

# BKVMUN'25 NATO STUDY GUIDE

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## **1. Letter from Secretary General**

Dear Delegates and most esteemed participants,

As the Co-Secretary Generals of the BJK Kabataş Foundation Schools Model United Nations Conference, it is our distinct honor to welcome you to our traditional conference, now in its second annual iteration this year.

We are delighted to collaborate with the diligent academic and organizational teams, whose dedication is truly commendable. We have worked extensively with our academic team to prepare engaging crisis and procedural committees where significant global issues will be discussed worldwide. Simultaneously, our organization team has tirelessly prepared to ensure the best conference experience for you, which will enchant these 3 days.

Delegates will have access to a wide variety of committee types and topics. Among these diverse options, delegates will have the opportunity to find a committee that aligns with their interests and select one that fits their preferred style of debate. With such broad spectrum, delegates can explore committees that resonate with their passions and engage in debates that suit their preferred style of discourse.

We aspire for this conference to act as a driving force, broadening your horizons, sparking fresh concepts, and propelling you toward greater strides in your pursuit of global leadership.

Sincerely,

Berra Gümüşler & Dila Bengisu

## 2. Letter from Under-Secretary-General

Most Esteemed Delegates,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to BKVMUN'25. I, Ceylin Umay Köylü, will serve you as Under-Secretary-General for the following 3 days.

I would like to use this section as a small disclaimer for the committee. First of all, this committee will proceed as a semi-crisis committee so we will both have debates and directives. On the first day, the first session, I will give a detailed workshop on both directives and the procedure so please keep your minds at ease.

Please read the guide carefully and **come prepared** for the first day so we won't have any issues with the flow of the committee.

If you have any questions, you can contact me via [ceylinumay@hotmail.com](mailto:ceylinumay@hotmail.com) or my phone number +905462868554 anytime you want.

I hope we will have 3 unforgettable days. Until then, take care of yourselves.

Ceylin Umay Köylü

### 3. Key Words

**Autonomous region:** An autonomous region is defined as an area of a country that has a degree of autonomy, or has freedom from an external authority. It is typical for it to be geographically distant from the country, or to be populated by a national minority.

**Propaganda:** The more or less systematic use of symbols to attempt to influence the beliefs, attitudes, or behavior of others is known as propaganda. Propaganda can be found in news and journalism, government, advertising, entertainment, education, and activism. It's frequently linked to materials created by governments for use in war efforts, political campaigns, health campaigns, revolutionaries, large corporations, ultra-religious organizations, the media, and specific people.

**Religious fanaticism:** Religious fanaticism, also known as religious extremism, is a term used to describe uncritical enthusiasm or obsessive excitement related to one's own or a group's devotion to a religion.

**Re-education camps:** The Chinese Communist Party Provincial Standing Committee and the government of Xinjiang jointly run the internment camps in Xinjiang, which are officially known as vocational education and training institutions by the Chinese government. Many governments of many countries and human rights organizations have condemned the camps for alleged violations of human rights, including maltreatment, rape, and torture, with some of them alleging genocide.

**Genocide:** The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, 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.

**Sinicize:** To Sinicize is defined as: "to modify by Chinese influence". Thus, sinicization is when non-Chinese cultures are forced to adopt ethnic Chinese (Han) culture.

## **4. Introduction to the Committee**

### **4.1 Functioning and Mission of Nato**

NATO is an established security alliance of 32 countries in North America and Europe, formed in 1949 with the signing of the Washington Treaty, aimed at maintaining the freedom and security of each of the Allies by political and military means. NATO remains the principal security instrument of the transatlantic community and an expression of its common democratic values. It is through NATO that security between North America and Europe is practically linked. The enlargement of NATO has promoted the U.S. goal of a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace.

A sine qua non for the Alliance is Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which stipulates an attack on one Ally is an attack on all: a pledge to defense collective. Article 4 obliges consultation among Allies on security matters of common interest, which have included issues ranging from a narrowly defined Soviet threat to a significant issue in Afghanistan, as well as peacekeeping in Kosovo; also the concerns of new security challenges like cyber-attacks; and global threats such as international terrorism and piracy that affect the Alliance and its global network of partners.

In addition to the traditional means of ensuring the territorial defense of Allied countries, NATO leads the ISAF in Afghanistan under a mandate from the UN; it has continuing missions in the Balkans and Mediterranean; also it exercises intervention on the training ground and provides security assistance to partners worldwide, including the EU, the UN, and the AU.

### **4.2 Activities of NATO**

#### **a. Decisions and Consultations**

Every day, the member countries consult each other and make decisions on all the security issues of their respective countries and in areas in between. A "NATO decision" refers to the collective will of 32 member nations since all decisions are taken by consensus. Hundreds of officials and civilian and military experts come each day to NATO headquarters to exchange information, share ideas, and help prepare decisions when needed, in cooperation with national delegations and the staff at NATO Headquarters.

#### **b. Operations and Missions**

NATO is alive and well engaged as a leading contributor to the peace and security international scene. They further democratic norms and are committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. But, when diplomacy fails, NATO has the military capacity to resort to independent or collective crisis prevention and management operations with partner countries and other international organizations.

### 4.3 Working Structure of NATO

Over the years, NATO has built up a highly sophisticated structure to accommodate its political, military, and operational necessities, with a heavy emphasis on security and cooperation between its member states. Consequently, this comprises both civilian and military sides, specialized agencies, and a transparent range of committees and organizations.

#### a. Civilian Structure of NATO

This civilian structure permits NATO to function and make decisions daily. The structure is dissolved by NATO Headquarters, situated in Brussels, Belgium, a center for NATO's administrative functions and decision-making.

**i. Permanent Representatives and National Delegations:** Representatives are sent from member states to NATO Headquarters in a permanent capacity, where they participate in discussions and decisions on behalf of their countries.

**ii. International Staff (IS):** The International Staff deals with the day-to-day work of NATO, which in turn includes the Private Office (PO) tasked with the coordination of NATO leadership, plus divisions that handle specific matters such as operations, defense policy, and public diplomacy. Some sub-divisions include:

- **Political Affairs and Security Policy Division:** This division handles the political aspects of NATO's security policy and diplomatic efforts in areas like the Southern Neighbourhood.
- **Defense Policy and Planning Division:** This division advises NATO leadership in the fields of defense strategy, arms control, and disarmament, among others, as well as managing logistical and resilience planning for the Alliance.
- **Innovation, Hybrid, and Cyber (IHC) Division:** This division handles new threats like cyber-attacks and hybrid warfare and manages programming like Science for Peace and Security.

**iii. Public Diplomacy Division:** This division promotes NATO's image, manages public communication and media relations, and administers co-sponsorship grants, publications, and multimedia resources along with local contact point embassies in partner countries.

**iv. Executive Management:** This part of the civilian structure deals with supporting administrative functions including recruitment, the NATO Internship Programme, and financial control.

**v. Joint Intelligence and Security Division (JIS):** This division deals with security for intelligence and oversight; it includes such sub-offices as the NATO Office of Security (NOS) and the Internal Oversight Service (IOS).

**b. Military Structure of NATO**

NATO's military structure is supposed to enable the effective defense of its members, allowing immediate and prompt response to crisis, and deterrent preparedness against any kind of threat. The military component of NATO is headed by the Military Committee, which is the highest body for military authority within NATO.

**i. International Military Staff:** The staff supports the working of the Military Committee in fulfilling its respective duties. It is divided into specialized groups:

- Cooperative Security (CS), Intelligence (INT), and Operations and Plans (O&P) critical functions on security, intelligence, and operations and plans.
- Logistics and Resources (L&R) ensure that military forces are well-equipped and prepared for deployment.

**ii. Allied Command Operations (ACO):** This command shall prepare NATO forces for operations. Under ACO are key commands such as:

- Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), located in Belgium, is responsible for the operational control of the use of NATO operations in Europe.
- Joint Force Command (JFC) positions include Brunssum (Netherlands), Naples (Italy), and Norfolk (United States) for operational command of NATO's multinational forces.
- Headquarters Allied Maritime Command (HQ MARCOM) and Headquarters Allied Air Command (HQ AIRCOM) are responsible for the naval and air operations, respectively.

**iii. Allied Command Transformation (ACT):** ACT makes sure that NATO military forces are not bogged down by outdated threats or ad hoc changes in the political environment of member states. It superintends all forms of education training and transformation initiatives through establishments like NATO School in Germany and the NATO Joint Force Training Centre in Poland.

**iv. Integrated Military Command Structure:** The Integrated Military Command of NATO is responsible for coordinated military operations throughout member states. The structure ensures that all members are integrated within joint operations and security efforts.



### **c. Agencies and Other Organizations of NATO**

Notably, NATO primarily built its infrastructure using a range of specialized organizations and agencies for support, coordination, and expertise over various sectors.

**i. Support Agencies:** The Agency for Procurement and Support in NATO (NSPA) is responsible for logistical operations and requesting administration in NATO forces. The Airlift Management Program of NATO and the Central European Pipeline Systems Program provides the global logistics support of NATO operations.

**ii. Communications and Information:** The NATO Communication and Information Agency is responsible for developing the NATO communications infrastructure, cybersecurity efforts, and command and control operations.

**iii. Science and Technology (S&T):** Research and technology organizations for NATO undertake S&T research which is an important area of research in defense-aided fields, for example, cyber defense and maritime operation.

**iv. Civil Emergency Planning:** The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) coordinates disaster response activities initiated when there is a disaster in countries within the EADRCC. Civil Emergency Planning Committees prepare NATO for large-scale emergencies.

**v. Creativity:** The Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) establishes innovative solution creation in the areas of defense and security technology for NATO to ensure continuous innovation in military effectiveness.

**vi. NATO Designated Centers of Excellence:** These are special centers that focus on different topics in the field of defense such as counter-intelligence, maritime security, and cold weather operations.

NATO's decision-making process is highly undertaken by several core bodies:

**i. Nuclear Planning Group (NPG):** This committee assures the strategic nuclear deterrence capability of NATO and develops policies related to nuclear forces.

**ii. North Atlantic Council (NAC):** The NAC is the highest decision-making body within NATO, consisting of representatives of each member country. It is charged to set policy directions and approve the strategic goals of the alliance.

**iii. Subordinate Committees:** The committees support NAC priorities with their specialized and comprehensive work on particular topics such as Logistics, Operations, and Resources.

**iv. Agencies and Secretary General:** NATO's highest officer is the Secretary-General, who presides on the organization. Under him is the International Staff, which provides professional expertise to the decision-making organ of NATO.

**v. Military Representatives:** Every member state designates one military representative to NATO's Military Committee. Thus, national military strategies will be placed into NATO's collective defense planning.

## 5. Introduction to the Agenda Item

### 5.1 Geopolitical Location of East Turkestan

The ancestral territory of the Turkish nation, East Turkestan is located in the northwest of the People's Republic of China. Formally identified for being associated with Beijing on October 1, 1955, the region was formally termed "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region". It is the largest of the five Chinese Autonomous Regions in terms of geographical size. It occupies an area of 1,828,418 km<sup>2</sup> and stretches 2,000 km from west to east and 1,650 km from south to north. It is located geographically between 34-40 latitudes and 74-95 longitudes. While more than 50% of the area in the region is occupied by deserts and snow-covered mountains, arable land is normally found along riverbanks.



China and Mongolia to the east and northeast, India, Pakistan, and Tibet to the south, Afghanistan and Tajikistan to the west, and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia to the north, thus marking the area. Yarkant, Quchar, Qumul (Hami), Tarbagatay, Altai, Hotan, Ghulja, Qaramay, Karashahr, Kashgar, Quchar, and Qumul (Hami) are other impressive cities located in the region apart from Urumqi. East Turkestan includes the components of the Tianshan Mountains known as the Altai, Karakorum, and Tarbagatay. North of these mountains is the Ili Basin (Dzungaria) and south of them is the Tarim Basin (Kashgaria).

The area makes up 80,000 km<sup>2</sup> of forest cover, including the Taklamakan Desert, which is the world's second-largest desert. The Tarim River divides into two and empties into the Lop/Lop Nur Lake; hence, it is the largest river in the area. Lakes of great importance in the area include Sayram, Bogda, Bagrash, Ebi, and Lop. Generally, the consequence of the Taklamakan desert makes the southern part arid and hot in winter, while the northern part receives rains and cool temperatures in summer.

### 5.2 History of East Turkestan

Up until the middle of the 19th century, Turks of East Turkistan geography had close relations with states. Written sources almost definitely state that Hun, Ak Hun, Gokturk, and Uyghur states were established in East Turkistan, according to chronology-from the period before Christ until the one in which the Turks embraced Islam massively.

After the collapse of the Uyghur Khaganate, which occurred in 840, the Uyghurs and all the tribes that were under their rule began to migrate towards two different geographic areas, some establishing the Gansu Uyghur Khanate (848-1036) south of the Great Wall of China, while others formed the Turkic tribes within the territories of East Turkistan and the Kochu Uyghur Khanate (843-1209).

The Yagma and Karluk tribes have been living in the East Turkistan region since the Huns and incorporated other Turkic tribes to establish the Karakhanids State (840-1212), which made Kashgar its capital.

This brought about the mass conversion of Turks to Islam soon after the conversion of the Karakhanid ruler Sultan Satuk Buğra Khan to Islam in the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Subsequently, the East Turkistan darling was shared by the Genghis Empire, Chagatai Khanate, and Yarkent Khanate. The Manchu empire was the last to extend its wings over East Turkistan by defeating the Jungars in the eighteenth century; it first annexed the north of the region in 1759 and then the whole territory of East Turkistan.

The people of East Turkistan resisted each time against Chinese domination. The last appeasement occurred in 1865 under Yakup Han and involved the expulsion of Chinese forces from East Turkistan along with the establishment of the Kashgar Emirate, later referred to as Kashgarya. But even with the fall of Kashgarya, the fight of the East Turkistan people continued until the establishment of the Islamic Republic of East Turkistan in Kashgar in 1933.

This legitimate republic came under the boot of China by military occupation, in November, 1934, led by Sheng Shicai of the Chinese militant leader and supported by Stalin's troops.

Massacres were carried out against the people of East Turkistan, especially founding figures, scholars, and intellectuals forming the Islamic Republic, between 1937 and 1941, by Sheng Shicai.

The uprisings continued, and in November 1944, the Republic of East Turkistan was declared in Ghulja. In 1949, however, East Turkistan was again occupied by the CCP<sup>1</sup>, and the process continues to this day.

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<sup>1</sup> CCP: Chinese Communist Party

### **5.2.2 Xinjiang under Qing Rule**

Largely inhabited by nomads of late Oirat Mongol stock, the territory called Xinjiang, which is now administered as a Chinese province, witnessed intermittent raids and invasions for about a century until it finally fell into the greedy lap of the Qing Empire. In the middle of the 18th century, this last predominantly nomadic reign left its impact in warfare upon the Chinese crown, the Qing dynasty, and its subjects. Some would say that the Mongols of Oirat stock, known traditionally as the Dzungars, raided this area of Xinjiang, or Dzungaria, into oblivion.

In 1680, the Dzungars entered the Tarim Basin, then a feudal possession of the Yarkent Khanate under the influence of the Muslim Khojas. In 1690, the Dzungars attacked the Qing dynasty at the Battle of Ulan Butung and were forced to retreat. In 1696, the Dzungar ruler Galdan Khan was defeated by the Qing at the Battle of Jao Modo. The kings of the Tarim Basin from 1693 to 1696 openly rebelled against the Dzungars, including the defection of Abdullah Tarkhan Beg of Hami to the Qing. In 1717, the Dzungar army invaded Tibet, a territory governed by an ally of the Qing: Lha-bzang Khan of the Khoshut Khanate. The Qing retaliated a year later by dispatching an invasion force, but this was sent to defeat at the Battle of the Salween River. A second and larger Qing expedition sent in 1720 successfully defeated the Dzungars and ejected them from Tibet. The people of Turpan and Pichan took advantage of the situation to rebel under a local chief, Emin Khoja, and defect to the Qing. The Dzungars then confronted the Khalka Mongols, vassals of the Qing, occasioning another Qing expedition that ended in defeat for the Qing near Khoton Lake. In 1730, Dzungar forces descended upon Turpan, forcing Emin Khoja to retreat and take refuge in Guazhou. Succession issues brought uprisings throughout the Dzungar Khanate in 1745. While executing authority in the khanate, the Dzungar nobles Dawachi and Amursana contested for the throne. In 1753, the Dörbet and Bayad deflected towards the Qing. The following year, amid rebellion against Dzungar rule by rulers in Khotan and Aksu, Amursana also defected. In 1755, a Qing army invaded Dzungar Khanate with hardly any resistance, utterly extinguishing Dzungar rule in a hundred days. Dawachi had tried fleeing but was apprehended by Khoji, the beg of Uchturpan, and handed over to the Qing.

After the conquest of Dzungar Khanate, the Qing sought to replenish the Oirat tribes with descripted khans. This plan did not come to fruition, due to Amursana wanting to reign over all the Oirats. Instead, Amursana was conferred the title of khan of Khoid only by the Qianlong Emperor. In summer, Amursana organized a revolt against Qing with another Mongol leader, Chingünjav. Unable to defeat the Qing, Amursana fled two years later

north searching for refuge among the Russians and died of smallpox in Russian land. In the spring of 1762, his frozen body was taken to Kyakhta for the Manchu to see. The Russians buried it, refusing the Manchu request for its return for posthumous punishment.

When Amursana rebelled, the Aq Taghliq khojas Burhanuddin and Jahan rebelled in Yarkand. Their rule was not popular and the people greatly disliked them for appropriating anything they needed from clothing to livestock. In February 1758, The Qing sent Yaerhashan and Zhao Hui with 10,000 troops against the Aq Taghliq regime. Zhao Hui was besieged by enemy forces at Yarkand until January 1759, but otherwise the Qing army did not encounter any difficulties on campaign. The khoja brothers fled to Badakhshan where they were captured by the ruler Sultan Shah, who executed them and handed Jahan's head to the Qing. The Tarim Basin was pacified in 1759.

### **Dzungar Genocide**

The Qianlong Emperor issued the following orders, as translated by Peter C. Perdue:

"Show no mercy at all to these rebels. Only the old and weak should be saved. Our previous military campaigns were too lenient. If we act as before, our troops will withdraw, and further trouble will occur. If a rebel is captured and his followers wish to surrender, he must personally come to the garrison, prostrate himself before the commander, and request surrender. If he only sends someone to request submission, it is undoubtedly a trick. Tell Tsengünjav to massacre these crafty Zunghars. Do not believe what they say."

Deaths in the Dzungar genocide are estimated at between 70 and 80 percent of the 600,000 or more Dzungars, who were destroyed by disease and warfare between 1755 and 1758, which Michael Clarke describes as "the complete destruction of not only the Dzungar state but of the Dzungars as a people." According to the Qing scholar Wei Yuan (1794–1857), the Dzungar population before the Qing conquest was around 600,000 in 200,000 households. Wei Yuan wrote that about 40 percent of the Dzungar households were killed by smallpox, 20 percent fled to Russia or Kazakh tribes, and 30 percent were killed by Manchu bannermen. Khalkha Mongols also participated in the killing. For several thousands of li, there were no gers except of those who had surrendered.[31] According to Russian accounts, all the men, women and children of the Dzungars were slaughtered by the Manchu troops. The population of Dzungaria would not rebound for several generations.

The destruction of the Dzungars has been attributed to an explicit policy of extermination, described as "ethnic genocide", by the Qianlong Emperor

which lasted for two years. He ordered the massacre of the majority of the Dzungar population and the enslavement or banishment of the remainder, resulting in the destruction of the Dzungars. The Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity classifies the Qianlong Emperor's actions against the Dzungars as genocide under the definition given by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The Emperor saw no conflict between his order of extermination and upholding the peaceful principles of Confucianism. He supported his position by portraying the Dzungars as barbarians and subhuman. The Qianlong Emperor proclaimed that "to sweep away barbarians is the way to bring stability to the interior", that the Dzungars "turned their back on civilization", and "Heaven supported the emperor," in their destruction.

His commanders were reluctant to carry out his orders, which he repeated several times using the term *jiao* (extermination) over and over again. The commanders Hadaha and Agui were punished for only occupying Dzungar lands but letting the people escape. The generals Jaohui and Shuhede were punished for not showing sufficient zeal in exterminating rebels. Others such as Tangkelu were rewarded for their participation in the slaughter. Qianlong explicitly ordered the Khalkha Mongols to "take the young and strong and massacre them." The elderly, children, and women were spared but they could not preserve their former names or titles. Loyalist Khalkhas received Dzungar Khoit women as slaves from Chebudengzhabu, and orders to deprive the starving Dzungars of food were issued. Manchu Bannermen and loyalist Mongols received Dzungar women, children, and old men as bondservants, and their Dzungar identity was wiped out. Mark Levene, a historian whose recent research interests focus on genocide, states that the extermination of the Dzungars was "arguably the eighteenth century genocide par excellence.

In 1759, after the Qing acquired Xinjiang from the Dzungars, it termed the conquered territory as not merely a part of the Chinese but an integral multiethnic Chinese state. The Qianlong Emperor could not limit China to Han-majority regions; thus, any official arguing against incorporating Xinjiang was dismissed. Immediately after the conquest, it was hailed by the Qing as a part of "China" in the official Manchu-language record and intended to unify its varied peoples. The people of Xinjiang were prohibited from being regarded as outsiders (*yi*).

Qianlong had also permitted Han immigration to consolidate control, introduced Chinese-style governance that included civil service examinations, prefectures, and counties, and renamed cities with the kind of Confucian names such as Dihua (Urumqi) in 1760. Additionally, it proposed funding Confucian education among the Muslims of Xinjiang as one of the directives

in The Imperial Gazetteer of the Western Regions (Xiyu Tuzhi).

To establish their rule, the Qing compared their conquests with the Han (202 BCE–220 CE) and Tang (618-907 CE) dynasties and claimed to have controlled parts of Xinjiang in the past. The Qing revived old Han and Tang nomenclature for places and historiography to assert their claim that the expansion was a restoration of China's historical borders. Military leaders such as Zhao Hui were lined with the Han and Tang generals Ban Chao, Li Guangli, and Gao Xianzhi. The Qing, however, partly borrowed the type of government from the Han and Tang, but they built quite a centralized administration, modeled like that of the Europeans and Russians, unlike the previous nomadic empires such as the Qara Khitay.

Qing scholars-writings, including those of Manchu and Mongol writers, were in Chinese to advance the case for Xinjiang's place in those histories above all. In this way, by rewriting history and government, the Qing sealed Xinjiang's fate within the Chinese state and prepared it for its future political footprint.

### **5.2.3 Dungan Revolt**

The Dungan Revolt (1862-1877) was a large-scale Muslim ethnic uprising, mainly Hui (Dungan), against the Qing in northwestern China. The occurrence was born of ethnic tensions and economic misery related to how the Qing regarded Muslims. Like the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) or the Panthay Rebellion (1856-1873), this uprising occurred in history during a season of major conflicts throughout China.

#### **a. Impacts of the Revolt**

##### **Total Death and Dislocation**

Millions perished in the fighting, with estimates ranging from 8 million to 12 million from battle, massacre, and famine. The overwhelming majority of Hui Muslim communities were completely wiped out. Mass expulsion and subsequent immigration caused tens of thousands of Dungan to move to the Russian Empire into present-day Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and beyond.

Unlike the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) and the Panthay Rebellion (1856-1873), this event happened within this historic season of major conflicts throughout China. Ethnic and religious tensions shrouded populated areas, with a well-established history around Muslim Hui and Han Chinese.

#### **b. Origin of the Revolt**

There were economic troubles and other antagonisms in resource access which additionally aggravated the situation. These corrupt Qing



officials exploited these for their own benefit. The spark that ignited the powder-keg occurred due to a local dispute in 1862 about a commercial activity that led to the slaughter of the Hui by Han militias and soon to much wider violence. Previously the Qing government was very weak due to different insurrections before it completely lost control, and before long, the conflict spread very quickly.

### **c. Key Events and Timeline**

#### **The Outbreak of the Revolt (1862-1864)**

- In 1862, the uprising began in Shaanxi and Gansu, as Hui Muslim militia attacked Qing officials and Han settlements.
- The Qing military then found it prudent to employ extreme ruthless bloody suppression-an act that is not different from the usual thing by which it fueled further escalation.
- Hui Muslims and other ethnic groups already joined the battle against the Qing by 1864, when the rebellion had already reached Xinjiang.

#### **Expansion into Xinjiang and Yaqub Beg's Rule (1864-1873)**

- Meanwhile, in 1865, when the revolt had started to sweep towards Xinjiang, Yaqub Beg, a military commander from Kokand (now part of modern Uzbekistan), seized the moment to establish an independent Islamic state in Kashgar (southern Xinjiang).
- Yaqub Beg joined forces with Muslim heads in the area and ruled large swathes of Xinjiang to the time the Qing forces launched their counterattack.

#### **Qing Counteroffensive and Defeat of the Rebels (1867-1877)**

- The effort of the Qing dynasty was directed, after suppressing the Taiping Rebellion, towards recovering the lost Cold lands.
- In 1867, the General Zuo Zongtang was appointed to lead the Qing military campaign against the Dungan rebels.
- From 1868 to 1873, Zuo Zongtang's forces recaptured most of Xinjiang and all of Shaanxi and Gansu by superior strategy and thousands of reinforcements from Central China.
- By 1877, the last strongholds of Dungan capitulated, and the unknown death by strange causes of Yaqub Beg heralded the end of the revolt.

#### **d. Results of the Revolt**

##### **Mass Mortality and Forced Migrations**

- The Participant Quantities of Killed Became 8-12 Million People Because of Fighting, Massacred, and Hike-related Famine among Wars.
- Many Hui Muslims were swept away from the attack, while an entire exodus and population displacement took place afterwards. Tens of thousands Dungan people fled to the Russian Empire, which was today located in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

##### **Political and Administrative Changes**

- In 1884, Xinjiang was declared a province of China in order to bolster Qing control and avoid further rebellions.
- The Qing put rules on spheres of Muslim habitation and exercised closer governmental supervision to ward against such revolts in the future.

##### **The Muslim-Han Relationship Influence**

- Riot made more bitter the bonding of ethnic lines and religious divisions, such that some of these will now be entrenched with more lasting distrust between Hui Muslims and Han Chinese along their future journeys.
- Experiences with revolts like the one with the Qing served to affect subsequent policies concerning Muslims in China, impacting on future administration in Xinjiang and other Muslim-majority areas.

The Dungan Revolt of 1862-1877 claimed enormous casualties during one of the highest peaks of death by natural disasters of human history up to now, besides the heavy demographics, political as well social changes that it brought in northwestern China. It underscored the dilemma of ruling a multi-ethnic empire as much nearer the further penalties placed on Muslims in most conditions and the de jure incorporation of Xinjiang as a province in 1884. The revolt continues to play a part in defining the state policy-historical relationship of China with ethnic and religious minorities, particularly in Xinjiang.

#### **5.2.4 Xinjiang under the rule of the Republic of China**

The Republic of China was announced in 1912 after the Qing dynasty had fallen. The last Qing governor of Xinjiang, Yuan Dahua, ran away, leaving only Yang Zengxin as the master of the lands. The first confirmation of the Republic of China for Yang came in March 1912 as he utilized gross political manipulation and balance of competing ethnic groups to gain total control over Xinjiang. His tenure lasted until 1928 when he was assassinated after the Northern Expedition orchestrated by the Kuomintang (KMT). After Yang's death, Jin Shuren succeeded him; against him, revolts erupted, including the Kumul Rebellion of the early 1930s initiated by Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples alongside Hui Muslims. Jin then recruited White Russian mercenaries for their suppression.

It instead fell apart further; The First East Turkestan Republic was declared on November 12, 1933, in Kashgar but extinguished by 1934 when the ETR's army was defeated by the Hui Kuomintang 36th Division in the Battle of Kashgar. Afterwards, it was directly the Soviets who intervened inside Xinjiang, proceeding with the invasion, the Soviet Invasion of Xinjiang, and then the Xinjiang War (1937). Following that, another Manchu warlord, Sheng Shicai, took control of the province and ran it with a hard hand and Soviet backing for the next decade. In 1944, Sheng turned against prominent Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek; he'd heard whispers that Sheng would resign any Chinese pretensions to Xinjiang in return for the area becoming part of the Soviet Union, so he promptly turned against Sheng, sending him off to Chongqing as Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

However, this particular year saw the establishment of the ETR in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture with Soviet backing, which extended her scope not only to Ili but to Tarbagatay and Altay districts in the north of Xinjiang. The Ili uprising was in continuation of the fact that the Republic of China was still playing its role in keeping the remaining areas of Xinjiang outside the control of the ETR under the sponsorship of the Soviet Union. In 1946, a Coalition Government of Xinjiang Province was set up in the wake of a short-lived ceasefire, later dissolved in 1947. After that, however, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) marched into Xinjiang in 1949, and the Kuomintang Commander Tao Zhiyue surrendered the province to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The former provincial apparatus, backed into Taipei, continued to represent the Republic of China's claim over Xinjiang through the Sinkiang Provincial Government Office until its dissolution in 1992.

### **5.2.5 Control of Xinjiang Region by the Peoples' Republic of China**

Between 1949 and the latter half of 1950, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) from China took over Xinjiang in three months. The Kuomintang forces in the region soon gave up to the PLA, while Uyghur political leaders associated with the Second East Turkestan Republic were absorbed into the Communist government. Any hopes for a real degree of autonomy for the Uyghurs were soon suppressed. While the establishment in 1955 of the People's Republic of China (PRC)-recognized Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) was a tacit acknowledgment of Uyghur claims, Beijing exercised tight control over the region in practice, and any semblance of self-government was virtually nonexistent.

Demographic engineers have been an essential instrument in the PRC rule over Xinjiang. From 1950s until the late 1970s, policies were set by Beijing to encourage migration of Han Chinese to Xinjiang. These state-sponsored resettlement programs were aimed at consolidating control over a region that was historically considered to be rebellious, economically exploit it, and serve as a barrier for its borders.

1954: The setting up of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), the paramilitary-economic-political body, was the main facilitator of Han migration. XPCC was supposed to build up infrastructure, agriculture, and industry, while keeping an eye on security in the region.

1980s-1990s: Continuing with Deng Xiaoping's reforms, Han migration was further facilitated, especially to urban centers like Urumqi, Kashgar, and Hotan. Consequently, the proportion of Han Chinese in Xinjiang rose from about 6 percent in 1949 to nearly 40 percent at the beginning of the 21st century. Han settlers received priority in employment and state resources.

21st-Century Policies: Birth control measures were instituted that discriminated against the Uyghurs. Forced sterilizations and imposed restrictions on how large a family a Uyghur could have were reported as part of a broader agenda aimed at lowering the Uyghur birthrate and forcing demographic changes. Uyghur women reported the government ordering them to have IUDs placed or undergo sterilizations.

## 6. Human Rights Violations in East Turkestan

Human rights have been studied for a long study by scholars since the 18th century. Among several classifications, the most famous was made by legal scholar Georg Jellinek who differentiated human rights into three broad categories: negative status rights (status negativus), positive status rights (status passivus) and active status rights (status activus).

These rights refer to freedoms that people actually enjoy without interference by governments, groups, or individuals. Such freedoms include those of thought, expression, speech, movement, and peaceful assembly.

**Positive status rights** place obligations on others, especially the state, to provide basic benefits and services. These include the right to free education, healthcare, social security, and employment.

**Active status rights** enable individuals to participate in the government of their country. These are the rights to vote, stand for election, establish political parties, and take part in political activity.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is a unitary one-party authoritarian state mostly under the control of the Communist Party of China (CPC). The CPC becomes a direct restriction on democratic participation, not only in East Turkestan but also in the rest of the nation. There are no free and fair elections and no political competition. Legislative seats are not subject to democratic elections, and the leaders of the national executive are not elected under direct or competitive voting. All branches of the state are under CPC monopoly, so there is no possibility for alternative political groups or opposition parties to hold public office.

Multiple international organizations have condemned the political oppression reflected in Chinese reality and its systematic suppression of democracy. It classifies China as an "unfree" country by Freedom House with reference to free fairest elections and political opposition without any legal framework. The one-party system strictly suppresses an organized dissent from initiating and functioning. Just like, an IDEA report classifies China as among the most anti-democratic states all around the world. This report emphasizes free elections as a fundamental principle of democracy, yet this country completely lacks such a system. According to the report, the CPC has to introduce a multi-party constitutional framework for democratic governance.

It similarly puts China 153rd out of 165 countries in its global Democracy Index, denoting it to be among the world's still-most-right regimes in this regard. It confirms

that indeed the Chinese government runs an authoritarian political system and imposes strict restrictions on active status rights in the whole country.

The present study will examine the rights violations most specifically of the negative and positive status rights in East Turkistan since those have cast a serious blow on the indigenous Uyghur population in the region. The denial of active status rights exists all across China, but the curtailment of the civil liberties and the most basic services present in East Turkestan is an even more severe form of state suppression, equivalent to systematic oppression and pervasive human rights violations.

### **6.1 Negative Rights Violations in East Turkestan**

Through these fair trials, miscarriage of justice can be avoided, which is the basic mainstay of a just society. A person accused of committing a crime ought definitely to prove innocence or guilt against the background of a proper effective and fair legal system. Such systems ensure that justice is done; safe-guarded against abuses directed towards defendants and suspects; as well they fortify community concerns. Without it, they lack any confidence in the legal system and make it questionable for social stability. The right to fair trial guarantees a fair and public hearing before an independent and impartial tribunal, within a reasonable time. This is recognized in many of the international legal frameworks.

In East Turkestan, the Turkic communities are denied the internationally recognized right to a fair trial with huge social consequences thus. Although religious extremism or secessionism is used as wide justification for detaining and imprisoning many Turkic people in the area, evidence supporting such claims is neither substantial nor existent. Not only are detainees and arrestees usually denied access to legal counsel or any other form of legal representation, but it is also nearly impossible for them or their families to ascertain the reasons for their detention or arrest.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has also restricted individual rights of an accused "leaking state secrets" or "compromising state security." Where a defense lawyer "makes a request during the criminal investigation period for an interview with a criminal suspect in custody who is suspected of compromising national security, terrorist activities, or extraordinarily significant bribery, the meeting shall be subject to the permission of the criminal investigation authority," Article 37 of the Chinese Criminal Procedure Law (CCPL) states. That provision gives the investigative authority the ability to deny access to lawyers of their clients, especially with regard to the accusation of extremism, separatism, or terrorism.

The authorities would, though, detain the suspects for up to thirty days prior to the arrest being approved or disapproved by the Chinese People's

Procuratorate as allowable under Article 69 of the CCPL. After such approval, however, investigations could take many months, if not years, before coming to the trial process that lasts as long as seven years. Recent reports from the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) document instances where investigations into alleged crimes took more than three years to complete.

The CCPL has several critical human rights issues. It's out of the jam with the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment without proof that it prevents law enforcement agencies from abusing detainees. These have all been the means adopted by the Chinese authorities in rendering some of their confessions, including torture, as false when forced. This often used evidence has gone to the extent of the testimony of people like Abdukiram Abduweli, İlham Tohti, Shohret Tursun, Mirzahid Amanullah Shahyari, and Noor-ul-Islam Sherbaz, sentenced to life or long prison terms based on coerced confession.

The Chinese Counter-Terrorism Law (CCTL) has also helped effect many human rights violations. Article 3 of the CCTL defines “terrorism” and “terrorist activities” in such broad terms that massive restrictions in relation to freedom of religion emerge. Freedom of religion is an inalienable right recognized in many international treaties and is funded for article 36 in Chinese Constitution. This right has, however, been summed with great severity by the kind of policies levelled against East Turkestan by the Chinese regime.

On July 29, 2016, the Chinese government made joint regulations for East Turkistan to complement CCTL provisions. Article 7 of the regulations categorizes numerous religious observances as "terrorist actions," serving as a catch-all provision for the popular crackdown on religious practices. Extreme religious practices include wearing face coverings, growing beards, putting up Islamic symbols, sharing information that has something to do with the religion, and traveling to predominantly Muslim countries. Furthermore, naming newborn children with Islamic names, for example, Arafat, Hajj, Islam, Jihad, Medina, or Muhammad, has also been outlawed under this ordinance.

As such, the Chinese government normally has "political indoctrination camps," popularly known as "re-education centers," where it goes to implement these rules. These have become the centers where thousands of Turkic Muslims have been interned since 2014, often without any charges laid against them or trial. These detentions are extra-legal, with no legal representation permitted. Such detainees are under forced indoctrination sessions where they must memorize slogans pitched by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and swear allegiance to their motherland. The

detainees are deprived of food, overstuffed, and have to learn Mandarin without any chance to practice the native languages or beliefs. Besides, they have been deprived of the opportunity to exercise their religious beliefs, while disloyal actions are met by severe penalties, including physical torture and treatment of a most inhumane kind, such as waterboarding and extended restraints.

Many detainees have died in the camps. Most deaths are due to harsh conditions and torture. Muhammad Salih Hajim, an esteemed religious figure in East Turkestan, died in custody in January 2018, at the age of 82. Also, Ayhan Memet died in a camp in May 2018 when he was 78, being the mother of World Uyghur Congress (WUC) President Dolkun Isa. A report documented 26 deaths in one camp in the Hotan prefecture as of June 2018.

Besides its re-education camps, the Chinese Communist Party has also worked towards further suppression of religious expression by destroying mosques and limiting access to religious sites. It does not matter whether one is young or old; almost every mosque has been destroyed since 2016 on the grounds of security issues. The regime has also banned people under eighteen from going to mosques or attending religious activities since 2017. All above eighteen have been permitted to dedicate their daily prayers outside government-sanctioned worship houses, which are closely surveilled by the government. The imams who lead these congregations are appointed by the state, and what they do is strictly scrutinized, with punishments meted out for non-compliance. A lot of people have been arrested and imprisoned for following religious practices that do not comply with the rules set up by the CCP. Some of these people include Albukiram Abduveli, Eli Yasin, Qamber Amber, Horigul Nais, Memet Sidiq, Memet Réhim, and Abdusemet Qarihaji. They were all convicted for practicing their religion outside the parameters set by the regime.

The rights of Turks in East Turkestan are severely curtailed by the communist regime, especially during the holy month of Ramadan. It surveils religious sites and practices throughout the month. Religious fasting is said to be unhealthy in regime pamphlets, and it becomes almost impossible for civil servants or those under 18 to fast, for they are regularly interrogated by the authorities about their religious observances. Many prominent Turks, such as Tursunjan Hezim, Tursunjan Muhemmet Marshal, Memet Turghun Abdulla, Ekbar Eset, and Memetjan Abdulla, who criticized the Ramadan policy, were arrested and imprisoned for their dissent.

Another negative right violated by the Chinese regime in East Turkistan is freedom of expression. Article 41 of the Chinese Constitution provides that an individual is entitled to express his opinions freely. However, various policies



by the Communist regime in East Turkestan have led to innumerable violations of this most cherished right.

Minority rights under Articles 4/3, 119, 121 and 122 of the Chinese Constitution, dedicated to protecting and promoting the ethno-cultural characteristics of minority communities, are correspondingly harshly curtailed. Websites calling for the preservation of the Turkic culture were shut down, and their administrators were thrown behind bars for "endangering state security" or "harming ethnic unity."

Ilham Tohti was arrested in January 2014 for promoting dialogue between the Chinese and Turkic communities. He was convicted of "disturbing separatism" in September 2014 and sent to life imprisonment. For six months, Tohti's defense lawyers were barred from meeting him, and prosecutors withheld complete evidence. Some defense witnesses were sidelined, with the presiding judge opting to hear testimony that Giordano deemed compromised Tohti's right to a fair trial.

Gheyret Niyaz is an Uighur journalist arrested in the year 2010 for articulating his dissent against the Chinese regimes assimilationist policies against East Turkestan's Turks. Niyaz was sentenced to 15 years for the crime of "endangering state security." In similar fashion, other journalists, Nijat Azar, Dilshat Perhat, and Nureli Obul, were sentenced to 10, 5, and 3 years respectively for their writings published on the websites Selkin and Diyarim under the charge of "endangering national security."

Abdurehim Heyit, an important Uighur folk poet, was arrested in 2017 because of his song "Forefathers," which the authorities regarded as separatist, although this had been allowed to be performed before. He got an 8-year sentence in 2018. Reports of his death in custody surfaced in 2019 when the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested an explanation from China. China countered this with a video of Heyit alive, but reports suggested he was under house arrest.

Peaceful assembly has been one of the rights that have been consistently violated in East Turkestan. Public protests that condemn Chinese policies are violently suppressed by the security forces of the country. By the intensified oppression exercised by the communist regime's security forces, a pronounced example could be the fatal suppression of protests held in the cities of Awat, Bugur, and Kucha, where gunfire caused civilian casualties. Article 291 of the Chinese Penal Code (the CPEC) grants authorities the right to incarcerate organizers of peaceful demonstrations with a maximum penalty of five years on account of "disorderly conduct in a public place". Such evidence of killing has been repeatedly invoked against peaceable demonstration.

Abdulbasit Ablimit, was executed by the security at a checkpoint in Aksu in April 2014. In the protest which followed concerning his killing, about 400 thronged, followed by 70 detentions for "disturbing order in a public place," with 17 of the arrested receiving prison sentences between six months and seven years. In Bashkent township, a similar event occurred when a house-to-house search operation was conducted in July 2014 and led to the death of eleven Turks, which spurred a peaceful congregation in Elishku. The regime's security forces opened fire, killing at least 96 civilians with scores wounded. An aid worker, who was a retired veterinarian, also gave medical assistance to the victims, leading to an eight-year sentence for him.

The freedom of movement is largely restricted for ethnic Turks in East Turkestan. This negative right bestows upon a person the privilege of travelling freely within the contours of the state and leaving or coming back to his country. However, this is now transformed into a severe limitation under the communistic regime. On 19 October 2016, Shihezi Public Security Bureau ordered Uighurs to surrender their passports for annual supervision; those who failed were said to have incurred disciplinary penalties. By extension, this measure in 2017 also covered all Uighurs who resided in China, while similar restrictions apply to those residing abroad, especially with concerns as to renewing passports. Uighur students at that time studying abroad faced a threat of forced return to China, and many have since found detention on charges of extremism or terrorism after returning. Reports indicate that some of these detainees died in custody.

Between little movement and dwelling on mainland China, ethnic Turks share their misery. Most of them are placed on security blacklists, making hotels at major cities unavailable for their stays. As one example of the reality of this practice, the World Uighur Congress (WUC) reports that a hotel in Beijing was fined 15,000 yuan for accepting a Uighur guest. This does greatly negate the much-needed ability for ethnic Turks to travel comfortably within their own country.

In this section, various negative rights violations are taken into consideration in East Turkestan, among them the right to a fair trial, the freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of movement. The next section will continue with violations of the positive rights in the region.

## **6.2 Positive Rights Violations in East Turkestan**

The right to education has been recognized as one of the basic positive rights in international and regional instruments and declarations on human rights. This right embodies certain basic entitlements and freedoms, which, among others, are:

- (i) the right to free and compulsory primary education;
- (ii) the right to basic, accessible secondary education;
- (iii) the right to equal access to institutions of higher learning;
- (iv) the right to fundamental education, as well as for those who are illiterate and failed to complete primary education;
- (v) the right to quality education, public or private;
- (vi) the freedom of parents to choose their children's education in relation to personal moral and religious standards;
- (vii) the freedom to establish educational institutions with a specific curriculum as per state standards;
- (viii) the academic freedom of students as well as faculty; and finally,
- (ix) the right of minority communities to receive education compatible with their ethno-cultural identities.

Under a variety of international legal frameworks, including the UN conventions, it is the state's obligation to ensure the right to education free from discrimination. Hence, such states are to be held responsible for any violation or denial of such a right.

Article 19 proclaims the right to education in the Chinese Constitution, which includes the rights of minority peoples to use their native language as a medium of instruction, to teach their curricula that reflect their cultural identities, and to utilize their native language as regional official languages. Such minority rights recognized in the Constitution have however not been enjoyed freely by the Turks of East Turkestan. Numerous policies enacted by the Communist regime were designed to make the exercise of these rights impossible for the Turks. Few to no references have been made regarding the Turkic curricula that were prepared to teach these local languages.

The bilingual (Uighur/Mandarin) education system has been enforced in East Turkestan by the Chinese regime since the mid-1980s and intends thereby promoting Mandarin and replacing Uighur in schools. The government's plan is to make all the Turkic citizens learn Mandarin while abolishing the use of the Uighur language in public life. Uighur language teachers were massively laid off with respect to their jobs while the costly increase of Han Chinese teachers was observed. A directive was released from the Education Department of Hotan Prefecture banning Uighur language use in primary and

secondary schools in contradiction with Articles 4/3, 119, 121, and 122 of the Chinese Constitution meant to uphold minority language rights. However, this decree seems to work with no hindrance whatsoever.

Policies by the Chinese state, on the contrary, are also directed to wipe out Turkic ethno-cultural manifestations in East Turkestan. Promoting such area instruments, small in number, as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Minorities (DNM) and UNDRIP, and regional documents, like the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, all strive towards the protection of minority cultures. These international documents would now complement the provisions embedded in the Chinese Constitution; however, the Turkish people of East Turkestan are unable to fully assert any such rights. The communist regime also erased almost 85 percent of the old city of Kashgar, disenfranchising hundreds of thousands of ethnic Turks behind closed doors. This devastation further entailed the obliteration of places of worship, bazaar-like shops, and residences that testified to the Turkic lifestyle. Though sometimes Uighur dance-music earn presentation on various media spectacles, another aspect of Turkic identity, one may say language and religious practices, is vigorously curbed. In addition, media portrayals of ethnic Uighurs often depict them as would-be extremists or terrorists, further fanning the flames of inter-ethnic hatred and Islamophobia.

Another category of positive rights the Communist regime violates is economic rights. Such economic rights include the right to work, the right to rest, the right to housing, and the right to social security, all recognized by international and regional legal frameworks. The Turkish people of East Turkestan are excluded from Articles 42-45 of the Chinese Constitution that guarantee such rights. Employment in the key industries of resource extraction, construction, and energy, for the most part, is reserved for Han Chinese; ethnic Turks are systematically excluded either on the excuse of inability to speak the Chinese language or by their ethnic identity. Only 7 percent of the labor force of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (Bīngtuán), a government-run agency, consists of ethnic Turk.

Turkic residents generally reside in the countryside and in the southern belt of East Turkestan while the Han Chinese dominate the more urbanized areas in the north. Unemployment and poverty are rife in Turkic-majority cities, forcing many ethnic Turks to migrate into Han-majority northern cities where they work under low-salaried, labor-intensive conditions. Some reports have alleged that huge numbers of ethnic Turks have been forcibly transferred to work in other regions of China. A report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) states that at least 82 companies profited from forced labor programs which transferred tens of thousands of Turkic workers outside East Turkestan. The workers who live under constant supervision are confined to

dormitories separated from others, are required to attend Mandarin classes outside of work hours, stay from any religious practices, and undergo ideological training.

In East Turkestan, even Turkic business owners are under heavy scrutiny this year during Ramadan. They pressure these merchants into selling things such as pork, tobacco, and alcohol. Those who refuse have to face really tough measures, including closure of their shops and cancellation of their business licenses.

## **7. Key Issues**

The conditions prevailing in East Turkestan, or Xinjiang, have raised great alarm about blatant violations of human rights and genocide against the Uyghurs, Muslims, and other Turkic ethnic peoples. For instance, thousands of reports are issued by human rights organizations, governments, and international communities denouncing these actions. Some key issues and allegations concerning genocide in East Turkestan include:

### **7.1 Collective Detention in "Reeducation" Camps**

Almost a hideous theme has been scattered across East Turkestan by the Chinese government, naming these centers as "reeducation centers" or "vocational training schools." But many account the couple of survivors to human rights organizations and independent researchers to prove it-[really-a-detainment field with some loitering of the ethnic Uyghurs and even Turkic minorities being kept, often without consideration or lacking legal scrutiny into the conditions of the area]. Conservatively, as many as more than a million Uyghurs and members of minority groups were detained as from 2017 and underwent enforced indoctrination and political re-education along with forced labor.

### **7.2 Forced Sterilizations and Prophylactics**

Seeing quite a few reports concerning forced sterilization and birth control, abortion, and enforced birth control devised, among other things, against the Uyghur women have come into viewpoints. With such "Bush-style" forced abortions and sterilizations, with a less public agenda to reduce the Uyghur populace and other Turkic Muslim categories in that area, the paramount aim of totally abating Uyghur birth rates is being pursued. The acts listed above, in the light of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, correspond to the definition of genocide insofar as they are said to be carried out with the intention of preventing births in a group.

### **7.3 Culture and Religion Suppression**

The Chinese government actively engaged in the: Destruction of Uyghur culture and religion; for this is one of the key points associated with possible

genocide; with a lot of reporting about the decimation of Uyghur mosques, shrines, and other religious sites; closure of the Uyghur language schools; rather, children are forced to learn Mandarin in place of their native tongue; fasting during Ramadan and harming mosques is restricted, and religious detainees also disappear.

The Chinese government also conducts the so-called "force" culture-change among the Uyghurs, putting them into learning Mandarin and many more, all seeking the ultimate goal of ending the very identity of occupation of the Uyghurs altogether. Cultural assimilation is about ending the existence of even the definition of identity of this nation called the Uyghurs.

#### **7.4 Forced labor and economic exploitation**

Reports abound where Uyghurs are wrongfully being kept as labors in factories which supply internationally some branded commodities. Transfers of such persons from detention camps to factories in China are said to occur under terrible conditions and with no or little payment for their work. The forced labor programs are merely part of this larger framework of economic exploitation and social control. The forced labor counts among the important features of the genocide claims, as it bears economically, socially, and psychologically against the targeted population.

#### **7.5 Surveillance and social control**

East Turkestan qualifies for being one of the most surveilled areas in the world. The Chinese run some of the most advanced high-tech surveillance systems in place today, operating by using every kind of tracking device possible—from facial recognition to biometric data collection. Monitors in East Turkestan, especially for Uyghurs, actually observe movement and behavior through mass data collection, producing fear and an atmosphere of oppression. The overwhelmingly heavier burden of surveillance and control serves to alienate the Uyghur community from the rest of society, which in turn keeps the Uyghurs impoverished regarding their autonomy and freedom.

#### **7.6 The Destruction of the Uyghur Communities**

Chinese authorities have destroyed Uyghur neighborhoods and traditional houses, with sites of cultural importance being most prominent. For instance, with respect to cities like Kashgar, destruction of old Uyghur buildings was subjected to total redevelopment of cities Chinese-style. A kind of destruction is militantly associated with a larger trend of suppression established to eliminate Uyghur history, culture, and presence in that particular region. Countless displacements with regard to Uyghur families and fragmentation of communities took place.

#### **7.7 Testimonies of Torture and Accounts**

Witnesses and testimonies from innumerable Uyghur survivors that have escaped from the area refer to horrific conditions within the camps: torture, sexual abuse, and physical violence. These detainees suffered the harshest and degrading treatment in the camps, being forced to renounce their religion, their cultural practices, and their identity.

### **7.8 International Reaction and Allegations for Genocide**

Many international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and various foreign governments have condemned the Chinese government for genocide and crimes against humanity over these reports. The U.S. government formally declared in 2021 that the acts of China towards the Uyghur population were genocide. Several countries have adopted this line, and calls for action have intensified on the international level.

### **7.9 China's Denial and Counter-Narrative**

Chinese officials have denied all allegations with respect to human rights violations in East Turkistan. According to the Chinese government, these actions constitute counterterrorism, anti-extremism, and anti-separatism that may be implemented for the sake of stability in the region. Furthermore, Beijing claims that these policies are a mechanism for economic development and social integration of minority groups in the region.

Evidence for the atrocities and gross human rights violations in East Turkestan has made many call the situation genocide, while the international community has been pushing for accountability and action to stop the atrocities being inflicted on the Uyghur and Turkic people in the region. But, in spite of an outrage of international proportions, Beijing continues to deny the allegations and stick to a policy of tight control in the region.

## **8. Timeline of Events**

### **Ancient Period (Pre-BC to 1st Century AD)**

- 2000 BCE – 1000 BCE: Early Indo-European migrations; presence of Tocharians and Indo-Iranian peoples.
- 8th – 3rd Century BCE: The region was influenced by Scythians and other nomadic groups.
- 3rd Century BCE: The Xiongnu Confederation dominates the region, controlling the Silk Road.

- 2nd Century BCE: The Han Dynasty begins its expansion into the Tarim Basin, leading to conflicts with the Xiongnu.
- 60 BCE: The Han Dynasty establishes the "Protectorate of the Western Regions," solidifying control over the area.

### **Early Middle Ages (1st Century – 10th Century AD)**

- 2nd – 4th Century AD: Kushan and Sogdian influences increased, spreading Buddhism.
- 5th – 6th Century AD: Rouran Khaganate and later the Göktürks gain control over the region.
- 7th Century: The Tang Dynasty briefly controls parts of East Turkestan, establishing the Anxi Protectorate.
- 8th Century: The Tibetan Empire and the Umayyad Caliphate extend influence; Islam begins to spread.
- 9th – 10th Century: The Uyghur Khaganate collapses, and the Uyghurs migrate to the Tarim Basin, establishing the Kingdom of Qocho and the Kara-Khanid Khanate (first Muslim Turkic state).

### **Medieval Period (11th – 16th Century)**

- 11th Century: The Karakhanids introduce Islam widely in the region.
- 13th Century: Mongol conquest under Genghis Khan; region becomes part of the Chagatai Khanate.
- 14th Century: The Chagatai Khanate splits, leading to political instability.
- 15th Century: Moghulistan emerges, ruled by the descendants of the Mongols and Timurids.

### **Early Modern Period (17th – 19th Century)**

- 17th Century: The Dzungar Khanate, a powerful Oirat Mongol state, dominates the region.



- 1755 – 1759: The Qing Dynasty conquers East Turkestan, defeating the Dzungars in a brutal campaign.
- 1864 – 1877: Yakub Beg, a Kashgar-based ruler, establishes an independent kingdom before Qing reconquest.
- 1884: The Qing formally incorporates East Turkestan as "Xinjiang" (New Frontier).

### **Early 20th Century: Warlordism and Revolts**

- 1911 – Fall of the Qing Dynasty; Xinjiang becomes controlled by Yang Zengxin, a warlord loyal to the new Republic of China (ROC).
- 1928 – Yang Zengxin is assassinated; Jin Shuren takes control but faces growing resistance from Uyghur and Kazakh populations.
- 1931 – 1934 – Anti-Chinese uprisings:
  - 1931 – Kumul Rebellion, Uyghurs and Kazakhs resist Chinese warlord rule.
  - 1933 – First East Turkestan Republic (ETR) declared in Kashgar, led by Sabit Damulla. It lasts less than a year before being crushed by Chinese forces and the Soviet Union.
  - 1934 – Sheng Shicai, backed by the Soviet Union, takes control, ruling with a mix of Marxism and brutal repression.

### **Soviet Influence and the Second East Turkestan Republic (1944–1949)**

- 1941 – Sheng Shicai aligns with the Chinese Nationalist government (Kuomintang, KMT) and purges Soviet advisors, leading to deteriorating relations with the USSR.
- 1944 – 1949 – Second East Turkestan Republic (ETR) established in Ili (northern Xinjiang), supported by the Soviet Union.
  - Led by Uyghur and Kazakh leaders, including Ehmetjan Qasimi.
  - Fought against Chinese Nationalist forces until 1949.

- 1949 – Communist China takes control of Xinjiang after a Soviet-brokered surrender of the ETR leadership.
  - Some ETR leaders mysteriously die in a plane crash en route to Beijing.

### **1950s – 1970s: PRC Consolidation and Suppression**

- 1955 – Xinjiang designated as an "Autonomous Region" under the People's Republic of China (PRC).
- 1958 – 1962 – Thousands of Uyghurs flee to the Soviet Union due to Chinese land reforms, repression, and famine under Mao Zedong's policies.
- 1966 – 1976 – Cultural Revolution:
  - Mosques and Uyghur religious sites are closed or destroyed.
  - Islamic practices and Uyghur cultural expressions are banned.
  - Uyghur intellectuals and religious leaders are persecuted.

### **1980s – 1990s: Rising Tensions and Crackdowns**

- 1980s – Policies briefly relax under Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms. Uyghur cultural expression resurges.
- 1990 – Baren Township uprising: Armed conflict between Uyghur insurgents and Chinese security forces.
- 1997 – Ghulja Massacre:
  - Uyghur protests against religious repression violently suppressed.
  - Thousands arrested; mass executions and torture reported.
  - Leads to the first major wave of international human rights criticism.

### **Early 2000s: Rise of Anti-Terror Campaigns & Repression**

- 2001 – After 9/11, China aligns with the U.S. "War on Terror" to justify crackdowns on Uyghurs, labeling all forms of dissent as “terrorism.”
- 2009 – Urumqi Riots:
  - Uyghur-Han ethnic tensions explode after Uyghur factory workers in Guangdong are lynched.
  - Protests in Urumqi turn violent, leaving nearly 200 dead.
  - Mass arrests and internet blackout in Xinjiang follow.

### **2014 – Present: Mass Internment & Cultural Suppression**

- 2014 – Strike Hard Campaign Against Violent Terrorism:
  - President Xi Jinping orders a crackdown on Uyghur “separatism.”
  - Security measures increase, mass surveillance introduced.
- 2016 – Chen Quanguo appointed as Xinjiang Party Secretary:
  - Implements mass internment camps under the pretext of "deradicalization."

### **2017 – Present: Internment Camps & Global Outrage**

- 2017 – 2020 – Up to 1–3 million Uyghurs and other Muslims detained in “Vocational Education and Training Centers” (internment camps).
  - Reports of torture, indoctrination, forced labor, and sexual abuse.
  - Mass surveillance, facial recognition, and DNA collection used to monitor Uyghurs.
- 2019 – Leaked China Cables confirm the systematic repression strategy.
- 2020 – Present –
  - US, UK, Canada, EU impose sanctions on Chinese officials over human rights abuses.

- Reports of forced sterilization of Uyghur women emerge.
- Some governments recognize China's actions as genocide.

## **Recent Developments (2023 – 2024)**

- China claims internment camps are closed, but satellite images suggest continued detentions in prison-like facilities.
- Uyghur diaspora continues to push for international legal action.
- China increases efforts to counter Western narratives, dismissing accusations as "lies."

## **9. Stakeholders and Major Parties Involved**

### **Human Rights Watch**

Human Rights Watch works to uphold human rights all throughout the world. It meticulously looks into wrongdoings, disseminates the information, and puts pressure on people in positions of authority to uphold rights and secure justice. As a part of a dynamic movement to protect human dignity and advance the cause of human rights for all, Human Rights Watch is an independent, global organisation. Respect for the dignity of every human being, international human rights law, and humanitarian law serve as its guiding principles.



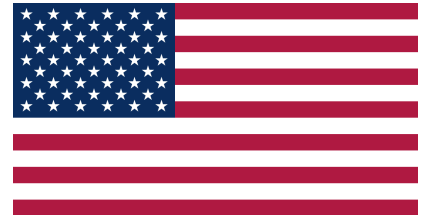
When human rights organisations revealed in 2018 that Muslim minorities in the area were being arbitrarily imprisoned and subjected to psychological indoctrination, the Chinese government changed its position from categorically denying the mass detention to claiming that these were reeducation camps. One of the organisations to report that almost a million people had been held in re-education camps was Human Rights Watch. Additionally, HRW has reports on the use of monitoring technologies by Chinese authorities to monitor legal conduct. The police and government officials in China have access to an app through the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP), which enables them to track personal information about individuals, according to Sophie Richardson, the China Director of HRW.

### **Amnesty International**

Among the other human rights groups to report on the situation in Xinjiang was Amnesty International. Nicholas Bequelin, the organisation's East Asia Director, has spoken out in response to the events in Xinjiang, stating that "the Chinese government must not be permitted to continue this cruel assault against ethnic minorities in northwest China. Amnesty International has received several requests from families seeking information on their missing relatives and loved ones.

### **United States of America**

The United States and the international community are paying more attention to China's persecution and mistreatment of the Uyghur people. The atrocities committed against Muslim Uyghurs and other members of ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang were determined to be genocide and crimes against humanity on January 19, 2021, by the then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.



The Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020 became US legislation in June of that year. This law mandates monitoring and reporting of human rights breaches against Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang. It was approved by Congress with bipartisan support. Sanctions are also demanded against those who support the persecution of these groups. Additionally, legislation addressing Xinjiang's business supply chains and forced labour has been introduced.

### **People's Republic of China**

The country immediately involved in the matter is the People's Republic of China. Although Uighur Muslims who tend to see themselves as more closely related to Central Asian culture, ethnicity, and language make up the majority of the population in Xinjiang, an autonomous province of northwest China, China has maintained strict control over the area despite this. The Chinese government forbids investigators from entering the grounds of the detention institutions and has put tight security around the region to ensure this, despite protests from other countries and human rights organisations and calls to open the re-education centres to international journalists.



As a means of eradicating radicalism and quelling separatist ideals, they have also set rules and passed laws. The common religious traditions of Muslim Uighurs, such as growing lengthy ("non-standard") beards and donning veils in public, are now illegal and punishable by deportation to a camp for "de-extremification" instruction.

The Chinese government does not consider that the Uighurs' human rights are violated by these prison facilities. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has shown interest in visiting Xinjiang; however, the two parties have not yet reached an agreement on the specifics.

Through its counterterrorism initiatives and vocational training, China claims to have restored peace and security to the region, and the absence of new terrorist acts since December 2016 is evidence of this claim. China began inviting select international journalists in small groups to tour several re-education facilities at the beginning of 2019. The ensuing revelations gave rise to allegations that these visits were planned in advance.

### **Turkiye**

The Uighurs are Turkic Muslims who have ties to Turkey in terms of history, culture, and religion. Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary General, was urged to "take effective steps to end the human catastrophe" there by Hami Aksoy, the spokeswoman for Turkiye's foreign ministry. Countries worried about the re-education centres are looking to Turkiye and other OIC members to play a bigger role in exerting pressure on China to address the issue. One of the few majority-Muslim countries to officially condemn China's treatment of the Uighurs is Turkiye. This is probably because other countries, like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Indonesia, have made their political and economic connections with China a priority.



### ***Further Statements Made by the International Community***

**Belgium:** The Belgian Foreign Relations Committee endorsed a motion on June 15, 2021, declaring China's acts to be crimes against humanity, expressing concern about the "severe possibility" of genocide, and urging a review of all relevant laws, from extradition to investment.

**Canada:** Along with the US, UK, and EU, Canada imposed coordinated human rights sanctions on violators of severe human rights against Uyghurs on March 22, 2021. Four PRC officials and the Xinjiang police force are subject to visa bans and financial asset freezes as a result of the punishment.

On 22 February 2021, the Canadian House of Commons voted 266-0 to recognize the persecution of Uyghurs as a genocide being committed by the People's Republic of China.

**Czech Republic:** A motion calling for a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games was overwhelmingly approved by the Czech Senate on June 10, 2021, in recognition of the Chinese government's actions as crimes against humanity and acts of genocide.

The Czech Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee denounced the inhumane treatment of the Uyghur people and urged the Czech government to take a firm stance against the flagrant abuses of human rights that are occurring in the Uyghur Region. (18 March 2021)

In a resolution supporting Uyghurs and Tibetans, the Czech Senate expressed its concern over violations of their human rights.

**Germany:** On 19 February 2020, the German government's Commissioner for Global Religious Freedom, expressed "great concern" about persecution of Uyghurs, based on leaked Chinese government documents known as "The Xinjiang Papers." Officials from many political parties have urged the German government to take more action.

Germany declared in August 2018 that it would cease all deportations of Uyghurs to China.

**Italy:** Although it did not designate the crimes as genocide, as originally suggested, the Parliament issued a forceful resolution denouncing atrocity crimes against Uyghurs on May 27, 2021.

**Lithuania:** By a vote of 86 to 1 with 7 abstentions, the Lithuanian parliament decided on May 20, 2021, to "strongly condemn China's huge, systematic and egregious human rights violations and crimes against humanity" and to request the U.N. to launch "a formal inquiry into the Uyghur genocide."

**The Netherlands:** The treatment of the Uyghur Muslim minority in China amounts to genocide, according to a resolution that the Dutch parliament voted on February 25, 2021. This was the first such judgement made by a European Parliament.

**United Kingdom:** The UK House of Commons approves a motion on April 23, 2021, declaring that the Chinese government is killing Uyghurs in a genocide. Many members of the parliament were concerned about barring the U.K. from concluding trade agreements with any country determined by the British High Court to be engaging in genocide, and the motion was discussed numerous times in the Parliament between January and April 2021.

Along with Canada, the EU, and the US, the UK slapped coordinated human rights sanctions on aggravating factors against Uyghurs on March 22, 2021. Four PRC officials and the Xinjiang police force were subject to visa restrictions and financial asset freezes as a result of the punishments.

On 23 December 2020, 46 U.K. parliamentarians called on the government to "act urgently" to hold Chinese officials accountable for rights abuses against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims. They called for UK government support for the opening of an investigation by the International Criminal Court into "crimes committed by Chinese officials."

In contrast to western nations, countries from the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates that are predominantly Muslim have been remaining silent unlike when they made forceful declarations in support of the Bosnian Muslims and advocated for international action in response to the 1992 genocide in Bosnia.

## **10. Involvement of the United Nations and Previous Actions Taken**

In August 2018, a report on China was examined by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The UN committee's experts emphasised in their study that racial discrimination in anti-terrorism laws, particularly those that target Uighurs and other ethnic minorities, is of grave concern. Concerned about allegations of "bulk surveillance unfairly targeting ethnic Uighurs," the committee voiced its concern.

Resolution from October 2018 denouncing discrimination against religious minorities in the PRC. The Uighurs are being persecuted and mistreated in Xinjiang, and the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations has published a resolution denouncing these measures as well as those that "restrict their free speech and practice of faith." The resolution also calls on the government of the People's Republic of China to recognize the human right to freedom of religion, reiterates the United States' commitment to promoting and protecting religious freedom, condemns the restriction of religious materials, and expressly rejects the use of concentration, internment, or reeducation camps.

Joint Statement, February 2019, urging the UN Human Rights Council to adopt a resolution on Xinjiang. This was a statement from a number of human rights organisations asking the UN Human Rights Council to pass a resolution on the re-education centres in Xinjiang. In spite of claims that its "Strike Hard Campaign tackles extremism and terrorism," the statement contends that the Chinese government truly wants to "eradicate Muslim's separate identity and to secure their devotion to the government and Chinese Communist Party." A fact-finding mission should be undertaken by the Human Rights Council, according to the document, so that it can assess the claims of widespread violations in Xinjiang and take the necessary action.

High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations statement from March 2019. Michelle Bachelet, the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations, requested entry to Xinjiang in March 2019 in order to "check" the "worrying information they are receiving" about re-education centres housing millions of Uighurs. In addition, she said that she "wants to engage China in a serious discourse on this urgent issue" and that she "will continue to advocate for permission to visit Xinjiang shortly." Since then, China has requested that Bachelet "respect China's sovereignty".



Resolution 2019/2690 against China, specifically the treatment of religious and racial minorities (RSP). With a resolution on China and the plight of religious and racial minorities that was adopted in April 2019, the European Union has taken a strong stance on the current circumstances facing the Uighurs in Xinjiang. The resolution notes that the Chinese government has "stepped up its antagonism" toward "the freedoms of expression and religion," and it condemns the violation of human rights in Xinjiang. "The Chinese Government is called upon to quickly put an end to the practice of arbitrary detentions," the resolution states. Furthermore, it urges the release of information regarding the missing people in Xinjiang and demands for the suspension of all exports of technology that aids China's cyber surveillance. In April 2019, the EU published a press release in which the parliament urged "the Chinese Government to put an end to the arbitrary detentions of members of the Uyghur and Kazakh minority and Tibetans, without any indictment, trial, or conviction for a criminal act."

Some attendees in the July 2019 Security Council meeting behind closed doors at the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia reported it as a contentious discussion. Following that, 22 largely Western nations wrote a letter to the UN denouncing China's widespread incarceration of Muslims. China's allies responded to this letter by writing another letter to the UN.

## **11. Further Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events**

- United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- 1951 Refugee Convention, Resolution 2198 (XXI) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination Adopted and opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution of 21st December 1965
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A

(XXI) of 16th December 1966 entry into force 23rd March 1976, in accordance with Article 49

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16th December 1966 entry into force 3 January 1976, in accordance with article 27.

## **12.NATO's Stance**

There were certain tactical and political considerations that have kept NATO very cool in its view of East Turkestan, while allowing, at some times, certain incursions into the very complicated bonds with China. This situation, however, has never led to outright condemnatory accusations towards concrete atrocities in East Turkestan so far from NATO in any formal or significant way. Nonetheless, the policies and positions of nations have acted to bring about divergence among member states in the responses they have made. The following are some of the main key notes summarizing NATO's considerations toward East Turkestan.

### **12. 1. No individual viewpoint exists for all NATO**

The NATO lecture on human rights violations has not been one except on those occasions when this kind of violation affects NATO's military or political interests directly. This reluctance was closely connected to an emphasis on collective defense and political-military cooperation. Thus, actions and even formal public statements then have been absent regarding the treatment accorded to Uyghurs and others in Xinjiang and Turkic origin backgrounds by NATO, as a body.

However, there have been expressions from some individual NATO members, notably in EU and North America, about human rights violations in Xinjiang sometimes affecting the NATO formal narrative towards China.

### **12.2. Human Rights Violations Condemned By NATO Countries**

NATO doesn't usually bring any comments on other countries' human rights violations-except on countries that are part of NATO. Some of its members were especially stated in the case of East Turkestan

**U.S.A.:** The United States has one of the most vocal critics of the Chinese policy in East Turkestan. In 2021, the United States government has officially declared the acts perpetrated by China in East Turkestan against the Uyghurs

as genocide and as crimes against humanity. Furthermore, the USA has withheld recognition and sanctioned Chinese officials and enterprises participating in oppression within Xinjiang, calling for world responses to this crisis.

**European Union:** The European Union also condemned the Xinjiang human rights violations. In 2021, the European Union sanctioned Chinese officials believed to have played a role in the Xinjiang human rights violations. These sanctions were part of a wider EU initiative in dealing with human rights issues related to China, especially including Hong Kong and Tibet. The EU balances trade relations with China against human rights issues.

**Canada:** In 2021, Canada shadowed U.S. proclamations on genocide directed at the Uighurs in Xinjiang while sanctioning Chinese officials complicit in the crackdown in Xinjiang.

**United Kingdom:** A situation that has been of concern for the UK and the British parliament has been that of East Turkestan. Lawmakers wished to see stronger action against China for its treatment of Uyghur Muslims, and in 2021, the UK government stated there was a possibility of genocide, although it did stop short of saying it outright. As far as sanctioning Chinese officials over the abuse is concerned, the UK has taken a firm stand in favor.

### **12.3. The Relation of China to NATO Strategy**

NATO has been careful not to adopt an openly confrontational attitude towards China due to China's increasing influence as an emerging superpower. Several member states in NATO, particularly those economic heavyweights with strong economic ties with China, have been reluctant to jeopardize their economic relations with China by taking strong actions.

As a major node in global geopolitical disputes, China occupies differing poles of human rights agenda and strategic agenda, trade, and cooperation on global matters such as climate change, arms control, and the global economy among NATO members.

### **12.4. Security and Stability Issues of NATO**

NATO's main interest lies in security and defense, and the alliance has not embarked on any specific activities regarding East Turkestan. Instead, NATO has distinguished itself by focusing on central issues, such as the growing influence of China in international affairs, military expansion, and cyber activities. While NATO has found

that the actions of China, inclusive of those in Xinjiang, impact global interests, the responses tend to treat security issues rather than human rights advocacy in the specific region.

### **12.5 Humanitarian Advocacy and the Role of Civil Society**

Although NATO itself may not be able to take a vigorous stand over human rights violations in East Turkestan, NGOs and human rights organizations within NATO member states are important in mobilizing support for decent awareness. Action groups in Europe and North America have been calling for international actions, including trade sanctions, diplomatic measures, and Uyghur diaspora assistance. All these have helped shape the discourse around East Turkestan, but no direct action was taken by NATO.

Being an alliance, until now, has not shown any clear position regarding the human rights abuses within East Turkestan. It most likely concerns itself with collective defense, military issues, and more mainstream international geopolitics in statements and actions. Individual NATO countries, nonetheless, have frowned on China's policies in Xinjiang, most vocally by the U.S., European nations, and Canada, which have proceeded to sanction and take diplomatic measures against China regarding those alleged genocidal crimes.

This leaves NATO with one foot in the territory of the East Turkestan dispute, while its stance against China mostly continues to be defined by geostrategic interests rather than direct action against the atrocious human rights violations.

### **13. Questions to be Answered**

- What is NATO's official stance on the human rights violations occurring in East Turkistan?
- How does NATO engage with China regarding human rights issues in East Turkistan?
- How does NATO collaborate with partner countries to address security concerns related to human rights violations in East Turkistan?
- Has NATO taken any actions to support refugees or displaced persons from East Turkistan due to the Chinese government's policies?
- What is NATO's position on the claims of genocide and crimes against humanity in East Turkistan?
- What impact does the situation in East Turkistan have on NATO's broader security concerns, such as counterterrorism and regional stability?
- What kind of military action could NATO take to counter Chinese influence in East Turkistan without violating international law?
- How likely is it that NATO would adopt coordinated economic sanctions with its allies (such as the European Union, the U.S., and other global players) to target Chinese companies involved in human rights abuses in East Turkistan?

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