

Debate Pack

CDP 2022-0009

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The Uyghur Tribunal

1	Background	2
2	Press and media articles	6
3	Press releases	7
4	PQs	16
5	Other Parliamentary material	26
6	Further reading	36

1

Background

A Backbench Business Committee debate on the Uyghur Tribunal is scheduled for Thursday 20 January 2022 in the House of Commons chamber. The debate will be led by Ms Nusrat Ghani MP.

Note: While the Tribunal uses the spelling Uyghur, [many Western academic and news sources use the spelling Uighur](#). For consistency, the spelling Uyghur shall be used throughout this introduction.

The Tribunal

The [Uyghur Tribunal](#) is an unofficial body that examined claims of human rights abuses and crimes against humanity reportedly committed against the Uyghur people by China in its [Xinjiang province](#). The Tribunal has no legal powers. Its hearings were held at Church House in London.

The Tribunal was chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, a barrister who has served as a part-time judge and worked at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia between 1998 and 2006 and led the prosecution of Slobodan Milošević, former President of Serbia.

Members of what the [Tribunal styled as a jury](#), included several academics specialising in fields like medicine, law and anthropology, and board members of charitable organisations.

The Tribunal started its work in September 2020, and published a judgment in December 2021.

Tribunal's findings

The [Tribunal's judgment](#) (PDF) found evidence that China had detained “hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs – with some estimates well in excess of a million [...] without any, or any remotely sufficient, reason and subjected [them] to acts of unconscionable cruelty, depravity and inhumanity”.

The judgment stated that torture of Uyghurs “attributable to the PRC [Peoples’ Republic of China] is established beyond reasonable doubt”. It also said that crimes against humanity attributable to the PRC “is established beyond reasonable doubt” by acts of: “deportation or forcible transfer; imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty; torture; rape and other sexual violence; enforced sterilisation; persecution; enforced disappearance; and other inhumane acts”.

On the subject of genocide, the Tribunal’s judgment emphasised the difficulty of assessing what legal standards should apply, and how such standards interact with public understanding of the phrase. However, they conclude that:

[O]n the basis of evidence heard in public, the Tribunal is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the PRC, by the imposition of measures to prevent births intended to destroy a significant part of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang as such, has committed genocide.

The evidence the Tribunal reported of birth-prevention measures included enforced abortions, the removal of wombs against women's will, the killing of babies immediately after birth and mass enforced sterilisation through the insertion of IUD devices that were only removable by surgical means.

The judgment reported evidence of reduced birth-rates particularly in indigenous Uyghur counties:

Across the 29 counties with indigenous-majority populations for which we have 2019 or 2020 data, the birth-rate has fallen by 58.5% from the 2011-15 baseline average [...] In those counties that are over 90% indigenous, the birth-rate fell at an even greater rate, showing a 66.3% decrease in 2019-20.

The Tribunal found however, that “there is no evidence of organised mass killings”.

Chinese Government response

In March 2021, the Chinese state [imposed sanctions](#) on nine UK citizens, including five MPs and Sir Geoffrey Nice, and several UK-based organisations, including the Uyghur Tribunal.

In September 2021, [in a press conference](#) the Chinese Ambassador to the UK, Zheng Zeguang, described the Tribunal as “nothing but a farce carried out by a small number anti-China elements”. Mr Zheng further dismissed the evidence presented to the Tribunal and the witnesses, saying:

Its so-called "evidence" is nothing but sheer lies and disinformation. Its so-called "experts" are rumour mongers who have long engaged in slandering China. And the so-called "witnesses" the organizers have put together are merely actors who have been making up the so-called "persecution" that never happened at all.

The Ambassador dismissed claims of genocide as “absurd”, stating that in “the past 40 years, the population of Uygurs in Xinjiang has increased from 5.55 million to 11.6 million”.

He said that “Xinjiang-related issues have nothing to do with human rights, ethnic groups or religions, but everything to do with fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism”, that the “Vocational Education and Training Centres in Xinjiang are absolutely not “concentration camps”, but preventative and de-radicalisation measures”. Adding that “in nature, they are no different from the Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP) of the UK or the de-radicalisation centres in France”.

On 10 December, the day the Tribunal published its findings, a spokesperson for China's UK Embassy [said the Tribunal](#) was “nothing but a political tool

used by a few anti-China and separatist elements to deceive and mislead the public”, describing its conclusions as “mere clumsy shows staged by anti-China elements for their self-entertainment”; adding “anyone with conscience and reason will not be deceived or fooled”.

UK Government statements on the tribunal

During a debate on the Tribunal in June 2021, the then Minister for Asia, Nigel Adams, [told the House of Commons](#) the Government “welcomes any rigorous and balanced initiative that raises awareness of the situation faced by Uyghurs and other minorities in China”. The Minister added that he had met Sir Geoffrey Nice in April 2021 to discuss the Uyghur Tribunal, that “we are following its work” and that his “officials will study any resulting report very carefully indeed”.

In January 2022, Nusrat Ghani MP asked Amanda Milling, the current Minister for Asia, about a December 2021 meeting she had held with Ambassador Zheng. The Minister in [her answer said](#) she had during the meeting “urged the Chinese Government to engage with the evidence provided by the Uyghur Tribunal”.

UK Government policy on investigating genocide

In November 2020, as part of its [inquiry into Xinjiang detention camps](#), the Foreign Affairs Select Committee wrote to the then Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, to [ask if the Foreign Office would refer the issue of possible genocide against the Uyghurs to the International Criminal Court](#) (PDF) or alternatively give its own opinion of whether genocide has been committed.

[Mr Raab responded](#) (PDF), that the Government would leave assessments of genocide up to “competent courts”:

[I]t has been the Government's long-standing policy that any determination of genocide should only be made by competent courts, rather than by governments or non-judicial bodies. Competent courts include international courts, such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, and national criminal courts that meet international standards of due process.

International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court (ICC), which prosecutes individuals – not states, [has jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes](#), committed after 1 July 2002. But it can only exercise jurisdiction if:

- the accused is a national of a State Party to its Rome Statute (the ICC's founding treaty), or a State otherwise accepting the jurisdiction of the Court; or
- the crime took place on the territory of a State Party or a State otherwise accepting the jurisdiction of the Court; or

- the United Nations Security Council has referred the situation to the Prosecutor, irrespective of the nationality of the accused or the location of the crime.

China is not a State Party to the Rome Statute. If the Security Council were to try to refer the issue of the Uyghur's to the ICC's Prosecutor, China could use its veto to block the move.

However, the ICC's recent rulings on investigating crimes against the Rohingya people may have provided another avenue. The Court looked at whether it could investigate alleged crimes committed against the Rohingya in Myanmar, which is not a State Party to the Rome Statute, but considered that many of the Rohingya fled into Bangladesh, which is a State Party, and [at least part of the alleged crimes may have taken place on Bangladeshi territory](#).

In September 2018, the [Court clarified](#) (PDF) in general ruling that the Court may have jurisdiction "if at least one element of a crime within the jurisdiction of the Court or part of such a crime is committed on the territory of a State Party to the Statute".

In 2020 a complaint against China was [filed at the ICC by two Uyghur exile groups](#). In addition to alleged abuses against Uyghurs inside China's borders, the groups also lobbied the court to investigate Beijing for pursuing the repatriation of thousands of Uyghurs through unlawful arrests in or deportation from other countries, including Cambodia and Tajikistan.

In December 2020, however, the then chief prosecutor of the ICC, Fatou Bensoud, [said the abuses described](#) "have been committed solely by nationals of China within the territory of China," and that she would not investigate the claims further, but [said she would keep the file open](#) for further evidence to be submitted.

2

Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[Senior Tory calls for UK to mull HSBC sanctions over links to Uyghur oppression](#)

City AM

Stefan Boscia

11 January 2022

[Uyghur Tribunal: And the Verdict Is—Genocide](#)

Bitter Winter

Ruth Ingram

10 December 2021

[‘A historic day’: Uyghurs welcome genocide ruling and call for action from world leaders](#)

Independent

Rory Sullivan

9 December 2021

[China replaces Xinjiang party boss associated with Uyghur crackdown](#)

Guardian

Vincent Ni

26 December 2021

[Biden Signs The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act Into Law](#)

Forbes

Dr. Ewelina U. Ochab

23 December 2021

[China’s Oppression of Muslims in Xinjiang, Explained](#)

New York Times

Austin Ramzy

20 January 2021 (Updated 27 July 2021)

3

Press releases

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference (Excerpt)

**Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America
14 January 2022**

CGTN: US official recently said in a statement that “addressing forced labor has been a priority for this Administration” and the international community is concerned over the ongoing “genocide” and “crimes against humanity” in Xinjiang. Some US lawmakers said cotton produced in Xinjiang is synonymous with “forced labor”. Do you have any comment?

Wang Wenbin: For some time now, US politicians, in collusion with some anti-China organizations and individuals, have been unscrupulously spreading and hyping up the lie of “genocide” and “forced labor” in Xinjiang for their ulterior political purpose. Today, I would like to take some time to share with you my experience of debunking lies on Xinjiang and avoiding being misled so that you can all see the true face of those who fabricated those lies.

First of all, those who fabricate lies on Xinjiang always camouflage themselves with three cloaks.

The first is the cloak of academic research. They spread rumors in the name of scholars and academic institutions. A typical example is Adrian Zenz. His claim that “900,000 to 1,800,000 people have been systematically held in detention in Xinjiang” comes from a groundless report by Istiqlal TV, a Turkey-based media organization with close ties with extremists. Abdulkadir Yapuquan, leader of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a UN listed terrorist organization, is a regular guest of it. Zenz also claimed that 70 percent of the cotton plantations in Xinjiang in 2019 were harvested by human labor. But fact tells a completely different story: over 85 percent of the cotton in Xinjiang is harvested by machine. These facts have proved that Adrian Zenz, a so-called “China expert”, is just a pseudo scholar with no academic integrity at all.

Another case in point is the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). The “findings” published by ASPI and its research fellows have repeatedly been proven to be disinformation. In September 2020, ASPI produced a Xinjiang-related report claiming that researchers had identified and mapped more than 380 “suspected detention facilities” in Xinjiang using satellite imagery. However, at least 343 of the locations are proven to be public or civil facilities such as schools, hospitals, houses and shops. In another report of ASPI titled “Uyghurs for Sale: ‘Re-education’, forced labour and surveillance beyond Xinjiang” published in March 2020, over 100 notes cite reports by Chinese media, but without using the original words or reflecting the authentic meaning. It is more appropriate to define ASPI as a rumormonger, rather than a research institute.

The second is the cloak of victims. They concoct lies by playing the victim or witness. Such fake witnesses abound. We once exposed how Zumrat Dawut and Tursunay Ziawudun lied. Today, I want to give you another example named Sayragul Sauytbay. She sometimes calls herself a teacher at a vocational training center, and sometimes a “victim” of the “detention center”. She claims to have witnessed “torture” and “violence” at vocational training centers on one occasion, but insisted that she has never seen any acts of violence on the other. She says the “detainees” were forced to have pork, but asserts that there was no meat at all in another context. In fact, this person has never learned or worked in vocational training centers, but is wanted by the public security authorities for suspected crimes of illegal border-crossing and loan fraud. The so-called “testimonies” of these individuals contradict themselves and cannot justify anything, only to reveal that the people are not victims or witnesses, but third-stringer actors that give themselves away while changing their playbooks.

The third is the cloak of law. The so-called “Uyghur Tribunal” stands out in peddling lies under the legal pretext. This “tribunal” has nothing to do with the law, but engages in anti-China manipulation with a deceptive name. The “Chair” Geoffrey Nice reportedly used to be a British agent, who spends his life mainly making up false accusations to serve the US’ and the UK’s geopolitical purposes. Those who showed up as “witnesses” were familiar faces including Sayragul Sauytbay and Tursunay Ziyawudun. The so-called “research outcomes” cited there were fabricated by individuals like Adrian Zenz and institutions like the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). The 28 Xinjiang-related false testimonies given at the “tribunal” were all rebuked by the relatives and colleagues of the so-called “witnesses”, as well as independent media in the world.

No matter what cloak the liars may wear, their disguise is no different from the “emperor’s new clothes” in the face of facts and truth. We believe you would not be easily hoodwinked when you encounter lies about Xinjiang including “forced labor” and “genocide” again.

Second, those who make up Xinjiang-related lies seem to be independent from each other, but are in reality closely related as they are prompted and manipulated by the same force behind the scene.

For example, Tursunay Ziyawudun had received several interviews of foreign media outlets before arriving in the US, where she did not mention once that she was a victim of abuse. But she immediately changed her stories after she set foot in the US and received some “training” by certain forces. After fleeing overseas, Sayragul Sauytbay colluded with “East Turkistan” organizations sponsored by the US, was awarded by the US Department of State, and was even showered with Pompeo’s praise.

Adrian Zenz works at the “Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation”, an anti-China organization launched and manipulated by the US intelligence community, and the Jamestown Foundation. He’s also a key member of a research group set up by the US intelligence community on vocational

education and training centers in Xinjiang. Right after the US House of Representatives adopted the “Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act” in 2019, Adrian Zenz took a victory lap of sorts to celebrate the passage of the Act while testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee and used the occasion to call for opening up a new front against China and starting an investigation into “involuntary labor in relation to Xinjiang”.

The top funder of the “Uyghur Tribunal” is the “World Uyghur Congress”, an anti-China terrorist organization advocating the secession of Xinjiang that has been supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) since the day it was founded. Since 2004, the NED has provided \$8.76 million in funding to overseas Uyghur organizations.

As for ASPI, it is an organization funded by the US Department of State, NATO and some arms dealers. Its two biggest funding payments from overseas government agencies are both from the US Department of State. After this institute released its report on “forced labor” in Xinjiang in March 2020, some US lawmakers began to clamor for banning imports from Xinjiang, and introduced the “Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act”, which was later signed into law.

It is not difficult to see that the real fabricators and “beneficiaries” of Xinjiang-related lies are some anti-China forces in the US. Lawrence Wilkerson, a former senior US official, stated unabashedly back in 2018 that the US “would want to destabilize China and that would be the best way to do it to foment unrest and to join with those Uyghurs in pushing the Han Chinese in Beijing from internal places rather than external”. It is just part of the “use Xinjiang to contain China” strategy of the anti-China forces in the US to weave Xinjiang-related lies, tarnish China’s image, and destabilize Xinjiang to suppress and contain China’s development.

Third, much has changed in today’s world, but the US still uses the same M.O. to fabricate lies. Years ago, it used a test tube of what was suspected to be laundry powder as evidence to accuse Iraq of hiding weapons of mass destruction and waged a war. Today, 20 years later, citing the “testimonies” of a bunch of lame actors, the US alleged that there is “genocide” and “forced labor” in Xinjiang, based on which it imposed sanctions and adopted legislation to suppress China. Its M.O. remains the same. It just replaced the white powder with cotton from China’s Xinjiang.

However, new progress in our world today also brings with it a more discerning eye. The Xinjiang-related lies concocted by anti-China forces in the US cannot undermine the stability, unity, harmonious development, and wellbeing in Xinjiang or silence the just voice of the international community showing support for China. They will only further expose the true face of liars and conspirators in front of the whole world.

The sun will shine through the dark clouds and people will just admire the clear blue sky even more. Anti-China forces’ desperate attempts to smear and suppress China failed in the past and will never succeed in the future. The

fabricator of the “lie of the century” will be nailed to the historical pillar of ignominy.

[WUC welcomes Uyghur Tribunal judgement confirming Uyghur genocide](#)
World Uyghur Congress
9 December 2021

On behalf of Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic people in East Turkistan, the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) welcomes with great encouragement the final [judgement](#) of the Uyghur Tribunal, which announced today that the Chinese communist government’s atrocity crimes against the Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples in East Turkistan amount to genocide and crimes against humanity.

“This is a historic day for the Uyghur people”, WUC President, Dolkun Isa said. “The verdict recognizing the Uyghur genocide by an independent body, which also provided the only venue for Uyghur and other survivors to speak and provide firsthand evidence to a quasi-judicial body, is a crucial step towards wider recognition by the international community. This is another urgent reminder for the UN and all State parties to the 1948 Genocide Convention to fulfill their legal and moral obligation under international law to stop this ongoing genocide as well as hold accountable those who are responsible for these crimes.”

In June 2020, WUC President Dolkun Isa formally requested Sir Geoffrey Nice QC to establish and chair an independent people’s tribunal to investigate “ongoing atrocities and possible Genocide” against the Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic Muslim Populations in East Turkistan. The Uyghur Tribunal was [launched](#) on 3 September 2020, and has continued to receive support from the WUC throughout its establishment and operation.

Hearings were held in June, September, and November 2021, during which the Tribunal’s expert panel reviewed over 500 witnesses statements and heard live evidence from more than 30 witnesses about their experiences of China’s oppressive policies and its concentration camp system, as well as from 40 expert witnesses. The judgement is based on an evidence database consisting in hundreds of thousands of pages of documents on the situation in East Turkistan. A large majority of witnesses highlighted the systematic torture and rape in the internment camps, forced labour, forced sterilization and abortions of Uyghur women, and the surveillance system in place in the region. These accounts were further corroborated by over three dozen expert witnesses, who detailed their research and investigations which helped uncover the Chinese government’s crimes as well as the structure and the decision-making process of the Chinese Communist Party, which proved the genocidal intention crucial to a genocide finding.

As such, the amassed documentation and judgement of the Tribunal adds to the mounting evidence of the atrocity crimes committed by the Chinese authorities. In May of this year, the Essex Court Chambers published an authoritative legal opinion which [concluded](#) “there is a very credible case that acts carried out by the Chinese government ... amount to crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide. In July, dozens of experts [concluded](#) that “the People’s Republic of China is in breach of the Genocide Convention under international law.”

In light of today’s judgement, the World Uyghur Congress reiterates its calls upon the international community to take a strong stand against the Uyghur genocide. To today’s date, the United States, as well as seven parliaments in liberal democracies (Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Belgium, the Czech Republic and United States) have recognized China’s actions as constituting genocide and crimes against humanity and (a serious risk of) genocide, as noted by Belgian Parliament”). However, the vast majority of the state parties to the Genocide Convention, including the United Nations, have remained shamefully silent.

The independent judgement that underpins the crimes committed by the government of China is crucial for the creation of broader awareness, acknowledgment and action by the international community. It is now the responsibility of states, international institutions, but also companies and individuals in the private sector, to take steps to apply the Tribunal’s Judgement in their dealings with China. The World Uyghur Congress once again requests the United Nations to invoke Article 8 of the Genocide Convention to support the establishment of an independent UN mechanism to investigate and document these violations such as a Commission of Inquiry through the adoption of a Resolution.

[Human rights situation in Xinjiang: joint statement](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

21 October 2021

I have the honor of delivering this cross-regional joint statement on behalf of the following 43 countries: Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, Germany, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, and my own country France.

We are particularly concerned about the situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Credible-based reports indicate the existence of a large network of “political re-education” camps where over a million people have been arbitrarily detained. We have seen an increasing number of reports of widespread and systematic human rights violations, including reports documenting torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based violence, and forced separation of children. There are severe restrictions on freedom of religion or belief and the freedoms of movement, association and expression as well as on Uyghur culture. Widespread surveillance disproportionately continues to target Uyghurs and members of other minorities.

We also share the concerns expressed by UN Special Procedures in their 29 March statement and the letter published by UN experts describing collective repression of religious and ethnic minorities.

We thus call on China to allow immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for independent observers, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and her Office, and relevant special procedure mandate holders, as well as to urgently implement CERD’s eight recommendations related to Xinjiang. We welcome the High Commissioner’s announcement to present her findings to date and encourage publication as soon as possible. In view of our concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, we call on all countries to respect the principle of non-refoulement. We also call on China to ratify without delay the ICCPR.

We urge China to ensure full respect for the rule of law and to comply with its obligations under national and international law with regard to the protection of human rights.

[Ambassador Zheng Zeguang Attends Online Press Conference on Xinjiang-related Issues Co-hosted by Chinese Embassy in UK and Government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and Makes Remarks](#)
Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
9 September 2021

Just now, Mr Xu explained the background for this press conference. He also laid bare, from both factual and legal perspectives, the nature of the so-called “Uyghur Tribunal”. It is nothing but a farce carried out by a small number anti-China elements.

I want to make the following points:

First, the Uygur ethnic group is a member of the big family of the Chinese nation. No one cares more than the Chinese Government about the development in Xinjiang and the well-being of the people there.

As President Xi Jinping stated, all ethnic groups of China are brothers and sisters of one big, close-knit family; they are closely bonded like pomegranate seeds and come to each other's aid when needed; no ethnic group should be left behind as we build a modern socialist country in a comprehensive way.

The Chinese Government remains unwavering in its determination to implement the relevant policies on Xinjiang. We will continue promoting high quality development, ethnic solidarity and social progress and improving the life of the people in Xinjiang, so that the people of all ethnic groups in the region will enjoy a happy life.

The second point I want to make is that the so-called Xinjiang-related issues have nothing to do with human rights, ethnic groups or religions, but everything to do with fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism. The Vocational Education and Training Centres in Xinjiang are absolutely not "concentration camps", but preventative and de-radicalisation measures. In nature, they are no different from the Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP) of the UK or the de-radicalisation centres in France.

The allegation of "genocide" is even more absurd. In the past 40 years, the population of Uyghurs in Xinjiang has increased from 5.55 million to 11.6 million. Life expectancy for Uyghurs has risen from 30 to 72 in the past 60 years. What else is more remote from "genocide"?

The fact is, remarkable achievements have been made in the economic and social development in Xinjiang, and thus government policies have won the whole-hearted support of the people of all ethnic groups in the region, including the Uyghurs. In the past 40 plus years, average disposable income of the Xinjiang residents has been growing at an annual rate of over 12%. In the past two years, Xinjiang's GDP growth rate had been 6.5%, and in the first half of this year, Xinjiang's GDP reached 732.89 billion RMB yuan, increasing by 9.9% year-on-year.

Before coming to the UK, I had the pleasure of visiting Xinjiang, and I was impressed by the new buildings, the wide avenues, the beautiful parks, the booming cities and the smiles on the faces of the local people. As the Uyghurs say, Xinjiang is a good place. Now is the best time in history for Xinjiang to achieve development.

The third point I want to make is that the so-called "Uyghur Tribunal" is in nature a political manipulation aimed at discrediting China. It is a non-governmental entity funded by anti-China forces. It is a fake and has no legal basis or validity whatsoever. Its so-called "evidence" is nothing but sheer lies and disinformation. Its so-called "experts" are rumour mongers who have long engaged in slandering China. And the so-called "witnesses" the organizers have put together are merely actors who have been making up the so-called "persecution" that never happened at all. The organisation has

been designed to tarnish the image of China, mislead the public here, spoil the goodwill between the Chinese people and the British people and disrupt the smooth development of the China-UK relationship. We are firmly opposed to it and strongly condemn such malicious act.

Facts are facts. We hope you will view Xinjiang-related issues from an objective perspective and see through the real motives of those organizers of the so-called tribunal. Rumours will not write off Xinjiang's comprehensive progress. Attempts to disrupt Xinjiang's stability and prosperity are doomed to fail. Xinjiang will continue to achieve even greater success in its economic and social development in the years to come. The clumsy shows of those anti-China elements will be futile.

China-UK relationship is at a critical juncture. We need to tap the potentials of mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries. So it is all the more necessary for people here to see the real pictures of Xinjiang and to see through the motives of those organizers of the so-called "tribunal" and not to allow them to continue to mislead the public and spoil the goodwill between the peoples of China and the UK.

[UK sanctions perpetrators of gross human rights violations in Xinjiang, alongside EU, Canada and US](#)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

22 March 2021

- Foreign Secretary announces first UK sanctions against Chinese Government officials
- sanctions target 4 senior officials and the Public Security Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps
- new measures complement action by the European Union, Canada and the United States

The Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has announced sanctions against the perpetrators of gross human rights violations taking place against Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang, in a move coordinated by the international community.

The UK will, for the first time, impose asset freezes and travel bans against 4 Chinese government officials, as well as a Xinjiang security body, under the [UK's Global Human Rights sanctions regime](#) for systemic violations against Uyghurs and other minorities.

The measures come as part of intensive diplomacy by the UK, United States, Canada and European Union to deliver complementary action on Xinjiang. It follows the trend of a growing number of countries holding China to account

for its human rights record, with 39 countries signing a joint statement at the UN.

Acting together sends the clearest possible signal that the international community is united in its condemnation of China's human rights violations in Xinjiang and the need for Beijing to end its discriminatory and oppressive practices in the region.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The evidence of widespread human rights abuses in Xinjiang cannot be ignored – including mass detention and surveillance, reports of torture and forced sterilisation.

Working with our international partners we are imposing targeted sanctions to hold those responsible to account.

The UK sanctions will be immediately imposed against:

1. The Public Security Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps – a state run organisation responsible for security and policing in areas administered by the XPCC
2. Zhu Hailun, Former Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
3. Wang Junzheng, Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and previously Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
4. Wang Mingshan, Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and former Director of the Public Security Department of XUAR
5. Chen Mingguo, Vice Chairman of the Government of the XUAR, and Director of the XUAR Public Security Department

4

PQs

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Uyghur Tribunal

13 Jan 2022 | 100588

Asked by: Ms Nusrat Ghani

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Minister for Asia has met people involved in the Uyghur Tribunal (a) before and (b) after that tribunal's verdict of Uyghur genocide in Xinjiang.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

FCDO Ministers and senior officials have engaged extensively with the Chair of the Uyghur Tribunal, Sir Geoffrey Nice, over the last year to discuss the Tribunal's work. We recognise and welcome the Tribunal's contribution to building international awareness and understanding of the human rights violations occurring in Xinjiang.

China: Foreign Relations

10 Jan 2022 | 98339

Asked by: Ms Nusrat Ghani

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when the Minister for Asia met with the Chinese Ambassador Zheng Zeguang on 15 December 2021, whether she raised the cases of Parliamentarians who have been sanctioned by the People's Republic of China; and what the outcome of that meeting was.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

In my meeting with Ambassador Zheng on 15 December 2021, I raised the UK's serious concerns regarding human rights in Xinjiang, noting these concerns are widely shared by the international community. I urged the Chinese Government to engage with the evidence provided by the Uyghur Tribunal. I also raised the unacceptable and unwarranted sanctions imposed upon UK Parliamentarians by the People's Republic of China. I emphasised the importance of freedom of speech and Parliamentary independence in the UK, as well as the necessity for Parliamentarians to be able to raise their legitimate concerns.

Uyghur Tribunal

05 Jan 2022 | 92880

Asked by: Fiona Bruce

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the implications for its policies of the findings of the judgment of the Uyghur Tribunal, chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, published on 9 December 2021.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The Government notes the findings of the Uyghur Tribunal, and welcomes its contribution to building international awareness and understanding of the human rights violations occurring in Xinjiang. The UK has led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions on senior Chinese government officials, and announced measures to help ensure no UK organisations are complicit in human rights violations through their supply chains. The policy of successive UK governments is that any determination of genocide or crimes against humanity is a matter for a competent court.

Xinjiang: Uighurs

23 Dec 2021 | HL4858

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to the finding of the Uyghur Tribunal that a genocide is underway against Uyghurs in Xinjiang; and what steps they intend to take in response.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We have followed the Uyghur Tribunal's work closely, and will study its conclusions carefully. We welcome the Tribunal's contribution to building international awareness and understanding of the human rights violations occurring in Xinjiang. The UK has led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions on senior Chinese government officials, and announced measures to help ensure no UK organisations are complicit in these violations through their supply chains. We will continue to work with international partners to increase the pressure on China to change its behaviour.

Xinjiang: Human Rights

20 Dec 2021 | 92858

Asked by: Shabana Mahmood

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies of the naming of alleged perpetrators of gross human rights abuses named in the Xinjiang Papers released at the Uyghur Tribunal, including Chen Quanguo, Zhu Hailun and Zhu Changje.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The Government notes the findings of the Uyghur Tribunal, and welcomes its contribution to building international awareness and understanding of the human rights violations occurring in Xinjiang. The Tribunal's work adds to the growing body of evidence about the deeply disturbing situation that Uyghurs and other minorities are facing. The UK Government has consistently led international efforts to hold China to account for its human rights violations in Xinjiang, including by using our Global Human Rights sanctions regime to impose asset bans and travel freezes on Chinese actors responsible for enforcing China's repressive policies. We will continue to work closely with our international partners to hold the Chinese authorities to account, including at the UN.

Uighurs in Xinjiang

16 December 2021 | 817 cc427-431

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conclusion of the Uyghur Tribunal on 9 December that a genocide is underway against Uyghurs in Xinjiang; and what steps they intend to take in response.

My Lords, I beg leave to ask the Question standing in my name on the Order Paper, and in doing so declare that I am a patron of the Coalition for Genocide Response and vice-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Uyghurs.

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, we have followed the Uyghur Tribunal's work and are studying its conclusions carefully. I welcome the tribunal's contribution to international understanding of the deeply disturbing situation in Xinjiang. The UK has led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions and announced measures to help UK organisations avoid complicity in human rights violations. We will continue to work with our partners to increase pressure on China to change its behaviour.

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

My Lords, I thank the noble Lord for his, as ever, helpful reply. Does he agree that International Court of Justice jurisprudence is clear on when a state has an obligation to prevent genocide? It is, and I quote:

“the instant that the State learns of ... a serious risk“

of genocide. Given that the Uyghur Tribunal, led by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, who prosecuted Slobodan Milošević, has conducted easily the most comprehensive examination of the Uighur crisis, having reviewed hundreds of thousands of pages of evidence and declared in a very tightly drawn judgment there to be a genocide, will the Minister, instead of perhaps telling the House again that genocide determination is a matter for courts, tell us whether the Government have performed the required assessment under the genocide convention of whether Uighurs are at serious risk of genocide and, if not, whether they will now do so?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, the noble Lord will know my response. Obviously, the British Government’s position on genocide and the declaration of genocide has not changed, but I believe that the tribunal—he will know this from our own exchanges—has again provided what I would describe as the most harrowing evidence of what has happened and continues to happen in Xinjiang, and we are looking at that very carefully.

Asked by: Lord Cormack

My Lords, what contact have the Government had with Sir Geoffrey and the tribunal? Have there been official meetings? If not, will my noble friend undertake to ensure that he meets Sir Geoffrey at an early date?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, I can assure my noble friend that we have met Sir Geoffrey Nice—indeed, I have met him on several occasions over various reports and work he does. Our officials followed the tribunal very closely and engaged directly with Sir Geoffrey Nice.

Asked by: Lord Collins of Highbury

My Lords, the Minister says that we have led the way, and I certainly appreciate the actions of the United Kingdom’s Government. He has also stressed before that sanctions really become effective when we act in concert with our allies, so can he explain why the United States is able to sanction more people and a broader range of people to stop this genocide than the United Kingdom? Why can we not match the actions of the United States on this important issue?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, I agree with the noble Lord that it is important to work with our allies: the US is one, as are other countries. When we did act together—indeed, we acted with 29 other countries with the sanctions we announced in March—that sent the clearest possible signal. Of course, I am very mindful that the United States has further sanctioned additional individuals, and we will continue to look at the situation on sanctions, but I cannot speculate any further.

Asked by: Lord Purvis of Tweed

My Lords, the Government have accepted that the human rights abuses against these people is carried out on an industrial scale, but in response to a question I asked the Minister on 23 March, he confirmed that no preferential access arrangements for Chinese trade to the UK and access to our financial services have been suspended or notified to be suspended. One of those would allow a state entity in Xinjiang to own more than 50% of a UK pension fund, so why have the Government not even signalled their intent to suspend any preferential access to Chinese finance companies to the British market?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, first, I welcome the noble Lord back and we will catch up on his travels. On 8 December, my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for International Trade announced, via a WMS, a package of measures to update the UK's export control regime. This included an enhancement to our military end use control that will allow the Government to better address threats to national security and human rights and completes the review of export controls as they apply also to Xinjiang that was announced to Parliament. The point he makes on financial services is a specific point and I will continue to engage with him on that issue, but we are sending quite specific signals and the announcement made on 8 December is a good example of that.

Asked by: Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

My Lords, I understand that the BBC has film evidence of the atrocities that have been addressed in the Uyghur Tribunal, but has been reluctant to show the programmes to date, having set the evidential test so unrealistically high that it cannot be met. Will the Minister ask for these films at least to be available for a private viewing to inform parliamentarians, so that people may be better informed in their own thinking and have another source of information?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, I will certainly reflect on and take back that suggestion. I often see the written details of reports which come through, some of which are quite detailed, and they are harrowing—I use the word deliberately. I can only

imagine what some of these pictures would depict, but I will certainly reflect on what the noble Baroness has said.

Asked by: Lord Hayward

My Lords, I think the vast majority of the population welcomes the Government's decision to diplomatically boycott the Olympics along with other countries, but do they really believe that Coca-Cola and other major multinational corporations should be sponsoring the Beijing Olympics and thereby indicating support for a Government who are willing to commit the atrocities to which the noble Lord, Lord Alton, referred?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, as someone who worked in the private sector, I think it is important that companies look at the responsibility of their own actions. I am sure they will take note of the decision not just of the UK but of other countries to announce that diplomatic boycott.

Asked by: Lord Shinkwin

My Lords, these findings clearly have major implications for businesses' ESG policies. When do the Government plan to follow the lead of the US and produce an investment ban list of firms known to be exercising or participating in the worst human rights abuses?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, presenting specific lists is always a challenge, though I hear what my noble friend has said. Certainly, the announcement of my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for International Trade reflects our continued concern in looking at this very carefully and systematically. Equally, I feel that companies, as I just said to my noble friend Lord Hayward, need to reflect on their actions and the business they are conducting.

Asked by: Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

My Lords, given the importance that the FCDO has attached, for example in the Trade Bill debates, to securing unrestricted access to Xinjiang for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, what steps has it taken to support her in seeking that access? What progress has been made since this was last discussed in Parliament, which I believe was in March?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, we championed that proposal and suggestion; it was in my meeting with Michelle Bachelet that we proposed that directly to her. We have been very supportive. She has been challenged by the Covid crisis, which has prevented her travelling. I know that she has agreed in principle and we will continue to make the case, as we have since March, that the first step—I

know the noble Lord, Lord Collins, is seized of this—must be for Michelle Bachelet, in her capacity as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, to be given rights of access to Xinjiang.

Asked by: Lord Polak

My Lords, turning a blind eye or looking the other way is no answer; we know that from history. We know what is going on and I welcome the Government's announcement of the diplomatic and political boycott of the Winter Olympics, but that should just be the start. Do the Minister and the department have a list of activities through which we can keep the pressure on the Chinese Government?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, I totally agree with my noble friend. I assure him, as he will know all too well from our conversations, that it is not a question of turning a blind eye. We are very clear-eyed in our relationship with China; we accept that it makes some important contributions on the global stage, particularly on climate change, but all options remain on the table in what we are considering. As I have said, we have exercised leadership at the UN and resorted to exercising sanctions as and when necessary.

Asked by: The Lord Bishop of St Albans

My Lords, what assessment have Her Majesty's Government made of kitemarking products which originate in Xinjiang province so that people can be informed that they may be produced by slave labour? That would help the economy take action in this important area, where we face such atrocities.

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, the right reverend Prelate makes an important point on supply chains, ensuring that the sourcing of particular products is clearly identified. This was a matter specific to supply chains which we discussed during the recent G7 meeting of Ministers. I will certainly write to him on his point about identifying products from specific sources.

Xinjiang: Uighurs

16 Dec 2021 | 91907

Asked by: Shabana Mahmood

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to evidence in the Xinjiang Papers submitted to the Uyghur Tribunal, what assessment she has been made of the accuracy of reports that Chinese official Chen Quanguo and his deputies Zhu Hailun and Zhu Changjie played a direct role in commissioning the network of mass internment camps in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The evidence submitted to the Uyghur Tribunal adds to the growing body of evidence about the situation that Uyghurs and other minorities are facing in Xinjiang. The UK government has consistently led international efforts to hold China to account for its human rights violations in Xinjiang, including by using our Global Human Rights sanctions regime to impose asset bans and travel freezes on Chinese actors responsible for enforcing China's repressive policies. We will continue to work closely with our international partners in holding China to account for the egregious human rights situation in Xinjiang.

Uyghur Tribunal

15 Dec 2021 | 90959

Asked by: Claire Hanna

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the findings of the independent Uyghur Tribunal announced on 9 December 2021; and what steps she plans to take in response to those findings.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We have followed the Uyghur Tribunal's work closely, and will study its conclusions carefully. We welcome the Tribunal's contribution to building international awareness and understanding of the human rights violations occurring in Xinjiang. The UK has led international efforts to hold China to account at the UN, imposed sanctions on senior Chinese government officials, and announced measures to help ensure no UK organisations are complicit in these violations through their supply chains. We will continue to work with international partners to increase the pressure

Uyghur Tribunal

24 Sep 2021 | 50647

Asked by: Ms Lyn Brown

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether officials in her Department have had discussions with their Chinese counterparts on the Uyghur Tribunal chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC.

Answering member: Amanda Milling | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

The Chinese Ambassador had an introductory meeting with the former Minister for Asia, Nigel Adams MP, on 8 September, where the issue of the Uyghur Tribunal was raised. The former Minister for Asia reiterated the UK Government's deep concern about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, and

made clear that the UK Government would not interfere with the tribunal's work.

China: Muslims

16 Jun 2021 | 812 c1894

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

My Lords, with Amnesty's report detailing arbitrary detention, forced indoctrination, torture, mass surveillance and crimes against humanity, along with newspaper reports from Xinjiang of the destruction of 16,000 mosques, harrowing evidence being given last week to the independent Uyghur Tribunal, whose brave witnesses and families now experience threats and intimidation, and further legislatures joining the House of Commons in declaring atrocities against the Uighurs to be a genocide, when will the United Kingdom raise this report from Amnesty at the UN Human Rights Council and seek judicial remedies? Will the Government commit to co-operating with, examining and acting on the findings of the Uyghur Tribunal, chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, as the noble Lord is aware, I have met directly with Sir Geoffrey Nice on numerous occasions and we continue to monitor the tribunal as it takes place. My understanding is that the first session has now been completed. On the independent evidence, the noble Lord might be aware that I met with some of the people who gave evidence to the tribunal last week as part of our direct engagement with members of the Uighur community. With the session of the Human Rights Council coming up we will look at this report very carefully. As I said, we have met directly with Amnesty International on its recommendations and findings.

Trade Deals: Human Rights

10 Jun 2021 | 696 c1104

Asked by: Ms Marie Rimmer

Happy birthday, Mr Speaker.

“Mass torture”, “rape” and “forced sterilisation”—that is the testimony of dozens of survivors at the Uyghur tribunal in London, which is chaired by the former lead prosecutor at The Hague, Sir Geoffrey Nice, QC. Does the Minister really think the British Government should be turning a blind eye to the suffering of the human race for the sake of trade deals?

Answered by: Mr Ranil Jayawardena | International Trade

We have not. We have proven our leadership and commitment time and again. We have ramped up pressure on China in multilateral forums. We are

taking targeted action on supply chains and our approach to China remains clear-eyed: we remain rooted in our values and in our interests. The truth is that we have announced a series of measures to help make sure that British businesses and the public sector are in no way complicit in the rights violations in Xinjiang, and that includes making sure there is a review of export controls as they apply to the situation there.

China: Uighurs

25 Sep 2020 | 93671

Asked by: Afzal Khan

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he plans to (a) establish a relationship with and (b) provide evidence to the Uyghur Tribunal.

Answering member: Nigel Adams | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We have serious concerns about gross violations of human rights occurring in Xinjiang and welcome any work that is rigorous, balanced and raises awareness of the situation faced by Uyghurs and other minorities in China. We are aware of this initiative by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, and will study any resulting report carefully.

China: Uighur Internment Camps

23 Sep 2020 | 805 c1835

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

My Lords, I should mention I am vice-chairman of the all-party group on the Uyghurs.

In the light of the near impossibility of arriving at a legal determination of alleged genocide or crimes against humanity in the Uyghur region, which Ministers in the other place have acknowledged, will the Minister join me in welcoming the new initiative of Sir Geoffrey Nice QC in setting up the Uighur tribunal? Will he confirm that the Government will do everything possible to co-operate with the tribunal, including providing evidence and agreeing to take seriously what will be a rigorous and impartial judgment when the process is completed?

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

My Lords, I am fully aware of the formation of this new inquiry, and we are looking at it carefully. I am discussing our approach with officials. We intend to attend the inquiry as we did the inquiry on organ harvesting.

5 Other Parliamentary material

5.1 Statements

Human Rights Update

22 March 2021 | 691 cc621-635

Dominic Raab | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs

With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement about the treatment of the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.

This is one of the worst human rights crises of our time and I believe the evidence is clear, as it is sobering. It includes satellite imagery; survivor testimony; official documentation and, indeed, leaks from the Chinese Government themselves; credible open-source reporting, including from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International; and visits by British diplomats to the region that have corroborated other reports about the targeting of specific ethnic groups.

In sum, the evidence points to a highly disturbing programme of repression. Expressions of religion have been criminalised, and Uyghur language and culture discriminated against on a systematic scale. There is widespread use of forced labour; women forcibly sterilised; children separated from their parents; an entire population subject to surveillance, including collection of DNA and use of facial recognition software and so-called predictive policing algorithms.

State control in the region is systemic. Over 1 million people have been detained without trial. There are widespread claims of torture and rape in the camps based on first-hand survivor testimony. People are detained for having too many children, for praying too much, for having a beard or wearing a headscarf, for having the wrong thoughts.

I am sure the whole House will join me in condemning such appalling violations of the most basic human rights. In terms of scale, it is the largest mass detention of an ethnic or religious group since the second world war, and I believe one thing is clear: the international community cannot simply look the other way.

It has been two and a half years since the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination called on China to stop arbitrarily detaining Uyghurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang province. It is over 18 months since the UK led the first ever joint UN statement on Xinjiang at the UN General Assembly's third committee, back in October 2019. The number of countries now willing to

speak out collectively has grown from just 23 to 39 as the evidence has accumulated and as our diplomatic efforts have borne fruit. That is a clear signal to China about the breadth of international concern.

Last year, 50 independent UN experts spoke out about the situation in an exceptional joint statement calling on China to respect basic human rights. Last month at the Human Rights Council, I led the calls on China to give the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet—or some other fact-finding expert—urgent, unfettered access to Xinjiang. Since then, Ms Bachelet herself has reinforced in the clearest terms the need for independent access to verify the deteriorating situation. We regret that, instead of recognising those calls from the international community, China has simply sought to deny them. Chinese authorities have claimed that the legitimate concerns raised are fake news. At the same time, the authorities continue to

expand prison facilities, surveillance networks and forced labour programmes. China continues to resist access for the UN or other independent experts to verify the truth, notwithstanding its blanket denials.

For the UK's part, our approach has been to call out these egregious, industrial-scale human rights abuses, to work with our international partners and ultimately to match words with actions. In January, I announced a package of measures to help ensure that no British organisations—Government or private sector—deliberately or inadvertently can profit from human rights violations against the Uyghurs or other minorities, and that no businesses connected with the internment camps can do business in the UK.

Today, we are taking further steps, again in co-ordination with our international partners. Having very carefully considered the evidence against the criteria in our global human rights sanctions regime, I can tell the House that I am designating four senior individuals responsible for the violations that have taken place and persist against the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. Alongside those individuals, we are also designating the Public Security Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. That is the organisation responsible for enforcing the repressive security policies across many areas of Xinjiang. The sanctions involve travel bans and asset freezes against the individuals and asset freezes against the entity we are designating. The individuals are barred from entering the UK. Any assets found in the UK will be frozen.

We take this action alongside the EU, the US and Canada, which are all taking similar measures today. I think it is clear that, by acting with our partners—30 of us in total—we are sending the clearest message to the Chinese Government that the international community will not turn a blind eye to such serious and systematic violations of basic human rights, and that we will act in concert to hold those responsible to account.

As the Prime Minister set out in the integrated review last week, China is an important partner in tackling global challenges such as climate change. We pursue a constructive dialogue where that proves possible, but we will always stand up for our values, and in the face of evidence of such serious human rights violations, we will not look the other way. The suffering of the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang cannot be ignored. Human rights violations on this scale cannot be ignored. Together with our partners, we call on China to end these cruel practices, and I commend this statement to the House.

[...]

Human Rights Update

The following Statement was made in the House of Commons on Monday 22 March.

23 March 2021 | Vol 811 cc732-43

Xinjiang: Forced Labour

12 January 2021 | 687 cc160-79

Dominic Raab | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs

With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to update the House on the situation in Xinjiang and the Government's response.

The evidence of the scale and severity of the human rights violations being perpetrated in Xinjiang against the Uyghur Muslims is now far-reaching. It paints a truly harrowing picture. Violations include the extrajudicial detention of over 1 million Uyghurs and other minorities in political re-education camps; extensive and invasive surveillance targeting minorities; systematic restrictions on Uyghur culture, education and, indeed, on the practice of Islam; and the widespread use of forced labour. The nature and conditions of detention violate basic standards of human rights. At their worst, they amount to torture and inhumane and degrading treatment, alongside widespread reports of the forced sterilisation of Uyghur women.

These claims are supported now by a large, diverse and growing body of evidence that includes first-hand reports from diplomats who visit Xinjiang and the first-hand testimony from victims who have fled the region. There is satellite imagery showing the scale of the internment camps, the presence of factories inside them and the destruction of mosques. There are also extensive and credible third-party reports from non-governmental organisations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, with the United Nations and other international experts also expressing their very serious concerns.

In reality, the Chinese authorities' own publicly available documents also bear out a similar picture. They show statistical data on birth control and on security spending and recruitment in Xinjiang. They contain extensive references to coercive social measures dressed up as poverty alleviation programmes. There are leaks of classified and internal documents that have shown the guidance on how to run internment camps and lists showing how and why people have been detained.

Internment camps, arbitrary detention, political re-education, forced labour, torture and forced sterilisation—all on an industrial scale. It is truly horrific—barbarism we had hoped was lost to another era is being practised today, as we speak, in one of the leading members of the international community.

We have a moral duty to respond. The UK has already played a leading role within the international community in the effort to shine a light on the appalling treatment of the Uyghurs and to increase diplomatic pressure on China to stop and to remedy its actions. I have made my concerns over Xinjiang clear directly to China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi. We have led international joint statements on Xinjiang in the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee and the UN Human Rights Council. In the Third Committee, we brought the latest statement forward together with Germany in October last year and it was supported by 39 countries.

China's response is to deny, as a matter of fact, that any such human rights violations take place at all. They say it is lies. If there were any genuine dispute about the evidence, there would be a reasonably straightforward way to clear up any factual misunderstandings. Of course China should be given the opportunity to rebut the various reports and claims, but the Chinese Government refuse point blank to allow the access to Xinjiang required to verify the truth of the matter.

We have repeatedly called for China to allow independent experts and UN officials, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, proper access to Xinjiang, just as we in this country allow access to our prisons, our police custody suites and other parts of the justice system to independent bodies who hold us to account for the commitments to respect human rights that we have made.

China cannot simply refuse all access to those trusted third-party bodies that could verify the facts and, at the same time, maintain a position of credible denial. While that access is not forthcoming, the UK will continue to support further research to understand the scale and the nature of the human rights violations in Xinjiang. But we must do more, and we will.

Xinjiang's position in the international supply chain network means that there is a real risk of businesses and public bodies around the world, whether

inadvertently or otherwise, sourcing from suppliers that are complicit in the use of forced labour, allowing those responsible for violations to profit—or, indeed, making a profit themselves—by supplying the authorities in Xinjiang. Here in the UK, we must take action to ensure that UK businesses are not part of supply chains that lead to the gates of the internment camps in Xinjiang, and to ensure that the products of the human rights violations that take place in those camps do not end up on the shelves of supermarkets that we shop in here at home week in, week out.

We have already engaged with businesses with links to Xinjiang; we have encouraged them to conduct appropriate due diligence. More widely, we have made a commitment to tackling forced labour crystal clear. With the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the United Kingdom was the first country to require companies by law to report on how they are tackling forced labour in their supply chains. Today, I can announce a range of new measures to send a clear message that those violations of human rights are unacceptable and, at the same time, to safeguard UK businesses and public bodies from any involvement or links with them.

I have been working closely with my right hon. Friends the Home Secretary, the Secretary of State for International Trade and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Our aim, put simply, is that no company profits from forced labour in Xinjiang, and that no UK business is involved in their supply chains. Let me set out the four new steps that we are now taking.

First, today the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and the Department for International Trade have issued new, robust and detailed guidance to UK businesses on the specific risks faced by companies with links to Xinjiang, and underlining the challenges of conducting effective due diligence there. A Minister-led campaign of business engagement will reinforce the need for UK businesses to take concerted action to address that particular and specific risk.

Secondly, we are strengthening the operation of the Modern Slavery Act. The Home Office will introduce fines for businesses that do not comply with their transparency obligations, and the Home Secretary will introduce the necessary legislation setting out the level of those fines as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Thirdly, we announced last September that the transparency requirements that apply to UK businesses under the Modern Slavery Act will be extended to the public sector. The FCDO will now work with the Cabinet Office to provide guidance and support to UK Government bodies to exclude suppliers where there is sufficient evidence of human rights violations in any of their supply chains. Let me say that we in the United Kingdom—I think rightly—take pride that the overwhelming majority of British businesses that do business do so with great integrity and professionalism right around the world. That is their

hallmark and part of our USP as a global Britain. Precisely because of that, any company profiting from forced labour will be barred from Government procurement in this country.

Fourthly, the Government will conduct an urgent review of export controls as they apply, specifically geographically, to the situation in Xinjiang, to make sure that we are doing everything we can to prevent the export of any goods that could contribute directly or indirectly to human rights violations in that region. The package that has been put together will help to ensure that no British organisations—Government or private sector, deliberately or inadvertently—will profit from or contribute to human rights violations against the Uyghurs or other minorities. I am of course sure that the whole House would accept that the overwhelming majority of British businesses would not dream of doing so. Today's measures will ensure that businesses are fully aware of those risks, will help them to protect themselves, and will shine a light on and penalise any reckless businesses that do not take those obligations seriously.

As ever, we act in co-ordination with our like-minded partners around the world, and I welcome the fact that later today Foreign Minister Champagne will set out Canada's approach on these issues. I know that Australia, the United States, France, Germany and New Zealand are also considering the approaches they take. We will continue to work with all of our international partners, but the House should know that in the comprehensive scope of the package I am setting out today the UK is again setting an example and leading the way.

We want a positive and constructive relationship with China, and we will work tirelessly towards that end, but we will not sacrifice our values or our security. We will continue to speak up for what is right and we will back up our words with actions, faithful to our values, determined, as a truly global Britain, to be an even stronger force for good in the world. I commend this statement to the House.

[...]

5.2

Urgent Questions

Uyghur Tribunal: London

14 Jun 2021 | 697 cc24-33

Urgent question on the treatment by the Chinese Government of witnesses giving evidence to the Uyghur Tribunal in London.

Asked by: Sir Iain Duncan Smith

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs if he will make a statement on the treatment by the Chinese Government of witnesses giving evidence to the Uyghur Tribunal in London.

Answered by: Nigel Adams | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

We are disturbed by reports of attempts to intimidate those appearing at the recent hearing of the Uyghur Tribunal. We have previously made it clear that any attempt by China to silence its critics is unwarranted and unacceptable. The United Kingdom supports freedom of expression both as a human right in and of itself and as an essential element for the enjoyment of a full range of other rights. The freedom to speak out in opposition to human rights violations is fundamental.

The Government have repeatedly expressed our serious concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, and the United Kingdom has led international efforts to hold China to account for its human rights violations in the region. Yesterday's G7 leaders' communiqué called on China to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially in relation to Xinjiang. In March, the Foreign Secretary announced sanctions against four Chinese officials and one entity responsible for those violations, alongside the European Union, the United States and Canada. In January, we launched a package of measures to help ensure UK businesses and the public sector are not complicit in human rights violations or abuses in Xinjiang. The Foreign Secretary has consistently raised the UK's serious concerns directly with the Chinese Foreign Minister, State Councillor Wang Yi, most recently in a phone call on 27 May.

Rather than continuing to issue denials in the face of overwhelming evidence and seeking to silence their critics, we call on the Chinese Government to address the breadth of concerns being raised internationally about Xinjiang. As a matter of urgency, China must grant the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights or another independent fact-finding expert unfettered access to Xinjiang to verify the facts on the ground.

I reiterate that the Government welcome any rigorous and balanced initiative that raises awareness of the situation faced by Uyghurs and other minorities

in China. I met Sir Geoffrey Nice in April to discuss the Uyghur tribunal, and we are following its work. My officials will study any resulting report very carefully indeed.

[...]

Uyghur Slave Labour: Xinjiang

16 December 2020 | 686 cc291-306

Asked by: Sir Iain Duncan Smith

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs if he will make a statement on what the Government are doing to deal with the overwhelming evidence of the Chinese Government's use of Uyghur slave labour in Xinjiang province.

Answered by: Nigel Adams | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Evidence of forced Uyghur labour within Xinjiang and in other parts of China is credible; it is growing and it is deeply troubling to the UK Government. Yesterday's media reporting, based in part on Chinese Government documents, suggests that forced labour is occurring on a significant scale. The reports raise particular concerns regarding the cotton industry, with serious implications for international and UK supply chains. We have consistently made clear our view that all businesses involved in investing in Xinjiang or with parts of their supply chains in Xinjiang should conduct appropriate due diligence to satisfy themselves that their activities do not support, or risk being seen to support, any human rights violations or abuses.

In our national action plan, implementing the UN guiding principles on business and human rights, we set out our expectation that UK businesses should respect human rights across their operations and their international supply relationships. While there is an important role for Government, businesses have a clear responsibility to ensure that their supply chains are free from forced labour. We have issued clear guidance and held regular meetings with businesses and industry stakeholders to underline our concerns and the importance of thorough due diligence. We have also financed projects to build the evidence base and increase awareness of the risks. This includes the high-profile report "Uyghurs for sale", which has led several companies to take action in respect of their supply chains.

I have updated the House on a number of occasions on the UK's international leadership and extensive diplomatic activity to hold China to account. Most recently, alongside Germany, we brought together a total of 39 countries in a joint statement at the UN General Assembly Third Committee in October. That sent a powerful message to China on the breadth of international concern, including on the issue of forced labour. In September, we devoted our entire

national statement at the UN Human Rights Council to China, again raising forced labour.

In summary, the UK has taken the lead internationally. We have shone a light on the evidence of what is going on, to raise awareness and urge action, and we have provided clear guidance to business. However, the Government acknowledge that, in light of the gross human rights abuses being committed, there is more to be done. That is why, in September, the Home Secretary announced plans to strengthen the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and why the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is co-ordinating extensive work right across Government to address this deeply concerning issue.

I will conclude by reassuring the House that we recognise and share the depth of cross-party concern on the human rights situation in Xinjiang. We have made that concern abundantly clear to the Chinese Government, Toggle showing location of Column 292 and we expect China to live up to its responsibilities under international law and to the commitments it has made as a leading member of the international community. Continuing to stand up for those whose human rights are oppressed remains a top priority for this Government.

[...]

5.3

Debates

[Magnitsky Sanctions: Human Rights Abuses](#)

8 December 2021 | 705 cc162-178WH

[China: Genocide](#)

25 November 2021 | 816 cc1014-1055

[Organ Tourism and Cadavers on Display Bill \[HL\]](#)

16 July 2021 | 813 cc2107-2125

[Human Rights: Xinjiang](#)

22 April 2021 | 692 cc1211-1246

[China's Policy on its Uighur Population](#)

11 March 2020 | 673 cc130-152WH

[China: UK policy](#)

7 May 2019 | 659 cc242-263WH

5.4 Early Day Motions

Verdict of the Uyghur Tribunal

EDM 763 (session 2021-22)

Layla Moran

9 December 2021

That this House notes with grave concern the findings of the Uyghur Tribunal of 9 December 2021 which detailed the depth and severity of abuses taking place against Uyghurs in Xinjiang by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) including rape, forced re-education, forced labour, mass surveillance, forced sterilisation, cultural and religious destruction; further notes the Tribunal's verdict that there is proof beyond reasonable doubt that the People's Republic of China are committing crimes of torture, crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide as defined under international law; calls on the UK Government to accept Parliament's declaration of the atrocities in Xinjiang as a genocide; and urges the UK Government to step up sanctions against CCP officials involved in perpetrating these abuses.

6

Further reading

[Uyghur Tribunal](#) (Homepage)

[Uyghur Tribunal judgment summary](#)

As delivered at Church House Westminster on Thursday 9th December 2021

[World Uyghur Congress](#) (Homepage)

[Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report](#), Fifth Special Report of Session 2021–22, Foreign Affairs Committee, HC 840, 14 November 2021

[Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond](#), Second Report of Session 2021–22, Foreign Affairs Committee, HC 198, 8 July 2021

[Uyghur forced labour in Xinjiang and UK value chains: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2019–21](#), Third Special Report of Session 2021–22, Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, HC 241, 8 June 2021

[Uyghur forced labour in Xinjiang and UK value chains](#), Fifth Report of Session 2019–21, Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, HC 1272, 17 March 2021

[“Like we were enemies in a war”: China's mass internment, torture and persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang](#), Amnesty International, 10 June 2021

[“Break Their Lineage, Break Their Roots”: China's Crimes against Humanity Targeting Uyghurs and Other Turkic Muslims](#), Human Rights Watch, April 2021

Ewelina U. Ochab, [‘What is next for the atrocities against Uyghurs in Xinjiang?’](#) Oxford Human Rights Hub, 14 May 2021

[China and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region](#), Commons Library Debate Pack, 20 April 2021

[E-petition 300146 relating to China's policy on its Uighur population](#), Commons Library Briefing, 8 October 2020

[The UK-China relationship](#), Commons Library Briefing, 14 September 2020

[China's policy on its Uighur population](#), Commons Library Debate Pack, 6 March 2020

[UK policy towards China](#), Commons Library Debate Pack, 2 May 2019

[All Party Parliamentary Group on Uyghurs](#) (Homepage)

[All-Party Parliamentary Group on Uyghurs](#) (Membership)

[All Party Parliamentary China Group](#) (Homepage)

[All-Party Parliamentary China Group](#) (Membership)

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