

# **“BATTERING, SEXUAL ASSAULT... BEIJING WANTS TO DESTROY US” East Turkistan CONCENTRATION CAMP SURVIVORS TESTIFY TO CONGRESS FOR THE FIRST TIME**

Source: VOA



Tursunay Ziyawudun, a Uyghur concentration camp survivor, attended the online hearing of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives on May 6, 2021.

*“The situation there is very bad and dirty. We were told that our ideology had a problem and we had to be educated. If we asked a question, we would be beaten.”*

*“It’s crowded. There is a bucket in the corner of the room, which serves as our toilet. There are many cameras in the room watching us.”*

*“We are hungry every day, and every meal is a bowl of water-like soup and a bread. We are also injected with unknown drugs.”*

*“We must constantly pledge allegiance to the Chinese govern-*

*ment every day and reject our own beliefs. We want to watch Xi Jinping’s video that will never end.”*

*This is an East Turkistan Uyghur concentration camp survivor telling the U.S. Congress about her experience of being detained in concentration camps twice.*

*On Thursday (May 6), the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives held an online hearing on the topic of "Atrocities Encountered by Uighurs and Other Minorities in East Turkistan."*

*Tursunay Ziyawudun, who introduced herself from East Turkistan, gave his first testimony to Congress as a Uyghur concentration camp survivor, and used personal experience to tell members of what happened in the concentration camp that the outside world did not know. The Uighurs call the Xinjiang region East Turkistan.*

*Also participating in the hearing via video was the chairman of the Uyghur Human Rights Project Board of Directors Nury Turkel and James Millward, a professor of history at Georgetown University's Edmund Walsh School of Diplomatic Service.*


*Ziya Wuding, who does not speak English,*

*delivered statements and accepted questions through translators throughout the process. She told the congressmen that the situation in the concentration camp was terrible. After she was detained for the first time, due to health reasons, she was released in about a month. However, on March 8, 2018, she was detained again. She was detained for 10 months at that time.*

*"The situation in the concentration camp I was sent to was worse the second time, and it also left unforgettable scars in my heart," Ziyawuding went on to describe the sexual abuse she experienced and the sexual violence she witnessed.*

*"Girls will be taken away, and they won't come back for several days after they leave. I saw many girls go crazy because of this," Ziyawuding said. "Me and another woman were also taken away. I was shocked. Inserting the lower body, I can hear another girl screaming in the next room, I know the guard raped her."*

*Ziyawuding went on to describe how girls*



*Rep. Michael McCaul, R-TX, the chief Republican member of the House of Representatives for Foreign Affairs, attended the online hearing of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives on East Turkistan Human Rights on May 6, 2021.*

were forced to birth control in concentration camps. "Once, under an order, all girls were required to be sterilized or placed IUDs. Many young girls cried and screamed. They were told that they would be sterilized and would never have children," Zi Yawuding said.

In December 2018, Ziyawuding left the concentration camp. She said that before leaving, someone warned her that if she told her about the camp, "there will be serious consequences." Therefore, even after leaving the concentration camp, she knew that she had not truly been free until she arrived in the United States.

In 2020, Tursunnai Ziyawuding became one of the few concentration camp survivors who had the chance to succeed in the United States. She decided to tell these experiences. Ziyawuding emphasized that this is not to seek mercy from all walks of life, but to stand up for those who can't speak up.

Ziyawuding accepted an interview with the BBC earlier this year, and for the first time fully exposed the experience and situation of the concentration camp to the international media. After the report was published on February 2, it quickly set off a wave of attention from all walks of life on the human rights issue of East Turkistan Uyghur, and it also touched the most sensitive nerves of the Beijing authorities. "The spokesperson of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs once took a picture of me at a press conference and called me a liar," Ziyawuding said.

However, the Chinese government's response to the attack did not scare Ziyawuding. "As a survivor, for those who did not survive, I think I must speak up," Ziyawuding said.

"I hope the world can wake up. This world should not tolerate the continued genocide in the 21st century."

"The goal of the (Chinese) government is to destroy each of us, everyone knows," Ziyawu-

ding continued to shout to members of Congress, "Now that you have listened to my testimony, I hope you can take action."

After listening to Ziyawuding's opening statement, members of the two parties expressed their shock and disbelief.

Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-NY, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, a Democrat from New York State, said to Zia Wuding, "Your testimony deeply moved me. No one should have experienced your suffering. That kind of terrible treatment."

Meeks went on to say that in the case of Beijing's blockade of information in East Turkistan, it is extremely important for the Congress to listen to personal experiences dictated by their experiences.

"In particular, the Chinese authorities have been preventing reporters, researchers and field visitors from going (to understand). Therefore, it is very important for us to hear these experiences from your mouth," Meeks said.

"I am very touched by your personal experience, the courage and bravery to stand up and speak the truth, even if the threat of the Chinese Communist Party is so real," said McCall, the chief Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, (Rep. Michael McCaul, R -TX) said to Ziyawuding.





rMcCall then asked Ziyawuding, "Can you explain to us why the Chinese Communist Party regards Uyghur Muslim culture and religion as a threat? It even needs to treat them by setting up concentration camps and committing such terrible crimes?"

"I don't know the exact reason, but they really seem to think we are terrifying," Ziyawuding replied, "When I was in the concentration camp, we had nothing on us. The guards had weapons, but they treated us. The way they seem to feel we are terrible. I feel like they want to remove us from the earth, and I don't understand."

### **The two parties call for an independent investigation to promote multilateral sanctions**

At the hearing, Meeks called on the United States to lead the international community to conduct an independent investigation into the human rights crisis in East Turkistan.

"The Chinese government has adopted a strategy of distortion and rumors. They label any concerns about human rights violations as lies and rumors. They also impose unfounded sanctions on organizations and individuals that call for investigations into those atrocities, and Prevent and obstruct the conduct of any independent investigation of human rights violations," Chairman Meeks said.

He further stated, "We call on the executive branch to instruct the permanent representative of the United States to the United Nations to urge the agency to investigate ongoing human rights violations and initiate multilateral sanctions against China in the United Nations Security Council."

Representative McCall, a Republican from Texas, said at the meeting, "The genocide of Uyghurs and other minorities by the Chinese Communist Party is a moral test of our time."

### **kistan-related human rights bills**

Currently, the Senate and the House of Representatives are deliberating on a number of bills related to Uyghur human rights in East Turkistan. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives passed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act and a resolution on April 21 without objection, condemning the Chinese authorities' acts of genocide against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious groups. Crimes against humanity.

After the two bills were passed by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, they have been sent to the House of Representatives for further voting.

The Law on the Prevention of Forced Uyghur Labor contains a "rebuttable presumption", that is, all commodities produced in East Turkistan are presumed to be manufactured by forced labor unless "clear and convincing" evidence is presented. This presumption can be overturned, otherwise all entry into the United States will be prohibited.

The bill also authorizes the President of the United States to impose sanctions on anyone



**Congress is reviewing a number of East Tur-**

involved in forced labor of Uyghurs and other Muslims in East Turkistan, requiring listed American companies to disclose the financial status of their contacts with Chinese companies and entities.

In addition, the Democratic Party members of the Congress introduced the Uyghur Human Rights Protection Act in the Senate and the House of Representatives in March and April this year, aiming to list persecuted Uyghurs as the second-class refugees. Provide assistance and protection to Uyghurs who wish to seek asylum. However, this bill has not made any progress since its introduction.

### **The international community is increasingly concerned about the human rights crisis in East Turkistan**

China's human rights violations in East Turkistan have received increasing international attention. The New Zealand Parliament passed a motion on Wednesday announcing serious human rights abuses against Uyghurs in Xinjiang, China. The Chinese Embassy described this as an interference in China's internal affairs.

However, the text passed by the New Zealand Parliament on Wednesday deleted the word

"genocide" in the original proposal of the New Zealand Action Party, and only expressed it as "serious violations of human rights." At the end of last month, the British House of Commons also unanimously determined that China's suppression of East Turkistan Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities was a genocide, and condemned Beijing's actions in the strongest terms. This move by the British Parliament has increased the pressure for the Johnson government to step up its criticism of Beijing.

In addition to the United Kingdom, the parliaments of European countries such as the Netherlands and Lithuania have also put forward similar motions, planning to determine that the Beijing authorities' suppression of Uyghur human rights in East Turkistan constitutes genocide.

The US State Department stated in March that Secretary of State Blincoln agreed with the Trump administration's determination that the Chinese government's treatment of Xinjiang Uyghur Muslims constituted genocide and crimes against humanity.

U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price said at the State Department's regular press conference on March 9 that the Biden





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## G7 foreign ministers call on China to 'respect human rights' following summit

Michael Howie, 5 May 2021



Foreign ministers from the G7 met in London  
(Stefan Rousseau/PA) (PA Wire)

**Foreign ministers from the G7 group of industrialised nations have called on China to "respect human rights and fundamental freedoms" following their first face-to-face meeting in over two years.**

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and his counterparts from the US, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, Italy and the EU met for a two-day summit hosted in London where security challenges and the pandemic were on the agenda.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson denied the meeting was a mistake after India's foreign minister was forced to pull out of attending in person after two positive coronavirus cases were detected in the country's travelling delegation. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar participated vir

tually in the event, where India had been invited as a guest, after coming into contact with the suspected cases, although he has not tested positive.

In a lengthy communique issued after the two-day summit, foreign ministers condemned "human rights violations" in East Turkistan and Tibet as well as China's "arbitrary, coercive economic policies".

"In line with its obligations under international and national law, we call on China to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms," the joint statement said.

"We continue to be deeply concerned about human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang and in Tibet, especially the targeting of Uyghurs, members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, and the existence of a large-scale network of 'political re-education' camps, and reports of forced labour systems and forced sterilisation.

"We agree the importance of tackling instances of forced labour through our own available domestic means, including through raising awareness and providing advice and support for our business communities.

The statement said the foreign ministers

were "united" in concerns regarding practices that "undermine... free and fair economic systems", including on trade, investment and development finance.

"We will work collectively to foster global economic resilience in the face of arbitrary, coercive economic policies and practices," it said.

"We urge China to assume and fulfil obligations and responsibilities commensurate with its global economic role."

On Russia, the G7 was supportive of Ukraine but offered little beyond words.

"We are deeply concerned that the negative pattern of Russia's irresponsible and destabilising behaviour continues," G7 ministers said.

"This includes the large build-up of Russian military forces on Ukraine's borders and in illegally-annexed Crimea, its malign activities aimed at undermining other countries' democratic systems, its malicious cyber activity, and (its) use of disinformation."

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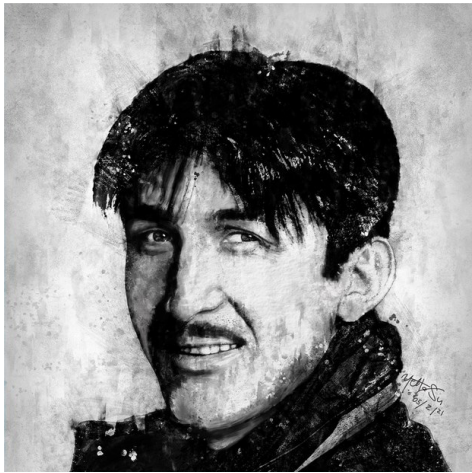


# Uyghur School Director, Brother of RFA Reporter **Jailed For 14 Years** After Stint in East Turkistan Camp

RFA, 2021-05-03



*Ahmetjan Juma, who was known for his translation work, was accused of possessing an 'extremist' book.*



A sketch of Ahmetjan Juma.

*A Uyghur academic director and prolific translator who is the brother of an RFA reporter has been sentenced to a lengthy prison sentence following two years spent in an internment camp in China's East Turkistan for "religious extremism," according to officials.*

*Ahmetjan Juma, whose brother Mamatjan Juma is the deputy director of RFA's Uyghur Service, went missing from his home prefecture of Kashgar (in Chinese, Kashi) in 2017 and was added to a list of disappeared Uyghur intellectuals compiled by the Norway-based "Uyghuryar" Foundation. The academic director of the No. 1 Middle School in Kashgar's Kona Sheher (Shufu) county, who was known for his excellent literary translations, vanished around the same*

*time that authorities in East Turkistan rolled out a campaign of mass incarceration that has since seen up to 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities held in a vast network of internment camps throughout the region.*

*While Beijing initially denied the existence of the camps, China in 2019 changed tack and began describing the facilities as "boarding schools" that provide vocational training for Uyghurs, discourage radicalization, and help protect the country from terrorism.*

*But reporting by RFA and other media outlets indicate that those in the camps are detained against their will and subjected to political indoctrination, routinely face rough treatment at the hands of their overseers and endure poor diets and unhygienic conditions in the often-o-*



vercrowded facilities. Former detainees have also described being subjected to torture, rape, sterilization, and other abuses while in custody.

According to Abduweli Ayup, a researcher and the founder of Uyghuryar, Juma's school was "an early target" of the campaign. He said other detained educators from the same school include principal Ablajan Mamat and geography teacher Sajidigul Ayup.

Juma was the first person to disappear from the school, which Ayup said is seen as the "brains" of Kona Sheher in the eyes of the Chinese authorities, suggesting that as a Uyghur school, officials believed it to be a place where knowledge outside of state supervision could be transmitted.

"I received news of Ahmetjan Juma's detention in 2017," he said. "Ahmetjan was detained in ... the first wave of detentions. He's one of the intellectuals."

### **Sentence confirmed**

RFA recently spoke with a police officer in Kona Sheher's Toqquzaq (Tuokezhake) township who said that he works on matters of national security and was aware of Juma's case. He confirmed that Juma had been detained in a camp in 2017, adding that the former academic director was later sentenced to prison in mid-2019 despite having received praise for the signs of "change" he showed while in internment.

"There was a book they found in his house, and that was apparently the reason he was detained," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity out of fear of reprisal.

"They said he had a book with extremist content. I don't know [the details], though."

Juma's arrest was also connected to his involvement in organizational activities, the officer said, characterizing them as a "mistake."

"They didn't say anything about him being

involved in an incident, but they said he did things about organizations," he said.

The officer said that while he hadn't worked on Juma's case, he knew that the educator was later tried and jailed.

"A trial was held. How could he have been sentenced if there wasn't a trial," he said, adding that the court had only mentioned the "extremist" book as part of his sentence, without elaborating. "They said something like 14 years [in prison]."

According to the officer, Juma had spent two years in an internment camp in Kona Sheher's Opal township where he had worked for 28 months.

"He's always known the national language very well," the officer said, referring to what he knew of Juma's ability in Mandarin Chinese during his time at the camp.

### **Teacher and community leader**

Ayup told RFA that Juma had been detained twice before, which may have led to his being targeted during the sweep in 2017—once for a month in 2006, and again from July 2009 until November of that year in the aftermath of deadly unrest in East Turkistan capital Urumqi.

Some 200 people died and 1,700 were injured in the three-day rampage of violence that began on July 5, 2009 in Urumqi between ethnic minority Uyghurs and Han Chinese, according to China's official figures, although Uyghur rights groups say the numbers are much higher.

Ayup said that after the July 5 unrest, Juma went to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing to get a visa to go to the U.S., which led to his detention that year.

"[Both times], Ahmetjan got out thanks to the hard work of [people from] the school, the education bureau," he said, who had advocated on his behalf, citing his academic work and contributions he had made to the

According to Ayup, who says that he had a friendly relationship with Juma, the former academic director is known not only for being a good teacher but also for his active participation in his community.

### Respected translator

In addition to his work at the school, Juma was also a literary translator and an educational researcher who published textbooks and other pedagogical works. A series of high-school textbooks he wrote, including titles like *The World and Me*, *History and Me*, *Society and Me*, were published in Turkey last year, which Ayup worked on.

"The books were published in Istanbul in 2020 as a way of commemorating the three-year anniversary of Ahmetjan's detention," Ayup said.

At the time of Juma's disappearance, he was working on the translation of Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* from English into Uyghur, which never went to press.

Juma's family members are among more than 50 relatives of RFA's Uyghur Service staff who have been confirmed held in some form of Chinese state detention, alongside the millions either in the camps or sentenced to prison for activities deemed "religious extremism" by authorities.

According to the 2020 Freedom to Write Index published by PEN America, China is among the countries with the highest number of imprisoned writers, intellectuals, and researchers, including at least 40 imprisoned Uyghur intellectuals. Washington-based Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) has documented hundreds of disappeared Uyghur scholars.

In March, the Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy published a report which said that China has demonstrated "intent to destroy" the Uyghur ethnic minority, and therefore bears state responsibility for committing genocide, in the first independent report to investigate claims of abuses in East Turkistan.

The report counted the mass internment campaign, as well as other state policies such as government-mandated homestays, a mass birth-prevention strategy, the forcible transfer of Uyghur children to state-run facilities, the eradication of Uyghur identity, and the selectively targeting of intellectuals and other leader as evidence of intent to destroy the ethnic group.

The U.S. government determined in January that rights violations in the region amount to genocide—a label that has since been similarly applied by the parliaments of Canada, The Netherlands, and the U.K.

**Reported by Shohret Hoshur for RFA's Uyghur Service. Translated by the Uyghur Service. Written in English by Joshua Lipas. manual labor."**



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