



The Muslim World Has Failed the Uyghur



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THE MUSLIM WORLD HAS FAILED THE UYGHUR

The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, also known as the UFL, signed into law inflicted against Uyghur in China

Khaled Beydoun

Jan 12 2023

The longstanding persecution of Uyghur Muslims devolved into a full-fledged genocide during the last several years. This indigenous Muslim and Turkic population, however, has not only been ignored by governments in Muslim-majority nations, but even more chillingly, Muslim leaders. Many state heads and politicians have backed the Communist government in China – the very entity that devised and is currently unleashing a genocide against their coreligionist sisters and brothers, Uyghur Muslims.

Even more nefariously, these leaders are using Islam to legitimize genocide and faith-wash the horrors inflicted against Uyghur men and women, children and elders.

[A new low took place this week.](#)

Dr. Ali Rashid-Al Nuaimi, chairman of the World Muslim Communities Council, organized a delegation of thirty imams and Islamic scholars from fourteen nations. This delegation visited occupied East Turkistan, called “Xinjiang” by China, for a dog and pony show wielded as propaganda by the Chinese government to endorse, and by way of symbolism,

Islamically endorse the genocidal campaign against the Uyghur.

These imams and Islamic scholars were walking pawns on a propaganda chessboard, who willingly traded their reputations and names in exchange for material interests, it seems.

The delegation boasted figures from Saudi Arabia and Syria, Egypt and Bosnia and Herzegovina, who offered platitudes that sheepishly conflated genocide with “war on terror” policing. In turn, echoing the very Islamophobic lies and lines that western governments, including France and the United States, peddle to justify the strident policing and civil liberties crackdowns on Muslims.

Dr. Abdullah al-Obaid of Saudi Arabia endorsed the persecution of Uyghur under the bigoted war on terror logic, stating alongside Ma Xingrui (Communist Party Chief in Xinjiang), that, “The government

has made a huge and consistent effort in eradicating violence, extremism and terrorism, but there are still extreme ideas inciting terror and violence.”

Shameful. But a prevailing geopolitical reality that positions China as a lead superpower is that Muslims-majority governments, like other states, will swiftly sacrifice their religious commitments in exchange for political and economic interests. While that is a sobering reality that we have come to expect, imams and Islamic scholars flattening our faith, Islam, into a political tool to endorse genocide, and justify the extermination of a proud and native Muslim people, is a step too far, and a step too deep into the infernos of hypocrisy and hubris.

But this is not fiction, a postmodern postscript to Dante’s *Inferno* or another case of geopolitics gone wrong.

This is, in short, an affront to Islam. An



affront to a Muslim people struggling for dignity, self-determination, and basic survival.

That plight is why I showcased a young Uyghur refugee, Muslima, as the face of my forthcoming book on global Islamophobia, *The New Crusades*. Their plea, however, has been largely ignored by the Muslim World, and for leaders claiming the seats of governments and religious institutions, betrayed by siding with a genocidal enemy.

These leaders are not only on the wrong side of history. But when the black ink dries on the white pages, will be singled

out for having the stain of red of blood on their hands. The blood of Muslims; Uyghur Muslims.

The East Turkistan government in exile, which represents the global Uyghur diaspora, sharply condemned the delegation and its theatre of shame.

So do I. So should you. All of you.

Khaled A. Beydoun is a law professor at Wayne State University in Detroit and the Berkman Center at Harvard. He is the author of the forthcoming book, *The New Crusades: Islamophobia and the Global War on Muslims*. You can find him on his socials at @khaledbeydoun.



HE Dr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, Chairman of the World Muslim Communities Council (TWMCC)

Remarks During Meeting with Officials of China's Xinjiang



- Pride in identity, religion and belonging must be reinforced by educational speech from beginning
- Uyghur youth need persuasive speech win their minds to not fall prey to terrorist groups

- We congratulate China on completion of anti-terrorism plan in Xinjiang
- Relationship between Islamic civilisation and China is historical and characterised by friendship, cooperation and alliance
- Interest we have found in Xinjiang embodies Chinese leadership's determination to serve all people
- Reasonable people all over the world need a safe, stable, and prosperous China
- China's security and stability are not only a national interest but a global interest
- Caring for Muslims in China is a great necessity
- We present to world that affiliations do not conflict but complement each other
- It is necessary for national framework to be comprehensive and brings together all identities



PRO-CHINESE PROPAGANDA BY THE WORLD MUSLIM COMMUNITIES COUNCIL: UYGHURS STRIKE BACK

Muslim delegation visited East Turkistan and reported all is well there. Uyghur throughout the world are denouncing its statement as Goebbels-style propaganda.

by Gulfiye Y, with Abdurehim Gheni
Uyghur

01/24/2023

“We are happy to see Muslims in East Turkistan lead a happy life. They fully enjoy the freedom of religious belief.” As reported by Bitter Winter, this was the unbelievable statement by a delegation of thirty Islamic clerics and intellectuals led by Emirates scholar Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi on behalf of The World Muslim Communities Council (TWMCC), during

a visit to the Uyghur homeland stage-managed by the Chinese government this month.

Al Nuaimi said that in Chinese culture there is no concept of targeting Muslims or Islam, adding that it is their [TWMCC] responsibility to tell the world about China’s prosperity and development. Really?

China was very selective on who was invited to “tour” the region. There were no independent scholars or journalists, and all

invitees were connected to governments that have never acknowledged the Uyghur genocide nor any human rights violations in China. This visit also comes after claims that Egypt, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia have been deporting Uyghur refugees back to China, despite obvious concerns over their safety if sent back.

We would like to compare this attitude towards the Uyghur genocide to how the same Islamic countries, and often the same Islamic intellectuals, reacted to offensive cartoons published in Europe. Readers may remember the cartoon controversy of September 2005, when “Jyllands-Posten,” a Danish newspaper, published twelve cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad. Within six months, 139 people died and 823 were injured by violence following the controversy. Danish, Austrian, and Norwegian embassies were

burned in Syria and Iran. Islamic leaders called for a boycott of Danish goods, and the cartoonists themselves had to go into hiding due to death threats.

Even more well-known is the “Charlie Hebdo” shooting of January 7, 2015, following the publication by the French magazine of cartoons offensive to Islam. Twelve people were killed, including eight cartoonists and journalists of the magazine. Five people died in a related attack in Paris days later. The “Charlie Hebdo” cartoons, too, elicited a worldwide condemnation from the Islamic world and its intellectuals.

We do not condone offenses to religion and to Islam. However, we ask the question: is the Uyghur genocide a less serious attack on Islam than the publication of offensive cartoons in Europe? If some regard

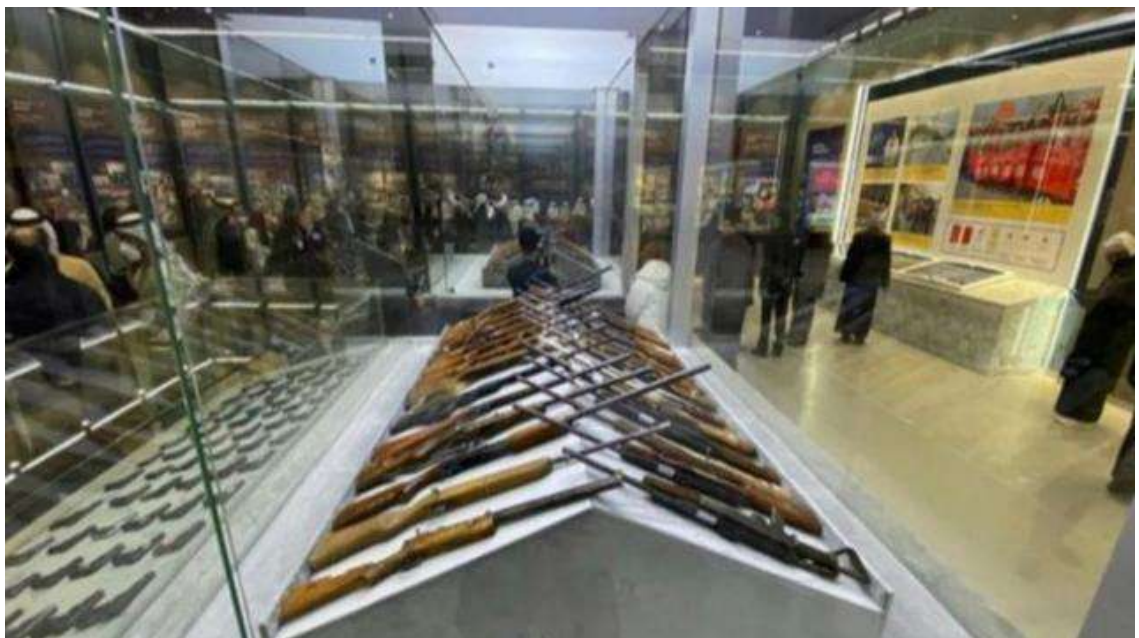


symbolic offenses as intolerable, why they did not react when the Holy Quran was burned in East Turkistan (Ch. Xinjiang) or its verses referencing Allah were written on floor tiles in a café to be walked on? Are the desecration of mosques less offensive than satirical drawings? Why the different reactions—different in the extreme—by the Islamic world? One led to attacks on several embassies and widespread violence and murder; the other elicits little or no condemnation. The two publishers were small private businesses in contrast to the government-sanctioned actions directly targeting a whole people, their faith, their life, their very existence.

It is difficult to explain such an attitude, which is obviously motivated by political and economic interests and agendas. Unless... Unless East Turkistan can be presented as a utopia of peace and religious liberty, as the visiting Muslim

delegation claimed. In this case, there is no need for protest.

However, this is a travesty of the reality. In a statement after TWMCC's visit, the International Union of The East Turkistan Organizations wrote that, "More than 16000 Religious places are destroyed, over half a million Muslim Uyghur Children had been victims of state-run apostasy agendas of China, millions of Muslims are sent to concentration camps, thousands of healthy Muslims are affected by China's organ harvesting missions, millions of Islamic literature had been burned and entire Uyghur Muslims have been criminalized for their Islamic faith. This is what the Islamic leaders are praising, supporting, endorsing, and taking sides with China's massacre and genocide policies against the Muslims of East Turkistan, and the act of the Delegation clearly demonstrates a total betrayal of the teaching of Islam."



That there is no religious freedom in East Turkistan is continuously confirmed by international reports, most recently by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

A group of distinguished Muslim scholars and organizations also published a “Joint Statement of Muslim Scholars and Organizations against Chinese Misleading Propaganda for The Islamic Region.” We read there that, “We, the ‘Commissions of Muslim Scholars and the Participating Organizations,’ condemn and denounce in the strongest terms the visit of The World Muslim Communities Council (TWMCC) to East Turkistan, a visit that justifies the Chinese crime at the expense of the genocide of Muslims in East Turkistan, which is supported by the statements of the Council officials that praise the Chinese achievements in fighting ‘terrorism’ and ‘extremism’ and the ‘necessity’ of melting different

ethnicities into one crucible. [This is] in strange disregard for facts [that] are supported by evidence and reports issued by various international forums and organizations about the deplorable humanitarian situation in East Turkistan, and Chinese practices which are at the level of Genocide, systematically and continuously practiced against Muslims in East Turkistan.”

TWMCC’s actions discredit the entire mission and makes it irrelevant to any positive or beneficial aid to the Uyghurs. It is a monstrous falsehood, an embarrassment and a millstone of shame on these individuals and their organizations. But their testimony will be of use to some to promote the narrative put out by the Chinese Communist Party to the detriment and demoralization of the Uyghurs. Perhaps a big lie continuously repeated will eventually be believed.

TWMCC’s visit did not succeed in covering



up the Uyghur genocide. It just exposed the corruption of Arab regimes and the brutality and cunning of the Chinese autocracy.

The Chinese Mission at the United Nations Human Rights Council stated that, “East Turkistan-related issues are not human rights issues at all, but issues of counter-terrorism, de-radicalization, and anti-separatism.”

We are reminded of Joseph Goebbels, Hitler’s Minister of Propaganda, whose strategies have been studied extensively after World War II. Goebbels’ strategy has been reconstructed as a five-point model:

Avoid abstract ideas—appeal to the emotions.

Constantly repeat just a few ideas. Use stereotyped phrases.

Give only one side of the argument.

Continuously criticize your opponents.

Pick out one special “enemy” for special vilification.

Goebbels-style propaganda was at work when the Islamic delegation was accompanied to visit the Museum of Fighting Extremism & Terrorism in Urumqi. The Chinese propaganda mouthpiece “Global Times” reported that, “Saudi Arabia’s former Minister of Education Abdullah Saleh Al Obaid said they felt grieved to see the terrorist attacks in East Turkistan. Osama Elsayed Mahmoud Mohamed Saad, the Egyptian president’s advisor for religious affairs, said that the exhibition exposed the crimes of terrorists and also showed the efforts made by the Chinese government and Chinese people to counter terrorism.”



This can be summarized as “China and the Chinese Communist Party good; Uyghurs bad; Goebbels proud.”

The only statement the happy group did not make was to declare that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is in full expression in East Turkistan. But this might have been too much even for them.

One of the authors of this article, known as the “lonely Uyghur” protesting in Amsterdam, has 19 family members missing and has spent more than five years without knowing whether they are alive or dead, imprisoned, or suffering atrocities. The fate of the women is of deepest concern. Many friends are missing. The evidence of the atrocities is unquestionable and unbearable. This family is the evidence of China’s genocide against Uyghurs.

We experience the fear and helplessness under such tyranny. We see the lack of concrete results of the many human rights efforts by organizations and governments, the impotency of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And now we have to suffer the pain of so-called Islamic clerics testifying to the utopian life of the Uyghurs. These Muslim

clerics and intellectuals have violated the teachings of the Quran by lying about fellow Muslims and delivering them into the hands of an adversary. May they suffer eternal shame.

We conclude with the words of Burhan Uluyol Uyghur, an academic at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, and a regular protester against the genocide: “Cruel China has arrested my father, mother, brothers, uncles, and nephews. They have been under arrest for four [now six] years. We are here to be their voice... Organization of Islamic Countries, listen to our voice! You can ignore Uyghur people or you can ignore East Turkistan, but you have to protect the Islam in East Turkistan! Protect the houses of Allah! Protect the honor of Islam! Protect the values of Islam!” TWMCC has not offended Muslims and Uyghurs only, but also the victims of CCP brutality in Tibet, Hong Kong, Southern Mongolia, and all those persecuted and jailed in China for their religious or political dissent. The thirty members of TWMCC delegations have sided with the persecutors and abandoned the victims. This is unforgivable. They have unleashed a backlash that should





JOINT STATEMENT OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS AND ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST CHINESE MISLEADING PROPAGANDA FOR THE ISLAMIC REGION

In The Name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful

Thank Allah, and may Allah's blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah,

We, the Commissions of Muslim Scholars and the Participating Organizations, condemn and denounce in the strongest terms the visit of the World Muslim Communities Council (WMCC) to East Turkistan, a visit that justifies the Chinese crime at the expense of the genocide of Muslims in East Turkistan, which is supported by the statements of the Council officials that praise the Chinese achievements in fighting "terrorism" and "extremism" and the "necessity" of melting different ethnicities into one crucible. In strange disregard for facts and are supported by evidence and reports issued by various international forums

and organizations about the deplorable humanitarian situation in East Turkistan, and Chinese practices which are at the level of Genocide, systematically and continuously practiced against Muslims in East Turkistan.

We jointly support the following statements:

The tragedy of East Turkistan continues, millions remain in Chinese concentration camps. mosques are demolished and some of them are turned into clubs and cafes, Qurans are burned, and all manifestations of Islam have become prohibited. No women with an Islamic veil, No Islamic funeral, No Islamic marriage, and more than that, the relentless war is intensifying to erase the Islamic heritage and Muslim identity of the East Turkistan people, the goal is to sinicize them and strip them of their faith and culture.

We condemn the visit of WMCC's delegation to East Turkistan, which has been occupied by China since 1949 and calls it "Xinjiang", which came in response to an invitation from the Chinese regime to justify its ugly face.

We affirm that this council does not represent Muslim scholars, nor does it speak in their name, while Muslim scholars' opinion is clear regarding the Muslim issue in East Turkistan.

We call for independent visits by delegations of scholars, politicians, writers, and journalists to the region, in order to inspect the situation of Muslims, visit camps and prisons called rehabilitation centers, conduct an unrestricted investigation, and communicate directly with the East Turkistan people, as well as interview the Uyghur community in the diaspora, to determine the real situation of Muslims in East Turkistan.

We call on any delegation visiting the region not to engage in political calculations that would turn a blind eye to East Turkistan people's plight and the injustices they live in and not to participate in the genocide by justifying Chinese crimes against the Uyghur people, and this is not appropriate for a free person, as well as being a Muslim scholar.

We, the signatories of this statement, remind all Muslims that China practices deception, lies, and concealment of facts to convince the Islamic world to arrange such visits. And the Muslim world should not be deceived by the Communist

Party's lies and should make real efforts to establish the facts and help Muslims who are subjected to genocide, according to reports documented by international organizations such as the United Nations, Amnesty International, and other human rights organizations.

We call on Muslim scholars, communities, organizations, and countries to be aware of the fact that the East Turkistan issue is the most urgent matter for the whole Muslim community and humanity and to recognize China's sinicization of Islam and the eradication of Muslim identity as a war against Islam and Muslims, and to recognize the Genocide which is caused by the occupation of East Turkistan, and to place the occupied East Turkistan under international supervision for the protection of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims there and the termination of the Chinese colonization.

Signatories:

Organizations:

International Union of East Turkistan Organizations

Association of Palestinian Scholars Abroad

Wisdom Association

Association of Muslim Scholars

Witnesses Civilization Center for Studies

Minority Studies Center

Secretary General of the Committee for the Support of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace

Secretary General of the Association of Sunni Scholars	Scientific and Intellectual Research Center (IFAM)
Lawyer in international law	Islam21c
Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq	Stand4Uyghurs
Libyan Scholars Association	The Cordoba Foundation, UK
Assistant Secretary General of the Maghreb Scholars Association	East Turkistan Education and Solidarity Association
Yemeni Renaissance Association	Satuk Buğrahan Science and Civilization Foundation
Yemen Scholars Association	East Turkistan Human Rights Watch Association
President of the Academy of International Relations	East Turkistan Ulemas Association
Secretary General of the International Commission for the Liberation of Prisoners and Detainees	East Turkistan Press and Media Association
Iraq Scholars and Advocates Association	Blue Crescent Humanitarian Aid Association
International Association for Rights and Freedoms	East Turkistan Nuzugum Culture and Family Association
Istanbul Human Rights Association	Uyghur Science and Civilization Research Foundation
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)	



East Turkistan Entrepreneurial Tradesmen
and Industrial Businessmen Association

East Turkistan New Generation Movement

East Turkistan Sports and Development
Association

Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Science and Irfan
Foundation

Hira Foundation

Furkan Education and Solidarity
Association

Swedish Uyghur Education Association
(UIGURISKA UTBILDNINGSFÖR
ENINGEN)

European East Turkistan Education
Association (STICHTING EUROPA OOST
TURKISTAN EDUCATIE CENTRUM)

Finland Uyghur Cultural Association

UMER UYGHUR TRUST

Science Service Assistance and Solidarity
Association

Abdusattar Hacı Saidiye Science and

Knowledge Association

Indonesia Save Uyghur

Free Uyghur Now

Malaysia Muslim Youth Movement (ABIM)

Libyan Scholars Association

Libyan Fatwa House

Konya Non-Governmental Organizations
Platform

International Lawyers Association

Iraq Scholars and Advocates Association

Union of Volunteer Organizations of
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IHH Humanitarian Aid Foundation

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Individuals:

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Sheikh Faisal Al-Safi

Dr. Mohamed Abdel Karim



Prof. Dr. Wasfi Ashour Abu Zeid

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Prof. Dr. Walid Al-Tabtabaei

Yasin Aktay

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Dr. Tariq Shandab

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Abdullah Kadioğlu

Dr. Mohamed Al-Saghir

Maira Khan

Dr. Enes Al Tikriti

Hidayet Oğuzhan

Dr. Alimcan Buğda

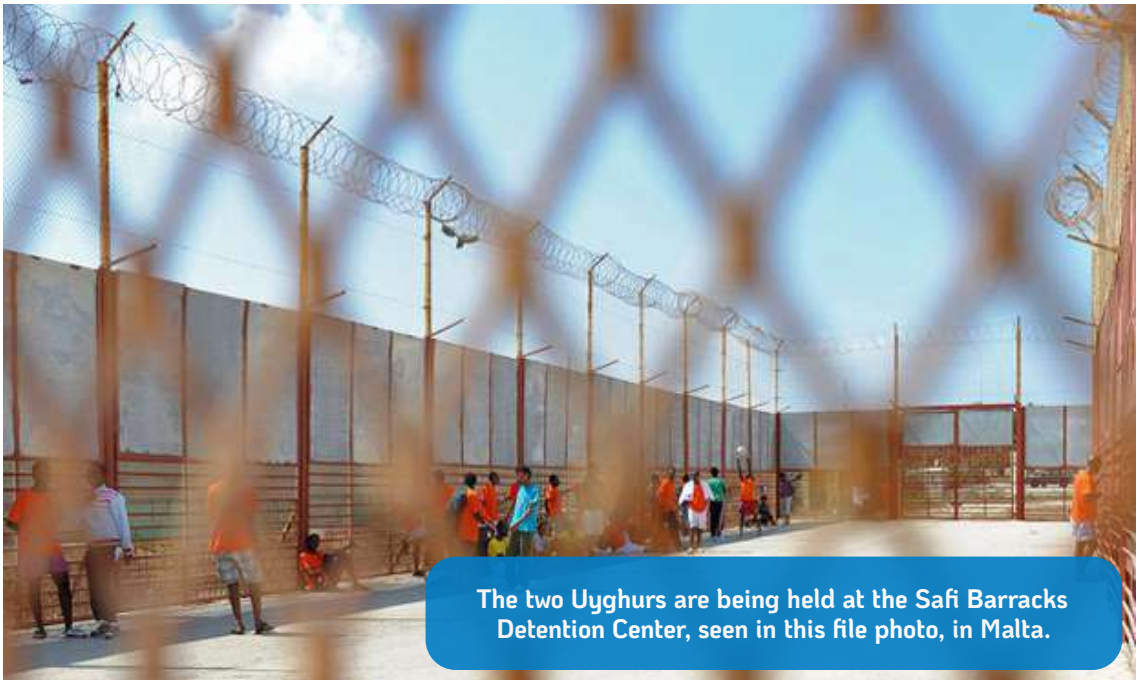
Dr. Abdulhalik Uygur

Khairul Anwar

Dr. Ahmed Mowafak Zidan

Abdul Malik Mujahid





The two Uyghurs are being held at the Safi Barracks Detention Center, seen in this file photo, in Malta.

RIGHTS GROUPS CONSIDER LEGAL STEPS IN CASE OF UYGHURS FACING DEPORTATION IN MALTA

The European Court of Human Rights ordered the country not to return the pair to China.

By Jilil Kashgary for RFA Uyghur

2023.01.19

Two human rights groups instrumental in getting the European Court of Human Rights to order Malta to halt the forcible deportation of two Muslim Chinese asylum-seekers of Uyghur ethnicity are now strategizing with lawyers about their next move.

“We together with the lawyers will evaluate the rest of the procedures to be followed, which may be a full application to the European Court—maybe. There might be other avenues, but we are discussing that,”

said Laura Harth, campaign director at the Spanish humanitarian group Safeguard Defenders, which learned about the two Uyghurs in August 2022. She did not elaborate on the possible options.

Safeguard Defenders and the Maltese NGO Aditus Foundation have taken up the case of the married couple who arrived in Malta in 2016 and applied for international protection because of the danger of persecution they faced back in China based on their ethnicity and religion.

After authorities denied their application

in 2017, they went into hiding in the country and were issued a return decision and removal order on Aug. 1, 2022.

The couple raised a claim based on the non-refoulement principle, which states that no one should be returned to a country where they would face persecution, violence or death.

But the authorities rejected it on Jan. 12.

The next day, the two rights groups filed an application with the court under Rule 39 for urgent interim measures against Malta, a European Union member state.

The move came a day after the Maltese Immigration Appeals Board's final rejection of the couple's appeal for humanitarian protection, Aditus Foundation said in a statement. Immigration authorities held the pair at Safi Barracks, an immigration detention center, pending their imminent

deportation to China.

The Strasbourg, France-based Court of Human Rights issued the order on Jan. 16 after Maltese authorities decided to send the pair back to China despite evidence of atrocities committed against Uyghurs in the far-western Xinjiang region and the transnational persecution of the couple through reprisals against their family members in China.

Under Rule 39, the court can indicate interim measures to any state party to the European Convention on Human Rights only in cases where there is an imminent risk of irreparable damage, such as requests by applicants to suspend an extradition.

Malta's Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade did not respond to questions about the situation sent by



RFA on Thursday. A ministry official who answered the phone on Friday said officials would respond to the inquiry, but no comments had been received as of publication time.

Procedures ‘far from perfect’

The two human rights groups and lawyers representing the couple provided Malta’s immigration board with ample evidence of the atrocities Uyghurs face in China, including statements by foreign governments, parliaments and the United Nations, Harth said. They also cited a damning report by the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights that said China may have committed crimes against humanity in Xinjiang.

But the Maltese board said the “appellants failed to produce further evidence to substantiate the principle of non-refoulement,” Safeguard Defenders said in a statement.

In the coming days, the groups will discuss and evaluate with attorneys the legal procedures to be followed, Harth said.

But she indicated that the process may not go smoothly.

“The Maltese authorities have obviously said that they respect the order from the European Court, but at the same time,

we’ve also seen in Maltese media that the Maltese authorities said that they are not likely to overturn their decision,” she told RFA.

But even though Malta’s asylum procedures rejected the Uyghur couple’s request, the procedures are far from perfect, said Neil Falzon, director of Aditus.

He cited a recent judgment from the European Court of Human Rights, involving a Bangladeshi journalist, which indicated problems in the way Malta reviews asylum requests.

“In the light of these problems, and of international awareness on the situation of Uyghurs in China, it is untenable for Malta to insist that all has been done to protect our clients,” he said.

In the meantime, Maltese authorities released the Uyghur couple on Wednesday, Harth said.

“Their status remains what it was,” she said. “They have not obtained asylum at this point. They are protested by interim measures from the European Court.”

Translated by RFA Uyghur. Written in English by Roseanne Gerin. Edited by Malcolm Foster.



UYGHUR MEMBER OF ‘PROPAGANDA VANGUARD’ CONFIRMED DETAINED IN EAST TURKISTAN

Authorities detained Hurshide Kerim after finding an ‘illegal’ book in her home.

By Shohret Hoshur for RFA Uyghur
2023.01.27

Authorities in Xinjiang have given a 20-year jail sentence to a Uyghur woman who at one time staunchly supported China’s anti-extremism campaign targeting the mostly Muslim ethnic group in the restive northwestern region, while two of her sons were each jailed for 17 years, local security officials said.

Hurshide Kerim was a member of the Communist Party’s “propaganda vanguard,” a group of Uyghurs who traveled around Xinjiang and publicly

denounced “religious extremism” under China’s nearly 10-year-old “strike hard” campaign aimed at what Beijing deems to be terrorism and extremism in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Authorities accused her of being a “two-faced” Uyghur—a derogatory term for local people who work for the government but also observe elements of Uyghur or Muslim culture—after police found an “illegal” book in her home in Ghulja county, known as Yining in Chinese, the sources said.

Kerim’s case illustrates how some

Uyghurs were amenable to serve as propaganda tools for Chinese authorities in exchange for higher salaries, free travel, and promotions by denouncing the traditional practices and beliefs of their ancient Turkic culture. But like ordinary Uyghurs, they were not immune from arrest or detention if authorities discovered that they had willingly or unwillingly committed infractions.

They also face the scorn of ordinary Uyghurs for serving a Chinese government that multiple Western countries and human rights groups accuse of committing genocide or crimes against humanity for their treatment of the Turkic minorities of Xinjiang.

Kerim, who has six children and more than 10 grandchildren, was 55 years old when she was arrested in 2017 and is serving her sentence in Baykol Women's Prison in Ghulja, said a security official in Qarayaghach town, where the woman resides.

When Chinese authorities began the strike hard campaign against in 2014, they imposed severe penalties on Uyghurs, arrested them arbitrarily, and began a propaganda campaign against the group's ethnic customs and religious faith under the guise of promoting modernity. As part of the campaign, authorities confiscated and burned a vast number of religious and cultural books.

Authorities target sons

Authorities also charged Kerim's two sons, Merdan and Mewlan for violating China's "planned birth policy" in the past under which ethnic minorities were allowed to have up to three children, though some Uyghurs had larger families. But in 2017, the Chinese government began enforcing family planning policies in Xinjiang as a population-control measure.

Kerim, a villager from Qarayaghach town, from which several Uyghur propagandists were hired, was taken away when



authorities began mass arbitrary arrests and detentions began in Xinjiang in 2017, town security officials said. Local police also arrested those she previously criticized.

The woman was active in propaganda work in the neighborhood, said one security official who worked with her, but who declined to be identified so he could speak freely.

“She was [part of the] propaganda vanguard that gave speeches against extremism during meetings,” he told RFA. “The police arrested her after suddenly searching her house, because they found an illegal book.”

The security official said he had no further information on Kerim and did not know what type of book police found in her home, whether it belonged to her, or if she had confiscated it while working.

An employee at the local judicial department confirmed that authorities sentenced Kerim to 20 years in jail, but also did not know the title of the confiscated book or its contents.

“Hurshide was a good and well-dressed lady, a Communist Party member, and worked 30 years for the government,” she told RFA. “The government sentenced her to prison for her mistake.”

Kerim has three daughters and three sons, two of whom were sent for political “re-education” and later sentenced to 17 years in prison, she said.

Other collaborators arrested

Uyghur vanguard propagandists in other parts of Xinjiang also have suffered the same fate as Kerim, with demotions and punishments.

Patigul Dawut, who enjoyed a degree of fame for a while when she worked as a member of the propaganda vanguard in Korla, the second-largest city in Xinjiang and known as Kuerle in Chinese, was arrested in autumn 2017.

Authorities took her in for “allowing others to preach religion” because workers were said to have delivered Islamic sermons at her carpet factory, her husband told RFA at the time.

Dawut was ordered to serve six months in a local detention center, despite suffering from a number of health complications, said her spouse, Naman Bawdun, a Uyghur former head and Communist Party secretary of a village in Korla.

Bawudun, whom authorities had recognized as a “vanguard of ethnic unity” was arrested with Dawut, while their daughter, a police officer, was fired from her job.

Other Uyghurs who previously worked for Chinese authorities also have come under attack in recent years.

Nur Bekri, the highest-ranking ethnic Uyghur in the Chinese government, who served as the head of China’s National Energy Administration and vice chairman of the National Development and Reform

Commission, was arrested on corruption charges in 2018. He was highly unpopular among Uyghurs because he supported China's repression of Muslim "extremists" and advocated Chinese-language education for Uyghur students.

Kadir Memet, former deputy chief of the Urumqi police department, was detained by authorities for unknown reasons in

2019. The highest-ranking Uyghur police officer in the regional capital was reviled for ruthlessly implementing Beijing's repressive policies against members of his ethnic community, sources told RFA at that time.

Translated by RFA Uyghur. Written in English by Roseanne Gerin. Edited by Paul Eckert.



Kamile Wayit, a 19-year-old college student at a university in China's Hebei province, was detained by police in December after returning to Xinjiang on winter break.

US-BASED UYGHUR MAN CALLS ON CHINA TO RELEASE HIS 19-YEAR-OLD SISTER

Kamile Wayit was detained after posting video about the recent 'white paper' protests across China

By Jane Tang for RFA Mandarin

2023.01.26

A Uyghur man working as an engineer in the United States has called on Chinese authorities in the northwestern region of

Xinjiang to release his 19-year-old sister, who was detained in December after posting a video relating to November's "white paper" protests across China.

"My 19-year-old sister Kamile Wayit has

been detained last month, on Dec. 12,” her brother Kewser Wayit said in a short video on his Twitter account on Jan. 22.

“She was a freshman in college studying preschool education at a university in Hebei province of China. However, when she went back for winter break, she has been detained by the local Artush city police after her arrival at home,” he said, describing his sister as “caring, courageous and clever.”

“She’s innocent, and committed no crime. I demand the Chinese authorities to release her immediately and let her speak to me,” he said. “I won’t stop until she’s free.”

Kamile Wayit’s detention comes as the authorities detain dozens of young people around the country for taking part in the “white paper” protests in late November.

Sparked by a fatal lockdown fire in an apartment building in Xinjiang’s regional capital Urumqi, the protests also took aim at the rolling lockdowns, mass surveillance and compulsory testing of the zero-COVID policy, with some protesters holding up blank sheets of A4 printer paper and others calling on President Xi Jinping to step down and call elections.

“I don’t know the reason for her detention, but it could be because of one of her posts on WeChat,” he told Radio Free Asia in a later interview. “When the uprising ... the protests started in China after the Urumqi fire, she did post something about that.”

“And then the police called my father

about it,” he said. “So it could be related to that or it could be related to me being abroad and being a bit, you know, active, here.”

“Mature and thoughtful”

Kewser Wayit described Kamile as “very mature and thoughtful” despite her young age, which he ascribed to her traditional Uyghur upbringing in an educated and cultivated family.

“She has read a lot of books about our history, our traditions, about culture, faith and a lot of other things that she can’t unlearn,” he said. “What China is trying to do now, the forced assimilation and trying to reinvent [Uyghur] society by wiping out our culture, our religion, really doesn’t fit with the environment she [was raised in].”

“She didn’t see herself fitting into this place, after seeing so many of her friends change over the past five or six years,” he said. “She still held onto her reason, which I also think presented a challenge to the authorities.”

Kamile had suffered particularly while living alone in an Urumqi high school dorm while her beloved father was in a “re-education” camp between 2017 and 2019, Kewser Wayit said.

“She was going through trauma and depression in those two years, especially because ... she was all alone,” he said. “I later learned that those days were really tough for her, that wouldn’t even be able to sleep at night time.”

“She had nightmares and ... remained unstable to this day,” he said, describing Kamile as “a fragile kind of soul.”

But she had been a happy, talkative child, he recalled.

“Since she was really, really young, like four or five years old, she would talk a lot and she would tell us a lot of stories,” he said. “Because in the beginning she was brought up by my grandparents.”

Families disappearing

He said many other families in his hometown in Artush are “being taken away or disappearing,” citing the case of his cousin Zulpiqar Qudret, a Shanghai Jiaotong University computer science student who went missing during the summer vacation of 2022 for “using foreign news software,” and who remains in custody today.

Kewser Wayit said he doesn’t want to think about what his sister has been going through in detention.

“I’m imagining what she has been going

through for the past 50 days ... because if she’s been going through interrogation, you know, whatever they do in custody, it hurts my feelings [just to think about it],” he said.

But he said he won’t remain silent any longer.

“I was silent for almost two years, while the people around me were also losing their relatives, and we just didn’t know what to do,” he said. “[I felt like] if I spoke up, then my mother would be detained, or my siblings, which is just the fear they put inside of us to stop us speaking up.”

“Dictatorships use fear to thrive on,” he said, warning that people overseas won’t be exempt as the Chinese Communist Party redoubles efforts to “export oppression” far beyond its borders.

“It would be a great time to speak up now, because China is afraid for their reputation and they’re afraid of us activists,” he said.

Translated by Luisetta Mudie. Edited by Malcolm Foster.



Kewser Wayit

@KewserWayit · Follow



I am devastated to learn that my 19 year old sister, Kamile Wayit, was detained by local police last month when she returned home for winter break. I demand Chinese authorities to release her immediately! I won't stop until she is freed!

Please share to help her.

#uyghur #china

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