

X. Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

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Findings

- During the Commission's 2025 reporting year, the Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum published research by scholar Rian Thum showing that PRC officials had perpetrated and continued to perpetrate mass atrocity crimes against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Thum determined that all of the official policies in the XUAR that led to the findings of crimes against humanity and genocide have continued.
- Reports indicated that authorities in the XUAR had recently expanded a system of forced labor that involved Turkic and Muslim individuals, often transferring them from traditional occupations in rural areas into industrial work. In conjunction with forced labor programs targeting rural Uyghurs, authorities have confiscated land held by Uyghur farmers and transferred their land use rights to state-run cooperatives and developers.
- As in previous reporting years, XUAR authorities placed restrictions on Muslims' observance of Ramadan. According to videos posted on Chinese social media platforms, authorities forced residents of various locations in Aksu and Hotan prefectures to engage in forced labor during the Ramadan period in March 2025 in order to prevent them from fasting. In addition, authorities required residents of several towns in Peyziwat (Jiashi) county, Kashgar prefecture, to film themselves eating lunch during the Ramadan period in order to prove that they were not fasting.
- On February 27, 2025, Thai officials deported 40 Uyghur asylum seekers to China, in spite of widespread international concern over their safety and evidence that PRC authorities had imprisoned or tortured 20 Uyghurs who were similarly deported from Cambodia to China in 2009. The men were among 500 Uyghurs who fled the XUAR to Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries around a decade ago in hopes of reaching Türkiye. In November 2024, *Radio Free Asia* reported that 16 of the Uyghurs deported from Cambodia in 2009 were sentenced to lengthy prison terms, and two of the deportees died in prison.
- In February 2024, Chinese officials sent 22-year-old **Abdureqip Rahman**, an ethnic Uyghur, to Kucha (Kuche) county, Aksu prefecture, XUAR, from Cambodia, where he had fled in hopes of ultimately seeking asylum in the United States. In spite of U.N. officials' attempts to assist him, in January 2024, Abdureqip Rahman was first held in custody by Cambodian authorities and then transferred to the custody of PRC authorities in Cambodia, before being sent to Kucha on February 1. Abdureqip Rahman's whereabouts remained unknown as of December 2024.
- Authorities in the XUAR used surveillance technology and other methods to maintain control over Turkic and Muslim

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residents. Methods used included an online security operation in the summer of 2024; requirements in Kashgar and Hotan prefectures for Uyghurs to promptly report the arrival of guests to their home to the police; a winter security campaign in the runup to the Spring Festival in early 2025; and the re-detention of Uyghurs who had previously been detained, including businessmen, philanthropists, and people who had traveled abroad.

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Mass Atrocities Continue in the XUAR

During the Commission's 2025 reporting year, the Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum published research by scholar Rian Thum showing that PRC officials had perpetrated and continued to perpetrate mass atrocity crimes against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).¹ In January 2021, the U.S. State Department issued a determination that genocide was ongoing against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR and that authorities had committed crimes against humanity against these groups since at least March 2017.² The State Department found that acts constituting genocide and crimes against humanity included arbitrary detention, forced abortion and forced sterilization, rape, torture, forced labor, and the violation of freedom of religion, expression, and movement.³

In research published in February 2025, Thum determined that all of the official policies in the XUAR that led to the findings of crimes against humanity and genocide had continued.⁴ Thum's findings included the following points:

- **Detention.** While officials appear to have closed most mass internment camps, and rates of new formal imprisonment appear to have declined, the current number of Turkic Muslim individuals formally or extrajudicially detained in the XUAR likely exceeds half a million, and may be much higher.⁵ Even as authorities removed security features from mass internment camps in 2019 and 2020, officials expanded and constructed prisons and public security bureau (PSB) detention centers (看守所 or *kanshousuo*), which may be used for extended extrajudicial detention.⁶ An expansion of one prison was ongoing as late as April 2024.⁷ Individuals formerly detained in PSB detention centers have reported numerous accounts of torture and sexual assault.⁸
- **Boarding schools and nursing homes.** Authorities continued to build, and plan the expansion of, boarding schools for Uyghur and other ethnic minority children, with the goal of breaking the transmission of cultural traditions from parents to children.⁹ Officials often go against parents' wishes in forcing children to attend such schools, and parental compliance is achieved under the threat of potential detention.¹⁰ Officials have also forced ethnic minority families to send elderly parents to live in nursing homes, in spite of strong cultural beliefs against such practices.¹¹ Regional officials planned to triple the number of placements in such facilities between 2017 and 2025, housing elderly relatives of people forced to take part in labor programs.¹²
- **Population control.** Officials have obscured data about population control, population growth, and demographics in recent years, but the limited data available suggests that officials have continued to implement forced sterilization and other forms of coercive family planning measures among ethnic minorities

in the XUAR, severely repressing their rates of population growth.¹³

- **Forced labor and land transfers.** Officials expanded forced labor and “labor transfer” programs, likely sending more Turkic Muslims into forced labor in 2023 than in any previous year.¹⁴ The transfer of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims to forced labor programs, often from rural areas into factories and other industrial work, continued to be widely implemented through 2024 and was set to continue through 2025.¹⁵ Alongside such programs, officials coerced farmers to transfer their land use rights to state-run entities and companies.¹⁶ [For more information on forced labor programs involving Turkic Muslims, see Chapter 12—Business and Human Rights.]

FORCED POPULATION CONTROL TARGETING UYGHUR WOMEN

In March 2025, a panel of experts hosted by the advocacy organization Campaign for Uyghurs discussed the implementation of forced population control measures against Uyghur women.¹⁷ Scholar Adrian Zenz emphasized that such measures align with Article 2(d) of the Genocide Convention, which addresses “[i]mposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.”¹⁸ Zenz stated that according to a U.N. risk framework, indicators for genocide and crimes against humanity continued to be evident in the XUAR.¹⁹ Sophie Richardson, co-executive director of Chinese Human Rights Defenders, noted that officials had viewed “faith-based and culturally based resistance to family planning policies” in the XUAR among ethnic minority communities as “extremism,” leading to intensified persecution of Uyghur women and their families.²⁰ [For more information on forced population control measures imposed on Uyghur women, see Chapter 8—Population Control.]

During this reporting year, governments, international organizations, and human rights advocates voiced concerns that PRC officials had continued to carry out systematic rights abuses in the XUAR in the two years since an August 2022 U.N. report found that the “arbitrary and discriminatory detention of members of Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim groups . . . may constitute . . . crimes against humanity.”²¹ In September 2024, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Human Rights Council read a joint statement from the 10 member countries of the “Core Group on Xinjiang,” calling upon the PRC to implement the report’s recommendations and to release Uyghurs and others unjustly detained in the XUAR.²²

Turkic Muslims Sentenced to Lengthy Prison Terms

Cases of Uyghurs sentenced to long-term imprisonment that were reported this past year include the following:

- **Tursunjan Hezim.**²³ In January 2025, *Radio Free Asia* (RFA) reported that in 2022, security personnel in the XUAR detained Uyghur historian and website founder Tursunjan Hezim, and an unknown court sentenced him to life in prison on unknown charges later that year.²⁴ The website he created, *Orkhun*, was popular among Uyghurs, serving as a repository for Uyghur historical materials and as an alternative to state-sponsored websites.²⁵ Authorities previously detained Tursunjan Hezim

in 2009, following demonstrations and riots that took place in Urumqi municipality beginning on July 5, and in 2010, a court sentenced him to seven years in prison on unknown charges.²⁶ Earlier in his career, officials removed him from his teaching position at a school in Aksu prefecture because of his views on Uyghur history and assigned him to guard the school's dormitory.²⁷

• **Elijan Ismail.**²⁸ In August 2024, *RFA* reported that in 2017, authorities in Urumqi municipality detained Uyghur entrepreneur Elijan Ismail, the owner of a biotechnology company, and in 2018, an unknown court sentenced him to 18 years in prison.²⁹ His detention and sentencing were reportedly related to his distribution of charitable donations called *zakat*, including to family members of political prisoners.³⁰ Elijan Ismail was part of a group of entrepreneurs who made such donations and who authorities said were an “ethnic separatist group.”³¹ Officials in the XUAR largely banned *zakat* in 2016.³² *RFA* reported that according to a police officer in Maralbeshi (Bachu) county, Kashgar prefecture, authorities had detained more than 20 individuals in connection with Elijan Ismail's case.³³

Tenth Anniversary of the Sentencing of Ilham Tohti

In September 2024, on the tenth anniversary of the conviction and life imprisonment of Uyghur scholar **Ilham Tohti**, international observers called for his release.³⁴ According to Agnes Callamard, Secretary General of Amnesty International, “When Ilham Tohti promoted cooperation and peaceful coexistence between China's Uyghur and Han communities, the Chinese government responded with repression and imprisonment. His decade-long incarceration is a further shameful stain on China's troubled human rights record.”³⁵

A court in Urumqi municipality, XUAR, sentenced Ilham Tohti to life in prison on September 23, 2014, on the charge of “separatism.”³⁶ He has reportedly not been allowed visits from family members since 2017.³⁷ During his pretrial detention, authorities reportedly subjected him to abuse, including by shackling his feet for more than a month and depriving him of food.³⁸ Prior to his detention, he taught economics at Minzu University in Beijing municipality, and he founded the website *Uyghur Online*, which promoted discussion among different ethnic groups in China on a variety of different issues.³⁹

In September 2024, *RFA* reported that a court in the XUAR had sentenced Uyghur prison guard Ghopur Abdureshit, who had overseen Ilham Tohti in XUAR No. 1 Prison, to seven years in prison for sharing information on Ilham Tohti's condition.⁴⁰ Authorities reportedly detained Ghopur Abdureshit in February 2024 for “intentionally spreading sensitive and negative information” after he revealed to other prisoners that Ilham Tohti had been placed in solitary confinement, was in poor health, and had limited access to sunlight.⁴¹ Interviewees told *RFA* that Ghopur Abdureshit had used Ilham Tohti's situation to warn other prisoners to abide by the prison's rules in order to avoid ending up like Ilham Tohti, and this information ended up reaching other prisoners' family members.⁴²

As in the past reporting year,⁴³ reports emerged documenting the deaths of individuals in custody or shortly after they were released. Examples include the following:

- **Ibrahim Dawut**, a chemistry teacher and language rights advocate in his late fifties, died in custody around two months after his July 2019 detention in the XUAR.⁴⁴ A former high school teacher in Kashgar prefecture, he had criticized the “bilingual education” system in the region, translated high school textbooks into Uyghur, and helped found a Uyghur-language kindergarten.⁴⁵ On October 6, 2019, authorities informed Ibrahim Dawut’s family members of his death but did not allow his family to see his body before he was buried.⁴⁶ Police forced his family members to sign a document stating that his cause of death was a heart attack.⁴⁷
- **Shirzat Bawudun**, a former senior government and Party official in his late fifties, died in a prison in Turpan municipality, XUAR, around four years after he was sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve for charges including “separatism” and “participating in terrorist organizations.”⁴⁸ Authorities did not inform family members of the cause of his death.⁴⁹ In April 2021, official media outlet *CGTN* released a video featuring Shirzat Bawudun that portrayed him as having used his position as the head of the regional justice department to support terrorist activity.⁵⁰

AUTHORITIES DETAIN ETHNIC KAZAKH JOURNALISTS AND SCHOLARS

During this reporting year, authorities continued to detain or hold in detention a number of ethnic Kazakh journalists and intellectuals in the XUAR.⁵¹ Examples include the following:

- In July 2021, authorities in Changji city, Changji Hui Autonomous prefecture, XUAR, detained educator and composer **Qarapa Nasiolla** after he returned to the XUAR from teaching outside the region the previous month.⁵² He maintained a WeChat account that was popular with the ethnic Kazakh community on which he published Kazakh literary, musical, and historical material.⁵³ According to the Xinjiang Victims Database, he may have been held at the Changji Municipal PSB Detention Center.⁵⁴ Information on any charges against Qarapa Nasiolla was not available, but authorities may have detained him for reasons including his social media posts, his contacts with people in Kazakhstan, and encouraging his students to study in Kazakhstan.⁵⁵
- In April 2024, authorities in the XUAR detained **Kanat Yerezhap**, who had retired from a senior position at state-owned *Xinjiang Television*.⁵⁶ He is believed to have subsequently been imprisoned on unknown charges.⁵⁷
- In 2022 or 2023, authorities in the XUAR detained Urumqi-based **Zhanibek Zhaudet**, who worked as a reporter and translator at the *Xinjiang Daily* newspaper.⁵⁸ He was reportedly formally arrested in 2024.⁵⁹

According to *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (RFERL), a Kazakhstan-based newspaper reported in July 2024 on the cases of 22 ethnic Kazakh intellectuals detained in China, but family members

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refused to comment on their cases, due to fear that speaking out could adversely affect their imprisoned relatives.⁶⁰ *RFERL* noted that Qarapa Nasiolla's Kazakhstan-based mother and brother, for instance, had publicly advocated on his behalf when authorities initially detained him in 2021, but refused to speak to *RFERL* about his case in August 2024.⁶¹

Forced Labor and Land Appropriation involving Turkic and Muslim XUAR Residents

During this reporting year, reports indicated that authorities in the XUAR had recently expanded a system of forced labor that involved Turkic and Muslim individuals, often transferring them from traditional occupations in rural areas into industrial work.⁶² According to a report published in February 2025 by the International Labour Organization, in recent years officials raised their targets for sending individuals to other provinces to work in forced labor.⁶³ In conjunction with forced labor programs targeting rural Uyghurs, authorities have confiscated land held by Uyghur farmers and transferred the land use rights of Uyghur farmers to state-run cooperatives and developers.⁶⁴ According to Rian Thum's research, while officials have long carried out the transfer of rural land in many parts of China as part of agricultural industrialization, the magnitude and speed of land transfers in the XUAR exceeds that seen in other parts of the country.⁶⁵ Thum also noted that land transfers in the XUAR are carried out in a more coercive manner, and they are linked with other abusive policies that disrupt Uyghur families and communities.⁶⁶ Research published by scholar Adrian Zenz and I-Lin Lin connects these land transfers to large Chinese agricultural corporations, particularly those producing tomatoes and red peppers.⁶⁷ Zenz and Lin's research indicates that both Chinese agribusinesses and Western companies working with or purchasing products from them facilitate forced labor and forced land transfer policies in the XUAR, in turn fragmenting Uyghur communities and making it easier for officials to surveil and control them.⁶⁸ [For more information on forced labor involving Turkic and Muslim XUAR residents, see Chapter 12—Business and Human Rights.]

Officials Demolish Rebiya Kadeer Trade Center

In November 2024, authorities in Urumqi municipality, XUAR, demolished the Rebiya Kadeer Trade Center, in a move Uyghur rights advocates view as targeting Uyghur identity.⁶⁹ Officials have for years persecuted the XUAR-based family members of **Rebiya Kadeer**, who went into exile in the United States in 2005, in retaliation for her human rights activism.⁷⁰ She operated the trade center, which hosted hundreds of mainly Uyghur-owned businesses, from 1991 until her imprisonment in 1999 for her Uyghur rights advocacy.⁷¹ Following demonstrations and riots beginning in July 2009 in Urumqi, officials shut down the trade center and said it would be demolished.⁷² A Uyghur rights activist living in the U.S. said local residents told her that officials sealed off the area around the trade center the day before demolishing it, treating its demolition as a "state secret."⁷³ Rebiya Kadeer said officials had not compensated her for the demolition.⁷⁴

Freedom of Religion

XUAR government officials curtailed Muslim residents' freedom to practice their religious beliefs, including by holding Turkic Muslims in detention for observing their faith, as in the following examples.

- In December 2024, *RFA* reported that in late 2018, authorities in Konasheher (Shufu) county, Kashgar prefecture, XUAR, sentenced **Seylihan Rozi** to 17 years in prison for providing “illegal religious education” to her two sons and neighbor **Yaqup Hidayet** at least a decade earlier.⁷⁵ Seylihan Rozi’s sons **Sattar Qadir** and **Yusupehmet Qadir** were sentenced to 7 and 10 years in prison, respectively, for having received religious instruction from their mother between 2004 and 2008.⁷⁶ Additionally, **Yaqup Hidayet** was reportedly sentenced to nine years in prison for receiving three days of religious instruction from Seylihan Rozi in June 2006.⁷⁷
- *RFA* reported in August 2024 that Uyghur entrepreneur **Ablikim Qurban** had been sentenced to life in prison sometime after being detained in July 2017 for alleged involvement with “religious extremism.”⁷⁸ Prior to establishing a company selling imported sesame seeds in April 2017, he toured factories in Egypt and met with Uyghurs from his hometown who were studying at a university in Cairo.⁷⁹ Authorities attributed Ablikim Qurban’s detention to his meetings with these students, saying they constituted involvement with “terrorists.”⁸⁰ In 2016, PRC government officials had threatened Uyghurs studying in Egypt with punishment and detained their relatives in some cases, to compel them to return to China; many of the students were studying Islamic theology.⁸¹ In 2017, officials included Egypt on a list of 26 countries linked to terrorism.⁸²

As in previous reporting years,⁸³ XUAR authorities placed restrictions on Muslims’ observance of Ramadan. According to videos posted on Chinese social media platforms, authorities forced residents of various locations in Aksu and Hotan prefectures to engage in forced labor during the Ramadan period in March 2025 in order to prevent them from fasting.⁸⁴ In addition, authorities required residents of several towns in Peyziwat (Jiashi) county, Kashgar prefecture, to film themselves eating lunch during the Ramadan period in order to prove that they were not fasting.⁸⁵ A government worker interviewed by *RFA* said local residents would not disobey requests to film themselves eating during Ramadan because some people had been sentenced to prison terms as punishment for fasting during previous Ramadan periods.⁸⁶

XUAR authorities also restricted Muslim residents’ freedom of religion by preventing them from making the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. According to a July 2024 *RFA* report, statistics provided by the Islamic Association of China showed that among the more than 1,000 PRC citizens registered in early June to make the Hajj pilgrimage later that month, none were Uyghurs or other Muslim residents of the XUAR.⁸⁷ XUAR authorities have prohibited independent Hajj pilgrimages since 2014,⁸⁸ and rules issued in October 2020 by the National Religious Affairs Administration and seven other government entities barred any Muslim PRC citizens from

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making independent Hajj pilgrimages.⁸⁹ [For more information on official restrictions on Muslims' right to practice their faith throughout China, see Chapter 1—Freedom of Expression and Chapter 3—Freedom of Religion.]

Transnational Repression of Uyghurs and Other Turkic Muslims

Reports published this past year documented the PRC's continued transnational repression of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims, through harassment and intimidation, to prevent them from speaking out about human rights conditions in the XUAR.⁹⁰ Examples include the following:

- U.S.-based Uyghur journalist Kasim Abdurehim Kashgar, a reporter at *Voice of America* (VOA), told Reporters Without Borders that PRC authorities had sentenced at least four of his former colleagues and one friend to lengthy prison terms in retaliation for his work.⁹¹
- U.S.-based Uyghur activist Tahir Imin told VOA that in early 2024, the Urumqi Intermediate People's Court had sentenced six of his former business contacts in the XUAR for "separatism," one of whom was sentenced to 15 years in prison and five of whom were sentenced to 12 years.⁹² According to Tahir Imin, he previously learned that authorities had sentenced 28 of his relatives to prison because of their connection to him.⁹³
- *RFA* reported in February 2025 that authorities had sentenced **Yalqun Isa**, the older brother of former World Uyghur Congress president Dolkun Isa, to 20 years in prison for "inciting terrorism."⁹⁴ Yalqun Isa is one of several family members of Dolkun Isa whom authorities have detained or persecuted because of his overseas rights advocacy.⁹⁵
- In February 2025, the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) canceled the presentation of Uyghur rights advocate **Abduweli Ayup** the day before he was scheduled to speak at a panel on language and technology at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France.⁹⁶ Abduweli Ayup expressed the belief that PRC officials pressured UNESCO officials to cancel his presentation after he questioned a Chinese state media journalist about language rights for Uyghurs in China during a panel the previous day.⁹⁷

In February 2025, Human Rights Watch reported that XUAR authorities had begun permitting some Uyghur exiles to visit the XUAR, but only after undergoing extensive vetting and under restrictive conditions.⁹⁸ Vetting reported by interviewees included background checks taking up to six months and approval from "neighborhood committees" in their hometowns.⁹⁹ Uyghurs living in countries requiring a visa to visit the PRC reported having visa applications rejected for reasons including enrolling their children in Uyghur-language classes and attending weddings that were also attended by Uyghur activists.¹⁰⁰ PRC diplomatic officials required some Uyghur exiles wishing to visit family members to join official tours organized by the XUAR United Front Work Department, during which they were closely surveilled, required to speak Mandarin Chinese at all times, and forced to participate in propaganda such as praising the Chinese Communist Party's policies in the region.¹⁰¹

“Through these controlled visits and tours,” reported Human Rights Watch, “the Chinese government has continued to control the Uyghur diaspora, some of whom stay silent or shun activism and even Uyghur cultural activities in hopes of resuming contact with their families and visiting the region.”¹⁰²

UYGHURS DEPORTED FROM THAILAND FACE PERSECUTION

On February 27, 2025, Thai officials deported 40 Uyghur asylum seekers to China,¹⁰³ in spite of widespread international concern over their safety and evidence that PRC authorities had imprisoned or tortured Uyghurs who were similarly deported from Cambodia to China in 2009.¹⁰⁴ The men were among 500 Uyghurs who fled the XUAR to Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries around a decade ago in hopes of reaching Türkiye.¹⁰⁵ In March, PRC officials hosted a group of Thai officials and reporters during a visit to Kashgar prefecture, XUAR, that was aimed at showing that the Uyghurs who were deported the previous month and Uyghurs who were deported from Thailand in 2015 were all being treated well.¹⁰⁶ One of the reporters said that security personnel closely surveilled their visit and vetted material before it could be transmitted to Thailand.¹⁰⁷ In November 2024, *RFA* reported on the imprisonment and torture of 20 Uyghur asylum seekers deported from Cambodia to China in 2009.¹⁰⁸ According to *RFA*’s report, one of the detainees, who is serving a 20-year sentence, was forced to work despite being in very poor health, and another detainee suffered a miscarriage after being tortured, including by electric shock.¹⁰⁹ Four of the Uyghurs deported from Cambodia were sentenced to life in prison; four were sentenced to 20 years; four others were sentenced to 17 years; and four more were sentenced to 16 years.¹¹⁰ Two of the deportees died in prison.¹¹¹ According to a separate *RFA* report, one of the two, **Memet’eli Rozi**, died after prison officials rejected his requests to remove metal rods that had been implanted in his wrist following a traffic accident, leading him to develop a fatal ailment.¹¹²

Uyghur Man Disappears After Being Refouled from Cambodia

In February 2024, Chinese officials sent 22-year-old **Abdureqip Rahman**, an ethnic Uyghur, to Kucha (Kuche) county, Aksu prefecture, XUAR, from Cambodia, where he had fled in hopes of ultimately seeking asylum in the United States.¹¹³ According to a *Washington Post* investigation, Chinese authorities sentenced him to one year in prison sometime after his March 2022 resignation from employment at a Kucha detention center, accusing him of being a “two-faced” person.¹¹⁴ Fearing that he was at risk of being detained again following his August 2023 release, Abdureqip Rahman arranged to be smuggled out of China and was trafficked into a scam center in Cambodia.¹¹⁵ While working inside the scam center—which his overseers did not allow him to leave—and seeking to flee, he secretly contacted United Nations (U.N.) officials and international activists, and informed them of the abuses he had witnessed while being imprisoned and working at a detention center in China.¹¹⁶ He expressed the fear that he would face “unimaginable” consequences if officials forced him to return to China.¹¹⁷ In spite of U.N. officials’ attempts to assist him, in January 2024, Abdureqip Rahman was first held in custody by Cambodian authorities and then transferred to the custody of PRC authorities in Cambodia before being sent to Kucha on February 1.¹¹⁸ Abdureqip Rahman’s whereabouts remained unknown as of December 2024.¹¹⁹ [For more information on the transnational repression of Turkic Muslims, see Chapter 17—Human Rights Violations in the U.S. and Globally. For more information on human trafficking in scam centers in Southeast Asia, see Chapter 9—Human Trafficking.]

Repressive Surveillance Technology and Security Measures

During the Commission’s 2025 reporting year, reports emerged regarding ways in which authorities in the XUAR used surveillance technology, requirements for reporting visitors, and other methods to maintain control over Turkic and Muslim residents.¹²⁰ These security measures were consistent with XUAR Communist Party Secretary Ma Xingrui’s July 2024 call for regional security officials to conduct “high-intensity crackdowns” and ensure “social stability” in the region.¹²¹ Examples include the following:

- In the summer of 2024, XUAR public security personnel carried out an online security operation in which they reportedly cracked down on “rumors” about regional tourism and “fake videos involving the police.”¹²²
- Authorities in localities in Kashgar and Hotan prefectures recently strengthened enforcement of requirements, first implemented in the XUAR in June 2015, that Uyghurs promptly report the arrival of guests to their homes to the police.¹²³ The mandated time frame for reporting guests ranged from within ten minutes to two hours, with violators subject to punishment.¹²⁴ In July 2024, police in Yengisheher (Shule) county, Kashgar, detained and interrogated a married couple overnight because the husband had forgotten to report the arrival of a family member from another prefecture earlier in the month.¹²⁵
- Regional authorities launched a winter security campaign targeting Uyghurs and other ethnic minority groups that focused

on managing security risks in the runup to the Spring Festival in early 2025.¹²⁶ George Washington University professor Sean Roberts noted, however, that officials had already intensified security measures in the region as much as possible.¹²⁷

- According to a July 2024 *RFA* report, public security officials targeted previously detained Uyghurs for detention, including businessmen, philanthropists, and people who had traveled abroad, deeming them national security threats.¹²⁸ Among those targeted was 24-year-old **Abuzer Abdughapar**, whom public security authorities detained in Urumqi municipality on March 25, 2024.¹²⁹ Abuzer Abdughapar, who had planned to get married in May, had been previously detained in Ghulja (Yining) county, Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, XUAR, in 2017 after returning from a year studying in Türkiye, and was held in a mass internment camp for almost a year.¹³⁰

Notes to Chapter 15—Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

¹Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 2, 19–20.

²U.S. Department of State, “Determination of the Secretary of State on Atrocities in Xinjiang,” January 19, 2021. See also Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet),” March 30, 2021; “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” *United Nations*, adopted December 9, 1948, entry into force January 12, 1951; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2020,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2020, 299–301; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2019,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, November 2019, 267–8.

³Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet),” March 30, 2021.

⁴Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 2, 19–20.

⁵Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 1, 4, 9.

⁶Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 7–8.

⁷Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 7.

⁸Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 5.

⁹Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 9–11.

¹⁰Rian Thum, “Eight Years On, China’s Repression of the Uyghurs Remains Dire: How China’s Policies in the Uyghur Region Have and Have Not Changed,” *Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, February 2025, 10.

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