



## **LOI Submission to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (66<sup>th</sup> Pre-Sessional Working Group)**

Uyghur Human Rights Project  
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The Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) writes in advance of the 66<sup>th</sup> Pre-Sessional Working Group (PSWG) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (“the Committee”) relating to China’s 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle review and compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

The following submission makes recommendations to the List of Issues (LOI) to be raised with China during the PSWG, and addresses issues related to articles 2, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15 of the Covenant.

### **Executive Summary:**

The government of China is perpetrating human rights abuses on a significant scale in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (“Uyghur Region”). Chinese officials are targeting Uyghur and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples on the basis of their religion and ethnicity. The Committee has a duty to investigate these violations as part of its mandate under the ICESCR.

The Chinese government has not taken adequate steps to ensure that development policies are equitably benefitting the Uyghur population. Uyghurs continue to lag substantially behind the Chinese population economically as a result of inadequate attention to employment opportunities, lack of access to employment in the Uyghur language, and discriminatory hiring practices. Despite touting the benefits of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its impact on the UN SDGs, the relevant policies forego the inclusion of Uyghurs.

Other systematic abuses include the mass arbitrary detention of at least one million Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples and a program to “cleanse” Uyghurs of their “extremist” thoughts through “re-education” and forced labor. China’s campaign involves exploiting the labor of Uyghurs detained in internment camps as well as through coerced labor at workplaces throughout the Uyghur Region and across several regions across China.

China is engaging in a systematic campaign to eradicate Uyghur culture, religion, and language through policy and practice, including the destruction of sacred cultural and religious sites such as mosques, cemeteries, and shrines. China’s ban on the use of Uyghur language in schools, as well as the arrest and detention of scholars wishing to establish Uyghur-language schools within the region, represents a clear violation of the Covenant’s protection of the right to education and cultural participation.

China’s use of forced sterilizations and coerced IUD implants on Uyghur women represents a clear violation of the Covenant’s protections on the right to family and bodily autonomy. Many observers have classified this as meeting the threshold of acts constitutive of genocide under the UN Convention, which forbids measures intended to reduce births.

Below, we focus on five issues related to the Covenant, and present for each: the 2014 Concluding Observations; the State Party's 2019 National Report; suggested questions for the delegation of the State Party under review during the PSWG; and relevant information for the Committee.

### A. Non-discrimination/Adequate Standard of Living (Articles 2 and 11)

**Concluding Observations (2014):** “The Committee recommends that the State party [...] pay particular attention to shortfalls and the differentials existing between the regions, as well as between urban and rural areas [and] ensure that poverty reduction programmes prioritize and allocate sufficient resources to alleviate the poverty of rural-to-urban migrants. The Committee requests the State party to include in its next periodic report disaggregated and comparative data by year and urban region, as well as indicators on the number of persons living in poverty, and on the progress made in its efforts to combat poverty.” (para. 28)

**State Party response:** “China protects the rights of ethnic minorities in accordance with the law. We are increasing economic and social development assistance to ethnic-minority areas [...]” (para. 25)

**Suggested questions:** *How will the government of China ensure that benefits from development and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) accrue equitably to all ethnic groups? Can the government provide disaggregated data on income disparities between ethnic groups?*

1. The Chinese government, while touting the success of development policies in the Uyghur Region for many years, has failed to provide detailed, disaggregated data showing disparities between ethnic groups. In doing so, it remains difficult to adequately understand how development policies have been impacting Uyghur and Chinese populations as such.
2. Uyghurs suffer from significantly higher unemployment rates than Chinese due to exclusion by state and private employers in sectors like energy, construction, resource extraction, and government positions,<sup>1</sup> as well as exclusion based on language skills.<sup>2</sup> The Belt and Road Initiative has boasted the potential development advantages for the entire region, but many past development campaigns have actually exacerbated economic problems for Uyghurs and led to greater inequities.<sup>3</sup> Uyghurs are often disproportionately excluded from development because they reside predominantly in the south and in rural areas, whereas Chinese are more heavily concentrated in northern, urban areas, which sees the benefits of regional development.
3. Uyghurs rely largely on agriculture for employment and have reported increased rates of poverty and unemployment, citing land degradation, lack of water, and land grabs from Chinese settlers. Uyghur migration to the north has resulted in labor-intensive jobs paying significantly less than

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<sup>1</sup> Tohti, I. (2015, April 15). Present-Day Ethnic Problems in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region: Overview and Recommendations – Unemployment, China Change. Retrieved from: <https://chinachange.org/2015/04/22/present-day-ethnic-problems-in-xinjianguighur-autonomous-region-overview-and-recommendations-1>

<sup>2</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (April 2017). “Discrimination, Mistreatment and Coercion: Severe Labor Rights Abuses Faced by Uyghurs in China and East Turkestan.” Retrieved from: [https://uhrp.org/docs/Discrimination\\_Mistreatment\\_Coercion.pdf](https://uhrp.org/docs/Discrimination_Mistreatment_Coercion.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (2016). “End of the Road: One Belt, One Road and the Cumulative Economic Marginalization of the Uyghurs.” Retrieved from: <http://uhrp.org/docs/End-of-the-Road.pdf>

Chinese workers.<sup>4</sup> Rural Uyghur workers also face significant barriers accessing credit as well as an adequate share of resources like water.<sup>5</sup>

## **B. Forced Labor** (Articles 6, 7, and 12)

**Concluding Observations (2014):** “The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation of the decision of the National People’s Congress on the abolishment of the Re-education through Labor system throughout the State party, as well as to ensure that no alternative or parallel system of forced labor is put in place, particularly at the local level.” (para. 22)

**State Party response:** “The Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress on Repealing Legislation on Re-education through Labor was adopted in 2013. As of 24:00 on 28 December 2013, all persons in re-education through labor installations throughout the country had been released.” (para. 65)

**Suggested questions:** *What steps will the government of China take to dismantle programs that promote or facilitate state-imposed forced labor of Uyghurs, including through “re-education” or “vocational training centers”? What will the government of China do to ensure that all Uyghurs, without discrimination, have access to freely chosen employment? Will the government of China ratify the ILO Forced Labor Convention?*

4. Investigations have documented the government’s continued use of forced labor camps as a means to exert social control over Uyghurs.<sup>67</sup> In the garment industry, Uyghur forced labor is present in all stages of the production process, including in the planting, harvesting and processing of cotton, the spinning of yarn, the weaving of textiles and the manufacture of finished garments. In 2020, the Fair Labor Association declared reports it had received of forced labor within the Uyghur Region as so “widespread” and “credible” that it urged all of its commercial affiliates to review primary and secondary sourcing of cotton from the Uyghur Region.<sup>8</sup>
5. In November 2020, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) wrote that it was aware of, and gravely concerned about, the continued operation of forced-labor camps: “The Committee, however, remains alarmed by multiple reports that large numbers of Uyghurs and members of other minorities are arbitrarily detained in extrajudicial detention facilities operating as education and training centres and in forced labor camps in the State party’s territory, in contravention to any recognized legal process with fair trial rights.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Howell, A. & Fan, C., Migration and Inequality in Xinjiang: A Survey of Han and Uyghur Migrants in Urumqi, (Eurasian Geography and Economics, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> 9 Jiang Leiwen, Tong Yufen, Zhao Zhijie, Li Tianhong and Liao Jianhua. (2005). Water Resources, Land Exploration and Population Dynamics in Arid Area – The Case of Tarim River Basin in Xinjiang of China. Asian Metacentre Research Paper Series, 18. Retrieved from: <http://www.populationasia.org/Publications/RP/AMCRP18.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Luke Adams, Steve Andrews, Scott Flipse, Megan Fluker, and Amy Reger, “Staff Research Report: Global Supply Chains, Forced Labor, and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region,” Congressional-Executive Commission on China, March 2020.

<sup>7</sup> France 24 (December 2020). “A huge game-changer”: Report says more than 570,000 Uyghurs forced to pick cotton.” Available at: <https://www.france24.com/en/asia-pacific/20201215-a-huge-game-changer-report-says-more-than-570-000-uyghurs-forced-to-pick-cotton>

<sup>8</sup> Fair Labor Association, “Fair Labor Association Statement on Sourcing From China And Forced Labor Risk.” March 2020. Available at: <https://www.fairlabor.org/blog/entry/fair-labor-association-statement-sourcing-china-and-forced-labor-risk>

<sup>9</sup> UN CERD Concluding Observations, November 2020. Available at: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/CHN/INT\\_CERD\\_FUL\\_CHN\\_43684\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/CHN/INT_CERD_FUL_CHN_43684_E.pdf)

6. The Chinese government has admitted to using Uyghur forced labor as a means of social control. The local government of Qapqal ordered that villagers should undergo military-style training to convert them into “obedient workers, loyal to employers and the ruling Communist Party.” According to the leaked directive, the goal of the local government’s policy was to “turn around their [Uyghur] ingrained lazy, lax, slow, sloppy, freewheeling, individualistic ways so they obey company rules.”<sup>10</sup>
7. The conditions in the forced-labor detention camps place Uyghurs at substantial health risks and violate their rights to safe working conditions, sanitation, and basic health. One Uyghur woman testified before the United States Congress that she had been arbitrarily detained by officials on three separate occasions.<sup>11</sup> She stated that while in a detention camp, she and other Uyghur women were forced to sleep in turns, use the toilet in front of security cameras, and were made to take unknown medication. She stated that nine women died in her cell alone during her three months of detention.<sup>12</sup>
8. In addition to internment camps, the Chinese government has exported an estimated 80,000 Uyghur laborers to other parts of China in factories under conditions which strongly indicate forced labor.<sup>13</sup> The availability of Uyghur labor to factories outside of the Uyghur Region is widely known amongst China’s managerial class. Publicly-accessible websites allow factory bosses to “bulk purchase” Uyghur labor for use in their manufacturing facilities outside of the Uyghur Region, with one online advertisement claiming to be able to provide “1,000 Uyghur workers aged 16 to 18 years” with a description that read: “The advantages of Xinjiang workers are: semi-military style management, can withstand hardship, no loss of personnel ... Minimum order 100 workers!”<sup>14</sup>

### C. Cultural rights (Articles 13 and 15)

**Concluding Observations (2014):** “The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to combat all forms of discrimination against ethnic minorities, particularly in the western provinces and regions, and to ensure their enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights, including legal work, social security, adequate housing, public health care, and education. In this regard, the Committee draws the State party’s attention to its general comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights.” (para. 14)

**State Party response:** “China protects the rights of ethnic minorities in accordance with the law. We are increasing economic and social development assistance to ethnic-minority areas [...] We are also promoting the integration of intangible cultural-heritage protection with targeted poverty alleviation. [...] In 2015, we began implementing comprehensive county and village cultural service-centre demonstration projects in impoverished areas, and comprehensive cultural service-centre coverage projects in ethnic

<sup>10</sup> Buckley, Chris (December 2019). “Inside China’s Push to Turn Muslim Minorities Into an Army of Workers,” *The New York Times*. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/30/world/asia/china-xinjiang-muslims-labor.html>

<sup>11</sup> Meixler, Eli (November 2018). “‘I Begged Them to Kill Me.’ Uighur Woman Tells Congress of Torture in Chinese Internment Camps,” *Time Magazine*. Available at: <https://time.com/5467628/china-uighur-congress-torture/>

<sup>12</sup> Danilova, Maria (November 2018). “Woman describes torture, beatings in Chinese detention camp,” *Associated Press*. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/61cdf7f5dfc34575aa643523b3c6b3fe>

<sup>13</sup> Xu, Vicky (March 2020). “Uyghurs for sale: ‘Re-education’, forced labour and surveillance beyond Xinjiang,” *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*. Available at: <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.



autonomous counties and border counties in impoverished areas. During the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan period, village cultural activity facilities in impoverished areas are being provided with cultural paraphernalia according to the standard of 20,000 yuan per facility.” (para. 154)

**Suggested questions:** *How does the Chinese government intend to protect cultural rights embedded in the Covenant while destroying Uyghur mosques, shrines, and graveyards? What steps will the Chinese government take to ensure Uyghurs are able to rebuild these sites?*

9. The Chinese government has undertaken efforts to destroy Uyghur cultural landmarks, including mosques, shrines, and cemeteries, supported by evidence from satellite imagery<sup>15</sup> (see figures 1 and 2).
10. In 2019, UHRP conducted its own months-long geospatial analysis investigation, calculating that between 10,000-15,000 Uyghur religious sites have been destroyed or damaged by the Chinese government since 2016.<sup>16</sup> A separate study focused on quantifying the damage to Uyghur mosques in particular, which calculated that over 8,500 mosques across the Uyghur Region have been demolished by the Chinese government since 2017—a figure representing the destruction of over one third of the region’s total mosques.<sup>17</sup>



*Figure 1. Geospatial analysis of the now destroyed Ordam Shrine (2011-2018).<sup>18</sup>*

<sup>15</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (October 2019). “Demolishing Faith: The Destruction and Desecration of Uyghur Mosques and Shrines.” Retrieved from: <https://uhrp.org/press-release/demolishing-faith-destruction-and-desecration-uyghur-mosques-and-shrines.html>; see also Australia Strategic Policy Institute (September 24, 2020). “Cultural erasure: Tracing the destruction of Uyghur and Islamic spaces in Xinjiang,” pp5. <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/cultural-erasure>.

<sup>16</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (October 2019). “Demolishing Faith: The Destruction and Desecration of Uyghur Mosques and Shrines.” Available at: [https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP\\_report\\_Demolishing\\_Faith.pdf](https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_report_Demolishing_Faith.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Deng, Chao (September 2020). “China Razed Thousands of Xinjiang Mosques in Assimilation Push, Report Says,” *The Wall Street Journal*. Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-razed-thousands-of-xinjiang-mosques-in-assimilation-push-report-says-11601049531>

<sup>18</sup> Buckley, Chris (September 2020). “China Is Erasing Mosques and Precious Shrines in Xinjiang,” *The New York Times*. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/25/world/asia/xinjiang-china-religious-site.html>



Figure 2. Geospatial analysis of the destroyed Sultanim Cemetery (2018-2019).<sup>19</sup>

11. Mosques have also been forced to remove Islamic architecture, symbols, or Arabic writing, including the crescent moon or domes which adorn the top of the structures.<sup>20</sup> Officials have acknowledged these “renovations” constitute a part of the China’s larger five-year plan to “guide Islam to be compatible with socialism.”<sup>21</sup> Some mosques have also been converted entirely into shops, housing, and even bars.<sup>22</sup> In one instance, the local government razed a mosque in Atush in order to install a public toilet on its grounds.<sup>23</sup>
12. Nearly 85 percent of the Old City of Kashgar, a 2000-year-old city, was demolished by between 2009 and 2017, displacing hundreds of thousands of residents without consultation.<sup>24</sup> The demolitions resulted in the loss of physical structures including homes, shops and religious sites, as well as patterns of traditional Uyghur life. Most conspicuously, Old Kashgar was not included on a list of Silk Road sites that Beijing recently submitted to UNESCO for World Heritage Status, though it is still a top tourist draw in the region.<sup>25</sup> A UNESCO cultural specialist in Beijing called the redevelopment of Kashgar “one of the black spots of heritage conservation.”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The Guardian (2019). “Then and now: China’s destruction of Uighur burial grounds.” Retrieved from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/09/chinas-destruction-of-uighur-burial-grounds-then-and-now>

<sup>20</sup> Buckley, Chris (September 2020). “China Is Erasing Mosques and Precious Shrines in Xinjiang,” *The New York Times*. Available at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/25/world/asia/xinjiang-china-religious-site.html>

<sup>21</sup> Kou, Lily (May 2019). “Revealed: new evidence of China’s mission to raze the mosques of Xinjiang,” *The Guardian*. Available at:

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

<sup>22</sup> Nathan Ruser, James Leibold, Kelsey Munro & Tilla Hoja (September 2020). “Cultural erasure: Tracing the destruction of Uyghur and Islamic spaces in Xinjiang,” *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*. Available at: <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/cultural-erasure>

<sup>23</sup> Radio Free Asia (August 2020). “Public Toilet Erected on Former Site of Razed Xinjiang Village Mosque.” Available at:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/toilet-08132020142800.html>

<sup>24</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (March 2012). “Living on the margins: The Chinese state’s demolition of Uyghur communities.” Retrieved from: <http://docs.uyghuramerican.org/3-30-Living-on-the-Margins.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Tharoor, Ishaan (July 29, 2009). “Tearing Down Old Kashgar: Another Blow to the Uighurs.” Retrieved from:

<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1913166,00.html>

<sup>26</sup> Levin, Dan (March 5, 2014). “China Remodels an Ancient Silk Road City, and an Ethnic Rift Widens,” *The New York Times*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/06/world/asia/china-remodels-an-ancient-silk-road-city-and-an-ethnic-rift-widens.html>



13. Since April 2017, the Chinese government has interned, imprisoned, or disappeared at least 435 Uyghur intellectuals as part of an intensified campaign to suppress Uyghur cultural expression.<sup>27</sup> Among those detained include Uyghur teachers, scholars, students, poets, musicians, as well as the academic staff of Xinjiang University.<sup>28</sup> Over 29 Uyghurs from the Xinjiang Educational Press and the Kashgar Uyghur Press have been detained or otherwise punished by authorities. Additionally, five members of Uyghur-language media groups have been interned or imprisoned arbitrarily for their work on Uyghur cultural expression and language education.<sup>29</sup>
14. The Chinese government has used travel restrictions to punish Uyghurs who wish to participate in cultural or religious life. In 2018, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in its Concluding Observations, recommended that China “. . . eliminate travel restrictions that disproportionately affect members of ethnic minorities. It also requests the State party to provide information on the number, and ethnic background, of applicants whose application for a passport was unsuccessful.”<sup>30</sup>
15. The teaching of religion is also prohibited from curriculum at all education levels in the Uyghur Region. Outside of schools, Uyghurs under the age of 18 are unable to enter mosques or participate in religious activities of any kind.<sup>31</sup> In 2018, Uyghur students were forced to sign pledges in schools stating that they would not fast during Ramadan.<sup>32</sup>

#### **D. Forced sterilization** (Article 10)

**Concluding Observations (2014):** “The Committee urges the State party to take further action to prevent and criminalize effectively the use of coercive measures, such as forced abortions and forced sterilization, in the implementation of the birth control policy. The Committee urges the State party to investigate effectively, without further delay, all cases of forced abortion and forced sterilization and to hold accountable those responsible for such acts. The Committee also recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that victims receive adequate compensation.” (para. 26)

**State Party response:** “The Chinese Government opposes any form of coercion in family planning work, including the compulsory implementation of contraceptive measures and the forced artificial termination of pregnancies. Personnel of administrative organs and technical service work units in maternal and child health care and family planning who violate the law are seriously investigated and dealt with in accordance with the law [...] The Chinese Government has earnestly carried out its commitments under the Cairo Declaration on Population and Development, stressing that the application of induced labor and surgical abortion must adhere to the principles of safety and voluntariness, and abide by the common practices of family-planning surgery. Doctors provide medical guidance to persons for whom

<sup>27</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (March 25, 2019). “Detained and Disappeared: Intellectuals Under Assault in the Uyghur Homeland.” Available at: <https://uhrp.org/press-release/detained-and-disappeared-intellectuals-under-assault-uyghur-homeland.html>

<sup>28</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project, “Report: The Persecution of the Intellectuals in the Uyghur Region Continues,” January 2019. Available at: [https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP\\_UPDATE-ThePersecution\\_ofTheIntellectuals-in-the-Uyghur-Region.pdf](https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_UPDATE-ThePersecution_ofTheIntellectuals-in-the-Uyghur-Region.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Concluding Observations, CERD/C/CHN/CO/14-17, September 29, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Hoja, G. (February 6, 2006), “China Bans Officials, State Employees, Children from Mosques,” February 2006. Radio Free Asia Uyghur Service. Available at: [https://www.rfa.org/english/uyghur/uyghur\\_religion-20060206.html](https://www.rfa.org/english/uyghur/uyghur_religion-20060206.html)

<sup>32</sup> Hoja, G. (May 21, 2018), Uyghur schoolchildren, Parents Forced to Abstain From Fasting During Ramadan, *Radio Free Asia Uyghur Service*. Available at: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/schoolchildren-05212018151019.html>

contraceptive failure has resulted in involuntary pregnancy, and respect the choices of husbands and wives or of single individuals.” (para. 98)

**Suggested questions:** *Based on government statistics, why was the use of IUDs among Uyghur women in 2018 substantially higher than the rest of the Chinese population? What steps will the government of China take to ensure that Uyghur women are not subjected to forced or coerced IUD placements?*

16. Since at least 2016, the government of China has made efforts to purposely reduce the birthrate of Uyghur women through coercive family planning—including the forced sterilization of women. In 2018, 80 percent of all net added IUD placements in China were performed in the Uyghur Region, despite the fact that the region only makes up 1.8 percent of the nation’s population.<sup>33</sup> The policy is intended to reduce the Uyghur population in the Uyghur Region relative to Han Chinese.<sup>34</sup>
17. Birth rates among Uyghur women plummeted from 2015-2018, with population growth in the Uyghur Region falling by over 84 percent in that period in the two largest Uyghur prefectures.<sup>35</sup> Population growth rates also declined further in several minority regions in 2019. In 2020, Chinese authorities in one Uyghur prefecture set a “near-zero birth rate target,” aiming to reach a birth rate of 1.05 per mile, down from 19.66 per mile two years earlier. Officials wrote that a zero birth rate would primarily be achieved through “family planning work.”<sup>36</sup>
18. Government documents have revealed that local authorities are instructed to punish Uyghur women who “violate” birth control targets with extrajudicial internment and “vocational skill” training camps. In May 2018, the government of Qiemo (Uy: Cherchen) county in the Uyghur Region issued a public notice that any woman who had violated state birth-limits would be forced to “adopt birth control measures with long-term effectiveness (i.e. forced sterilizations) and be subjected to vocational skills education and training (i.e. internment camps).”<sup>37</sup>
19. A leaked document known as the Qaraqash List showed that in one county in the Uyghur Region, the most frequently cited reason for internment of Uyghur women was a violation of birth control regulations.<sup>38</sup> A Qaraqash county’s official, in a 2018 government work report stated that “[by] severely curbing behaviors that violate birth control [policies], birth and natural population growth rates have declined dramatically.”<sup>39</sup>
20. The Government of China’s sterilization policies go beyond mothers who may have violated state-enforced birth-limits, and increasingly target all Uyghur women. Authorities have planned a

<sup>33</sup> Zenz, Adrian (July 2020). “Report: Sterilizations, IUDs, and Coercive Birth Prevention: The CCP’s Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birth Rates in Xinjiang,” The Jamestown Foundation - China Brief Volume: 20 Issue: 12, p. 3. Available at: <https://jamestown.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Zenz-Internment-Sterilizations-and-IUDs-UPDATED-July-21-Rev2.pdf?x99616>

<sup>34</sup> Wong, Chu (September 2020). “Xi Says China Will Continue Efforts to Assimilate Muslims in Xinjiang,” *The Wall Street Journal*. Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/xi-says-china-will-continue-efforts-to-assimilate-muslims-in-xinjiang-11601133450>

<sup>35</sup> Zenz, Adrian (July 2020). “Report: Sterilizations, IUDs, and Coercive Birth Prevention: The CCP’s Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birth Rates in Xinjiang,” The Jamestown Foundation - China Brief Volume: 20 Issue: 12. Available at: <https://jamestown.org/program/sterilizations-iuds-and-mandatory-birth-control-the-ccps-campaign-to-suppress-uyghur-birth-rates-in-xinjiang/>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Shepherd, Christian, “The Karakax list: how China targets Uighurs in Xinjiang,” *The Financial Times*, February 2020. <https://www.ft.com/content/e0224416-4e77-11ea-95a0-43d18ec715f5>

<sup>39</sup> Zenz, Adrian (July 2020). “China’s Own Documents Show Potentially Genocidal Sterilization Plans in Xinjiang,” *Foreign Policy*. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/01/china-documents-uighur-genocidal-sterilization-xinjiang/>



campaign of mass female sterilization in rural Uyghur regions, noting in documents they wish to target 14 and 34 percent of all married women of childbearing age in two Uyghur counties that year.<sup>40</sup> The campaign aims to permanently sterilize rural minority women with three or more children, as well as some with two children, criteria which would cover at least 20 percent of all childbearing-age women.<sup>41</sup> In 2018, one Uyghur prefecture publicly set a goal of leading its rural populations to accept widespread sterilization surgery.<sup>42</sup>

## **E. Right to education** (Article 13)

**Concluding Observations (2014):** “The Committee is concerned that ethnic minorities continue to face severe restrictions in the realization of their right to take part in cultural life, including the right to use and teach minority languages, history and culture, as well as to practise their religion freely. Despite the measures adopted by the State party, the Committee is concerned about the restrictions faced by Tibetans and Uighurs, in particular regarding the restriction of education in the Tibetan and Uighur languages.” (para. 36)

**State Party response:** “We are safeguarding the cultural and spoken- and written-language rights of ethnic minorities in accordance with the law, and are vigorously pursuing the development of education [...] China fully guarantees the right of ethnic minorities to receive education [...] Through such measures as offering minority language courses, translating textbooks, bilingual teaching, and unifying entrance-examination content, we can ensure that minority students receive the same standard of education within the scope of mainstream education. Students from Tibet and Xinjiang attend classes in inland areas, and preparatory and regular classes are held for ethnic minority students. The aim is to ensure that ethnic minority students enjoy opportunities for quality education.” (para. 141)

**Suggested questions:** *Are Uyghur students provided equal access to Uyghur-language instruction in schools at all education levels? How does the government ensure Uyghur children are able to study in their mother tongue?*

21. In 2017, the Hotan Prefecture Education Department banned the use of the Uyghur language “at all education levels up to, and including secondary school, in favor of Mandarin.”<sup>43</sup> It also instructed authorities in Hotan Prefecture to “prohibit the use of Uyghur language, writing, signs and pictures in the educational system and on campuses.” The directive also called upon local schools to “resolutely correct the flawed method of providing Uyghur language training to Chinese language teachers.”<sup>44</sup>
22. In January 2018, four UN Special Rapporteurs issued a Joint Other Letter to the government of China regarding its ban of the Uyghur language in schools, writing: “We would like to express

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Zenz, Adrian (July 2020). “Report: Sterilizations, IUDs, and Coercive Birth Prevention: The CCP’s Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birth Rates in Xinjiang,” *The Jamestown Foundation - China Brief* Volume: 20 Issue: 12. Available at: <https://jamestown.org/program/sterilizations-iuds-and-mandatory-birth-control-the-ccps-campaign-to-suppress-uyghur-birth-rates-in-xinjiang/>

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; the Special Rapporteur on the right to education and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, “Concerning the directive on bilingual education issued on 28 June 2017 by Hotan’s Education Department”, OHCHR, January 2018. Available at: <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=23557>

<sup>44</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (May 2019). “Resisting Chinese Linguistic Imperialism: Abduweli Ayup and the Movement for Uyghur Mother Tongue-Based Education.” Available at: [https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP\\_Resisting\\_Chinese\\_Linguistic\\_Imperialism\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_Resisting_Chinese_Linguistic_Imperialism_May_2019.pdf)

our serious concern over the directive issued by the Education Department in Hotan Prefecture on 28 June 2017 and its potential negative impact on the enjoyment of the right to education without discrimination by the Uyghur minority in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China, their right to use their own language freely without interference or any form of discrimination and to take part in cultural life, and the right of members of a linguistic and ethnic minority to use their own language among themselves. We are concerned at the disproportionate and hence discriminatory provisions of the directive, which impose a ban on, or seriously reduce, the use of the Uyghur language in educational settings in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.”<sup>45</sup>

23. The government of China’s implementation of ‘bilingual education’ programs in the Uyghur Region beginning in the mid-1980s has intentionally weakened teaching and the use of the Uyghur language. In practice, ‘bilingual education’ in the Uyghur Region is more a policy of transitioning Uyghur students at all levels of education to speak and learn only in Mandarin Chinese, rather than having them learn simultaneously in their native tongue. To facilitate this, Chinese officials have organized an influx of Han Chinese-language teachers into the Uyghur Region through special incentives, while Uyghur teachers are fired or are not able to find jobs in state-run educational institutions.<sup>46</sup>
24. The numbers and funding of “bilingual educational institutions” indicate a growing monopoly of Chinese-language schools: In 1995, 5,533 students were enrolled in ‘bilingual’ schools in the Uyghur Region, by 2007 it was 294,000, by 2010, 994,300 and by 2012, 1,410,000. The regional government has now set a target of 2,600,000 students for 2020 - a goal which constitutes enrolling nearly all non-ethnically Han students in the Uyghur Region into these schools so as to firmly establish Mandarin as their primary language.<sup>47</sup>

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### **About the Uyghur Human Rights Project:**

UHRP promotes the rights of the Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim peoples in East Turkistan, referred to by the Chinese government as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, through research-based advocacy. UHRP publishes reports and analysis in English and Chinese to defend Uyghurs’ civil, political, social, cultural, and economic rights according to international human rights standards.

UHRP documents violations; highlights human rights defenders, survivors, and victims; and researches avenues for defense and positive promotion of Uyghurs’ human rights, especially in the arenas of policymaking, grassroots action, and cultural rights promotion. We emphasize bringing forward Uyghur voices and Uyghur experiences to international fora and decision-makers.

<sup>45</sup> Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; the Special Rapporteur on the right to education and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, “Concerning the directive on bilingual education issued on 28 June 2017 by Hotan’s Education Department,” OHCHR, January 2018. Available at: <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=23557>

<sup>46</sup> Uyghur Human Rights Project (May 2015). “Uyghur Voices on Education: Chinese Assimilative ‘Bilingual Education’ Policy in East Turkistan.” Available at: <https://uhrp.org/press-release/uhrp-releases-report-bilingual-education-east-turkestan—uyghur-voices-education.html>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.