier, in October 2020, Canada also joined 39 other countries at the UN in supporting a statement by the German Ambassador calling on China to respect Uyghurs' human rights⁷¹. Of particular note, Justin Trudeau struck a tougher tone toward China in June 2021, following a joint statement Canada issued with 40 other countries at the UN urging China to allow the UN High Commissioner meaningful access to East Turkistan⁷². In response to China's retaliatory call for a probe into Canada's crimes against its Indigenous people, Trudeau pointed to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, whose findings were public⁷³. Trudeau contrasted this to China hiding its mistreatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim groups in East Turkistan, while refusing to recognize the problematic nature of their actions⁷⁴. More recently, in December 2021, Canada also announced that it would proceed with a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games⁷⁵.

69. <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2021/01/canada-announces-new-measures-to-address-human-rights-abuses-in-xinjiang-china.html>

70. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/22/politics/us-eu-china-uyghur-sanctions/index.html>

71. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/2020-edition-which-countries-are-for-or-against-chinas-xinjiang-policies/>

72. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-canada-leads-call-on-china-to-allow-xinjiang-access-statement-says/>

73. <https://rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525>

74. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-trudeau-challenges-china-to-publicly-probe-its-mistreatment-of-uyghurs/>

75. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/canada-announces-diplomatic-boycott-of-beijing-olympics-athletes-will-still-compete-1.5698625>



Trudeau contrasted this to China hiding its mistreatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim groups in East Turkistan, while refusing to recognize the problematic nature of their actions⁷⁴. More recently, in December 2021, Canada also announced that it would proceed with a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games⁷⁵.

In terms of its more hesitant approach, after abstaining from the February 2021 parliamentary vote to recognize the Uyghur Genocide, Trudeau and his government in July 2021 offered an official response⁷⁶ to policy recommendations contained in the parliamentary report on *The Human Rights Situation of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, China*. Here, the Canadian government appeared content to present pre-existing efforts and policies as the best available option while repeatedly declining to adopt new or more aggressive measures. For example, the government responded positively to recommendations regarding largely symbolic actions to be taken, such as joining allies in condemnations of China, by listing previous statements and votes at the UN that have had little-to-no impact on China’s ongoing anti-Uyghur campaign. By contrast, in response to recommendations that it add teeth to the enforcement of Global Affairs Canada’s ban on the import of products whose supply chain includes Uyghur forced labour, the government expressed a preference for a softer solutions-based approach, rather than for “strong punitive measures” to hold corporations legally accountable for the goods they produce and import into Canada. This more proactive approach would put the onus on the corporations to themselves investigate their supply chains to ensure they are free of forced labour, as is the case with the United States’ Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which was recently signed into law in December 2021⁷⁷.

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Thus far, a year after the announcement of Global Affairs Canada’s ban, only a single case of its application has come to light, with the Canadian Border Service Agency (CBSA) announcing in November 2021 that it had recently seized a shipment of women’s and children’s clothing⁷⁸. **The CBSA’s announcement came shortly after URAP was granted intervener status in September 2021 by the Federal Court of Canada as part of an ongoing legal case against the CBSA for failing to impose a reverse onus on importers to prove that goods coming into Canada from East Turkistan are not produced using Uyghur forced labour⁷⁹. Canada imported \$76.4 billion worth of goods from China in 2020⁸⁰.** The CBSA’s seized shipment therefore represents only the tip of the iceberg in terms of Chinese goods being imported into Canada whose supply chains involve human rights abuses and the use of Uyghur forced labour. An Oc-

76. [https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/Committee/432/FAAE/GovResponse/RP11458678/432_FAAE_Rpt04_GR/GR-Uyghurs%20\(FAAE-SDIR\)%20EN.pdf](https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/Committee/432/FAAE/GovResponse/RP11458678/432_FAAE_Rpt04_GR/GR-Uyghurs%20(FAAE-SDIR)%20EN.pdf)

78. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/canadian-officials-seize-clothing-made-with-forced-labour-in-china-1.5669660>

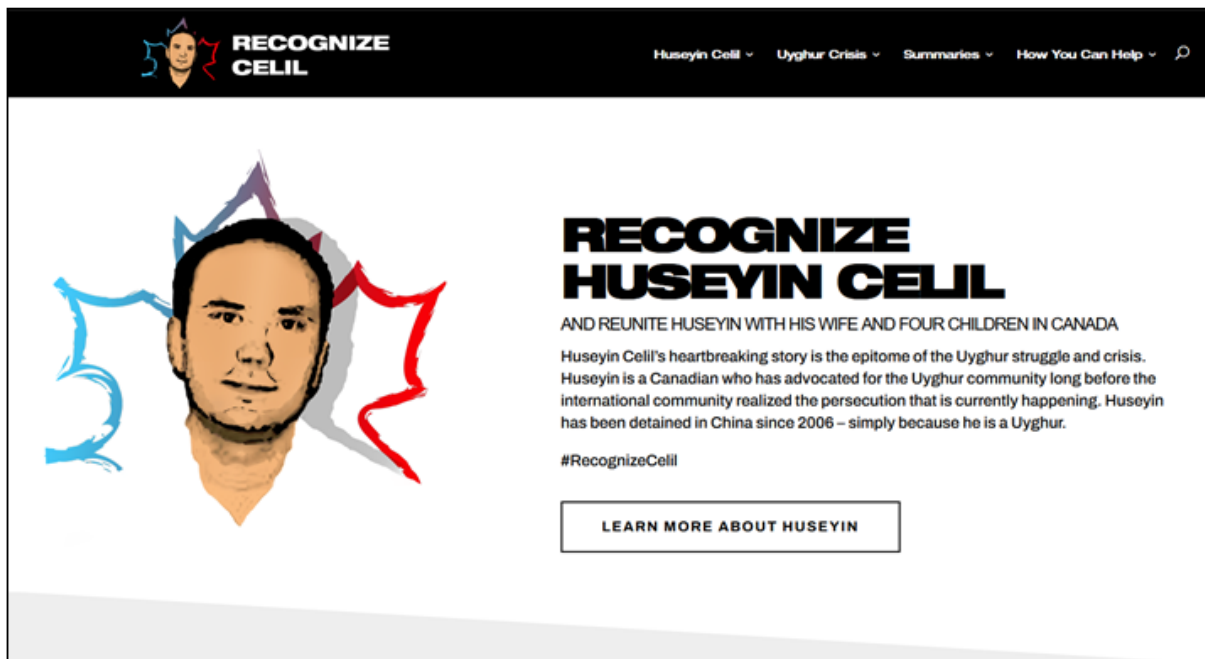
79. <https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/2021/10/20/are-chinese-goods-made-by-the-forced-labour-of-uyghurs-being-imported-into-canada.html>



tober 2021 investigation by CBC Marketplace, in which URAP participated, for example, found that various tomato-based products (pastes, sauces, ketchups) sold in Canadian grocery stores by corporations including Nestle, Del Monte and Unilever were produced using tomatoes harvested by Uyghur forced labour in East Turkistan⁸¹.

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Other issues have cast doubt on Canada’s ability and willingness to confront China in regards to the Uyghur Genocide and its treatment of Uyghur-Canadians. Following China’s use of “hostage diplomacy⁸²” with the arbitrary arrests of Michael Spavor and Michael Kovring in 2018 in response to Canada’s detainment of a high-ranking Huawei executive from China, Meng Wanzhou (孟晚舟), for extradition to the US⁸³, nearly three years passed before Spavor and Kovrig were released in September 2021⁸⁴. Notably, this informal “prisoner swap” between Canada and China did not include the return of Huseyin Celil, an Uyghur-Canadian and former Chinese citizen who has been detained in China since 2006 following his seizure during a family visit to Uzbekistan.



Recognize Huseyin Celil: <https://www.recognizecelil.com/>

80. <https://www.ualberta.ca/china-institute/research/analysis-briefs/2021/canada-china-2020-yearinreview.html>

81. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/marketplace-tomato-products-investigation-1.6227359>

82. <https://theconversation.com/meng-and-the-two-michaels-why-chinas-hostage-diplomacy-failed-168739>

83. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/05/tech/huawei-cfo-arrested-canada/index.html>

84. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-huaweis-meng-to-resolve-fraud-case-in-plea-deal-that-does-not-include/>



Celil’s arrest, based on unfounded terrorism-related charges, was followed by sentencing via sham trial in 2007, to which Canadian consular officials were denied access⁸⁵. China’s continuing life-imprisonment of Celil is in full contradiction of its own Nationality Law⁸⁶, which specifies that China does not recognize dual nationality for its citizens and that any Chinese citizen who acquires foreign nationality in a new country will automatically lose their Chinese citizenship. Despite Celil having both acquired Canadian citizenship and renounced his Chinese citizenship in accordance with the Nationality Law in 2005 prior to his visit to Uzbekistan, China has refused to release Celil, first cutting off consular officials’ access to him, and later eliminating bi-annual family visits⁸⁷. With no updates as to his condition after 16 years of imprisonment, no direct contact since 2016⁸⁸, and no news as to whether he is even still alive, Celil’s wife Kamila Talendibaeva has described the never-ending uncertainty she lives with regarding her husband as “24/7 torture”⁸⁹. She has been left to raise their four children alone, who themselves have unfairly been left to grow up without their father. Talendibaeva voiced criticism regarding the governing Liberal Party’s apparent indifference and lack of attention to her husband’s case following the Spavor and Kovrig’s release⁹⁰, in the process casting doubt on government claims that his case was of the utmost importance to Canada⁹¹.

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85. <https://recognizecelil.com/who-is-huseyin-celil/>

86. <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/ceus//eng/ywzn/lsyw/vpna/faq/t710012.htm>

87. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/as-ottawa-fumbled-husseyin-celil-languished-in-chinas-court-system/article4171496/>

88. <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2019/11/25/leak-of-china-documents-raises-questions-about-imprisoned-canadian-huseyin-celil.html>

89. <https://www.urap.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Uyghur-Family-Destruction.pdf>

90. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-no-more-excuses-canada-bring-my-husband-huseyin-celil-home/>

91. [https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/Committee/432/FAAE/GovResponse/RP11458678/432_FAAE_Rpt04_GR/GR-Uyghurs%20\(FAAE-SDIR\)%20EN.pdf](https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/Committee/432/FAAE/GovResponse/RP11458678/432_FAAE_Rpt04_GR/GR-Uyghurs%20(FAAE-SDIR)%20EN.pdf)



China’s Interference in Canada’s Domestic Affairs

China’s growing interference in Canada’s domestic affairs is an additional aspect of the countries’ relationship worth noting, as it touches on China’s influence campaign to stifle any criticism of the PRC, including the ongoing Uyghur Genocide. This issue is perhaps best illustrated by Canada’s recent federal election campaign, which began in August 2021. In contrast to the Liberal Party’s platform, which struck a vague tone in relation to China while not once mentioning the Uyghur issue⁹², the Conservative Party of Canada’s platform⁹³ framed China as a growing power Canada should pivot away from both economically and politically, while also explicitly addressing the Uyghur issue by promising to both recognize the genocide in China if elected and to ban imports produced using Uyghur forced labour. In response to this more aggressive stance, *the Global Times*, a CCP-owned tabloid, published an English-language article during the election campaign quoting a Chinese foreign policy expert who warned that the Conservative Party’s policies, if enacted into law, would be met by a “strong counterstrike” by China, with Ottawa ultimately being the one to suffer⁹⁴. This more overt interference into Canada’s elections was accompanied by CCP-supported efforts to defeat at least two British Columbia MPs running for re-election (Jenny Kwan – NDP⁹⁵ [re-elected] and Kenny Chiu – Conservative Party⁹⁶ [defeated]) who previously expressed criticism of China including opposing China’s genocidal repression of Uyghurs. In the months leading up to the election, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) had warned of this risk of interference⁹⁷.

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Elsewhere, a May 2021 report from Alliance Canada-Hong Kong⁹⁸ found that “Chinese authorities actively interfere in the political systems of liberal-democratic countries to shift political environments towards China-friendly politicians and policies.” In the case of Canada, the Chinese state’s interference and influence campaign occurs via a variety of means, including the surveillance and intimidation of diaspora and dissident communities, such as the Uyghurs, in order to stifle any scrutiny of the CCP. The report’s conclusions regarding Chinese state interference and the associated risk this poses to Canada are largely reflected in statements and reports from Canada’s security and intelligence community. A National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) report published in 2020⁹⁹, warned that unlike many of its Western intelligence allies, Ottawa had failed to respond to

92. <https://liberal.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/292/2021/09/Platform-Forward-For-Everyone.pdf>

93. <https://cpcassets.conservative.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/25132033/5ea53c19b2e3597.pdf>

94. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202109/1233869.shtml>

95. <https://vancouversun.com/news/politics/election-2021/daphne-bramham-is-china-interfering-in-the-canadian-election>

96. <https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/other/glavin-china-s-interference-in-canada-s-election-doesn-t-seem-to-faze-the-liberals/ar-AAOtFd6>

97. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/csis-foreign-interference-1.6112986>

98. https://alliancecanadahk.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ACHK_InPlainSight.pdf

99. https://www.nsicop-cpsnr.ca/reports/rp-2020-03-12-ar/annual_report_2019_public_en.pdf



Chinese state interference with any strong countermeasures. CSIS echoed these conclusions in 2021¹⁰⁰.

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In light of the Chinese state’s hostage diplomacy, its continued refusal to release Huseyin Celil, and its growing interference in Canada’s domestic affairs, the shape of Canada’s strategy going forward in regards to China remains unclear. In September 2021, Canada’s then-Ambassador to China, Dominic Barton, concerningly described China as a business opportunity waiting to be seized by Canadian corporations, in the midst of negotiations to free Spavor and Kovrig¹⁰¹, a statement condemned at the time by URAP¹⁰². Barton doubled down on his short-sighted statement in November 2021, stating that “the ‘major issue’ of contention bedeviling Canada-China relations has been resolved and sunnier days between the nations lie ahead ” ¹⁰³. This business-first point-of-view, a reflection according to many of the Liberal Party’s focus on perceived economic opportunity and integration in regards to the PRC, has increasingly come under question, given the genocide China’s government is committing, as well as its hostage diplomacy and foreign interference operations¹⁰⁴. Whether Canada’s next Ambassador to China will have fewer pre-existing business ties with China than Barton¹⁰⁵ also remains unclear at the moment.

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Canada’s closest allies appear impatient to learn whether Canada is willing to take a more aggressive approach vis-à-vis China, including joining its Five Eyes partners in banning Huawei from its 5G network¹⁰⁶. Thus far, the Canadian government has responded to such

100. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/csis-trudeau-china-media-1.6270750>

101. <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadas-ambassador-to-beijing-urges-businesses-to-seize-opportunities-in-a-rising-china>

102. <https://www.urap.ca/uyghur-rights-advocacy-project-urap-statement-regarding-to-the-recent-remarks-of-the-canadian-ambassador-to-the-peoples-republic-of-china/>

103. <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/major-issue-in-china-relations-resolved-canada-envoy-says-but-experts-urge-caution>

104. <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/stop-pussyfooting-around-canada-now-free-to-develop-unambiguous-policy-toward-china-experts-say>; <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-china-tougher-stance-1.6207251>; <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/editorials/article-the-two-michaels-are-free-but-this-is-only-the-beginning-of-canadas/>; <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-will-we-be-firmer-with-china-now-that-the-two-michaels-are-free-dont/>

105. <https://ipolitics.ca/2021/12/23/dominic-barton-and-the-art-of-reputation-washing/>

106. <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/stop-pussyfooting-around-canada-now-free-to-develop-unambiguous-policy-toward-china-experts-say>



concerns with a vague declaration that Canada cannot “simply return to business as usual” in regards to China, and by pointing to a new and equally vague policy focused on challenging, competing, cooperating and coexisting with China, depending on the issue at hand¹⁰⁷. A poll taken in the aftermath of Spavor and Kovrig’s liberation found Canadians are holding increasingly hardened and negative views of the Chinese state and the potential of Canada’s business relationship with China deepening¹⁰⁸.

The worldwide harassment and repression campaign against diaspora Uyghurs

The Chinese government’s worldwide efforts to silence and intimidate diaspora Uyghurs is by this point well-documented. The Uyghur Human Rights Project, for example, concluded

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that “the Chinese regime is implementing a systematic, ambitious, multi-year, well-resourced, relentless and cruel policy to inflict pain and suffering on Uyghurs abroad,” including intimidating and silencing Uyghurs residing in the United States¹⁰⁹. Similarly, Amnesty International tracked the same pattern of repression and harassment after interviewing dozens of Uyghurs residing across 22 countries, spread across five continents¹¹⁰. The Chinese state’s campaign of repression is largely carried out by its security and military apparatus, including the Ministry of State Security, the Ministry of Public Security and the People’s Liberation Army¹¹¹. Though it dates back to the 1990s, the Chinese government’s anti-Uyghur campaign has gained in intensity since 2014 with China’s passing of its first counter-terrorism law, and especially since 2017¹¹².

Though global in scale, the CCP’s approach typically differs depending both on whether diaspora Uyghurs reside in democratic or authoritarian states, as well as the nature of these countries’ relationships with the Chinese government. A recent analysis, for example, compiled over 1,500 cases of Uyghurs residing in authoritarian states in the Middle East, North Africa

107. <https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/major-issue-in-china-relations-resolved-canada-envoy-says-but-experts-urge-caution>

108. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-poll-shows-hardening-position-on-china-among-canadians/>

109. https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_RepressionAcrossBorders.pdf

110. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2020/02/china-uyghurs-abroad-living-in-fear/>

111. https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/Complete_FH_TransnationalRepressionReport2021_rev020221.pdf

112. https://oxussociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/transnational-repression_final_2021-06-24-1.pdf



and South Asia who had faced detainment in their host countries dating back to the 1990s. Nearly 400 of these Uyghurs, who had sought refuge abroad, instead faced deportation, extradition and rendition back to China, following requests made by the Chinese government to these host countries. This was found to especially be the case among countries with “close political and economic ties to the PRC”¹¹³.

A recent analysis, for example, compiled over 1,500 cases of Uyghurs residing in authoritarian states in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia who had faced detainment in their host countries dating back to the 1990s.

For their part, while Uyghurs residing in liberal democracies do not face the same threat of being detained and forcibly returned to China, they nonetheless remain the subject of persistent harassment and repression by the Chinese government. Residing in Europe or North America, for example, does not confer freedom or protection from the CCP’s campaign, which has the effect of “eroding legal norms and defying the constitutional rights of many Uyghurs living in liberal democracies”¹¹⁴. A significant aspect of Beijing’s overarching approach in regards to diaspora repression is reflected in the concept of *coercion-by-proxy*. Namely, given that the Uyghurs being targeted are residing abroad and cannot always be targeted directly, the Chinese state instead targets, or threatens to further target, relatives still residing in China either with imprisonment, or various forms of harassment and intimidation, as a way to coerce and pressure exiled Uyghurs to either return “home” to China, or at minimum, put an end to their anti-CPP activism in the country where they now reside¹¹⁵. While the Chinese state’s campaign once appeared to primarily target Uyghur activists, it increasingly targets the entire ethnic group as a form of collective punishment¹¹⁶.

Namely, given that the Uyghurs being targeted are residing abroad and cannot always be targeted directly, the Chinese state instead targets, or threatens to further target, relatives still residing in China either with imprisonment, or various forms of harassment and intimidation, as a way to coerce and pressure exiled Uyghurs to either return “home” to China, or at minimum, put an end to their anti-CPP activism in the country where they now reside¹¹⁵.

113. https://oxussociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/transnational-repression_final_2021-06-24-1.pdf ; <https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Canadian%20Coalition%20on%20Human%20Rights%20in%20China%20-%20Harassment%20Report%20Update%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf>

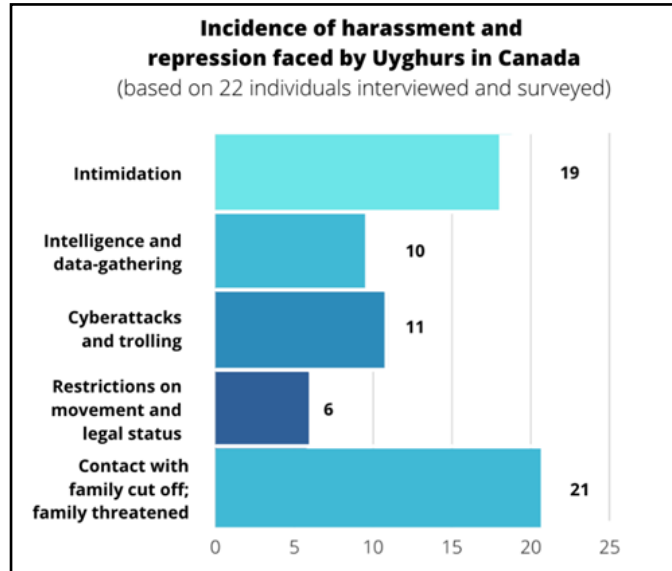
114. <https://uhrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UHRP-Your-Family-Will-Suffer-Report.pdf> ;

115. https://oxussociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/transnational-repression_final_2021-06-24-1.pdf ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/27/world/asia/xinjiang-china-crackdown.html>

116. <https://uhrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UHRP-Your-Family-Will-Suffer-Report.pdf>



Numerous¹¹⁷ NGO¹¹⁸ and news reports¹¹⁹ have highlighted the variety of tactics that comprise the CCP’s campaign of repression against Uyghurs residing in liberal democracies. Taken together, they represent a broad spectrum of techniques aimed at shattering any potential sense of peace, freedom or security diaspora Uyghurs might enjoy in their new countries of residence. The following section details these still-ongoing forms of harassment and repression using cases from Canada that primarily occurred over the past five years, gathered in the course of interviews conducted for this report, grouped into five general and at-times overlapping categories: (1) Intimidation; (2) Intelligence, data gathering and informant recruitment; (3) Cyberattacks and online trolling; (4) Restrictions on movement and travel; and (5) Contact with family members in East Turkistan being cut off or these family members being threatened. These repressive incidents in Canada closely match those occurring in other liberal democracies such as the United States, as documented in numerous cited reports.



117. https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_RepressionAcrossBorders.pdf

118. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2020/02/china-uyghurs-abroad-living-in-fear/>

119. <https://www.economist.com/1843/2020/10/15/if-i-speak-out-they-will-torture-my-family-voices-of-uyghurs-in-exile>



The Chinese Government's Campaign of Uyghur Harassment in Canada

1. Intimidation

Previous¹²⁰ reports¹²¹, as well as the interviews conducted by URAP revealed the main forms of intimidation Uyghurs in Canada are facing: calls to return home, recurring robocalls, and direct threats often coupled with intended restrictions on free speech. Of the 22 Uyghurs in Canada we queried in depth, 19 recounted to URAP having been subjected to at least one of these forms of intimidation.

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Calls to return home: Uyghurs having fled China to take up residence in new host countries have been aggressively implored to return to China, where they are likely to face interrogation and imprisonment. In September 2016, Arzu* (pseudonym) and her former husband, Uyghur residents of East Turkistan, were arrested, brought in for questioning and accused by Chinese officials of visiting a blocked "forbidden" website using a virtual private network (VPN). "The charges were made up," recalls Arzu. "I believe the real reason we were arrested had to do with my husband's company, which promoted the Uyghur language." While Arzu was held overnight, her then-husband was held for three days and deprived of food and water. Upon their release, a security official they knew warned them that if they did not leave China immediately, they would never be able to. They fled to the United States two days later, leaving behind most of their possessions, with Arzu then moving to Canada in September 2017 and applying for asylum. Beginning in mid-August 2021, Arzu began receiving messages on WeChat, a Chinese social media and messaging app, from a Chinese official posing as her sister. A week later, during a video call, following a brief discussion with her parents, who parroted pro-CCP slogans and appeared to be speaking under duress, a Chinese state official took over the call. After demanding detailed information regarding Arzu's current location and personal life, the official delivered a message. "I was told that if I did not return to China, I would never see my parents again, as they were going to die soon," says Arzu. "I was warned that they were in poor health" Despite the fact that they had been in good health the last time she'd seen them, Arzu was able to see during the video call that her father could no longer walk. Given the likelihood that Chinese officials knew she would not be moving back, Arzu feels the call to return home was a message to keep quiet regarding her intimate knowledge of China's campaign against Uyghurs. Following this call, Arzu says she feels unsafe and threatened, and is concerned about her family's safety back in East Turkistan. She is no longer able to communicate or converse openly with them.

120. <https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Canadian%20Coalition%20on%20Human%20Rights%20in%20China%20-%20Harassment%20Report%20Update%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf>

121. https://alliancecanadahk.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ACHK_InPlainSight.pdf



"I was told that if I did not return to China, I would never see my parents again, as they were going to die soon," says Arzu.

Robocalls: During interviews and in survey results, Uyghurs in Canada repeatedly reported persistently receiving robocalls seeking to draw them to either the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa or a Chinese consulate in their city. These automated calls repeat a message that an important document or package is waiting to be picked up by them at the Chinese state building¹²². Though the exact origin of the calls is unclear, interviewees reported that the recorded messages were in Mandarin. URAP was able to listen to a sample of 19 such robocalls, recorded between 2018 and 2020. The messages were delivered in a female voice and ranged from between 15 seconds to a minute in length. Though none of the Uyghurs URAP spoke to reported actually visiting a Chinese state building as a result of the robocalls, those who followed up reported that the numbers they were instructed by the recorded message to call back were those of the Chinese embassy or one of its consulates. In the cases when someone answered their calls, they would either be hung up on, or evasively informed that the embassy or consulate had not made the original call.

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These robocalls serve as a powerful reminder to Uyghurs, and especially activists, that even in Canada, the Chinese state is keeping an eye on them and expecting them to remain silent. Nuriyem Abla, a resident of London, Ontario, noted to URAP that she and her husband had begun receiving robocalls in late 2018 only after she posted video testimonies to social media regarding both her sister and brother-in-law, who are arbitrarily imprisoned in China, as well as her older sister, who died in a Chinese concentration camp in June 2018 under circumstances that were kept from her family. The frequency of these robocalls also picked up in 2021 in the period both immediately prior to, and following, her submitting detailed testimony regarding these missing relatives to the UK-based Uyghur Tribunal. Similarly, in the case of Abdughapur Abdilimit, a Montreal-based Uyghur who arrived in Canada in 2008, he reported that the frequency of robocalls he received lined up with periods where Uyghurs were organizing anti-CCP demonstrations. In his case, he later discovered that his Canadian phone number had been provided to Chinese security officials by his relatives in East Turkistan, who had been forced to provide it under duress.

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122. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/ohdio/premiere/emissions/desautels-le-dimanche/segments/reportage/152518/les-ouigours-de-montreal-sous-pression-frank-desoer>



Direct threats and restrictions on free speech: Uyghurs speaking up about the Chinese state’s anti-Uyghur activities have faced physical and verbal intimidation, as well as threats of reprisal against their families. Like many Uyghurs URAP spoke to (see section 5 later in this report), Turnisa Matsedik-Qira, a Vancouver-based nurse and activist who moved to Canada in 2006, reported that while she had previously been able to communicate with her family in East Turkistan, in late 2017 contact was suddenly cut off. In her case, she was suddenly deleted from a WeChat group of her relatives in China and another group made up of her friends. In the four years since, she has been unable to re-establish any contact. “They won’t pick up my calls,” she says. In response to the worrying lack of communication with her family, Matsedik-Qira’s already considerable level of activism increased, with her delivering speeches about the Uyghur Genocide in both Canada and the United States, organizing public awareness-raising events and boycott campaigns, and most prominently, protesting outside the Chinese consulate in Vancouver on a near-weekly basis. These activities, legally protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, have not gone unnoticed by the Chinese government.



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Mrs. Turnisa Matsedik-Qira, Vancouver, November 2021 / URAP

When Turnisa protests outside the consulate, she notes that individuals often approach her, swearing at her while telling her to back off and leave. She suspects these individuals are either consulate employees or individuals the consulate contacts to come confront her. In addition, in September 2019, Turnisa protested at a speech the head of the Chinese consulate delivered in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Holding up a sign with a message decrying China’s treatment of Uyghurs, she was informed by several Chinese attendees of the speech that she was unwelcome there. Shortly after, she received a call from a man warning her in Mandarin to “Not jump too far. You need to think about your family in China.” Unsure of who the caller was, Turnisa felt intimidated and extremely worried. In particular, she feared

she was informed by several Chinese attendees of the speech that she was unwelcome there. Shortly after, she received a call from a man warning her in Mandarin to “Not jump too far. You need to think about your family in China.”



the unspeakable things Chinese authorities could do to her family back in East Turkistan. Her worst fears were confirmed in late August 2021, when she received the heart-breaking news that her brother Omarjan Mastedik, a father of two in his early 40s, who she describes as the kindest person she’d ever known, had died in a Chinese concentration camp¹²³. Unable to confirm this directly with her family, Matsedik-Qira was instead informed of his passing through a third-party, who added that Omarjan had passed away during kidney dialysis, which given her medical training, she felt was highly unlikely. “My brother was very healthy prior to his detention by the Chinese government. He never told me he had any health problems when I could still speak to him,” she adds. Turnisa believes her brother’s death is retribution for her long-time activism. She is also certain the Chinese government is aware of how difficult it is for Uyghurs to live their lives under the incredible psychological weight of being cut off from their families while a genocide is occurring. “This psychological torture is intended and unending. The Chinese government is playing with Uyghurs’ minds.” Many Uyghurs in Canada that URAP spoke to, as well as those interviewed for previous research projects¹²⁴, also noted that they were suffering psychologically, due to traumatic experiences in China and their families’ imprisonment in East Turkistan, describing an almost all-encompassing suffering that they could never escape.

“This psychological torture is intended and unending. The Chinese government is playing with Uyghurs’ minds.”

Previously reported cases of the Chinese government’s efforts to stifle the free speech rights of Uyghurs in Canada include officials from China’s Montreal consulate contacting university and event organizers in an unsuccessful attempt to block a planned March 2019 speech by Dolkun Isa, head of the World Uyghur Congress, at Concordia University¹²⁵. In addition, in February 2019, anti-CCP Uyghur activist Rukiye Turdush was filmed and shouted at by protesting Chinese students during a presentation at McMaster University. Though there is no evidence that this protest, which mirrors similar incidents occurring on American university campuses¹²⁶, was organized by the Chinese embassy, the students did inform the embassy of their protest, who in turn praised the students’ actions¹²⁷.

officials from China’s Montreal consulate contacting university and event organizers in an unsuccessful attempt to block a planned March 2019 speech by Dolkun Isa, head of the World Uyghur Congress, at Concordia University¹²⁵.

123. <https://campaignforuyghurs.org/cfu-mourns-the-death-of-omarjan-matsedik-in-ccp-camps/>

124. <https://foref-europe.org/blog/2020/09/07/who-are-the-uyghurs-canadian-scholar-gives-profound-insights/>

125. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/chinese-officials-concordia-university-cancel-event-with-uyghur-activist-1.5074423>

126. <https://www.propublica.org/article/even-on-us-campus-china-cracks-down-on-students-who-speak-out>

127. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/2186263/chinese-students-canada-report-uyghur-activists-talk-consulate>



2. Intelligence and data gathering, and informant recruitment

In addition to intimidation, a number of Uyghurs URAP spoke to reported that during interactions with Chinese state officials, they faced demands that they share personal information, such as where they reside, where they work, whom they have interacted with, and details regarding any anti-CCP activism they were a part of. In other cases, Chinese state officials have gone further, attempting to push Uyghurs to spy on their own communities in Canada by acting as informants for China. Among the 22 Uyghurs URAP queried in depth, 10 reported having faced demands that they hand over detailed personal information about themselves and/or their contacts, while three of these individuals also reported unsuccessful attempts by the Chinese government to forcibly recruit them as informants.

A number of Uyghurs URAP spoke to reported that during interactions with Chinese state officials, they faced demands that they share personal information, such as where they reside, where they work, whom they have interacted with, and details regarding any anti-CCP activism they were a part of.



Uyghur community in front of the Parliament, Summer 2021 / URAP

Intelligence and data-gathering: The Chinese government’s view regarding the forms of Uyghur activism worthy of intelligence-gathering is a broad one. In the case of Tashpolat* (pseudonym¹²⁸), an Uyghur who moved to Canada over 15 years ago, the Chinese state has targeted him over the last decade, he suspects, due to his desire to establish an Uyghur mosque here in Canada. This seemingly benign activity, which Tashpolat says he sought to achieve for his local community and culture as a way to help ensure their survival, is one he worked towards beginning in 2008, when he began raising funds towards this goal. At some point thereafter, Chinese officials acquired the donation list for the future mosque, and on multiple occasions beginning in 2010, friends of his who visited China were shown this donation list, with officials demanding information about the listed individuals. By insinuating to visiting Uyghurs

128. Due to the nature of Tashpolat’s activities, URAP is not revealing his location in Canada, in order to help maintain his anonymity.



that others on the list had shared intelligence related to this list of donors, Tashpolat noted that the Chinese government was seeking to sew mistrust within his area’s Uyghur community.

In the case of Tashpolat* (pseudonym), an Uyghur who moved to Canada over 15 years ago, the Chinese state has targeted him over the last decade, he suspects, due to his desire to establish an Uyghur mosque here in Canada.

Though he himself was never interrogated in this way, the Chinese government targeted Tashpolat in other ways. While he had twice been able to visit his family back in East Turkistan prior to 2008, his request to the Chinese consulate for a travel visa was rejected when he attempted to do so again in 2012, with no reason given. In 2014, when he again tried, he says “mountains of personal information” were requested as part of his application, which he chose to submit in hopes of being able to see his family again. With the desired data acquired, the Chinese government nonetheless rejected his application, as they did with all subsequent requests. Ultimately, the mosque was successfully established. As to why it attracted the suspicious attention of Chinese officials, and in turn made him a target for intelligence gathering, Tashpolat suspects they were worried about Uyghurs establishing a foothold location in Canada, where they might organize political activities.



In 2014, when he again tried, he says “mountains of personal information” were requested as part of his application, which he chose to submit in hopes of being able to see his family again.

An Uyghur activist taking part in the protest in front of Volkswagen retail shop in Ontario, Summer 2021 / URAP

Other Uyghurs URAP spoke to also noted the Chinese government had requested extremely detailed information as part of travel visa applications, or that police officers in China requested such information from them when they’d visited China prior to 2017. In other cases, interviewees reported that Chinese security officials had requested information about them from their families in East Turkistan.



Informant recruitment: Uyghurs have been pushed to act as informants against their diaspora communities, including providing detailed reports to Chinese officials regarding specific individuals and ongoing activities. In previously reported cases of Uyghurs in Canada targeted in this manner¹²⁹, as well as the three cases shared with URAP, interviewees described a carrot (inducement) and stick (threats) strategy being employed, with Uyghurs targeted in this way facing the likely punishment and imprisonment of their family back in China if they refused, and/or improved access to their family, including facilitated travel to China and unhindered use of WeChat if they accepted. Additional interviewees noted that the knowledge that informants were being recruited contributed to a sense of paranoia within their community.

Uyghurs have been pushed to act as informants against their diaspora communities, including providing detailed reports to Chinese officials regarding specific individuals and ongoing activities.

Tursunjan Rouzi fled to Canada in 2017, narrowly escaping China after receiving a tip that he was soon to be targeted for detention. Upon discovery of his move, Rouzi began receiving calls on WeChat demanding his return to China. The calls from Chinese security officials always originated from one of his relatives' phones. After six months of declining this request, Rouzi says higher-level officials from his former hometown of Urumchi began calling with a new request: “They asked me to spy on the Uyghur diaspora in Canada,” he recalls. Though the officials' attempts at intelligence gathering were initially undertaken in a relaxed manner, their tone soon shifted. “I was told they had my brother and sister in custody, and if I ever wanted to see them alive again, I would have to provide information to the authorities,” says Rouzi. In

“They asked me to spy on the Uyghur diaspora in Canada,” he recalls. Though the officials' attempts at intelligence gathering were initially undertaken in a relaxed manner, their tone soon shifted. “I was told they had my brother and sister in custody, and if I ever wanted to see them alive again, I would have to provide information to the authorities”.

his case, the approach employed against him relied on coercion-by-proxy, with access to his imprisoned family leveraged as a way to compel him to comply. Rouzi, who suspects he was targeted as a potential informant due to his organizational skills and extensive business background, demurred by insisting that he knew nothing of value. He was however surprised to discover that the Chinese government was already intimately familiar with his situation in Canada, including the fact that he'd opened an Uyghur restaurant, which he was expected to use as a source from which to extract and share information and intelligence from his customers and community. Rouzi refused to comply: “It's my upbringing,” he says. “I was always taught not to betray my family or my [Uyghur] people. It's a line I'd never cross.” Pressure to cooperate only

129. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/uyghur-canadians-say-chinese-officials-detained-blackmailed-them/article24056142/>



ceased after Rouzi began demanding they send an official to meet with him in person in Canada, which Rouzi correctly suspected Chinese officials would be unwilling to do, as well as after he posted a video of his daughter, who previously came to Canada with her mother and siblings prior to Rouzi’s arrival, testifying in December 2019 that the uncle and aunt (whose potential liberation the Chinese government had attempted to coerce Rouzi with), as well as other family members she named, had been arbitrarily imprisoned by the Chinese government¹³⁰.

“I was always taught not to betray my family or my (Uyghur) people. It’s a line I’d never cross.”

3. Cyberattacks and online trolling

Uyghur activists residing in liberal democracies, including Canada, face a wide range of increasingly sophisticated online attacks, including phishing campaigns and deceptive efforts to induce them to install malware, including spyware, onto their computers and phones¹³¹. Uyghur NGOs have also been targeted both by viruses aiming to disable their computers, and hacks seeking to infiltrate their networks. Speaking to URAP, interviewees also recounted being targeted by trolls meant to discredit them in response to online posts regarding China’s campaign against Uyghurs. Among the 22 Uyghurs in Canada URAP inquired with for this report, 11 reported having been targeted by at least one of these forms of cyberattack and online harassment.

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Among the 22 Uyghurs in Canada URAP inquired with for this report, 11 reported having been targeted by at least one of these forms of cyberattack and online harassment.

Cyberattacks: In March 2021, Facebook announced it had uncovered a Chinese cyber-espionage operation on their social media platform targeting Uyghurs in Canada, the United States and four other countries. Fake Facebook profiles posing as Uyghur journalists, students, human rights advocates, or fellow community members had been set up in an attempt to establish trust with targeted individuals, with the goal of eventually getting them to click through to sites where they’d be encouraged to download malware-laden Uyghur-themed

130. <https://www.facebook.com/rozi.tursun/videos/563346344448923/>

131. <https://uhrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UHRP-Your-Family-Will-Suffer-Report.pdf>



apps (keyboards, dictionaries, etc.) to their smartphones, which would then enable remote surveillance of their activities. The campaign was described by Facebook as bearing “the hallmarks of a well resourced and persistent operation”¹³². In a similar vein, several interviewees URAP spoke to reported receiving a persistent flow of suspicious Facebook friend requests from individuals they were unfamiliar with, often from relatively new accounts with few friends.

Interviewees presently involved with Uyghur activist organizations in Canada, including Tuyghun Abduweli, president of the East Turkistan Association of Canada¹³³, and Mehmet Tohti, executive director of the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project (URAP), noted that their organization’s websites, as well as those of previous organizations they had led, had been repeatedly hacked over the years. Both the organizations and they themselves have consistently been targeted with virus-laden emails, requiring a constant turn-over of new computers.



Tuyghun Abduweli, president of the East Turkistan Association of Canada, protesting the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games with activist Bilal Uyghur / Summer, 2021 / Toronto

Recently, in the lead up to a December 2021 hearing for a legal case URAP is partaking in regarding the Canadian Border Services Agency’s (CBSA) ability to ban products from China produced using Uyghur forced labour, both Tohti and the human rights lawyer representing URAP, Sarah Teich, were targeted by cyberattacks. Teich’s devices were targeted via her iCloud account, with Apple specialists she visited concluding that the hacker(s) had obtained both her iCloud email address and password, and appeared to have tried to remote delete her device’s contents from a location near her. She spent the three days prior to the hearing rushing to secure her devices, including by buying a new phone and acquiring a new phone number. Even so, on the date of the court hearing, which was held over Zoom, Teich was temporarily booted out of the hearing, a couple minutes into the start of her oral submissions on behalf of URAP. No other counsel had experienced any technical difficulties. Given its timing, including the fact that Tohti had also been the target of a cyber-attack that weekend, as well as the fact that Teich’s passwords (including her Zoom password) had all been stored on her iCloud account, Teich suspected the attack was linked to the CCP and represented an attempt at interference with the Canadian justice system¹³⁴. As with many Uyghurs URAP previously spoke to

132. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-uyghur-canada-espionage-1.5962221>

133. <http://www.eastturkistan.ca/>

134. <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2022/01/10/human-rights-advocates-say-theyre-being-hit-by-for-eign-cyber-attacks-and-that-canada-is-doing-little-to-stop-it.html>



selves would be unable to communicate in any way with their relatives. Eventually, however, many came to be “accidental activists,” pushed to speak up by the unrelenting ferocity of the PRC leadership’s anti-Uyghur campaign, some even seeing any potential retaliatory harassment as proof their activism was having an effect, or at least making the Chinese government fearful of reputational damage¹³⁵.



Madame Zulhumar Yarmemet holding a poster of her imprisoned brother, Mr. Otkur Yarmemet. Summer 2021 / URAP

Zulhumar, who herself narrowly escaped East Turkistan, saw her younger brother, Otkur Yarmemet, imprisoned in April 2017 for reasons Chinese officials refused to reveal to their parents, with her father, Yasin Yarmemet, likewise being sent to a concentration camp in February 2018 for unknown reasons. Her mother was soon after forced to delete her from WeChat. Cut off from contact with her family, Zulhumar described a feeling of helplessness, as if her life were a living nightmare, as well as a form of survivor’s guilt she experienced living freely in Canada while her family suffered in East Turkistan. Determined not to remain silent regarding her family’s fate (over ten members of her extended family were ultimately imprisoned), Zulhumar delivered testimony in September 2018 at a public event in Windsor, Ontario. Thereafter, she began frequently posting messages to her Facebook and Twitter accounts, such as “China release my brother,” “Stop the genocide” and “Save the Uyghur people.” Although her father was released in 2020, and her mother was able to re-establish a limited form of contact, her brother remains out of reach, having been sentenced in 2018 to 10 years in prison on arbitrary charges.

Cut off from contact with her family, Zulhumar described a feeling of helplessness, as if her life were a living nightmare, as well as a form of survivor’s guilt she experienced living freely in Canada while her family suffered in East Turkistan.

Zulhumar’s social media posts quickly attracted the attention of Chinese security officials. Through her mother, she learned that authorities had taken her sister to be interrogated for four hours in regards to Yarmemet and her social media posts, with the sister being told: “You have to tell your sister (Zulhumar) to shut up. To stop.” At the same time, trolls soon de-

135. https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/POLVReportFinal_2021-01-29.pdf ;
<https://foref-europe.org/blog/2020/09/07/who-are-the-uyghurs-canadian-scholar-gives-profound-insights/>



scended on her Twitter account, accusing her of lying about her family and the Uyghurs' fate.¹³⁶ Her Facebook account was soon also receiving suspicious friend requests. Yarmemet, who continues to agitate for her brother's release, notes that as both Facebook and Twitter are illegal in China, government officials with access to these services are likely the ones who found her accounts and targeted them for trolling.

*Screenshots from Zulhumar Yarmemet's Twitter account
Her brother Otkur Yarmemet (above) / Replies from pro-
CCP trolls (below)*



136. <https://twitter.com/ZYarmemet>
<https://twitter.com/ZYarmemet/status/1246581165319954438>
<https://twitter.com/rs7mtu/status/1095576540572659713>
<https://twitter.com/Tess20203/status/1263277510969585664>
<https://twitter.com/JeffHillinChina/status/1306084115536441344>

4. Restrictions on movement and travel

Another way in which the Chinese government continues to exert repressive control is through its widespread refusal to issue passport renewals or travel visas out of their embassies and consulates in countries where Uyghurs reside, including in Canada. Instead, Uyghurs have often been told they must return to China if their passports are to be renewed and offered only one-way travel documents to do so. Understandably, most Uyghurs are reluctant to take this trip, given the risk of being imprisoned upon arrival for any number of arbitrary reasons¹³⁷. As a result, Uyghurs URAP spoke to reported having been unable to visit terminally ill relatives or attend funerals, among other important family events. Likewise, relatives in East Turkistan have been unable to visit Uyghur family in Canada. Among the 22 Uyghurs in Canada URAP spoke to in depth for this report, 6 reported having faced such restrictions while seeking to visit family in East Turkistan in, or prior to, 2017.

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Erkin Kurban moved to Canada in 1999. His wife and three children followed him to Montreal four years later, via Canada's family reunification policy. Up to 2011, Kurban's family had been able to visit relatives in China several times without issue. The same was true for Kurban, up until 2010, when his more open engagement in anti-CCP activism became known to Chinese state officials. Soon after, he began getting phone calls from China from his terrified-sounding brothers, who suddenly requested information regarding his move to Canada, and his political activities here. Kurban suspected they had undergone interrogations by Chinese security officials. Having come to the attention of Chinese state officials, Erkin found that he was no longer being granted travel visas to visit family in East Turkistan. Request after request was refused, with no explanation given.



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"Mr. Erkin Kurban, Montreal, January 2022 / URAP"

137. https://www.docs.uhrp.org/pdf/Weaponized_Passports.pdf



In 2013, he made a final attempt to obtain a travel visa, seeking to visit his ailing mother prior to her passing. Much to his surprise, his brother called to tell him the request would be approved if he agreed to cooperate with Chinese authorities. Desperate to see his mother, he agreed, and his visa was granted. In this way, Kurban’s desperation to travel to China to see his mother was leveraged against him by the Chinese state, which upon arrival began inducing him to act as an informant. Lambasted for his political activities in Canada, Kurban was threatened, told that his Canada passport has no value in China, and as such he would be unable to return to Canada if he declined to cooperate. He was also informed that if he agreed to help, he would receive preferential treatment, including the ability to freely visit family in East Turkistan when he wanted to. Though Kurban agreed in order to be able to leave China, he demurred upon his return to Canada, and opted not to provide information about his community¹³⁸. While Kurban was cognizant that his visit to China in 2013 would be his last, he is deeply regretful that his political actions also prevented his wife and children from visiting family in East Turkistan thereafter. His daughter, Zumretay Kurban, herself now an activist working for the World Uyghur Congress¹³⁹, specifically recalls her mother being informed in 2015 that due to her husband’s activism, her and her son’s visa had been rejected, with the pair as such being denied the ability to visit Zumretay’s grandmother, who was seriously ill at the time.

Another way China’s tight control over passports and travel visas is being employed to negatively impact the lives of Uyghurs in Canada was reported by the Ottawa Citizen in 2019. Young Uyghurs who came to Canada for their university studies, and who wished to extend their stays in Canada fearing the likelihood of imprisonment upon their return to China, realized they might not be able to. China was being uncooperative in regard to renewing their study visas and passports, with the Chinese embassy only offering the students a one-way ticket back to China to sort out the issue¹⁴⁰. Though some of the interviewed students mentioned applying for refugee status in Canada, there was no guarantee they’d be accepted, as no special stream for Uyghur refugees exists in Canada. This remains the case, in spite of a recommendation in the Parliament of Canada’s Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development’s report, that such a stream be opened¹⁴¹.

138. <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/china-uighur/>

139. <https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/>

140. <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/uyghur-students-in-canada-fear-for-their-families-in-china-and-their-futures>

141. <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/FAAE/Reports/RP11164859/sdirrp04/sdirrp04-e.pdf>



5. Contact with family cut off, family members threatened

During the in-depth interviews URAP undertook, accounts were abundant of Uyghurs' free and open contact with relatives residing in China, including spouses, parents and children, alternately being monitored, cut off, or suddenly re-activated, often to pass on messages and threats under duress from the Chinese government. Such warnings when they occurred, were often delivered by family members themselves, rather than government officials. Of the 21 Uyghurs that URAP spoke to in depth who still had family in China, all 21 recounted having contact with their family affected by Chinese government actions in some way, including having family members in China either threatened, or employed as proxies by the Chinese state to deliver threats. Similarly, all 21 respondents noted that anywhere between a handful and dozens of their extended family members were presently imprisoned and out of reach in China's concentration camps.

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Contact with family interrupted: Among the accounts gathered by URAP, a recurring note was that the nature of contact with family in China had shifted in 2016 and 2017, coinciding with the period when China began ramping up its anti-Uyghur operations in East Turkistan, particularly in the form of mass imprisonment. Tursunjan Rouzi, for example, recounted losing contact with his younger brother following his imprisonment in May 2017. Similarly, following the arbitrary imprisonment of his sister and four other family members, he also lost contact with them. Thereafter, communication with his family back in East Turkistan has been very limited in scope, with strict avoidance of political or religious topics. He avoids, for example, uttering the normal Muslim greeting, "As-salamu alaykum," at the beginning of calls, for fear of the consequences its religious connotation would bring upon his family. Similarly, Zulhumar Yarmemet recounted that after being cut off from almost all of her family and friends in December 2016, she can only converse with her mother about serious issues through coded language (e.g. "the hospital is full" = "a large concentration camp"; "so and so person has fallen ill" = "that person was taken away to a camp"). Tuyghun Abduweli had contact with his family in East Turkistan cut off on February 1, 2016. On that day, his father told him that he should no longer call, after Chinese police officials had warned him that he would be imprisoned if his son ever called again. Abduweli's siblings received the same warning. As such, he has had no contact with his family in East Turkistan over the last six years. He only learned that his younger brother had been sentenced to 20 years in prison as retribution for Abduweli's activism in Canada later that year through a family contact living in Turkey. Because Abduweli's wife is married to an activist, she too has faced retribution, with contact with her family in China having been cut off for the past six years.



Family members being threatened or punished as retaliation for activism: Mehmet Tohti, executive director of the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project has been advocating for Uyghurs' rights in China over the past 20+ years since moving to Canada in 1998. By helping bring the plight of Uyghurs to the Canadian government's attention, he has also increasingly raised the ire of the Chinese government. In 2004, he received a phone call from his mother, but was soon after confronted by a security officer warning him to cease his activism. "Your mother and all your family will be in danger. The choice is yours," he was told. Soon after, his brother in East Turkistan was fired from his job and sent to prison. For a period, contact with his family was limited to phone conversations. In October 2016, this avenue of communication was also cut off, after Chinese authorities began interrogating his family members whenever he would call. "After unsuccessfully threatening me for decades, China turned their focus to what they could control: my family back in China," says Tohti. Of his seven siblings, Tohti is aware of his sister having died in 2011 under suspicious conditions at a hospital after visiting to give birth to her first child. No autopsy was permitted by Chinese authorities. He suspects his other six siblings are imprisoned, though like many others URAP spoke to, he too is unable to confirm if they are even still alive.



Mehmet Tohti, Executive Director of URAP, being interviewed by CBC News / November 2021

On July 20, 2020, as Tohti was preparing to testify before a human rights commission at the Canadian Parliament, he received a direct message on Twitter from a four-month-old account with no followers¹⁴². The message was short: "your fucking mother is dead. so funny." The message shocked Tohti, who does not know whether his mother is still alive, though he soon noted other concerning aspects about the Tweet. The account listed Sichuan as its location, which is almost 4,000 kilometres away from where Tohti's family lives, in Kargilik County, East Turkistan. How could a random troll in Sichuan know about his mother's current status unless they were a security official? Who else would be monitoring Tohti's name in the news? As previously noted, the use of Twitter is also banned in China, so the individual who contacted him would have also needed special permission to do so. As such, Tohti strongly suspects the account was operated by a CCP troll closely monitoring him and his family back in China. In spite of the taunting message, Tohti opted to testify at the commission, understanding that the Chinese government would continue targeting his family and other Uyghurs regardless of his actions in Canada.

142. Zunlong @Chenw37677371; account currently suspended



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Threatening direct message sent to Mehmet Tohti’s Twitter account

Policy Recommendations

Despite the Canadian Parliament becoming the first legislative body in the world to formally recognize the Uyghur Genocide in February 2021, despite the Parliament’s Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development acknowledging the Uyghur Genocide the following month and issuing its 15-point list of recommendations for the Government of Canada to implement, and despite the widespread and overwhelming evidence of the existence of the ongoing Uyghur Genocide, the Government of Canada has yet to acknowledge or significantly act upon it. In light of this, and in light of the CCP’s international campaign of harassment and repression against diaspora Uyghurs, including in Canada as highlighted in this report, URAP offers the following policy recommendations:

- **The Government of Canada should recognize the Uyghur Genocide**, so as to respect the will of Canadians, specifically the unanimous voice of their Parliament and representatives.
- **The Government of Canada should act without further delay in condemning the PRC’s use of concentration camps**, where millions of innocent Uyghur, Kazakh and other Turkic-speaking people are imprisoned based on arbitrary charges. The Government of Canada should offer its condemnation publicly and in close collaboration with its allies, as well as make appeals in



international venues including the United Nations (UN), the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Specifically, Canada’s permanent mission heads at the UN in New York and Geneva should constantly be raising the issue of the Uyghur genocide. Canada’s diplomacy and foreign policy should also be focused on raising such awareness, while calling for CCP party-state representatives responsible for overseeing the Uyghur genocide to be held accountable.

- **Public Safety Canada should establish mechanisms to track and address instances of the CCP’s campaign of direct intimidation, harassment and repressive threats** targeting Uyghurs (along with Tibetans, Hong-Kongers, Chinese pro-democracy advocates and Falun Gong practitioners) residing in Canada, and ensure their proper protection. Public Safety Canada should also take note of when these activists’ family members are imprisoned as retaliation by the Chinese government.

- **The Government of Canada should prioritize the case of Huseyin Celil**, the Uyghur-Canadian who has been unjustly detained in China for the past 16 years. His family needs their father and husband returned to them.

- **The Government of Canada should fulfill the Parliamentary Committee’s recommendation “to create an exceptional refugee streamflow for Uyghurs** and other Turkic-speaking refugees” and facilitate their resettlement into Canada.

- **The Government of Canada should enhance its mechanisms of control and revise its inefficient advisory guidelines on imports entering Canada from China’s Uyghur region**, given the overwhelmingly likelihood that they are tainted by the use of Uyghur forced labour. The onus of proof should be on importers to demonstrate their merchandise’s supply chain is free of the use of such forced labour. Specifically, but not exclusively, focus should be fixed on made-in-China cotton, tomato and solar panel products known to originate from East Turkistan (Xinjiang), where their inputs are either grown or manufactured. Such due diligence should also be mandatory for supply chains that include production in other parts of China, as there is increasing evidence that Uyghurs are being transported into interior China to similarly be exploited as slave labour. Finally, the Canadian Ombudsman for Responsible Enterprise¹⁴³ should apply its due diligence to study Canadian businesses profiting from Uyghur forced labour-tainted products entering the Canadian market.

- **Canada’s Department of Justice, in cooperation with the Parliament of Canada, should develop a comprehensive Human Rights Due Diligence Law** with concrete measures such that Canadian companies are held accountable when their supply chains breach international human rights standards, including being complicit in the use of Uyghur forced labour.

143. https://core-ombuds.canada.ca/core_ombuds-ocre_ombuds/index.aspx?lang=eng



Conclusion

The Chinese government will continue to aggressively target diaspora Uyghurs in the absence of concrete countermeasures by Canada and other allied governments. The genocide being committed by the Chinese government in East Turkistan is mirrored in its international campaign of Uyghur repression. In Canada's case, the small population of approximately 2,000 Uyghurs in Canada are suffering, cut off from their families and terrified about their fate. As if this were not enough, as documented in this report, they are also subject to various forms of intimidation, intelligence gathering operations, online attacks, restrictions on contact with their family, and the threat that their families will be punished and imprisoned if they do not cease to speak up about China's ongoing atrocities. In this way, URAP's findings mirror those of previous media and organizational reports, which also demonstrated that the Chinese government was committing a similar campaign of repression against other countries' diaspora Uyghur communities.

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As citizens of Canada, Uyghurs have rights and deserve protection. Currently, this is sorely lacking. Despite public security officials raising the alarm of Chinese interference in Canadian affairs, neither the Government of Canada, nor the RCMP or CSIS, have been able or willing to concretely act to put an end to the Chinese state's tactics in Canada, instead limiting themselves to offering general advice, or simply gathering testimonies without offering concrete follow-ups to the individuals in question. This represents an inadequate response to the issue at hand. URAP calls on the Government of Canada to concretely take action to help put an end to the undeserved and terrifying campaign of harassment that Uyghurs in Canada continue to be subject to.