



## **Accusations of genocide against Uyghurs in Xinjiang, China**

### **Debate on 25 November 2021**

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On 25 November 2021, the House of Lords is due to debate a motion moved by Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) that “this House takes note of the reported remarks of the Foreign Secretary that a genocide is underway against the Uyghur population in Xinjiang, China”.

A *Times* article from 1 November 2021 reported that Elizabeth Truss, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, had previously accused China of committing genocide against the Uyghur population in Xinjiang. This accusation was alleged to have taken place during a private meeting in October 2020 when Ms Truss was the Secretary of State for International Trade. Ms Truss has not publicly responded to the report.

The term ‘genocide’ refers to five specific acts committed with the intent of destroying a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. For several years, the international community has accused China of human rights violations of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang region of China. Most recently, several countries and parliaments have described China’s treatment of the Uyghur community as amounting to genocide.

China strongly denies the accusations and has accused western politicians of “choosing to believe lies” for ulterior motives. China has defended what it calls “education and vocational training” in Xinjiang, stating that they are there to counter terrorism and alleviate poverty.

To date, the UK Government has not described China’s treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang as genocide. It has emphasised its long-standing policy that it is not for the Government to make this determination. However, it has expressed public concern about alleged human rights violations in the region. The UK Government imposed sanctions on certain Chinese officials in 2021 as part of a collaborative action by several countries.

China’s treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang has been raised several times in the House of Commons and House of Lords. Notably, in April 2021, the House of Commons passed a motion that Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang were suffering crimes against humanity and genocide.

## What is the Foreign Secretary reported to have said?

On 1 November 2021, the *Times* (£) reported that Elizabeth Truss had previously accused China of committing genocide against the Uyghur population in Xinjiang, China.<sup>1</sup>

Citing information supplied by an unnamed source described as an “ally” of Ms Truss, the article states that this accusation occurred in October 2020 during a private meeting between Ms Truss—in her previous role as Secretary of State for International Trade—and the UK ambassador to China, Caroline Wilson.

The UK ambassador to China is said to have asked the then International Trade Secretary why the UK could not treat China “like we treat the French”. Ms Truss is said to have replied “because the French aren’t committing genocide”.

Ms Truss was appointed the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs on 15 September 2021. Since its publication, Ms Truss has made no public response to the article.

The article states that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has also declined to comment, but did say that:

The Government has led international efforts to hold China to account for its human rights violations in Xinjiang at the UN. It is the long-standing policy of the Government that the determination of whether genocide has taken place should be made by a competent court with the jurisdiction to try such cases, rather than by the Government or a non-judicial body.<sup>2</sup>

## What is genocide and who decides an act is genocide?

Genocide refers to any of the following five acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group:

- killing members of the group;
- causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; or
- forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the genocide convention) provides this definition.<sup>3</sup> The crime can be committed in both time of peace and in time of war.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt Dathan, [‘Liz Truss pulls no punches about ‘genocide’ of Uighurs by China’](#), *Times* (£), 1 November 2021.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, [Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#), 12 January 1951, article II.

In addition to the genocide convention, there are several other agreements to prevent genocide to which the UK is a signatory. This includes the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (the Rome Statute) which the UK ratified on 4 October 2001.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) can convict individuals of genocide.<sup>4</sup> The ICC will do this if: an alleged perpetrator is a national of a state party to the Rome Statute (a state party); the genocide has been committed in the territory of the state party; a non-state party has given its consent for the ICC to investigate; or the matter has been referred to the ICC by the UN Security Council.<sup>5</sup>

UK courts also have powers to convict UK nationals and residents with genocide. These powers are found in the International Criminal Court Act 2001.

### **What has China been accused of?**

International concerns about the mistreatment and human rights violations of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang have existed for several years.

There are an estimated 12 million Uyghurs living in the Xinjiang region.<sup>6</sup> Uyghurs speak a south-eastern Turkic language and are predominantly Muslim. The vast majority of Uyghurs reside in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang).

Accusations of violations against Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang have been widely reported in the media and by international organisations. This includes accusations of the detention of Uyghurs in ‘camps’ for the purposes of re-education, surveillance, restrictions on certain religions, and forced labour.<sup>7</sup> China is also accused of carrying out forced sterilisation and birth control on women in an alleged attempt to limit the Uyghur population.<sup>8</sup> These accusations are purported to be supported by evidence, including some collected by the Australian think-tank the Australian Strategic Policy Institute<sup>9</sup> and media outlets,<sup>10</sup> amongst others.

Concerns have led to the publication of a joint statement in October 2020 on behalf of 39 UN member states, including the UK, that referred to “grave concerns” about human rights in Xinjiang.<sup>11</sup>

Some countries have gone further by describing China’s treatment of the Uyghur community as amounting to genocide. In January 2021, Mike Pompeo, the then US Secretary of State, accused China

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<sup>4</sup> International Criminal Court, ‘[Understanding the International Criminal Court](#)’, accessed 12 November 2021.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p 4.

<sup>6</sup> David Brophy, ‘[The Uyghurs: making a nation](#)’, Oxford Research Encyclopaedias, 26 September 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, ‘[China’s repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang](#)’, 1 March 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Adrian Zenz, ‘[Sterilizations, IUDs, and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP’s Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang](#)’, updated 21 July 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Strategic Policy Institute, ‘[The Xinjiang Data Project](#)’, accessed 15 November 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Matthew Hill et al, ‘[“Their goal is to destroy everyone”: Uighur camp detainees allege systematic rape](#)’, BBC News, 2 February 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Permanent Representative of Germany to the UN on behalf of the UK and 38 member states, ‘[Human rights situation in Xinjiang and recent developments in Hong Kong: joint statement](#)’, 6 October 2020.

of committing “ongoing” genocide against Uyghur Muslims.<sup>12</sup> This accusation followed the US imposition of sanctions against certain Chinese officials whom it claimed were responsible for human rights violations in Xinjiang.<sup>13</sup> This stance has been maintained by President Biden’s current Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken.<sup>14</sup>

Several parliaments have also accused China of genocide. Canada’s parliament voted to declare China’s treatment of the Uyghur population as genocide in February 2021,<sup>15</sup> shortly followed by the Netherlands parliament, which became the first European legislature to take this stance.<sup>16</sup>

In December 2020, the International Criminal Court (ICC) announced that it could not investigate the case of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang.<sup>17</sup> Amongst other things, it said that this was because China is not a member of the Rome Statute and therefore the ICC does not have territorial jurisdiction over crimes alleged to have taken place there.

In June 2020, Dolkun Isa, the president of the World Uyghur Congress, asked UK barrister Sir Geoffrey Nice to establish an independent people’s tribunal that could investigate “ongoing atrocities and possible genocide” against Uyghurs.<sup>18</sup> The ‘Uyghur Tribunal’ launched in the UK in September 2020, assisted by the non-governmental organisation the Coalition for Genocide Response.

The tribunal consists of an independent panel of lawyers, business people and academics, amongst others, and is chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice. Its objectives are to review the accusations against China. Speaking to the objectives, Sir Geoffrey said:

The commission of genocide against the Uyghurs by the People’s Republic of China has been alleged but never properly explored on evidence. The Uyghur Tribunal will start without assumption or presumption of any kind, review evidence, consider all available arguments and reach a judgment.<sup>19</sup>

The Uyghur Tribunal has no official powers of sanctions or enforcement, so countries will have the discretion to use and apply the panel’s final judgement as they wish.

The panel held two public hearings, one in June 2021 and the second in September 2021. The final judgement is expected to be published on 9 December 2021.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Julian Borger, ‘[Mike Pompeo declares China’s treatment of Uighurs ‘genocide’](#)’, *Guardian*, 19 January 2021.

<sup>13</sup> BBC News, ‘[Xinjiang: US sanctions on Chinese officials over ‘abuse’ of Muslims](#)’, 9 July 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Humeyra Pamuk, David Brunnstrom, ‘[New US secretary of state favours cooperation with China despite genocide of Uighurs](#)’, Reuters, 27 January 2021.

<sup>15</sup> House of Commons Canada, ‘[Opposition motion \(religious minorities in China\)](#)’, 22 February 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Eline Schaart, ‘[Dutch Parliament declares Chinese treatment of Uighurs a ‘genocide’](#)’, *Politico*, 25 February 2021.

<sup>17</sup> International Criminal Court, [Report on Preliminary Examination Activities 2020](#), 14 December 2020, p 18–20.

<sup>18</sup> Uyghur Tribunal, ‘[UK Tribunal to investigate China’s alleged genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghur, Kazakh and other Turkic Muslim populations](#)’, accessed 16 November 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Uyghur Tribunal, [The Uyghur Tribunal](#), December 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Uyghur Tribunal, ‘[Twitter account](#)’, 9 November 2021.

## What have international organisations said?

Several reports have been published by international organisations on the treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. This includes reports by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the international non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch.

### UN committee report (2018)

On 30 August 2018, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (the committee) published a report on China's implementation of the international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination.<sup>21</sup> This convention is an international human rights agreement that requires parties to take action on eliminating racial discrimination.

In the committee's report, it raised concerns about allegations of ill-treatment and torture of ethnic minorities such as Uyghurs in the Xinjiang region.<sup>22</sup> The committee said several things had particularly alarmed it, including reports of the detention of large numbers of ethnic Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities without being charged or tried, and mass surveillance disproportionately targeting ethnic Uyghurs.<sup>23</sup>

The committee acknowledged that China denies the allegations. However, it provided several recommendations for China to address, including:

- the halting of the practice of detaining individuals who had not been lawfully charged, tried or convicted; and
- immediately releasing individuals currently detained under these circumstances, and allowing those wrongfully held to seek redress.<sup>24</sup>

In response to the committee, China denied the allegations referred to in the committee's report. It said that such allegations stemmed from "anti-China forces" and overseas media organisations that had "ulterior motives":<sup>25</sup>

Certain anti-China forces have made unwarranted charges against China for political purposes, and a few overseas media smeared China's measures to fight terrorism and crimes in Xinjiang through their distorted reports of the [committee's] review, which is out of ulterior motives. Xinjiang enjoys social stability, economic growth and harmonious coexistence of ethnic groups. People of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang cherish their peaceful and prosperous life. Any rumour and slander will turn out to be futile.

<sup>21</sup> UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, [Concluding Observations on the Combined Fourteenth to Seventeenth Periodic Reports of China \(including Hong Kong, China and Macao, China\)](#), 30 August 2018.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*, p 7.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, p 7–8.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*, p 8.

<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, ['Foreign ministry spokesperson Lu Kang's remarks'](#), 14 August 2018.

## Human Rights Watch report (April 2021)

In April 2021, the international non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch published a report on China's alleged crimes against humanity that targeted Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims.<sup>26</sup>

It stated that several crimes against humanity had been committed against Uyghur Muslims, including enslavement, torture, persecution, and imprisonment, amongst others. It also said that the Chinese Government's "oppression" of Uyghur and other Turkic Muslims was not new, but in recent years it had reached "unprecedented levels".

The report included several recommendations, including that the UN Human Rights Council should create a commission of inquiry to investigate allegations of crimes against humanity and other human rights abuses against the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.

In September 2021, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, reported a lack of progress in seeking "meaningful access" to Xinjiang.<sup>27</sup> The High Commissioner said that an assessment of the information on allegations of serious human rights violations in Xinjiang was being finalised by the council, with a view to making it public.

## How has China responded to the allegations?

China has strongly denied the accusations of genocide and human rights violations against the Uyghur population.

In response to accusations of the detainment and mistreatment of Uyghurs in so-called detention camps, a previous Ambassador of China to the UK, Liu Xiaoming, described the reports of mistreatment as "fake".<sup>28</sup> Liu Xiaoming said that the Uyghur community live in "peaceful and harmonious coexistence with other ethnic groups".<sup>29</sup>

China has also defended the use of what it calls "education and vocational training" in Xinjiang, stating that it is necessary in order to counter terrorism and alleviate poverty.<sup>30</sup>

China further defended its employment and labour policy in Xinjiang in a white paper published by China's State Council of Information Office in September 2020.<sup>31</sup> The state council said that "vocational training" and employment projects had positively impacted the region. Additionally, it also said that the quality of life for those in the region had increased, as well as peoples' "sense of gain, happiness and security".

<sup>26</sup> Human Rights Watch, "[Break their lineage, break their roots": China's crimes against humanity targeting Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims](#)", April 2021.

<sup>27</sup> UN Human Rights Council, '[48th session of the Human Rights Council: Statement by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](#)', 13 September 2021.

<sup>28</sup> BBC News, '[UK accuses China of 'gross' human rights abuses against Uighurs](#)', 19 July 2020.

<sup>29</sup> Heather Stewart, '[China's UK ambassador denies abuse of Uighurs despite fresh drone footage](#)', *Guardian*, 19 July 2020.

<sup>30</sup> BBC News, '[Xinjiang: China defends 'education' camps](#)', 17 September 2020.

<sup>31</sup> State Council of the People's Republic of China, '[Employment and Labor Rights in Xinjiang](#)', 17 September 2020.

More recently in March 2021, Reuters cited China's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, as saying that "the so-called 'genocide' in Xinjiang is ridiculously absurd. It is a rumour with ulterior motives and a complete lie".<sup>32</sup> In a BBC article from the same month, the Chinese foreign minister is also reported to have said that western politicians were "choosing to believe lies" about what was happening in Xinjiang.<sup>33</sup>

### **What has the UK Government said?**

The UK Government has not described China's treatment of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang as genocide. However, it has raised concerns about an alleged programme of repression in the country.

In a statement in March 2021 the then UK Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, described the situation in Xinjiang as "one of the worst human rights crises of our time".<sup>34</sup> He referred to "clear" evidence that corroborated reports about the targeting of specific ethnic groups in the region. Such evidence included satellite imagery, survivor testimony, official documentation and leaks from the Chinese government, amongst other things.

Referring to the detention camps, he described these as the "largest mass detention of an ethnic or religious group since the second world war". He said that the international community could not ignore these "appalling violations of the most basic human rights".

The UK Government announced several measures in January 2021 to help ensure that British organisations are not complicit in, nor profit from, the human rights violations in Xinjiang.<sup>35</sup> Measures included a review of UK product exports to Xinjiang, as well as providing support for UK bodies to exclude businesses complicit in human rights violations from supply chains.

The UK Government took additional steps in March 2021 by introducing a series of sanctions on four Chinese senior officials and the Public Security Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, Xinjiang's security body.<sup>36</sup> The sanctions, which included asset freezes and travel bans, formed part of collaborative action by the UK, US, Canada and EU to condemn China's alleged human rights violations in the region.

### **What discussions in Parliament have there been?**

China's treatment of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang has been raised during several debates and reports in the House of Commons and House of Lords. This includes a debate in the House of Lords on bringing perpetrators of genocide to justice, and a House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee report.

<sup>32</sup> Gabriel Crossley, ['China says hopes US will remove 'unreasonable' curbs on cooperation'](#), Reuters, 8 March 2021.

<sup>33</sup> BBC News, ['Uighurs: Chinese foreign minister says genocide claims 'absurd''](#), 7 March 2021.

<sup>34</sup> [HC Hansard, 22 March 2021, col 621.](#)

<sup>35</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office et al, ['UK Government announces business measures over Xinjiang human rights abuses'](#), 12 January 2021.

<sup>36</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, ['UK sanctions perpetrators of gross human rights violations in Xinjiang, alongside EU, Canada and US'](#), 22 March 2021.

## Bill proceedings of the Trade Act 2021

During the bill proceedings of the Trade Act 2021, several amendments were moved that aimed to ensure judicial oversight of trade agreements with countries accused of genocide. The treatment of Uyghur Muslims in China was referred to several times during the debates.

An amendment moved by Lord Alton of Liverpool during the bill's report stage debate in the House of Lords aimed to enable the High Court of England and Wales to determine that an international trade agreement should be revoked if a signatory country has committed genocide.<sup>37</sup> Whilst the amendment received cross-party support, it did not form part of the final Trade Act 2021. Instead, a compromise amendment was agreed to which enables a House of Commons committee to identify credible reports of genocide and insist on a parliamentary debate if the committee is not satisfied with the Government's response to its report.<sup>38</sup>

## House of Commons debate: human rights in Xinjiang

On 22 April 2021, the House of Commons passed a nonbinding, cross-party motion stating that Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang are suffering crimes against humanity and genocide.<sup>39</sup>

Nusrat Ghani (Conservative MP for Wealden) tabled the motion. Ms Ghani was one of several British politicians sanctioned by China in retaliation for the UK's decision to sanction Chinese officials linked to human rights abuses in Xinjiang.<sup>40</sup> Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) and Baroness Kennedy of the Shaws (Labour) were also sanctioned by China.<sup>41</sup>

During the debate, Ms Ghani acknowledged a reluctance to use the term genocide, but said that she believed such acts had taken place in Xinjiang:

First, genocide is measured against intent. Secondly, intent to commit any one of the five acts of genocide is sufficient. Thirdly, and fundamentally, all five acts of genocide are evidenced as taking place in Xinjiang. Therefore, while we must never misuse the term "genocide", we must not fail to use it when it is warranted.<sup>42</sup>

Ms Ghani highlighted that several countries and parliaments in Europe had already declared genocide against China, and urged the House to support the motion.

Stephen Kinnock, the Shadow Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said that the Labour party stood in solidarity with the Uyghur population and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang.<sup>43</sup> The

<sup>37</sup> [HL Hansard, 7 December 2020, cols 1058–1091.](#)

<sup>38</sup> UK Parliament, ['Lords agree to Commons Trade Bill compromise'](#), 24 March 2021.

<sup>39</sup> [HC Hansard, 22 April 2021, col 1246.](#)

<sup>40</sup> Adam Forrest, ['Why has China sanctioned five British MPs?'](#), *Independent*, 26 March 2021.

<sup>41</sup> [HL Hansard, 14 April 2021, col 1298.](#)

<sup>42</sup> [HC Hansard, 22 April 2021, col 1212.](#)

<sup>43</sup> *ibid*, col 1241.

shadow minister questioned the actions the Government had taken to address the problem, arguing that it had prioritised trade negotiations with China over a process to assess genocide.<sup>44</sup> He also called on the Government to support the motion.<sup>45</sup>

Nigel Adams, the then Minister of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, responded for the Government. The minister said that the Government had repeatedly emphasised its grave concern for human rights violations occurring in the region, and argued that it had “acted decisively”.<sup>46</sup> The minister highlighted the measures and sanctions it imposed in early 2021, and said that it continued to raise the human rights violations in Xinjiang with Chinese authorities.

However, the minister did not support the motion. He said it was not for the Government to make a determination of whether the actions in Xinjiang amounted to genocide, as this was instead the responsibility of competent national and international courts.<sup>47</sup> The minister said the Government would continue to work with international partners to hold China to account for human rights violations against Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang.<sup>48</sup>

At the close of the debate, the motion was subsequently agreed to.

### **House of Lords debate: ‘Genocide: bringing perpetrators to justice’**

On 27 May 2021, Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) asked the Government what steps it was taking to bring perpetrators of genocide to justice.<sup>49</sup> The debate included discussions on the alleged genocide in Xinjiang, as well as other instances across the world.

Lord Alton raised concerns about the Government’s policy that only competent courts should make determinations of genocide. He accused it of being “a convenient sleight of hand, disguising the shameful inability—or perhaps unwillingness—to bring perpetrators of genocide to justice”.

In response, the Minister of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, maintained that the Government did not believe that non-judicial bodies should make this determination.<sup>50</sup> He said the Government could instead respond by introducing sanctions regimes. The minister emphasised that this approach did not undermine the UK’s commitment to preventing atrocities such as genocide.

Specifically referring to the situation in China, the minister gave assurance that the Government would continue to work with international partners to increase pressure on China to “change its behaviour”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> [HC Hansard, 22 April 2021, col 1242.](#)

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*, col 1243.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*, cols 1243–1244.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*, col 1245.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*, col 1246.

<sup>49</sup> [HL Hansard, 27 May 2021, col 166.](#)

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*, col 178.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*, col 179.

## House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee report (July 2021)

On 8 July 2021, the Foreign Affairs Committee published a report on the UK's responsibility to act against atrocities in Xinjiang and elsewhere.<sup>52</sup> The report set out a range of measures aimed at preventing the Chinese Government from committing "atrocities" against Uyghurs and other ethnic groups in Xinjiang. Measures included:

- a ban on the import of all cotton products and other industries that are known to be produced in Xinjiang;
- not participating in the opening or closing ceremonies at the 2022 Beijing winter Olympics and Paralympics, and strongly discouraging UK business from sponsoring or advertising there; and
- forbidding surveillance companies like Hikvision (which provides surveillance equipment to detention camps) from operating in the UK. The report states that Hikvision cameras are currently used throughout the UK in leisure centres and some schools.

The report also called for further support to be provided to the Uyghur community by implementing an asylum fast track, as well as conducting an urgent consultation for Uyghurs living in the UK to determine the extent of the harassment they face from the Chinese Communist Party officials.

In addition, it also called on the Government to "accept Parliament's view that Uyghurs and other ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang are suffering genocide and crimes against humanity, and take action to bring these crimes to an end".

The committee published the Government's response to its report on 14 November 2021.<sup>53</sup> The Government acknowledged that further international action was required, but re-emphasised its policy that it was not for the Government to make a determination of genocide.

In reference to the winter Olympics and Paralympics, it said that no decisions had been made about potential representation but that this was a matter for the British Olympic Association and British Paralympic Association. On the recommendation of implementing a fast track for Uyghur asylum seekers, it said it did not currently have plans to implement one, but committed to keeping the situation in China under "close review".

On banning the import of cotton products, the Government said that whilst it did not currently have plans to place import controls on such goods, it is working with international G7 partners to ensure that global supply chains are free from the use of forced labour. It committed to keeping this under close review.

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<sup>52</sup> House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, [Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond](#), 8 July 2021, HC 198 of session 2021–22.

<sup>53</sup> House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, [Never Again: The UK's Responsibility to Act on Atrocities in Xinjiang and Beyond: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report](#), 14 November 2021, HC 840 of session 2021–22.

## Read more

- House of Lords Library, '[Genocide: bringing perpetrators to justice](#)', 21 May 2021

*This Lords In Focus article looks at what genocide is, international agreements to prevent genocide that the UK is signed up to, and recent parliamentary discussion during the Trade Bill.*

- House of Commons Library, '[China and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region](#)', 20 April 2021

*This briefing provides background information on alleged human rights abuses and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang.*

- House of Commons Library, '[China's policy on its Uighur population](#)', 6 March 2020

*This briefing provides further information about concerns surrounding the alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang, as well as details on several international reports on the issue.*

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