

# Parliamentarians And Activists In Exile Raise Global Alarm At China Interpol Election Bid

*By World Uyghur Congress, Nov 15, 2021*

“Parliamentarians and activists from around the world have launched a global campaign to oppose the candidacy of Hu Binchen, a Deputy Director General at China’s Ministry of Public Security, to the INTERPOL Executive Committee at its General Assembly session later this month.

50 legislators from the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) have penned a joint letter to their governments raising alarm at the PRC’s moves to gain influence over the global policing body. The letter references recent attempts by the Chinese government to use the INTERPOL Red Notice system to target Uyghur activists living in exile and argues that Hu Binchen’s election would give Beijing a ‘green light’ to continue using INTERPOL as “a vehicle for the PRC government’s repressive policies.”



The signatories span 20 countries across four continents, with prominent figures including German Green Reinhard Bütikofer MEP, Chair of the European Parliament’s China Delegation; Sir Iain Duncan Smith, former UK Conservative Party leader; Australian Labor Senator Kimberley Kitching and former US Presidential candidate Senator Marco Rubio.

The moves were accompanied by a separate letter from 40 activists to INTERPOL Member States warning that Hu Binchen’s election would have “grave consequences for the safety and wellbeing of Chinese, Hong Kongers, Taiwanese and Chinese human rights activists living outside China as well as Tibetan and Uyghur diasporas.” Prominent signatories include World Uyghur Congress President Dolkun Isa, himself subject to an INTERPOL Red Notice by the PRC government for nearly two decades; and former Hong Kong legislators Nathan Law and Ted Hui, both of whom are wanted by the Chinese government for alleged violations under the city’s so-called National Security Law.

Hu Binchen's election bid coincides with the release of a new report into the Chinese government's efforts to hide the extent of its 'long arm policing abroad'. The report, published by human rights advocacy group Safeguard Defenders, reveals for the first time how the Chinese government is refraining from making its INTERPOL Red Notice requests public, putting thousands of activists and dissidents at risk of arrest, detention and extradition to China. The report also examines the role of Hu Binchen's International Cooperation Department in the PRC's pursuit of alleged 'fugitives' abroad through legal and illegal means.

**Dolkun Isa, Uyghur activist and President of the World Uyghur Congress, said:**

For many years, I have personally experienced the consequences of China's abuse and repressive influence at international institutions. Until 2018, China's INTERPOL Red Notice against me posed a particular threat and barrier to my work to defend and promote Uyghur rights and freedoms. The international community cannot allow China's attempts to influence and abuse mul-



**tilateral institutions like INTERPOL to continue unchecked.**

Senator Kimberley Kitching, IPAC Co-Chair, said:

"The Chinese Communist Party is increasing its influence over the world's most important institutions. From the UN Human Rights Council to the World Health Organisation, we have already seen how the CCP's pernicious influence poses a threat to us all. That Beijing could be extending its influence over the world's policing body should be raising alarm bells in Embassies across the world. Our governments must press delegates to oppose Hu Binchen's election."

Nathan Law said:

"We need to be aware of how the PRC and other authoritarian governments are using INTERPOL as a means to hunt exiled activists. We should avoid any attempts by the PRC to extend its influence over the system and to make INTERPOL the long arm of the Chinese state."



# Video From Xinjiang Provides Fresh Evidence Of China's Uyghur Repression

*By RFA, 2021.11.18*

**The 20-minute documentary by 'Guanguan' depicts apparent detention facilities in several cities.**

A 20-minute video shot by a bespectacled young man who calls himself Guanguan appears to confirm reports of China's vast network of concentration camps used to persecute Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang.

Guanguan says in the video that he traveled previously to China's far western region in 2019 but went back in 2020 after reading an article from the U.S. news outlet BuzzFeed that indicated the locations of some of the camps there.

"But due to the Chinese government's restrictions, foreign journalists can hardly gain access to Xinjiang to conduct interviews," he says on the video, which includes English subtitles and was posted on YouTube in early October. "I thought to myself, foreign journalists can't go there, but good for me, I can."

Guanguan says in the documentary's introduction that the Chinese government has set up many concentration camps in Xinjiang where local ethnic minorities and dissidents are imprisoned without a trial.

China claims the camps are re-education and vocational training schools. The camps are believed to have held about 1.8 million mostly Muslim Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities since 2017. The video has been viewed on YouTube nearly 276,200 times.



*A view of Xishan Detention Center in Urumqi, capital of East Turkistan, 2020.*

The video includes scenes from Kumul (in Chinese, Hami), Mori (Mulei) Kazakh Autonomous County, Fukang, Urumqi (Wulumuqi), the outskirts Korla (Kuerle), and Yunqi. Guanguan says he relied on Mapbox satellite maps from 2017 and China's Baidu search engine for medium-resolution satellite images.

In Hami in eastern Xinjiang, Guanguan drives by the Hami Compulsory Isolated Drug Rehabilitation Center, which is not marked on the Baidu map. He says he suspects the center is a concentration camp because of bars over the building's windows and razor wire fencing along the compound walls.

In Mori Kazakh Autonomous County, Guanguan films a detention center flanked by watchtowers and surveillance cameras. He later goes to another location and finds the Mori County Detention Center. Neither building appears on the map.

In Urumqi, he drives down a road with several buildings with watchtowers and high fences topped with barbed wire. A slogan atop



one reads, “Reform through labor, cultural reform.”

“This must be the largest cluster of concentration camps in the Urumqi area,” he says. In the city’s Dabancheng district, Guangan drives off-road and lies on his belly atop a hill to shoot video of a newly built but apparently unoccupied detention complex.

### ‘Beyond imagination’

In Korla, Guangan finds a military complex with surrounding buildings he assumes are barracks and army trucks parked in the courtyard. Behind the complex, he spots other buildings with watchtowers and wire fencing.

“That is where the concentration camps are located,” he says.

In Yumqi, he finds more buildings with watchtowers and barbed-wire fencing.

“The Chinese government’s persecution of Uyghurs is beyond imagination,” Guangan says at the end of the video. “One who does not wish to be enslaved cannot bear the sight of others being enslaved. Down with the CCP [Chinese Communist Party], may it be dissolved sooner rather than later so as to end its anti-humanity evildoings.”

Both BuzzFeed and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) published reports about the camps based on satellite imagery. “I was really amazed when I saw that video,” Alison Killing, an architect and geospatial analyst who helped BuzzFeed create a satellite image map for reports on the camps in Xinjiang, identifying a vast new infrastructure built by the Chinese government for the mass detention of Muslims.

“The first thing that should be said is just how brave that guy was to head off to Xinjiang and to go and look for those camps,” she told RFA on Wednesday.

“It’s really useful to have that ground-level imagery that helps us to corroborate what we’re seeing in the satellite images and helps



*A view of two guard towers at a detention facility in Urumqi, capital of East Turkistan, 2020. Credit: Video screenshot/Guangan/YouTube*

us to confirm that what we thought we were looking at from above really is vast,” Killing said.

Killing, BuzzFeed reporter Megha Rajagopalan, and Christo Buschek, a programmer and digital security trainer who creates tools for data journalists and human rights defenders, won a Pulitzer Prize for international reporting this year for their story series.

Nathan Ruser, a researcher with ASPI’s International Cyber Policy Center, tweeted on Nov. 14 that Guangan filmed “some of the largest and most infamous” detention facilities in Xinjiang.

“All in all, he provides visual proof and footage of 18 different detention facilities, and one former facility,” he wrote.

**Reported by Nuriman Abdurashid for RFA’s Uyghur Service. Written in English by Roseanne Gerin.**



*A view of the Fukang City Detention Center in Fukang, East Turkistan, 2020. Credit: Video screenshot/Guangan/YouTube*

# Exclusive: Marriott Refused To Host Uyghur Conference, Citing “Political Neutrality”

By Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, Dave Lawler  
Nov 18, 2021

The Marriott hotel in Prague declined to host a conference of activists and leaders from China’s Uyghur diaspora this month, citing “political neutrality,” an email shared with Axios shows.

**Why it matters:** The Chinese government has condemned the World Uyghur Congress, which has attempted to rally global attention to the genocide in Xinjiang, China. The decision to reject the conference reflects China’s growing ability to extend authoritarian control beyond its borders by making clear to corporations that crossing the party’s red lines will be bad for business.

The World Uyghur Congress consists mainly of Uyghurs living in exile and advocates for the rights of those who remain in the Xinjiang region in western China, where upwards of one million people have been held in internment camps.

About 200 delegates from 25 countries gathered in Prague from Nov. 12-14 to elect the organization’s new leadership and hold discussions with politicians, academics and civil society representatives from around the world. The Prague Marriott Hotel declined to host the conference.

Melissa Froehlich Flood, Marriott’s senior vice president for global corporate communications, told Axios the hotel would be “contacting the group to apologize, as the hotel’s response was not consistent with our policies.”



The Marriott spokesperson clarified in a statement to Axios that hosting the conference would not have violated any “political neutrality” policy, and said the reference to “corporate management” in the email referred to “hotel-level management.”

“We are working with the hotel team to provide additional training and education on our longstanding practices of inclusion,” she said.

The U.S.-based company does have a history of flare-ups involving China, its biggest international market.

Marriott International issued a profuse apology in 2018 after Chinese authorities shut down its booking website over an online questionnaire that listed Tibet, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau as countries, rather than regions of China.

“We do not support separatist groups that subvert the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China,” the statement said.

Also in 2018, Marriott fired a U.S.-based employee who used a company Twitter account to like a post by a pro-Tibet group.

**The big picture:** The World Uyghur Congress has repeatedly drawn the ire of Chinese authorities, who have declared it a terrorist group for allegedly fomenting unrest in Xinjiang, though the group does not promote violence and is on no international terrorist lists.

Ahead of the conference, the Chinese embassy in Prague condemned the Congress and the politicians who participated. Prague mayor Zdeněk Hřib, who attended the conference, said in response: "I hear that China is unhappy about this conference being held here in Prague. Well, I am unhappy there's a country in 2021 that has concentration camps."

**What they're saying:** The conference organizers found Marriott's response "shocking," Arkin says, adding that none of the other hotels they reached out to expressed any concerns.



*World Uyghur Congress President Dolkun Isa (L) speaks to the group's members following the announcement of his re-election, in Prague, the Czech Republic, Nov. 14, 2021.*

"We organize international events all the time and this is the first time we were given this excuse," she says.

"It is chilling because of the broader concept of how China is really disrupting Western democracies," she adds.

## The 'Lacerating' Screams Of Uyghur Women In Xinjiang's Camps

*By Vladimir Rozanskij, 11/17/2021, Asia News*

**Moscow (AsiaNews) -**  
*"Everyone trembled listening to the lacerating screams of the women," these are the words of many witnesses to the World Uyghur Congress, including some Kazakhs, describing the suffering they endured in the Chinese concentration camps of Xinjiang.*



*The World Uyghur Congress calls for a boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics. Violence also against Kazakh citizens. Tales of forced sterilisations. Prisoners tortured to death in Chinese concentration camps.*



**The meeting was held in Prague from 12 to 14 November. People from all over the world attended, calling for the persecution of the Uyghurs in China to be recognised as “genocide”. In protest at the massacre of Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic-speaking minorities of Islamic belief, the conference called on the international community to defect from the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics.**

The Chinese deny all accusations, claiming that those in Xinjiang are vocational training centres and projects to reduce poverty, fight terrorism and separatism.

Khidajat Oguzhan, president of the International Union of East Turkestan (the name by which Uyghurs call Xinjiang), denounced that the Chinese government “arrests, tortures, humiliates, divides families, enslaves and conducts biomedical experiments on the skin of our people and other Muslims in Xinjiang”. He added that ‘Beijing has turned the region into the biggest open-air prison in history’.

A Uyghur woman, Kelbinur Sydyk, recalled when “an 18-20 year old girl was given a forced contraceptive injection”. The girl died two months later of haemorrhaging. The Chinese authorities had forced Kelbinur to work in an internment camp to teach the Chinese language. “I saw the 20-year-old’s body being taken away in a wheelbarrow,” the witness said. “It was normal to force women to take tablets so that they would no longer have children.”

Kelbinur recounts that 40-50 people lay on the bare concrete floor of the room, harassed by the Chinese guards. The inmates were brought to “class” in handcuffs and had a maximum of one minute to go to the bathroom. The guards would take turns picking

them up for interrogation even during “teaching”.

The Uyghur interpreter then worked in a women’s camp, with women between 18 and 40 years old, sometimes even older: “They were tortured with electric shocks and metal objects”. After quitting her job, Kelbinur managed to escape to Holland.

Another witness, Gulbakhar Khaitiuzhi, spoke about her imprisonment: “They injected me with unknown preparations, and made me walk barefoot in 30 degrees below zero”. In 2006, Gulbakhar emigrated to France with her family. 10 years later, she received a phone call from Karamaj’s hometown, inviting her to return to sign some documents.

Once back in China, Gulbakhar was arrested and taken to a camp, where she remained for three years, accused of being a ‘danger to society’. She says she arrived in the concentration camp with shackles on her ankles, watched by video cameras and forbidden to speak in Uyghur to other inmates.

Kazakh Omirbek Bekali also says he was tortured in Xinjiang, inflicted with the aim of obtaining an acknowledgement of guilt for a crime he did not commit. Arrested in 2017, he had held a Kazakh passport for 10 years, but this did not stop Chinese guards.

Omirbek had opened a tourist agency for travel from Kazakhstan to China, and was charged with terrorism and attacking state security. The classic torture he was subjected to was the ‘tiger chair’: the iron seat with electric shocks, to which he was tied with a hood over his head. I didn’t sign up,” the man said, “you only have to hold out for half a day, then you don’t feel the pain anymore; I held out, and now I am here among you. But many did not resist and died after the torture.”

# The West Must Do More To Protect Uyghurs From China's Online Harassment

*By The Hill, 11/17/2021*

The recent testimony by Facebook whistleblower Frances Haughen revealed that Big Tech is failing to protect its users from malign actors. Uyghurs, long persecuted by China's government, have proven to be especially vulnerable.

In March 2021, some 500 Uyghur Facebook accounts were infected with malware embedded by Chinese government-adjacent hackers. While the company alerted the individuals affected, Haughen was quick to note in a Senate hearing that Facebook's counterespionage team has been consistently understaffed, putting users at risk. Lack of disclosure has been another persistent problem in the industry. In 2015, former Microsoft employees revealed that the company had decided not to tell hackers' targets, many of them Uyghurs, that their email accounts had been compromised.

Twitter has been more proactive in pushing back against abuse of its platform. The social media giant recently listed some accounts as "foreign state actors" and permanently banned them from the website: In 2020, the company de-platformed 23,750 core accounts that generated content to be retweeted, as well as an additional 150,000 accounts run by bots and trolls. But much more remains to be done to ensure Uyghur safety online.



In-house measures taken by tech companies to dismantle networks of malign actors and protect their users will make the online space safer for Uyghurs to use, but there is still a need for policy to protect Uyghurs and other vulnerable communities. While Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act protects tech companies from being sued, Congress could push for greater oversight of these companies and their activities — including mandatory reports to congressional committees on abuse and malign influence on their platforms.

The unique threats to the Uyghur community are well documented. Since 2017, the Chinese government has been systematically eradicating their culture in the Uyghur homeland of Xinjiang, destroying mosques, sterilizing women and detaining millions in so-called reeducation centers. But this campaign isn't limited to China's borders. In fact, our research shows that China has embarked on a global campaign to silence this minority, with over 1,548 Uyghurs deported or detained at Beijing's request.



Moreover, our latest research shows that China has reached into the heart of liberal democracies using online tactics. In tandem with its domestic campaign of mass incarceration, the Chinese government and state-aligned proxies have used the internet to harass or intimidate Uyghur communities in 10 countries in a total of nearly 3,000 incidents — including the United States. Of the incidents recorded, over 50 percent are cyber attacks.

The relatively low cost and efficiency of repression through cyberspace has had a devastating impact on human rights workers and organizations alike. The World Uyghur Congress, based in Germany, has been subject to cyber attacks for more than a decade, for example. Digital security staffers informed us that the costs of counteracting these persistent attacks creates budgetary constraints on already cash-strapped advocacy organizations, effectively pricing many of them out of their day-to-day operations.

At the individual level, fear and anxiety permeate the Uyghur diaspora, adding to their collective trauma. Almost 96 percent of respondents to a recent survey we issued to 72 members of the Uyghur diaspora community felt that they faced unique digital threats, and almost 74 percent said they have experienced digital threats or surveillance personally. To challenge the Chinese government's efforts to harass and intimidate Uy-

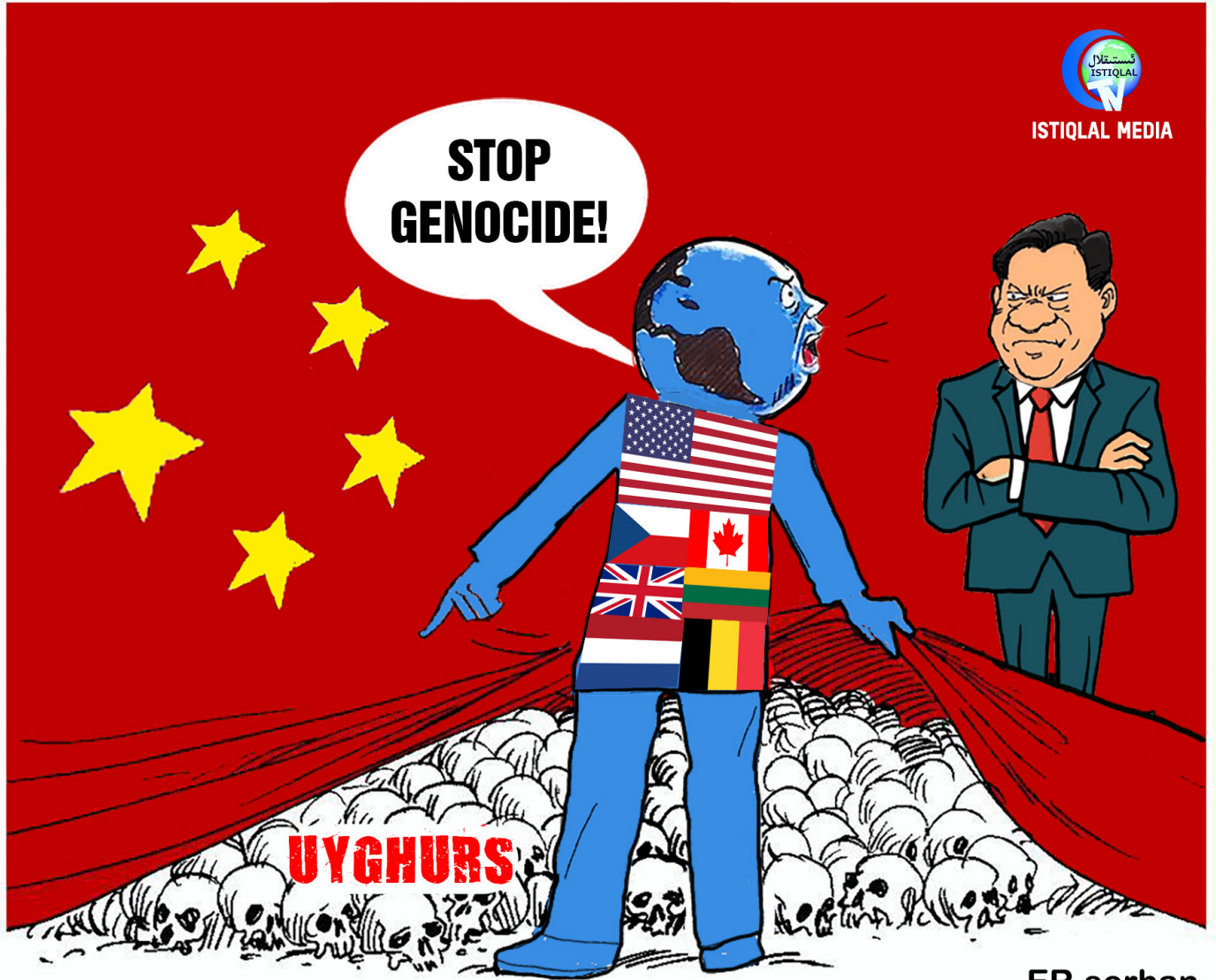
ghurs living abroad, tech companies must monitor their digital platforms for abuse and intimidation, and the West must work to create a unified vision for digital rights and digital democratic governance.

This unified vision should focus on protecting targets of state repression and violence. For example, governments could work to create an international convention on transnational repression, taking a clear stand against the practice globally. This — with accompanying state-level policies focusing on the protection of individuals' digital rights to freedom of speech and expression and freedom from surveillance, intimidation and harassment — will better ensure the human security of Uyghurs and other vulnerable communities worldwide.

The Biden administration, which has sought to define itself by its commitment to human rights, must pay attention to the all-too-real threats and challenges Uyghurs living within its own borders face. Uyghurs are left to handle these challenges on their own. Home to tech companies and world leaders, the U.S. could make a positive impact on Uyghur lives.

The ongoing repression in Xinjiang stands as a critical test case of President Biden's resolve to protect at-risk communities worldwide. China's digital authoritarianism must be challenged or we all lose.





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*Seven countries had recognized China's crimes in East Turkistan as genocide, and the other countries also must join them and fulfill their obligations.*



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