



High-level virtual event on the situation of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim minorities in Xinjiang

**Wednesday 12 May 2021
10:00-11:30 AM (EDT)**

The international community has grown increasingly concerned about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, China. In June 2020, 50 UN Special Procedures mandate holders jointly raised the alarm about Xinjiang and called on the Government of the People’s Republic of China to respect human rights in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China. In October 2020, a cross-regional group of 39 countries expressed grave concern about the existence of a large network of “political re-education” camps in Xinjiang, where credible reports indicate that more than a million people have been arbitrarily detained. They spoke of severe restrictions on the freedoms of religion or belief, movement, association and expression. They also voiced grave concern about widespread surveillance, which disproportionately targets Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim minorities, and continued reports of state-sponsored forced labor and forced birth control, including sterilization.

China has repeatedly voiced a willingness to grant access to the UN to assess the human rights situation in Xinjiang. Member states and civil society organizations have called for immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for the UN and other independent observers, including relevant special procedures mandate holders.

This high-level event has the goal of bringing together UN officials, civil society representatives, academics, journalists, as well as representatives of affected communities in order to exchange information on and raise awareness about the human rights situation in Xinjiang. Participants will discuss how the UN system, member states and civil society can support and advocate for the human rights of members of ethnic Turkic communities in Xinjiang.

Running Order

Moderator: Demetri Sevastopulo, Financial Times

Introductory Perspective: Jewher Ilham, Author and Human Rights activist

Welcome Remarks:

- H.E. Barbara Woodward, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom
- H.E. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Permanent Representative of the United States of America
- H.E. Christoph Heusgen, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany

Panel Segment I:

- Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Dr. Agnès Callamard, Secretary General, Amnesty International

Panel Segment II:

- Prof. Eva Pils, Professor of Law, King's College London
- Dr. Fernand de Varennes, UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues
- Jewher Ilham, Author and Human Rights activist

Q and A Session and Interventions from Member States

Closing Remarks:

- Dolkun Isa, President, World Uyghur Congress

Logistical Details

During the Q&A session, Member States can make one minute interventions and Member States speaking on behalf of a group can make two minute interventions. Time permitting, other attendees may pose questions to the panelists. **The event will be broadcast on UNTV.**