

# Chinese Cotton Sold in UK Could be From Persecuted Uyghurs, Court Hears

By Harry Farley, BBC, 2022-10-26



The UK government acted unlawfully by not investigating whether some cotton imports come from Uyghur forced-labour camps in China, a court has heard.

Lawyers for the World Uyghur Congress said there were “reasonable grounds” to believe UK retailers had benefited from cotton made by Uyghurs held in China.

Rights groups say Xinjiang’s Muslim Uyghur minority are being persecuted and conscripted for forced labour.

Government lawyers said it needed more evidence of a link to be able to act.

Beijing strongly denies any abuses.

Around 20% of the world’s cotton is made in China, and Xinjiang cotton accounts for

85% of all Chinese cotton.

In the first of two days of hearings at the High Court in London, Mr Tom Forster KC, for the World Uyghur Congress and the Global Legal Action Network, said the case was «not remotely hypothetical» but concerned the UK government’s duty to investigate whether «dirty property» was entering the country from Xinjiang.

Sir James Eadie KC, representing the home secretary, HMRC and the National Crime Agency, said the government considered China’s effort «to silence and repress Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang [to be] appalling».

However, he said there needed to be a clear link between «the alleged criminality

and its specific product» to investigate whether goods were made in a foreign prison.

«At best, the claimant's case is that there is a compelling inference of a chance that a crime has been committed but it is unable to identify how, by whom, when, or where such an offence took place,» the government's lawyers argued.

«The existence of a general statistical likelihood is not (nor has it ever been) a basis for any criminal investigation or the exercise of any coercive power.»

They said government agencies needed the discretion to decide whether an investigation was likely to succeed before allocating resources.

«In the present context of an investigation in which the Chinese government would be implicated, there is no realistic prospect of police-to-police (or agency-to-agency) co-operation or of evidence being obtained by way of mutual legal assistance from the Chinese authorities, for example.»

#### «Enough evidence»

Mr Forster responded that the claimant was not alleging a crime had been committed, just that there was enough evidence to launch an investigation.

«No identified criminal property results in no investigation, which results in no identified criminal property.»

It is thought to be the first time a foreign court has heard legal arguments from the Uyghurs over the issue of forced labour in Xinjiang.

Rahima Mahmut, UK director of the World Uyghur Congress, told the BBC she had not seen her family in Xinjiang for almost six years.

She urged the UK government to follow the lead of the United States and pass legislation to ban cotton products thought to have been made in Xinjiang.

«A genocide is happening in my country,» she said. «This case is about accountability.

«For us this is a legal opportunity to go to the high court in this country to complain about the departments that have the responsibility to stop slave-laboured goods.»

Gearóid Ó Cuinn, director of Global Legal Action Network, said the UK government needed to match its strong rhetoric on China with action.

«Right now UK consumers are systematically exposed to consumer goods tainted by forced labour,» he said.

«Companies have categorically failed in their efforts to remedy this unacceptable situation and continue to trade in these illicit goods in broad daylight.»

A government spokesperson said it would be inappropriate to comment while litigation was continuing.

The hearing, before Mr Justice Dove, is due to conclude on Wednesday, with a ruling at a later date.



## Parliament Votes to Help Uyghurs and Condemn Genocide in China

*By The Globe and Mail, 2022-10-26*



Canadian MPs voted 258 to 0 to endorse a report calling on Ottawa to extend special immigration measures that would grant refuge to Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities fleeing repression from China.

The adopted motion was to concur, or agree with, a recent report by the House of Commons standing committee on immigration committee that said Canada needs to open its doors for these minorities because they “face an ongoing genocide” in China. This repeated a strong condemnation that angered Beijing in 2021.

The vote offers another reading of parliamentary sentiment on China’s repression. It was only in late August that United Nations High Commissioner

for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, in a report released just before she left office, said the “arbitrary and discriminatory detention” of Uyghurs and other minorities may constitute crimes against humanity.

MPs from all opposition parties supported Tuesday’s motion, moved by Conservative international development critic Garnett Genuis. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s cabinet abstained, as it did in February, 2021, when the House of Commons first called China’s conduct genocide.

International Trade Minister Mary Ng voted to endorse the report that condemns China and seeks help for Uyghurs but her office put out a statement saying this was a mistake, and Ms. Ng subsequently distanced herself from the vote.

The immigration committee report endorsed by the Commons on Monday asks Ottawa to extend existing special immigration measures to Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims and allow them to seek refuge in Canada and waive the requirement that they be first designated as refugees by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

It's only the first of two calls this week in Parliament to provide safe haven for Uyghurs and other minorities.

On Wednesday, debate begins on motion M-62 by Montreal-area Liberal MP Sameer Zuberi, who is calling on Ottawa to make room in its refugee intake numbers for 10,000 Uyghurs and members of other Turkic groups who have fled China and are living in third countries such as Turkey.

Mr. Zuberi has spent the last few months building support for his motion.

More than 160 Uyghur Canadians have registered to attend the visitor's gallery in the House of Commons Wednesday to watch debate on M-62, according to Mehmet Tohti, executive director of the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project. They will wear T-shirts saying "We were all once refugees," he said.

Rights groups and media reports say the Chinese government has committed grave human-rights violations against the Xinjiang region's largely Muslim Uyghur population, as well as other minorities. Forced labour and forced relocation to work in other provinces, China's critics say, are part of the latest stage in a

government-directed effort to exert control in Xinjiang, which Beijing has described as being infected with extremism. To date, however, Canada has done little to act on the genocide motion from February, 2021.

Despite changing customs law as of mid-2020 to prohibit imports made with forced labour, Ottawa has failed to intercept a single shipment that it could prove was made under coercion.

It's not the first time Canada has been urged to open its doors for Uyghur refugees.

In 2019, a Commons subcommittee on human rights, of which Mr. Zuberi was a member, published a report that, among other things, called on Canada to create a dedicated refugee stream for Uyghurs and other groups persecuted by China. Such a stream has not been established.

"I hope and am pressing very strongly for the government to create a program after what I hope will be a positive outcome for the vote on this motion," Mr. Zuberi said Tuesday.

The UN Human Rights Commissioner's August report on China's treatment of Uyghurs included "allegations of torture, sexual violence, ill-treatment, forced medical treatment, as well as forced labour and reports of deaths in custody."

Media reports have detailed how China has forced intrauterine devices, sterilization and even abortion on hundreds of thousands in Xinjiang.

The report said official population figures

indicate a sharp decline in birth rates. In the space of two years, from 2017 to 2019, it said, the birth rate in Xinjiang dropped more than 48 per cent: to 8.14 per thousand from 15.88 per thousand. The average for all of China is 10.48 per

thousand, the UN report said.

Uyghur Canadian advocate Mr. Tohti said it's time for Canada to put action behind words.

"That UN report is damning," he said.

## **'Architect' of Horrific Uyghur Crackdown 'Ousted' From China's Top Leadership Body**

*By The New Arab, 2022-10-24*



Chen Quanguo, the former party secretary in charge of Xinjiang's Uyghur-majority region, has been reportedly ousted from China's newly elected top leadership body.

Chen's name was missing from the 205 members of the Central Committee, the command centre of China, following the 20th Communist Party of China (CPC) Congress last week.

He is widely regarded as the man

responsible for executing draconian laws against the country's Uyghur Muslim minority, in a crackdown described by the US and others as a genocide.

He has been accused of being behind the forced disappearances, mass surveillance, and brutal incarnation of the hundreds of thousands of Uyghur Muslims.

"Chen is the primary architect of

policies that meet the definition of genocide under international law,” according to a 2020 tweet from the Uyghur Human Rights Project.

Chen’s removal from the group was surprising given he is only 66 years old, two years below the mandated retirement age of 68.

Earlier this year, a cache of documents called the ~~Xinjiang~~ Police Files revealed that Chen allegedly told his audience to treat Uyghurs returning from abroad “as criminals” during a speech in 2017.

He also reportedly instructed police to “arrest, detain, handcuff and shackle them [returnees] without exception”, according to the BBC.

In the same speech, he ordered police to “shoot dead” anyone who tried to escape from the brutal incarceration camps.

More than a million Uyghurs are

thought to have been detained in these facilities, where torture and other abuses are common.

China argues the camps are used for “re-training” Uyghurs and stamping out religious extremism, claims widely rejected by human rights groups.

Chen is one of the highest-ranked Chinese officials sanctioned by various countries in connection with abuses against the Uyghurs, including the US.

Before ~~Xinjiang~~, Chen Quanguo made his name as the governor of China’s Tibet region where he has been accused of ruling with an iron fist and overseeing the abuse of the local population.

Muslims in these camps have been forced to undergo abortions, drink alcohol and eat pork in what activists say is an attempt to destroy their unique Turkic Muslim culture.

## Chinese Representative Pushes Propaganda at College Campus Event

*By Campus Reform, 2022-10-28*

The Eisenhower Institute at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania invited a representative of the People’s Republic of China, General Jin Qian, to speak with students and faculty in a private meeting held on Oct. 6.

The purpose of this event was to open a respectful dialogue with the Chinese Deputy Consul General and others about Chinese

and United States diplomatic relations and foreign perspectives.

In the meeting with Qian, students were encouraged to ask questions about politics, economics, foreign relations, and other diplomatic topics.

According to the student newspaper The Gettysburgian, when a student inquired about Qian’s perspectives on ~~Xinjiang~~, Qian





responded that though the word “genocide” has been thrown around, American media has distorted the truth of the CCP, denying accusations of minority persecution in China.

Prior to this, Qian stated that he believed the United States should not concern itself so much with Chinese issues, declaring that “China deserves the right to develop.”

Qian stated that he was “very touched” after seeing the battlefields of Gettysburg and the museum that covers the history of the American Civil War.

He went on to compare the division between North and South during the Civil War to the “peaceful reunification of China” the CCP allegedly seeks with Taiwan.

Just this summer, China threatened Taiwan with military force.

The Gettysburgian did not report if students challenged these statements. Over the past several years, reports of China’s persecution of the Uyghur ethnic people of Xinjiang and other human rights abuses have been hot topics across major news sources in America, including Campus Reform.

Campus Reform reached out to the Eisenhower Institute, Gettysburg College Media Relations, Tracie Potts, the Gettysburgian, and Gettysburg College students and student organizations for comment. This article will be updated accordingly.



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