

# US Hits China With New Trade Curbs And Sanctions Over Forced Uyghur Labour

*By Agence France-Presse, 17 Dec 2021*



*The Biden administration has moved to curb trade with over China's treatment of the Uyghur minority*  
*Photograph: Susan Walsh/AP*

US lawmakers have ramped up pressure on China in a bid to censure the country's treatment of the Muslim minority

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The United States has unleashed a volley of actions to censure China's treatment of the Uyghur minority, with lawmakers voting to curb trade and issuing new sanctions on Beijing.

The United States has been ramping up pressure on China amid a crop of disputes, with president Joe Biden's administration a day earlier targeting producers of painkillers that have contributed to America's addiction crisis.

The US Senate unanimously voted to make the United States the first country to ban virtually all imports from China's northwestern Xinjiang region over concerns of the prevalence of forced labour.

A surveillance camera outside a Huawei factory in Dongguan, Guangdong province Documents link Huawei to Uyghur surveillance projects, report claims

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"We know it's happening at an alarming, horrific rate with the genocide that we now witness being carried out," said Senator Marco Rubio, a driver behind the act, which already passed the House of Representatives and which the White House says Biden will sign. After prolonged negotiations to secure its passage, Rubio lifted objections and the Senate confirmed veteran diplomat Nicholas Burns as ambassador to China.

Burns, a widely respected former ambassador to Greece and Nato and a professor at Harvard, has described China as an "aggressor" and denounced the "genocide" of the Uyghurs, but has also voiced a willingness to cooperate on issues such as climate change. Some US businesses had voiced unease about the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which bans the import of all goods from the region unless companies offer verifiable proof that production did not involve slavery.

Xinjiang is a major source of cotton, with an estimated 20% of the garments imported each year into the United States including some material from the region.

Rights experts, witnesses and the US government say more than one million Uyghurs and other Turkic-speaking Muslims are incarcerated in camps in an effort to root out their Islamic cultural traditions and forcibly assimilate them into China's Han majority.

Beijing describes the sites as vocational training centres and says that, like many western nations, it is seeking to reduce the allure of radical Islam after deadly attacks.

The United States has described the campaign as genocide and, along with Australia, Britain and Canada, has planned a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Games next year over the issue.

The Biden administration on Thursday also fired off a round of new sanctions over surveillance in Xinjiang, where rights groups say China has been honing new technologies in artificial intelligence and DNA tracking to keep tabs on Uyghurs.

Companies hit by Treasury Department sanctions include SZ DJI Technology, by far the world's largest producer of consumer drones of the type used in film-making and aerial



Protestors hold signs during a rally for Uyghur Freedom in New York, with participants calling on U.S. President Joe Biden to "combat the Uyghur genocide through diplomacy and economic pressure," March 22, 2021.

photography.

“These eight entities actively support the surveillance and tracking of members of ethnic and religious minority groups in the PRC, predominantly Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang,” secretary of state Antony Blinken said, referring to the People’s Republic of China.

DJI has gone on to become a household name around the world among both enthusiasts and professionals that use drones, capturing more than 70% of the global market.

The United States had already restricted trade exports to the company, but the new Treasury Department sanctions will criminalise any US investment in it.

Other companies targeted included Xiamen Meiya Pico Information, which has developed a mobile application to track files on individuals’ phones, and Cloudwalk Technology, which was developed to recognise faces of Uyghurs and Tibetans and has since been deployed to Zimbabwe to help improve

the technology, according to the Treasury Department.

Separately, the Commerce Department restricted sensitive exports to the Academy of Military Medical Sciences and 11 of its research institutes over biotechnology work including “purported brain-control weaponry,” a notice said.

The research institutes include centres focused on blood transfusions, bioengineering and toxicology.

“The scientific pursuit of biotechnology and medical innovation can save lives,” Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said in a statement.

“Unfortunately, the PRC is choosing to use these technologies to pursue control over its people and its repression of members of ethnic and religious minority groups,” she added.

Based in Beijing, the Academy of Military Medical Sciences has been active in development of a Covid-19 vaccine.

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## **As Beijing Olympics Open, Uyghur Groups Set To Take Rights Case To Court In Argentina**

*by: Stephen Wade, The Associated Press, Dec 14, 202*

Argentina’s universal jurisdiction provision is ‘most realistic’ according to lawyer. China’s treatment of its Uyghur minority could come before the courts in Argentina at about the same time that the Winter Olympics open on Feb. 4 in Beijing.

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Michael Polak, a British lawyer representing the World Uyghur Congress and the Uyghur Human Rights Project, is preparing a “universal jurisdiction criminal complaint” to submit to the criminal courts of Argentina in February.

“We think what we are doing in Argentina is the natural next step for moving towards justice,” Polak told the Associated Press in an interview.

Last week, an unofficial body set up in Britain to assess evidence on China’s alleged rights abuses against the Uyghur people concluded that the Chinese government committed genocide and crimes against humanity.

Additionally, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is expected to soon release a report on human rights in the Xinjiang region of northwestern

China. In a statement, the U.N. said it had “similarly identified patterns of arbitrary detention, coercive labour practices and an erosion of social and cultural rights.” It also said it had been unable to gain “unfettered access” to the region.

Argentina agreed last month to hear a case against the Myanmar military involving the treatment of the minority Rohingya under the principle of “universal jurisdiction.” This principle holds that severe crimes can be tried in any jurisdiction.

“There are universal jurisdiction provisions in different jurisdictions around the world,” Polak said. “But the Argentinian one is the most realistic because the courts are actually able to use it. And they are very keen on using it because of their own history. Realistically, the aim would be to bring these people before the Argentinian courts and for



Activists, shown in a file photo call for a boycott of the Beijing Games in Los Angeles, California. The World Uyghur Congress and the Uyghur Human Rights Project are having a “universal jurisdiction criminal complaint” prepared by a British lawyer to submit to the criminal courts of Argentina in February. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP via Getty Images)

them to answer the allegations.”

The internment of an estimated 1 million or more Uyghurs and other largely Muslim minorities — in what China described as vocational training and education centres — has also put the focus on China’s treatment of Tibetans, the loss of civil liberties in Hong Kong, and restrictions on use of the Mongolian language in China’s Inner Mongolia region.

The U.S. government and parliaments in Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada have declared that Beijing’s policies against the Uyghurs amount to genocide and crimes against humanity.

“For the Uyghurs to swear their evidence in an Argentinian court is a huge moment,” Polak said. “We think it is realistic that arrest warrants can be issued and people can be arrested.”

### **Tribunal used to determine conclusion**

During the tribunal, about 30 witnesses and experts gave evidence at a series of public hearings in central London earlier this year, alleging torture, forced abortions, rape and beatings by authorities while in state detention centres. The hearings also reviewed numerous documents detailing other policies including the separation of young children from their families and widespread destruction of mosques.

The panel of lawyers, business people, and academics concluded that China’s General Secretary Xi Jinping and other senior officials had “primary responsibility for acts in Xinjiang.”

The Chinese Embassy in London called the tribunal a “political tool used by a few anti-China and separatist elements to deceive and mislead the public.” The embassy said in a statement that the policies in Xinjiang were aimed at fighting terrorism and pre-

venting radicalization.

A spokesperson for the Xinjiang region on Monday, anticipating the U.N. report, said “we will absolutely not accept the so-called human rights investigation report.”

“We will not allow interference in Xinjiang affairs and China’s internal affairs in the name of the so-called Xinjiang issues,” spokesperson Xu Guixiang added.<sup>7</sup>

### **China’s attempt at stopping case**

Polak said he expects China to use political leverage and financial pressure in Argentina to stop the court case. The court has to first agree to hear the case. If it declines, there is an appeal process.

“We think because of the strong evidence in our case, the Buenos Aires court should accept it and should investigate,” Polak said. “Everywhere we’ve taken the Uyghur case around the world, China tries to step in and stop it from happening,” Polak added. “What we’ve seen of the Argentinian courts and their decisions, we think the courts are independent and will look at this and look at the evidence properly.”

Polak said the Argentine government was sensitive to these cases, given what happened in Argentina during the 1976-83 military junta. Thousands were tortured, killed and forcibly disappeared in a government-sponsored crackdown on leftist dissidents during Argentina’s so-called “dirty war.”

“We hope that the politicians in Argentina and civil society will see the parallels and some of their struggles and support what we are doing,” Polak said. “Argentina has demonstrated this by prosecuting people within their own country.”

# Idris Hasan: Interim Update As Urgent Actions Needed To Avoid Extradition To China

*By: Safeguard Defenders, 16 Dec 2021*

After months of uncertainty, on December 15 the Moroccan Court of Cassation ruled in favor of the People's Republic of China's extradition request for Uyghur Idris Hasan

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**Idris was detained on July 19 at Casablanca Airport on the basis of an Interpol Red Notice issued in 2017 that the same Interpol withdrew following extensive media reporting on the case as the Notice was deemed “non-compliant” with the organization’s constitution forbidding persecution on political, religious or ethnic grounds.**

Interpol conveniently wiped its hands of the case – and has failed to provide legal defense advocated with the “new information” it reportedly received following Idris Hasan’s detention that led it to make the assessment of “non-compliance” – in stating to Moroccan authorities that following the issuance of a provisional bilateral arrest warrant from the PRC the case could move ahead nonetheless under the terms of the bilateral extradition treaty between the two countries that only entered into force following ratification by Beijing on January 22nd of this year. Signaling the PRC’s push for such bilateral treaties in recent years, the treaty was signed in



May 2016, in the framework of a strategic partnership between Morocco and the PRC with no less than fifteen agreements signed on the same day by King Mohammed VI and Xi Jinping at the People’s Palace in Beijing, relating in particular to the economic, financial, industrial, cultural, tourist, energy, infrastructure and consular fields. Morocco had ratified the treaty in 2017.

The case of Idris Hasan – accused of “terrorism” and “incitement to terrorism” by PRC authorities - was the very first under the terms of the new treaty, heightening concerns over the political nature of the judicial proceedings within Morocco. The Court of



Cassation charged with ruling over the extradition request without going into the merits of accusations was convened six times before its ruling of yesterday. The written judgment has not been made available to defense counsel yet, but the Court's ruling will now move to Morocco's Head of State who will sign the decision into Decree, after which the Ministry of Justice will be charged with its execution in coordination with PRC counterparts.

No internal legal remedies to challenge the decision exist in Morocco. Safeguard Defenders and Mena Rights Group, in consultation with Idris Hasan's legal team in Morocco, therefore immediately lodged an appeal requesting interim measures with the UN Committee Against Torture, which may consider individual complaints alleging violations of the rights set out in the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by States parties who have made the necessary declaration under article 22 of the Convention. The Kingdom of Morocco has made such a declaration, allowing for the lodging of such a complaint requesting the stay of execution of the extradition judgment on the basis of the universal principle of non-refoulement.

While we await the decision by the UN Committee Against Torture and in thanking the many actors seized in taking all possible measures and raising their voices to stop this extradition from moving forward, at this time Safeguard Defenders makes the following interim statement:

**"We are deeply disappointed the Moroccan Court of Cassation decided to ignore the extensive evidence provided by defense counsel of the certain torture, unfair trial and high risk of enforced disappearance Idris Hasan is exposed to if extradited to the PRC,**

**especially after the withdrawal of the Red Notice by Interpol highlighted the political grounds of his persecution.**

As there are no internal legal remedies available, Safeguard Defenders and Mena Rights Group immediately submitted an urgent appeal to the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) requesting interim measures to stop the execution of this extradition. Morocco would be bound by such a decision from CAT and we rest our hopes that they will issue such interim measures as a matter of urgency.

We also call on all democratic Governments around the world to do everything in their power to stop this extradition, which would come mere days after the independent Uyghur Tribunal established a genocide has been committed by CCP authorities in Xinjiang, an evaluation made previously by Governments and Parliaments around the world.

Members of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China have already written to their local Moroccan Embassies to reiterate their severe concern and asking the Moroccan authorities to abide by its international obligation of non-refoulement.

In August this year, four UN Special Procedures issued a letter to the Moroccan Government highlighting their extreme concern and the ongoing violations in Xinjiang. Only



last week, UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders Mary Lawlor made an express call to release Idris Hasan. We echo this call and reiterate the urgent need to do better to protect these people most at risk. As more and more people try to escape the cruel regime in the PRC in recent years, the number of legal and illegal means employed by the PRC to hunt them down and bring them back to China “by any means” is rapidly rising. Only last week, Deutsche Welle reported how 90% of Uyghurs abroad have been harassed or intimidated by the PRC, while exiled Hong Kong pro-democracy activists are facing increasing threats. Safeguard Defenders therefore reiterates its

call for the immediate suspension of bilateral extradition treaties with the PRC as called for by the European Parliament and the issuance of special protective and reporting measures for these communities at risk. We cannot stand while their basic rights are being violated around the world.

The case of Idris Hasan tragically demonstrates this. Our thoughts and actions now are first and foremost with him, as well as with his wife and three children who are going through hell, knowing they may never see each other again. This must be stopped and a safe haven should be provided to them as a matter of urgency.”

## Uyghur Policeman Died Of Torture at Hands Of Authorities, Not Suicide, Source Says Initiative

*By: RFA, Shohret Hoshur, 2021.12.02*

**Nurmemet Yusup had been arrested for wiping blood from the face of a re-education camp detainee.**

A Uyghur police officer in China who was said to have committed suicide was instead tortured to death, a source said.

Local officials confirmed to RFA that Nurmemet Yusup had died during the first week of August, though they said the cause of death was not immediately clear. Police officers, meanwhile, said Nurmemet committed suicide during an interrogation.

Nurmemet, who worked at the Urumqi Horse Racing police station in Xinjiang’s capital Urumqi (in Chinese, Wulumuqi), was arrested



*A Uyghur police officer patrols a street in Aksu in East Turkistan in a file photo.*

*Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images*

ted in late July on suspicion of sympathizing with a criminal when he previously worked in a “re-education” camp. He was said to have “wiped vomited blood from the face of



a camp detainee,” said the source who declined to be named so as to speak freely.

China has held up to 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in a network of detention camps since 2017. Beijing has said that the camps are vocational training centers and has denied widespread and documented allegations that it has mistreated Muslims living in Xinjiang.

The U.S. and parliaments in several European countries have called the treatment of Uyghurs and others in Xinjiang a genocide and a crime against humanity.

A source with knowledge of the situation told RFA that Nurmemet had been tortured to death and that his torturer had been disciplined.

A police officer in Urumqi’s Ulanbay district said Nurmemet’s death was a state secret and that a special notice had been issued for officers not to disclose the cause.

“We know this case, but this is a state secret,” he said. “We can’t tell you anything about this.”

A local official identified one of Nurmemet’s interrogators as a police officer named Hamit. The source said that he was disciplined by the police department for excessive use

of force during questioning.

RFA called the Ulanbay, Qarlighachliq and Horse Racing police stations and asked for information about the police officer named Hamit.

One officer said he had been summoned to his police station on the night of Nurmemet’s death. He was initially asked to remain on duty but later ordered to return home. He said he was not informed about Nurmemet’s situation while at the station.

“After that, we received a notice from the Urumqi Police Department that any information related to that night was not meant to be revealed and should be kept secret,” the police officer said.

The same policeman also mentioned that an officer named Hamit was one of Nurmemet’s interrogators.

Hamit had been an exemplary police officer in the past four years, but because of an incident where he used excessive force, higher-ups revoked an exemplary work award had received, he said.

**Translated by the Uyghur Service. Written in English by Roseanne Gerin.**

**China has crossed all the red limits. It was not satisfied with what China is committing in East Turkistan with human rights crimes and insulting Islam and Muslims, but also it started using the word monotheism on the floor of restaurants.**



**East Turkistan Muslim Scholars Association organized a protest and a press conference in front of the Chinese Consulate in response to the Chinese President's statements about the necessity of continuing the policy of Sinicizing Islam and Muslims should be subjected to communist principles.**



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