



Norwegian
Helsinki Committee



Open Letter Calling on Norway Oil Fund Divestment from Hikvision and Dahua

March 11, 2020

We, a coalition of six human rights organizations, write to express our serious concerns regarding investments held by the Government Pension Fund of Norway (also known as the “Oil Fund”), in Chinese technology companies Hikvision Digital Technology and Zhejiang Dahua Technology, both of which are directly implicated in gross and continued human rights violations in the Uyghur region of China. The Fund must take immediate steps to divest from both companies.

Hikvision, the world’s largest maker of surveillance cameras, and Dahua, a large provider of video surveillance products and services, have both won more than \$1 billion worth of Chinese government-backed contracts in the Uyghur region [since 2016](#).

Hikvision and Dahua products and services have been used by the Chinese government to monitor and suppress Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other religious and ethnic groups, including the mass arbitrary detention of [at least 1 million](#) in internment camps. The issue has been repeatedly raised by [human rights groups](#), [the European Union](#), the [UN](#) and by the [Norwegian Government](#) itself, on a number of occasions.

Both companies were added to a US trade blacklist in October 2019 which includes 20 Chinese public security bureaus and six other companies, all implicated in human rights violations against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims including mass detention and surveillance.

The Oil Fund makes clear its [focus](#) on responsible investment. It [recognizes](#) a set of international standards which includes integrating human rights into company policies and strategy, reporting on salient human rights issues, and engaging transparently on human rights through grievance mechanisms. The Oil Fund also has expressed its support for, and compliance with, the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#).

These standards could not be further from those adopted by Hikvision and Dahua. Both companies qualify for observation or exclusion according to section 3 (a.) of the Fund’s own [guidelines](#):

“Companies may be put under observation or be excluded if there is an unacceptable risk that the company contributes to or is responsible for: a) serious or systematic human rights violations, such as murder, torture, deprivation of liberty, forced labour and the worst forms of child labour [...].”

Norway’s Oil Fund is by no means the only culprit, however. A growing number of investment funds, corporations and other entities have publicly disclosed investments in these companies and continue to do so.

While immediate divestment will not solve the human rights crisis, it would send a clear signal to these investors that the world’s largest sovereign wealth fund is not interested in supporting those that

participate in, or enable, gross and systematic human rights violations. It would likewise ensure that the Oil Fund does not continue to profit from those violations going forward.

While we acknowledge that the Fund's Ethical Council has indicated greater attention to investigating whether technology companies' tools are being used for "improper surveillance", the time is now to seriously reassess its investments in Hikvision and Dahua and to take appropriate action to ensure it complies with its own ethical standards.

Sincerely,

Norwegian Helsinki Committee
Norwegian PEN
Norwegian Uyghur Committee
Rafto Foundation for Human Rights
Uyghur Human Rights Project
World Uyghur Congress

For media inquiries, please contact:

Adiljan Abdurihim, Norwegian Uyghur Committee: info@uigurene.no
Peter Irwin, Uyghur Human Rights Project: pirwin@uhrp.org
Ryan Barry, World Uyghur Congress: ryan.barry@uyghurcongress.org