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UN Rules Useless Against China's Forced Labor, Research Shows

By Stuart Lau, Politico, 2023.5.9

The EU's trade gurus, confronted with concerns over whether Chinese cotton or solar panels are being produced with Uyghur Muslim forced labor, have long turned to the International Labour Organization (ILO) guidelines for reference, adopting its rules while urging Beijing to ratify and observe them.

Except they might not be that effective in this case.

In a new research paper previewed by POLITICO, Adrian Zenz, a leading scholar on Beijing's repressive policies, casts doubt on the applicability of these rules by the ILO, a U.N. agency, arguing they were mainly drawn up to tackle commercially — not politically — driven exploitation.

In other words, Beijing is not primarily looking for cheap labor when its local officials in Xinjiang arrange for Uyghurs to go to work. Instead, it is a top-down political campaign to make these Uyghurs, collectively presumed by the state to be potential secessionists and terrorists, submit to Communist Party rule.

That, according to Zenz, a scholar at the U.S.-based Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, makes the ILO definition insufficient in tackling the issue. His research shows that the use of ILO indicators “largely fails” in evaluating the coercive elements in China's system against the Uyghurs.

“Conventional means such as the ILO's forced labor indicator framework,” Zenz says in a journal article previewed by POLITICO, “was

not designed to evaluate state-sponsored forced labor.”

Referring to the ILO’s 11 indicators for measuring forced labor, he writes: “These indicators were designed to measure forced labor in individual companies or economic sectors. They are largely unsuited to evaluating the key mechanism that underpin state-sponsored forced labor, especially in *Xinjiang*, where state goals for coercive mobilization are primarily political.”

“State-sponsored forced labor is not readily detected by examining individual workers, especially in highly repressive environments such as *Xinjiang* where they cannot speak freely,” adds Zenz, whose critical research led him to being sanctioned by China in 2021.

According to the European Commission’s proposal, the definition of “forced labor applied by state authorities” should be “aligned” with ILO Convention No. 105, which specifically prohibits the use of forced labor as punishment for the expression of political views; for economic development; as a means of labor discipline or punishment for participation in strikes; or for racial, religious or other discrimination.

China ratified ILO conventions on forced labor in August last year, and the provisions will enter into force this August. The ratification was widely seen as China’s strategy to woo Europe for deeper trade links while preparing for economic and technological warfare with the U.S.

Tracing the untraceable

Two particular features of China’s labor programs make it difficult for foreign companies to effectively apply ILO guidelines

to scrutinize forced labor.

First, eyewitness accounts are nearly impossible to gauge. Most of these workers are kept in guarded environments, even if they have not been criminally charged. In other cases, two eyewitnesses told POLITICO, the forced laborers involved were children, who were told it’s part of their curriculum to go to the fields to pick cotton.

Mamutjan Erkin, who said he worked as a high school teacher in the area of Artush back in 2005, recalled how he used to organize children to work on farms.

“From 5:30 a.m., the kids would need to be in front of the school and the bus would take them to where they needed to be,” Erkin told POLITICO in an interview, adding that the work would finish at 6:30 p.m. “This will continue for 15 days. If they were the kids of political prisoners, then cotton picking would go up to either a month or a month and a half.”

“If the kids did not show up, the whole family would be made to pick cotton the next day,” he said, noting that at that time he had no understanding of what forced labor meant. (Erkin wasn’t cited in Zenz’s research but the interview was arranged by the scholar.)

Second, *Xinjiang* labor programs are no longer confined to factories or farms within the region.

The West has been focusing on production in *Xinjiang*, as they mull whether to impose a ban on these exports in order to avoid forced labor.

For the past few years, however, even factories outside of *Xinjiang*, sometimes thousands of miles away, have been employing Uyghurs



who, human rights groups say, are forcibly removed from their homeland, according to the BBC and the Globe and Mail.

The Chinese government insisted that these schemes grew out of economic necessity, as “poverty ran wide and deep in southern Xinjiang.” It stated that more than 150,000 Xinjiang people had been transferred out of their original domicile since 2018, though a majority of them stayed within Xinjiang.

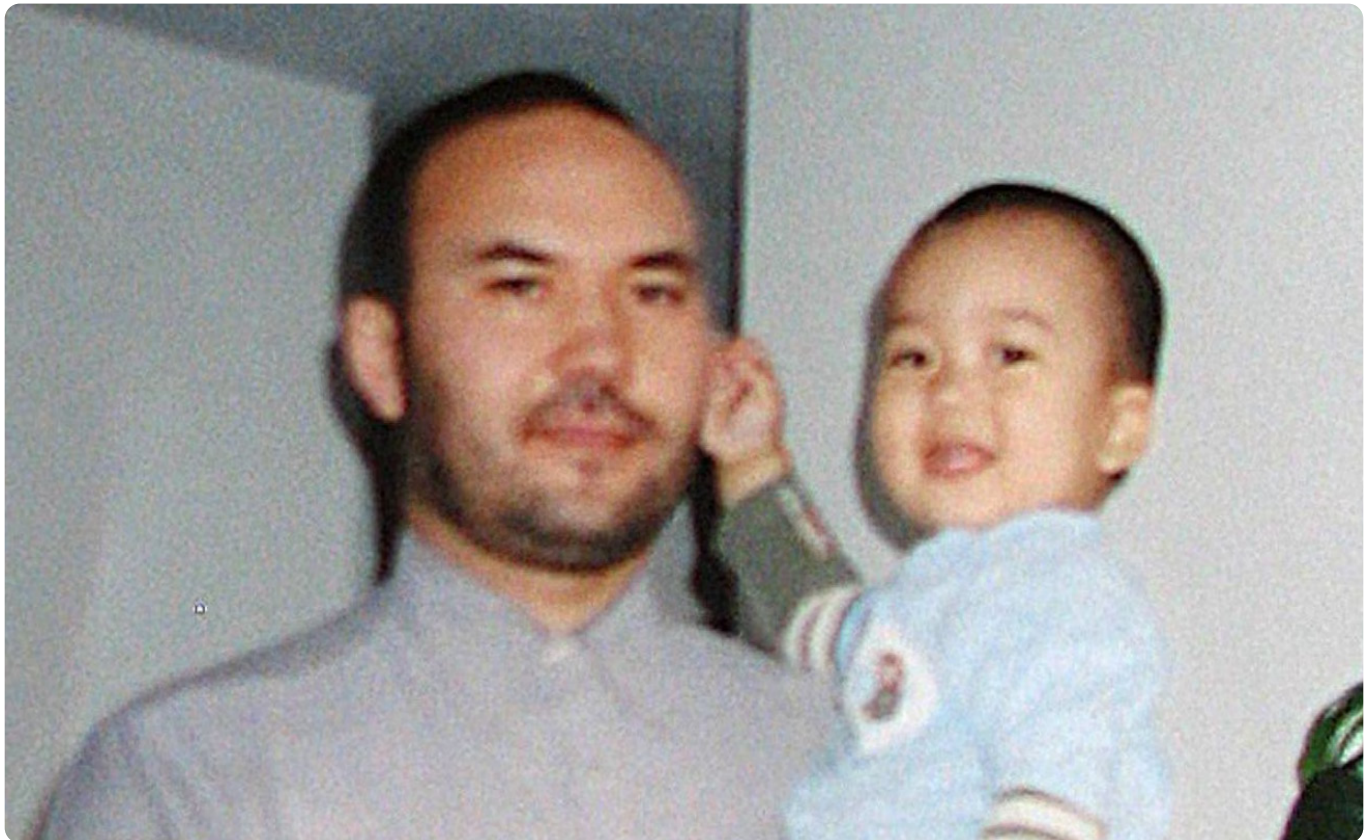
The EU’s current proposal also places an emphasis on companies to conduct due

diligence over their supply chains. Beijing isn’t making that easy.

The Chinese government is currently tightening rules for consulting work or due diligence to be carried out — primarily by foreign firms. The national legislature expanded the scope of the anti-espionage law, which covers all “documents, data, materials and items related to national security,” said the official Xinhua news agency. The move has caused widespread concerns among foreign businesses in China.

Canadian Huseyin Celil Remains Locked Up in China for Talking About Uyghurs

By Brian Deming, The Star, 2023.5.11



MPs to vote on House probe into Chinese envoy’s alleged targeting of Michael Chong, May 10.

In the hubbub about China’s intimidation of Michael Chong and his family, Canadians need to be reminded that another Canadian,

Huseyin Celil, remains locked up in China for no good reason.

It's been more than 17 years since the Chinese government scooped up this man for nothing more than talking about the rights of Uyghurs. China targeted Chong because he too dared

to talk about Uyghur rights. It's proper that Canada kicked out a Chinese diplomat. But the Canadian government and Canadians should do more. We should raise the issue of Uyghur rights loudly and often and demand justice for Celil and other Uyghurs.

Crimes Sending You to Jail in Xinjiang: "We Don't Trust You," "You Didn't Play Piano at Your Wedding"

By Kok Bayraq, Bitter Winter, 2023.5.12

Last year, The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (VOC) released a bombshell report entitled "Xinjiang Police Files" based on leaked internal documents from China's police network.

In the process of searching for information about my friends and relatives in this report for a year, one point caught my attention: the strangeness of the arrest reasons.

Humanity has witnessed many atrocities and inequalities in the political and legal fields, both on paper and in practice, but it has never witnessed crimes as strange as those listed in the files.

Here are some excerpts from the archive:

1. "Eli Jume, 28, reason for internment: Family members of those who are not allowed to leave the country..." Why would a country restrict someone from going abroad? Could it be because debts the person leaves behind her would cause problems, or because the person's appearance or statements would reveal the country's dirty secrets? I would say the latter reason is true. The logical translation of "families not allowed to travel abroad" is members of families that are

victims of, witnesses to, or rebels against the Uyghur genocide. Another strange feature of this case is that Eli Jume was arrested even if he did not attempt to leave the country.

2. "Abdugheni Pazil, 25, reason for internment: People who don't trust".

What does "people who don't trust" mean? There is no answer in the document.

However, there is a brief explanation in a report by Radio Free Asia for a similar case: "Those born in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s are [regarded as] dangerous generations." A village security chief cited from instruction on his hand and continued: "They have not experienced famine and the political storms, like generations before them; and they are not much appreciative of Party and state, and are daring and brave at making turbulence in the society." What is the term for a specific group being targeted for elimination? Genocide!

3. "Eziz Yasin, 32." One of the reasons for internment: "In June 2012, the suspect Eziz Yasin illegally studied scriptures from Kerim Yasin (deceased [his brother]) for 3 days..." All those who are born and raised in a family belonging to a particular religion, whether



Buddhist, Christian, or Muslim, normally take religious classes for at least a few days or a few hours throughout their lives.

The reason for internment shows that the aim is the eradication of religious identity, which is not tolerated. The same logic is confirmed in another official document stating that Islam is a mental illness and that a person who is affected by it must be “purified” and “treated.” What word should we use for the forcible eradication of a religious identity? “Forced assimilation”? Or something worse?

4. “Rabigul Abduweli, 31,” reason for internment: based on the rule that “everybody who needs to be arrested should be arrested.” This looks even more strange, the more so in a country that keeps telling the international community that it respects the “rule of law.” The subtext implies that all Uyghurs may be arrested just for being Uyghurs.

5. “Eziz Ibrahim, 33.” One of the reasons for internment: in 2012, when he got married, he didn’t play the piano at his marriage. There was a reason for this,

After the crackdown campaigns in the region, the local communities had lost many of their friends and relatives and were not able to organize funerals for them. Thus, they decided to stop singing and dancing for a while, including at their weddings, to pay their respects to their heroes. The fact that such consciousness emerged among the Uyghurs was considered a crime.

6. “Huseyin Memet, 51. One of the reasons for internment: he did not go funerals (nor to weddings). It was also reported that a villager was detained because he did not hold the ceremony of Nazir when his mother died, which raised suspects of religious extremism. In recent decades, some groups among the Uyghurs find it more virtuous to donate money to others than to hold the Nazir ceremony, and the Chinese authorities consider it a sign of “Wahhabism.” Thus, the situation evolved to a point when Uyghurs can only laugh and cry with the permission of the state.

The list goes on and on. We can list more than one hundred categories of such strange reasons for being detained, and thousands of



detainees in each category.

Eziz Ibrahim and Huseyin Memet's cases, where one was detained for not laughing and celebrating and another for not crying, mirror the following story.

There was a student who was a bully at his university, and he liked to "train" new students at the school. He entered the first-year-students dormitory and asked, "What did you have for lunch today?" "Dumplings" said a student. "Why didn't you eat noodles?" the bully asked, slapping the student's face. Then he turned to another student. "What did you have for lunch?" he asked again. The second student, who had learned from the experience of the first., answered "Noodles."

The bully then asked, "Why didn't you eat dumplings?" and slapped the second student as well.

The arrest reasons in the Chinese police documents are similar to the bully's "educational" strategy. They make no sense. Clearly, the bully's purpose was to show his strength. China's goal is much more sinister—to wipe Uyghurs and their identity from the face of the earth.

In short, as demonstrated by the files, being a Uyghur is a crime. As a Uyghur, I am not surprised. What I'm wondering is how can China still be a member of the UN Human Rights Committee after such atrocities were revealed to the world? And how some countries can expect mediations for peace from China in international affairs such as the Ukraine war? What is missing: decency, intelligence, or the power to punish crimes against humanity?

Dutch Municipalities Breaking Ties With China

By NL Times, 2023.5.8

The Chinese sister city is quickly losing popularity with Dutch municipalities. In the past two years, at least eight municipalities and two provinces have broken formal ties with Chinese counterparts, NRC reports after surveying the administrative bodies involved.

"Sister cities" or "ties of friendship" are formal collaborations between cities in trade and cultural exchange, among other things. A quarter of these collaborations have been canceled in the past two years. Many other municipalities have put their relationship on the back burner, are preparing to sever ties, or have let

the friendship fade to such an extent that there is hardly any cooperation anymore, according to NRC.

Breda, Tilburg, and Eindhoven are among the municipalities that have broken ties with their Chinese counterparts after their city councils insisted on it. The Dutch municipalities often refer to the oppression of the Uyghur people, who the Chinese government has persecuted and imprisoned in labor camps, as the reason for the separation.

"We must respect the principles of democracy, the rule of law, freedom of the press and expression," said Mayor Ahmed



Marchouc of Arnhem. His city broke ties with Wuhan in 2021. “By maintaining a relationship with a Chinese city, you create the appearance that you don’t.”

Weert and Capelle aan den IJssel, among others, told NRC that they broke ties because they got little economic benefits from the relationships. Other municipalities

said they are “rethinking” their relations, with many saying they want to focus more on friendships with European cities.

Dutch universities are also increasingly reluctant to accept Ph.D. students with a scholarship subsidized by the Chinese government, citing knowledge security as the main reason.

The Essence of East Turkistan in the Relations of China – EU

By UDTSB, 2023.5.10

STATEMENT

IUETO: We call on EU member states to place the occupied East Turkistan under international supervision for the protection of the Uyghurs and other Turkic people there and the termination of the Chinese colonization.



International Union of
The East Turkistan
Organizations

High respected ministers of Foreign Affairs and High Representative Borell,

I'm writing this letter regarding the Informal meeting of foreign affairs ministers (Gymnich) where a strategic discussion about China - EU relations, and current foreign, and security policy issues will take place.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, there have been two predominant challenges in international stages- the first is how to end the war in Ukraine and the second one is how to handle the threat of a rising China. This has caused the current international order and system to erode and go through a decisive period for the next generation of the century. The rising China is at the center of the decisive change and huge challenge. China has put forward the next three piecewise strategic development plans (2020-2050). The object of the new development plan is theoretically based on a 'community of common destiny for mankind' which means the future of international order.

Parallely China's global expansion has China continued its repression in East Turkistan, Tibet, and inner Mogolien to consolidate further its power in these regions. Specifically in East Turkistan China used inhuman and horrific measures to conduct an ongoing genocide against Uyghurs and other Turkic people. China thinks that it has the ultimate motive to "pacify" the people of East Turkistan because of the essence of East Turkistan. In terms of geopolitical, economic, resource, and demographic perspectives East Turkistan has a crucial role if China

will be successful or not in China's great vision to be a hegemonic leader in the international area.

Nearly seventy-three years after China's violent and illegal invasion of East Turkistan, it has become clear to part of the international community that the Chinese state is breaching international peace and conducting genocide against the people of East Turkistan. China's historical and current policies and treatment of the people of East Turkistan are serious violations of the UN Charter, Chapter VII, Article 39. As is stated in General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), "The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination, and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation."

China has been breaching international peace through genocide and has adamantly rebuffed every attempt by the international community to address human rights violations in East Turkistan by claiming that the region is its own internal issue and that it has no relation to the concept of "international peace." China's claim has no substantial basis for the following reasons: first, the people of East Turkistan are part of the international community. Therefore, the destruction of the Uyghur and other Turkic people in East Turkistan in whole or in part is necessarily an issue of international peace. Second, it is apparent that China's genocidal policies in East Turkistan could be an effective tactic or model to crack down on others opposed to the autocratic



regime, or who present peaceful demands for secession from China's autocratic international partners.

Therefore, have EU member states to take the essence of East Turkistan and China's genocidal policy into consideration and should build a new EU- China Strategic Outlook with regard that:

1. We call on EU member states to become aware of the fact that the fundamental root cause of this Genocide is the occupation. As we work on the steps ahead, this perspective must be kept in mind.

2. We call on EU member states to place the occupied East Turkistan under international supervision for the protection of the Uyghurs and other Turkic people there and the termination of the Chinese colonization.

3. We call on EU member states to uphold their legal and moral obligation towards the people of East Turkistan to ensure accountability for alleged violations of international law and assure pressure on China to end its occupation of East Turkistan.

4. We call on EU member states to act to hold the Chinese government accountable for its crimes and the ongoing genocide. We call on governments to realize their responsibilities under the 1948 UN Genocide Convention and take all necessary measures to end the ongoing genocide of Uyghurs and other Turkic people in East Turkistan.

5. We call on EU member states to defend democracy against China's atrocity and ensure international peace and security by providing the people of East Turkistan the freedom to determine their future. Hence there are no alternative ways to preserve the existence of the people of East Turkistan as a nation.

With high respect:

Hidayet Oğuzhan

President of the International Union of East Turkistan Organizations



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