

# UK Government Says No Plans For Ministers To Attend Beijing Winter Olympics

By ANI, November 26, 2021

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The announcement was made in response to a question from Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP, co-chair of the cross-party Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC), on whether the UK government would announce a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Jacob Rees-Mogg answered: “...It is up to the British Olympics Committee to



Winter Olympics 2022. Photo: Reuters



to decide whether or not athletes go. As regards Government Ministers, whether they would wish to go to the People’s Republic of China, I can tell the honourable gentleman that no tickets have been booked.”

The announcement follows growing international momentum behind a diplomatic boycott of the Ga-

mes, with the Biden Administration reportedly set to announce that no US government officials will be attending the Games, IPAC said in a statement.

The move comes amidst global concern for Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai, who has appeared only in a series of staged Chinese state media announcements since her disappearance following allegations of sexual abuse made against a top Chinese Communist Party official. The IPAC, a cross-party network of some 200 legislators internationally, has led parliamentary action in over 10 countries calling for a diplomatic boycott of the Games in

response to the Chinese government's human rights abuses in the Uyghur Region and Hong Kong.

UK's Sir Iain Duncan Smith MP said: "Today's announcement that government ministers are not planning to attend the Beijing Winter Olympics, whilst welcome, isn't as yet a clear public statement. The Games will take place while the Chinese government commits industrial scale human rights abuses in the Uyghur Region, Tibet and sends near-daily military incursions into Taiwan's airspace. Add to that their arrest of peaceful democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong and the list of human rights abuses is enormous.

"That is why the U.K. government must now go one further and publicly confirm that no ministers, diplomats or other British officials will attend the games. We cannot lend any legitimacy to China's despotic regime.

## Report: China Using Forced Uyghur Labor, Exploiting Complex Supply Chain

*By VOA, Asim Kashgarian, November 23, 2021*

**WASHINGTON** — More than a hundred international brands are "at risk" of selling cotton products related to Uyghur forced labor in China's Xinjiang region because of the way China's cotton industry "obscures" where the cotton actually comes from, according to a November 2021 report.

The report, *Laundering Cotton, How Xinjiang Cotton Obscured In International Supply Chains*, by the Helena Kennedy Center for International Justice at Sheffield Hallam University



*FILE - A worker packages spools of cotton yarn at a Huafu Fashion plant, as seen during a government organized trip for foreign journalists, in Aksu in East Turkistan, April 20, 2021.*

in England, found that five major Chinese yarn and fabric suppliers are using cotton from the Uyghur region. They export their semi-finished goods to international intermediary manufacturers that ship finished cotton products to international brands all over the world, including the U.S.

“Through this process, we were able to map likely supply chains that connect Xinjiang cotton to over a hundred international brands,” the report states.

According to Laura Murphy, the lead author of the report and professor of human rights and contemporary slavery at Sheffield Hallam University in England, approximately 85% of China’s cotton is produced in Xinjiang where local authorities are accused of imposing coercive labor on Uyghur people.

“They [local authorities] compel people — sometimes whole villages — to relinquish the leases to their land,” Murphy told VOA. “And then they are considered ‘surplus labor’ by the government and are made more vulnerable to state-sponsored labor transfers.”

Over the past four years, Beijing has been accused by some human rights organizations and countries of arbitrarily detaining more than 1 million Uyghurs and some other Turkic ethnic minorities in internment camps in Xinjiang, while coercing many others into forced labor.

According to the report, some of the facilities where cotton was processed were “located nearby or within a prison or camp.”

China maintains the facilities are not internment camps but rather are “vocational training centers” where people learn new skills, and Beijing reiterates the country doesn’t impose forced labor on Uyghurs and the labor arrangements are just “poverty alleviation” programs aimed at helping Uyghurs.

Earlier this year, the U.S. banned the import

of all cotton products from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China, citing Uyghur forced labor in cotton production, along with other commodities such as tomato products.

China’s foreign ministry spokesperson, Zhao Lijian, insisted that Uyghur forced labor is “the biggest lie of the century” made by some Western countries, including the United States, to contain China’s development.

“The United States both creates lies and takes egregious actions based on its lies to violate international trade rules and principles of market economy,” Zhao said at a press briefing in January, adding Xinjiang affairs are China’s internal affairs that no other country has the right or privilege to interfere with.

Using international trade and customs data from the last two years, the authors of the report found that 52% of China’s exported cotton, yarn, and fabric is shipped to 53 intermediary manufacturers in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Philippines, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Cambodia, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Mexico, where finished cotton-based apparel is supplied to 103 well-known global brands.

As a result, the report said, many of the international brands “may unwittingly be purchasing” goods made by Uyghur forced labor. To ensure these brands are not supporting an economy of forced labor, Murphy said they need to trace the raw material sources through their supply chains.



“Complex supply chains can obscure the source of raw materials,” Murphy told VOA. “Sometimes suppliers may hide their sourcing or combine different sources of cotton.” Some companies are actively investigating every one of their suppliers and sub-suppliers to do everything they can to ensure that no Xinjiang cotton makes it into their products, Murphy says. “Other companies would prefer simply not to know, though that’s get-

ting more difficult with international pressure, new research, and import legislation.” Murphy says there is no excuse for companies not knowing where their products come from. “If a supplier cannot tell a brand where they’re sourcing from and provide convincing evidence of that sourcing, the brand should end the relationship with that supplier.”

## Japanese Apparel Makers Join Boycott of China’s Xinjiang Cotton

*By Nikkei staff writers, Nov 22, 2021*

**Sanyo Shokai, TSI among those responding to allegations of forced labor**

**TOKYO -- Japanese apparel makers are part of a growing international trend to shun cotton from China’s western Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, as reports of forced labor and human rights abuses mount in the region, which produces some of the world’s highest grade cotton.**

**Japanese clothing makers, including Sanyo Shokai and TSI Holdings, have decided to stop using Xinjiang cotton, following in the footsteps of Mizuno, a major sports equipment and sportswear company, and others. The moves of Japanese clothing names with clout within the industry could create a ripple effect for the entire textile supply chain.**

Sanyo Shokai, which sells clothing under the Paul Stuart, Epoca and Mackintosh Philosophy brands, will stop using Xinjiang cot-



*Japanese apparel makers Sanyo Shokai and TSI Holdings have decided to stop using East Turkistan cotton. (Source photos by Kaisuke Ota, Getty Images and screenshot from TSI Holdings)*

ton, starting in the 2022 spring-summer season. Sanyo Shokai President Shinji Oe has told Nikkei that the company has gathered information on human rights issues in Xinjiang, but has been unable to pin down the facts. “As long as there is doubt, we have no choice but to stop” using Xinjiang cotton, Oe said.

TSI, which has a raft of apparel brands, inclu-

ding Nano Universe, has learned that cotton sourced from the region was used in some of its products. It has eliminated Xinjiang cotton from its products for this autumn-winter season. "We will not use [Xinjiang cotton] until the human rights issues are resolved," said TSI President Tsuyoshi Shimoji. King, known for its Pinore a women's clothing brand, has followed suit.

Sanyo Shokai is influential in the Japanese apparel industry because of its business partnerships with a number of large retailers, mainly department stores. TSI, which also sells popular Margaret Howell brand clothes, had 134 billion yen (\$1.17 billion) of sales in the year ended in February.

Besides Mizuno, Gunze, a major underwear maker, has also stopped sourcing cotton from Xinjiang. Sanyo Shokai and TSI use a wide variety of fabrics for their small-lot production of a broad array of products. The decision was difficult for these manufacturers because it creates challenges for their supply chain management and product development. But they have been forced to take the step amid a growing consumer backlash over allegations that members of the mostly Muslim Uyghur minority group are being used as forced labor in China.

China is the world's second-largest cotton grower, with Xinjiang accounting for 80% to 90% of the country's production. Many industry executives say it is impossible to eliminate Xinjiang cotton entirely from the global supply chain. Some Japanese clothing manufacturers, including women's underwear maker Charle, are responding by reducing the amount they use.

This issue is a sensitive, if familiar, one for foreign brands. They have a challenge in trying to sell to China's vast market while satisfying global customers' growing demands that they do business ethically.

H&M, a Swedish fast-fashion brand, has seen sales in China nosedive as nationalistic consumers have called for a boycott of its products over the company's comments on alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

Some big industry players are opting to take no action. Muji brand operator Ryohin Keikaku has decided to continue using Xinjiang cotton in the same volumes as before. "We have been unable to confirm the problem [of forced labor], as far as our investigation is concerned," the company says. It also pointed to concerns about the likely impact of halting the use of Xinjiang cotton on the local economy. Yamato International, an Osaka-based apparel maker, has decided to continue using only Xinjiang cotton that is "properly managed."

Some Japanese clothing brands are also stepping up their efforts to ensure socially responsible conduct by suppliers.

Fast Retailing, which operates the Uniqlo casual clothing brand, has established a system to directly monitor production of the materials it uses, including cotton, for possible human rights abuses and other ethical violations. Tadashi Yanai, the company's chairman and CEO, has pledged to "secure high levels of traceability" throughout the supply chain, down to cotton farmers, to ensure ethical production.

United Arrows next year will start demanding confirmation that no human rights abu-



ses or other ethical problems are occurring in its supply chain, including at sewing factories and other suppliers.

The growing international movement to rethink the use of Xinjiang cotton reflects a global movement that places greater importance on companies' environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) standards. Glo-

bal ESG investment last year totaled \$35.3 trillion, an increase of 15% compared with 2018, according to the Global Sustainable Investment Alliance. It is becoming increasingly difficult for companies to attract investors unless they show a strong commitment to socially responsible management.

## Amid Global Concern, China's Hu Binchen Wins Key Interpol Post

By ANI , 11/26/2021

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*“Mr Binchen HU of China and Mr Praveen Sinha of India have been elected to the posts of Delegate for Asia (3-yr term),” Interpol said in a tweet.*

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The Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) said in a statement that the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has repeatedly abused the Interpol Red Notice to persecute dissidents in exile.

The elections were held in Turkey during the ongoing 89th General Assembly of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).



*The entrance hall of Interpol's headquarters in Lyon, central France.(HT archive)*

“Hu's election gives the PRC government a green light to continue using Interpol as a vehicle for its repressive policies globally and places thousands of Hong Konger, Uyghur, Tibetan, Taiwanese and Chinese dissidents living abroad at even graver risk,” IPAC said.

“The PRC cannot be allowed to continue its long arm policing abroad. In light of these abuses, we reiterate our call for all governments to revoke extradition treaties with the PRC and Hong Kong. Activists, dissidents

and exiles living abroad must be protected from harassment and intimidation from the PRC authorities,” the statement added.

Earlier, parliamentarians and activists from around the world had launched a global campaign to oppose the candidacy of Hu Binchen, a Deputy Director General at Chi-

na’s Ministry of Public Security, to the Interpol Executive Committee.

As many as 50 legislators, from 20 countries, who are part of the IPAC penned a joint letter to their governments raising alarm at China’s moves to gain influence over the global policing body.

## Australia Considers An Unofficial Boycott Of Beijing Winter Olympics

*By Anthony Galloway and Eryk Bagshaw , 11/25/2021*

**Australia is considering not sending any government officials to the Beijing Winter Olympics next year amid growing calls from MPs for an official diplomatic boycott.**

Australian politicians from both major parties are urging the government to boycott the Games, which will be held in China in February, as concern grows for the welfare of Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai.

United States President Joe Biden this month confirmed his administration was considering a diplomatic boycott, which would be aimed at protesting China’s human rights record including in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet. The United Kingdom and Canada are also weighing up their positions.

A diplomatic boycott would involve not sending a delegation of officials to the Winter Olympics, but allowing athletes to participate.

The Australian government is awaiting the decision by the Biden administration before it makes a call on whether to sign up to a diplomatic boycott, with its preference to



*Chinese tennis player Shuai Peng briefly disappeared from public view.*

make any move in conjunction with other like-minded countries.

Under one option being considered, Australia would not send any government officials – including the ambassador to China – but decline to publicly call it a boycott. Sports Minister Richard Colbeck and Foreign Minister Marise Payne are already unlikely to attend.

Ms Peng, a former doubles world No.1, accused former Chinese vice-premier Zhang Gaoli of sexual assault then went missing

for weeks. After weeks of pressure on the Chinese government over her apparent disappearance, she this week reappeared in public view via a highly choreographed release of videos by Chinese state media and a video call with the International Olympic Committee.

The World Players Association, a global union representing the world's athletes, said on Wednesday the IOC call, which did not address Ms Peng's claims of sexual assault, had not alleviated their concerns.

"The International Olympic Committee's video call has not only failed to provide the necessary assurances, it has exacerbated global alarm by raising many questions that have rightly been asked by human rights organisations including Human Rights Watch," it said in a statement.

China's Foreign Ministry on Tuesday night said Ms Peng's situation was not a diplomatic matter.

"I believe everyone will have seen she has recently attended some public activities and also held a video call with the IOC president, [Thomas] Bach," said spokesman Zhao Lijian. "I hope certain people will cease malicious hyping, let alone politicisation."

Russian President Vladimir Putin is so far the only world leader to accept an invitation to the Olympics. He will become the first leader to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping in two years when he travels to Beijing in February.

Australia sent then-sports minister Bridget McKenzie to the previous Winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea. If Senator Colbeck was to travel to Beijing, he would be the first minister to enter China in more than two years and after more than 18 months of no ministerial contact between the two countries.

Senator Colbeck said it was understandable that many people have raised serious con-

cerns about Ms Peng's welfare.

"This is a matter that needs to be responded to with transparency and accountability," he said. "A decision on Commonwealth representation at the Beijing Winter Olympics is yet to be made."

Liberal senator Eric Abetz, who has previously written to Prime Minister Scott Morrison urging a boycott, said the treatment of Ms Peng "strengthens that call".

"I would like to think that other like-minded, freedom-loving countries would follow suit, but it takes a leader to start on this and hopefully Australia can take the lead," he said.

"It looks as though the United States and United Kingdom are now giving active consideration to it and I just hope that as each and every voice is added, there will be sufficient momentum for the freedom-loving countries of the world to say to this dictatorship: 'Enough is enough'."

Liberal senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells said China's actions over the years, "including its bellicose and illegal actions in the South China Sea, ongoing human rights abuses, cyberattacks and its conduct in Hong Kong and Taiwan, demonstrate that Beijing is not a good international citizen".

"The recent situation regarding Peng Shuai has added to international concerns. Accordingly, I continue to support a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics."



Labor MP Peter Khalil said, “at the very least the Australian government should be looking at a diplomatic boycott along with their allies”.

“Yes, we shouldn’t mix politics and sport, but there does come a time when we need to draw a line.”

Liberal MP Dave Sharma, a former senior diplomat, said he was sceptical about the effectiveness of Olympic boycotts.

“Athletes should be free to make their own decisions in this regard, but I believe a high threshold must be met before governments become involved,” he said.

“The Winter Olympics in Beijing will provide greater scrutiny and transparency around Beijing’s conduct, as the Peng Shuai case de-

monstrates. I believe it is better to make use of this opportunity, rather than discard it.”

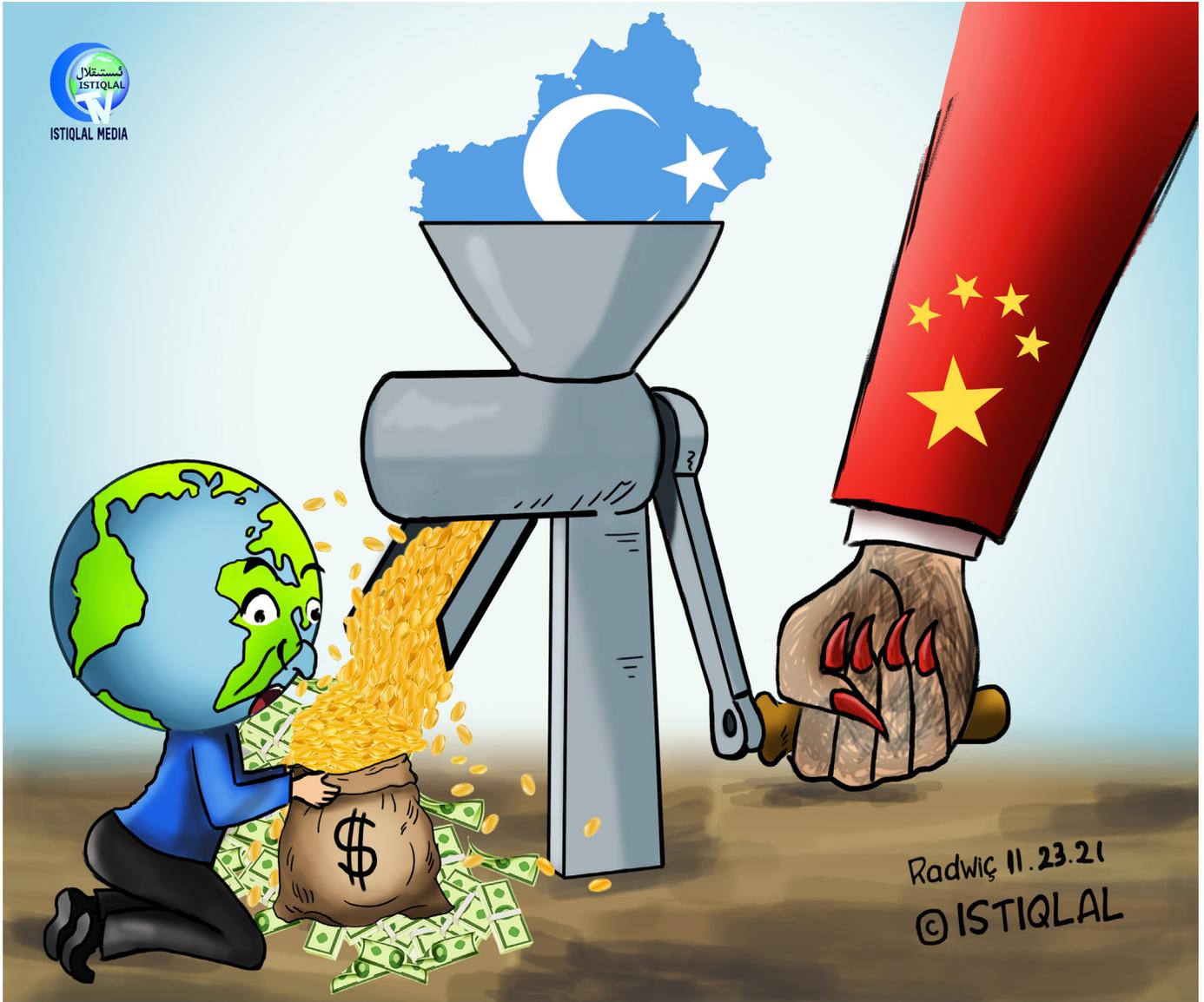
Liberal MP and former tennis champion John Alexander suggested he was against boycotts, saying “the whole idea of sport is it should be spreading good will”.

Independent MP and former Winter Olympian Zali Steggall said there were serious questions around China’s human rights record, but she was “on the record as strongly opposing boycotts of athletes”.

Asked whether he supported a diplomatic boycott, Defence Minister Peter Dutton on Tuesday said: “The short answer is no, but that’s an issue for others to consider, if that’s something under consideration, [it’s] not a conversation I’ve been a party to.”

**A press conference was held on November 23rd in Beşiktaş district of Istanbul against the Chinese official’s nomination for Interpol’s executive committee, and the Moroccan government, which still holds Idris Hassan.**





***The Chinese regime is not only committing genocide against Uyghurs but also plundering measureless natural resources from East Turkistan to increase its influence around the world.***



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