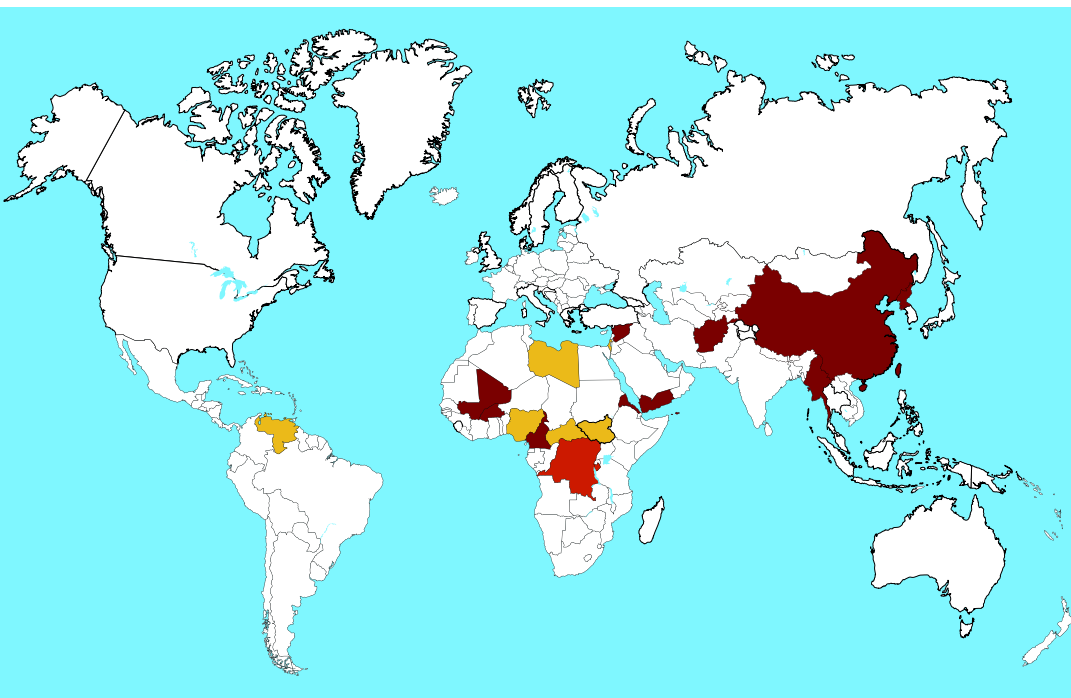


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Responsibility to Protect

The **Responsibility to Protect** (R2P) is a global norm, unanimously adopted by heads of state and government at the 2005 UN World Summit, aimed at preventing and halting Genocide, War Crimes, Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity. R2P stipulates that:

- » Every State has the Responsibility to Protect its populations from the four mass atrocity crimes (Pillar I).
- » The wider international community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual States in meeting that responsibility (Pillar II).
- » If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take appropriate collective action, in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter (Pillar III).

R2P Monitor applies an atrocity prevention lens to the following situations of concern:

CURRENT CRISIS

Mass atrocity crimes are occurring and urgent action is needed.

IMMINENT RISK

The situation is reaching a critical threshold and the risk of mass atrocity crimes occurring in the immediate future is very high if effective preventive action is not taken.

SERIOUS CONCERN

There is a significant risk of occurrence, or recurrence, of mass atrocity crimes within the foreseeable future if effective action is not taken.

R2P Monitor:

- » Provides *background* on populations at risk of mass atrocity crimes, with particular emphasis on key events and actors and their connection to the threat, or commission, of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
- » Offers *analysis* of the country's past history in relation to mass atrocity crimes; the factors that have enabled their possible commission, or that prevent their resolution; and the receptivity of the situation to positive influences that would assist in preventing further crimes.
- » Tracks the *international response* to the situation with a particular emphasis upon the actions of the United Nations, key regional actors and the International Criminal Court.
- » Suggests *necessary action* to prevent or halt the commission of mass atrocity crimes.

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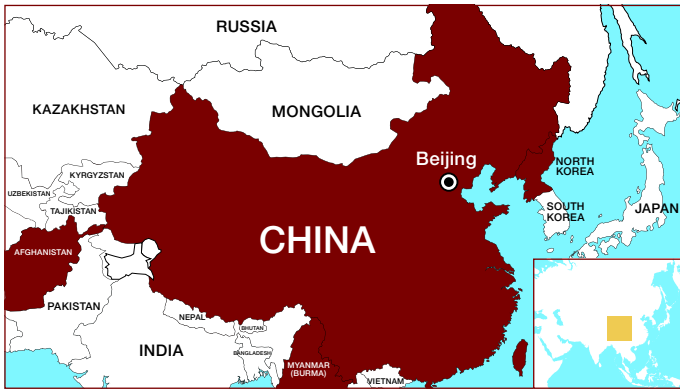
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Approximately one million Uighurs and other Turkic Muslim minorities are currently being detained in "re-education" or "de-extremification" facilities

CHINA

The treatment of ethnic Uighurs and other Muslim minorities in China may amount to crimes against humanity.

BACKGROUND

Under the auspices of combatting religious extremism and terrorism, in recent years the government of China and authorities in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) have increased their repression of members of the ethnic Uighur community as well as Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Hui. China's approach to combatting "religious extremism" has resulted in large-scale arbitrary detention, severe restrictions on religious practice, and pervasive surveillance of the country's Muslim population.

Approximately 1 million Uighurs and other Muslim minorities are currently being detained in "re-education" or "de-extremification" facilities without formal charges or due process. Former detainees have reported that while in state custody they were subjected to abuse and forced indoctrination. The government has also reportedly separated nearly half a million Muslim children from their families, often denying access to information on their location.

During February The Associated Press published leaked information from a database that includes profiles of over 300 detainees from Karakax County, XUAR. The database demonstrates that the Chinese government focused on religious devotion as one of the main reasons for detention, including ordinary activities such as fasting, praying or attending mosque.

These measures have been imposed in conjunction with increased restrictions on religious practice. In March 2017 XUAR authorities passed the "Regulation on De-extremification," which prohibits a range of "extreme" behaviors, such as "abnormal" beards.

On 1 March the Australian Strategic Policy Institute published a report which found that over 80,000 Uighurs are working under "conditions that strongly suggest forced labor," with

many transferred directly from detention camps to factories across China. According to the report, these factories are part of supply chains that provide goods for 83 global brands, including Apple, BMW, Gap, Nike and Samsung.

China has also expanded its pervasive surveillance across XUAR. Authorities monitor the daily lives of almost all Uighurs, including religious gatherings. Authorities collect DNA during medical check-ups, monitor mobile and online communications, and install a GPS tracking system on all vehicles. Data is reportedly used to profile persons at risk of "extremist thought" prior to being sent to "re-education" camps.

Authorities have also engaged in the systematic destruction of Uighur cultural heritage, including demolishing historic mosques and shrines. At least 100 Uighur cemeteries as well as over 100 mosques have reportedly been partially destroyed or completely demolished in XUAR.

On 1 April the Uyghur Human Rights Project reported on the Chinese authorities' systematic refusal to renew passports of Uighur citizens and denial of other documentation, threatening them with possible statelessness.

Leaked government documents reveal that the crackdown in Xinjiang was a result of pressure from senior officials. Following a visit to XUAR in April 2014, President Xi Jinping called for a "struggle against terrorism, infiltration and separatism" to be conducted with "absolutely no mercy." The Communist Party Secretary of XUAR, Chen Quanguo, then intensified Uighur persecution and drastically expanded the detention camps.

ANALYSIS

The large-scale detention program, abuse of detainees and lack of information regarding the fate of persons in state custody in XUAR could constitute crimes against humanity under international law. The targeted destruction of places of cultural significance may be part of a systematic attempt to eradicate Uighur cultural heritage in China.

Systematic discrimination against the Uighurs and other Muslims, as well as surveillance systems that target these groups, increase their vulnerability to violations and abuses of their fundamental human rights. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines "the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion" for all human beings.

The government of China is failing to uphold its responsibility to protect and is perpetrating possible crimes against humanity against the Uighurs and other Muslim minorities.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Twenty-two governments sent a letter to the President of the HRC on 8 July 2019 calling upon China to halt its mass detention of ethnic Uighurs and other minorities in Xinjiang. In response, on 12 July ambassadors from 37 governments sent a letter to the HRC President defending China's policies.

During October 2019 the US imposed visa restrictions on Chinese government and Communist Party officials “who are believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, the detention or abuse of Uighurs, Kazakhs, or other members of Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang.” On 3 December the US House of Representatives passed the Uighur Act of 2019, calling for sanctions against senior officials responsible for human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

On 29 October 2019 the United Kingdom (UK) delivered a statement on behalf of 23 states at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, urging China to respect freedom of religion and belief and to allow OHCHR and UN Special Procedures “immediate unfettered, meaningful access to Xinjiang.”

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, said on 4 March that she requested access to China “to carry out an independent assessment of the continuing reports pointing to wide patterns of enforced disappearances and arbitrary detentions, particularly in [XUAR].”

On 10 March Nike announced that it was reviewing its supply chain in China to address allegations of using forced Uighur labor.

NECESSARY ACTION

The government of China should immediately halt widespread violations and abuses of human rights in XUAR and repeal the “Regulation on De-extremification.” The authorities should release all Uighurs and members of other minorities being arbitrarily detained in “re-education camps” and related facilities. The authorities should immediately end the enforced separation of Uighur children from their families and cease the deliberate destruction of the unique cultural heritage of XUAR.

Countries that receive asylum seekers from Xinjiang must ensure respect for the principles of non-refoulement and not force them to return to China, where they are at risk of further persecution.

The Chinese government should grant unfettered access to OHCHR. UN bodies, including the HRC, should consider mandating a fact-finding mission to investigate international crimes and systematic violations of human rights committed in XUAR.

Recognizing the important influence they may have in urging China to reconsider its policies, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Muslim-majority countries, and neighboring states, should urge China to respect the rights of Muslim minorities and cease their systematic persecution of the Uighur population.



More than 4,000 people killed in attacks in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger during 2019

MALI AND BURKINA FASO

Populations in Mali and Burkina Faso face potential atrocity crimes as a result of attacks by armed Islamist groups, as well as growing conflict between ethnic militias and community “self-defense groups.”

BACKGROUND

Since 2015 Islamist armed groups have expanded their activities from northern to central Mali, as well as to Burkina Faso and Niger, prompting the formation of ethnic militias and armed “self-defense groups” in many communities. Over the past year civilians across the Sahel – particularly in central Mali and neighboring parts of Burkina Faso – have endured increasing attacks by terrorist groups as well as inter-communal violence perpetrated by rival self-defense groups. According to the Head of the UN Office in West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), more than 4,000 people were killed in terrorist attacks in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger during 2019 as compared to 770 during 2016. Nearly half of those killed were in Burkina Faso.

A cycle of reprisal attacks in the Mopti region of Mali has also dramatically increased since early 2019. Violence has taken place between Dozos (traditional hunters mainly from the Dogon ethnic community) and ethnic Bambara fighters, against members of the predominantly Muslim Fulani community. The attacks include the burning of villages and destruction of food sources. On 23 March 2019 Dozos massacred at least 150 people, including 50 children, in the predominately Fulani village of Ogossagou. Despite the government’s commitment to increasing security in the area, on 14 February 2020 at least 37 people were killed during another attack on Ogossagou.

Following a 2012 military coup, Tuareg separatists and armed Islamist groups seized territory in northern Mali. Despite the presence of a UN peacekeeping force (MINUSMA) and a French-led intervention force, as well as the 2015 “Bamako Agreement,” violence between government forces and various armed groups has continued. MINUSMA has frequently been attacked by these