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Findings

• Key findings from a cache of tens of thousands of files obtained from public security bureaus in two counties in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) included: the key role of senior Communist Party and central government officials in carrying out the mass detention and other persecution of Turkic Muslims in the XUAR; the highly securitized nature of detention in the region’s camps and prisons; the high rate of imprisonment in Konasheher (Shufu) county in Kashgar prefecture, XUAR, as authorities increasingly sentenced Turkic Muslims to formal imprisonment; and arbitrary deprivation of liberty in camps and prisons.

• Reports published during the Commission’s 2022 reporting year indicated that XUAR officials increasingly sentenced many Turkic and Muslim individuals to long prison terms, sometimes following their detention in mass internment camps. According to international reporting and analysts’ review of satellite imagery, officials have converted many former mass internment camps into prisons or other types of formal detention facilities.

• International researchers and journalists found evidence that authorities continued to expand detention facilities, including mass internment camps. Based on research and analysis of leaked official documents and satellite imagery, BuzzFeed News journalists estimated in July 2021 that authorities in the XUAR had enough space in detention facilities in the region, including prisons and mass internment camps, to detain more than one million people at the same time.

• Authorities in the XUAR maintained a system of forced labor that involved former mass internment camp detainees and other Turkic and Muslim individuals. In its annual report released in February 2022, the International Labour Organization expressed “deep concern” over forced labor in the XUAR and asserted that the “extensive use of forced labor” involving Turkic and/or Muslim minorities in the region violated the Employment Policy Convention of 1964.

• In September 2021, official media in the XUAR announced a new plan pairing Uyghur children with children from across the country, a move that observers believe is designed to control Uyghurs’ lives and eliminate Uyghurs’ cultural identity. Called the “Pomegranate Flower Plan,” the initiative matched Uyghur toddlers and elementary school students from a village in Kashgar prefecture with predominantly Han Chinese children from other parts of China, in order to establish “kinship” ties between the children.

• During the 2022 Ramadan period, which lasted from April 1 to May 1, authorities in parts of Urumqi municipality and Kashgar and Hotan prefectures reportedly enforced quotas for local Muslims allowed to fast during the holiday, and required them to register with officials. Reports published this past year showed that authorities have sentenced Turkic Muslims in the
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XUAR, including members of the clergy, to lengthy prison terms.
- Turkic women who had been detained in mass internment camps in the XUAR provided evidence to the Uyghur Tribunal that many female detainees were raped in the camps. One former camp detainee testified that unmarried, divorced, and widowed women were raped in a camp where she was detained and that men paid to come to camps to rape female detainees.

Recommendations

Members of the U.S. Congress and Administration officials are encouraged to:

○ Coordinate with allies and partners to advocate for the formation of a UN commission of inquiry to investigate forced labor abuses involving Turkic and Muslim XUAR residents.
○ Urge Chinese authorities to immediately cease all programs involving the forced labor of mass internment camp detainees and prisoners in the XUAR, along with programs involving the forced labor of other ethnic minority individuals within and outside the XUAR.
○ Work with allies and partners in the United Nations to establish a coalition to request a special session to address human rights violations against Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim people from the XUAR.
○ Work together with allies and partners to raise awareness about the transnational repression of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims from the XUAR, including through discussion of digital rights. Seek ways to ensure that Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in the United States and other countries can be free from surveillance, intimidation, and harassment by Chinese Communist Party and government actors.
○ Work with allies and partners to counter third countries’ cooperation with China in conducting transnational repression, including the refoulement, surveillance, and harassment of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim Chinese nationals. Impose sanctions, including through freezing assets and restricting travel, on officials in China and third countries who participate in such transnational repression. Advocate for the appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on transnational repression.
○ Prioritize the resettlement of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Turkic and Muslim refugees in the United States, including by granting them Priority 2 status in the United States’ refugee program. Urge other like-minded countries to implement similar refugee resettlement programs for Turkic and Muslim refugees from China. Identify countries likely to deport Turkic and Muslim refugees from China and engage these countries through diplomatic channels to prevent such deportations.
○ Urge People’s Republic of China (PRC) officials to allow foreign diplomats and journalists to travel freely to and within the XUAR.
○ Direct the U.S. State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development to create programming to provide care
for former mass internment camp detainees, to include such psychosocial counseling and other assistance as may be necessary to address the trauma these detainees have faced.

- Work with groups and through forums such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) to advocate for improved human rights and fair labor practices in the XUAR; work with allies to raise the issue of human rights in the XUAR in discussions with ASEAN and APEC members, as well as with Muslim countries in other forums. Work with allies and partners to support public events and civil society organizations in ASEAN and APEC Member States in order to raise awareness of human rights conditions in the XUAR.

- Work with officials at American universities to protect Uyghur and other Turkic and Muslim students who hold a Chinese passport and/or who speak out about human rights abuses in the XUAR, to ensure that they enjoy freedom of expression and are protected from harassment and threats to their safety.
The Xinjiang Police Files

In May 2022, international researchers and journalists reported new findings on the nature and scope of mass detention in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), based on information contained in a cache of tens of thousands of files obtained from public security bureaus in two counties in the XUAR. The files, containing documents, images, spreadsheets, and speeches mainly from 2017 and 2018, were provided to scholar Adrian Zenz by an unnamed individual who accessed internal computer systems in Konasheher (Shufu) county in Kashgar prefecture and Tekes (Tekesi) county in Ili (Yili) Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture in the XUAR. The files, which Zenz then shared with 14 news agencies, included more than 5,000 images of individuals from Konasheher county, 2,800 of whom researchers confirmed had been detained. The youngest detainee was 15 years old, and the oldest was 73. Key findings include:

- **The role of senior Communist Party and central government officials in carrying out the mass detention and other persecution of Turkic Muslims in the XUAR.** In a classified speech delivered in June 2018, Minister of Public Security Zhao Kezhi describes Chinese leader Xi Jinping's knowledge, support, and direction of mass detentions and other repressive policies in the region. Zhao's speech outlines a five-year plan for achieving “comprehensive stability” in the XUAR, beginning around the time mass internment camps appeared in 2017 and ending in 2021, and roughly concurrent with the tenure of XUAR Party Secretary Chen Quanguo.

- **The highly securitized nature of detention in the region's camps and prisons.** Internal documents and a speech delivered by former XUAR Communist Party Secretary Chen Quanguo instruct security personnel to “shoot to kill” anyone attempting to escape camp facilities; security personnel stationed in camp watchtowers were armed with machine guns and sniper rifles; and documents instruct security personnel to blindfold and shackle detainees when transferring them between different locations. Images from detention facilities show security personnel armed with guns, clubs, and/or batons, some while wearing combat gear, while carrying out security drills and monitoring detainees.
The high rate of imprisonment in Konasheher county, as authorities increasingly sentenced Turkic Muslims to formal imprisonment. According to the Associated Press (AP), nearly 1 in every 25 people in the county had been sentenced to prison on charges related to terrorism—the highest imprisonment rate in the world. The AP reported that more than 10,000 people in Konasheher, most of whom were arrested in 2017, had been sentenced to lengthy prison terms. Internal spreadsheets show that in 2018, more than 12 percent of ethnic minority adults in the county were held in some type of detention facility, which was more than 64 times the national detention rate.

Arbitrary deprivation of liberty in camps and prisons. Reasons for imprisonment included studying Islamic scripture with a relative seven years earlier, installing encrypted apps on one's cell phone, and inactivity on one's cell phone. Zhao Kezhi's characterization of cultural and religious heritage as traits that determined millions of Turkic Muslims to be threats in need of "re-education" indicates that authorities detained Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and others primarily because of their cultural and religious identity. Intake guidelines for mass internment camps listed 21 categories of detainees, including people with a connection to another country and husbands of women who were pregnant in violation of population planning policies.

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Another set of highly sensitive documents, leaked in September 2021 to a London-based independent tribunal known as the Uyghur Tribunal, which included records of speeches delivered by Xi Jinping, shows the role of Xi, Premier Li Keqiang, and other top PRC officials in directing and guiding repressive policies in the XUAR. The documents, dated between 2014 and 2018, detail the role of these officials in shaping policies such as mass internment, forced labor, population control, homestay programs, and forced placement in boarding schools targeting Uyghur and other ethnic minority communities in the XUAR in subsequent years. The documents are part of what are known internationally as the Xinjiang Papers, a cache of internal government and Party documents that the New York Times reported on in 2019. According to new analysis of the Xinjiang Papers published by scholar Adrian Zenz, two of Xi's speeches contained in the documents authorized the drafting of the region's first anti-extremism regulations. Official Chinese media portrayed the regulations, which the XUAR People's Congress revised in October 2018, as justification for mass internment camps, but the camps remained illegal under both Chinese and international law. The documents, and Zenz's analysis, also reveal a previously unreported link between clear demands made by Xi Jinping and a subsequent push to assimilate ethnic minority children in the XUAR in Chinese-language boarding schools, as well as an initiative to assign primarily Han Chinese cadres to live with and surveil ethnic minority families in their homes.
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more information on the Xinjiang Papers and PRC involvement in forced labor, see Section VI—Human Trafficking.]

Expansion of Mass Detention Facilities

International researchers and journalists found evidence during this reporting year that authorities continued to expand detention facilities in the XUAR, including mass internment camps. Based on research and analysis of leaked official documents and satellite imagery, BuzzFeed News journalists estimated in July 2021 that authorities in the XUAR had enough space in detention facilities in the region, including prisons and mass internment camps, to detain more than one million people at the same time. The journalists noted that this figure likely underestimated the true capacity of detention facilities in the XUAR, because it did not account for the overcrowded conditions reported by many former detainees. In addition, this estimate did not include the capacity of the more than 100 facilities built prior to 2016.

Kyrgyz Christian Ovalbek Turdakun and Mass Detention in the XUAR

The case of an ethnic Kyrgyz Christian who was detained in a mass internment camp in 2018 and who arrived in the United States in April 2022 illustrates several unique and significant aspects of mass detention in the XUAR. Authorities detained Ovalbek Turdakun, a Chinese national, for 10 months in a camp in Kizilsu (Kezilesu) Kyrgyz Autonomous Prefecture, XUAR, accusing him of having overstayed a visa on a trip to Kyrgyzstan and criticizing him for his marriage to a Kyrgyz national and for visiting mosques abroad. Ovalbek Turdakun is the first Christian formerly detained in a mass internment camp to publicly speak out about his detention, and is a member of the Kyrgyz ethnic group, whose numbers in the XUAR are smaller than those of Uyghurs or Kazakhs and whose plight has received less international attention. His legal background strengthened his ability to document details of his detention, including details regarding torture, surveillance cameras, and camp layout. In addition, observers believe the harassment and risk of deportation Ovalbek Turdakun faced after fleeing to Kyrgyzstan following his detention demonstrates a pattern of harassment of ethnic minorities fleeing to Central Asia from the XUAR that could help strengthen a case being submitted by international lawyers to the International Criminal Court regarding the repression of XUAR residents in Tajikistan.

Rise in Formal Detention of Turkic Muslims

Reports published this past year indicated that XUAR officials increasingly sentenced many Turkic and Muslim individuals to long prison terms, sometimes following their detention in mass internment camps. According to reporting by the Associated Press (AP), officials have converted some former mass internment camps into prisons or other types of formal detention facilities. The AP reported in July 2021 that, based on an in-person tour conducted in April 2021, Ürumqi No. 3 Detention Center in Dabancheng dis-
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district, Urumqi municipality, had been converted from a mass internment camp into a pretrial detention facility. Satellite imagery showed that new buildings added in 2019 to the facility—the largest detention facility in China, and possibly the world—reached nearly a mile in length. Analysis of two reports released by XUAR judicial authorities in March 2022 also indicates a shift in the detention of Uyghurs from mass internment camps to prisons, according to Radio Free Asia (RFA).

Chinese authorities’ lack of transparency often makes it difficult for relatives of detained Turkic Muslims to obtain confirmation of their sentences and other information. In July 2021, RFA reported that Xinjiang University sources confirmed that authorities had sentenced Uyghur ethnographer Rahile Dawut to a prison term of unknown length, possibly in 2020. Chinese authorities did not provide public information about Rahile Dawut’s case following her disappearance in December 2017 and likely detention in a mass internment camp.

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

- **Yusupjan Memtimin.** In March 2022, RFA reported that in late 2018, authorities in the XUAR sentenced businessman and philanthropist Yusupjan Memtimin (also known as Yusup Saqal) to 14 years in prison, reportedly in connection with “taking criminals under his wing.” Authorities detained Yusupjan Memtimin in 2017 because he had driven the family members of a detained Uyghur man to visit him at his detention facility in 2014.

- **Nurmemet Omer Uchqun.** XUAR authorities sentenced Uyghur literature professor and translator Nurmemet Omer Uchqun to 10 years in prison on charges related to “separatism” and “promoting Western culture.” Security personnel detained Nurmemet Omer Uchqun in Urumqi in early 2018 and transferred him to Keriye (Yutian) Prison in Keriye (Yutian) county, Hotan prefecture, after sentencing him.

- **Almire Erkin.** In May 2022, RFA reported that in 2017, XUAR authorities detained 32-year-old nurse Almire Erkin and subsequently sentenced her to 10 years in prison for watching Turkish movies on her cell phone. Authorities held Almire Erkin at a women’s prison in Urumqi municipality. Her father, a police officer in Kashgar prefecture, once received an award from the municipal government for detaining 2,000 individuals for “re-education.”

- **Meryem Emet.** In 2022, RFA and National Public Radio reported that in 2017, authorities in Urumqi had detained Meryem Emet and later sentenced her to 20 years in prison. Her sentence was reportedly connected to her having met and spoken with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan when he visited Urumqi in 2012, and to her having married a foreigner. Authorities held Meryem Emet in a prison in Kucha (Kuche) county, Aksu prefecture. After she was detained, officials placed her two young children in state-run boarding schools in Urumqi for more than a year and a half.

[For more information on Meryem Emet’s children, see Forcible...]

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Displacement and Assimilation of Ethnic Minority Children in this section.

Reports published throughout the year documented authorities’ continued use of torture and other forms of mistreatment against prisoners and camp detainees. As in the past reporting year, reports emerged documenting the deaths of individuals in mass internment camps and prisons or after they were held in camps or prisons. Examples include the following:

- **Yaqup Haji**, a 45-year-old Uyghur businessman and philanthropist from Ghulja (Yining) city, Ili (Yili) Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, who died in or around September 2021 after being tortured in a mass internment camp or prison, where he had been held since 2018. A friend of Yaqup Haji told RFA that authorities had detained him for making contributions to religious causes, and that authorities had tortured him, including by holding him in solitary confinement.

- **Zeynephan Memtimin**, a 40-year-old Uyghur woman who died in 2020 in a prison in Keriye (Yutian) county, Hotan prefecture, where she was serving a 10-year sentence for violating family planning policies. Authorities previously held Zeynephan Memtimin in a mass internment camp beginning in 2017, for having fled a hospital where she was due to undergo a forced abortion in 2014. Officials did not disclose the cause of her death to relatives.

- **Yaqup Hesen**, a 43-year-old goldsmith who died on May 1, 2022, 20 days after being released from a prison in Ghulja (Yining) city, Ili (Yili) Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, where he had been held for three years. A neighborhood committee official told RFA that authorities had detained him for praying. Family members sought medical treatment for Yaqup Hesen for an unspecified illness at multiple hospitals following his release. Yaqup Hesen’s 20-year-old son died, reportedly of grief, at his father’s funeral.

**Detention of 2008 Olympics Torchbearers**

Reports this past year highlighted the detention of at least eight Uyghurs who had served as torchbearers at the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games, including the following:

- In early 2018, authorities detained cardiac surgeon Abduqeyyum Semet, who served as director of the Kashgar Prefecture Health Department, and later sentenced him to 18 years in prison. Authorities reportedly detained Abduqeyyum Semet for his failure to carry out government directives and policies.

- In or around 2017, authorities detained Uyghur civil servant Adil Abdurehim for watching “counterrevolutionary” videos, and in 2018, the Urumqi Intermediate People’s Court in Urumqi municipality, XUAR, tried and sentenced him to 14 years for attempted “separatism.” Adil Abdurehim led a local culture and sports bureau, and reportedly received many awards for his work, including for being an exemplary member of the Chinese Communist Party and a model of “ethnic unity.”
In 2017, authorities detained Uyghur volleyball coach Alimjan Mehmut for being in contact with Muslim Uyghurs whom they deemed suspicious, and later sentenced him to eight years in prison. Alimjan Mehmut, who was viewed as a leader in sports and activism in the Uyghur community, was one of at least six or seven instructors at the Kashgar Sports School in Kashgar prefecture whom authorities detained in recent years.

International Observers Condemn Bachelet Visit to the XUAR

The U.S. Government, human rights groups, and scholars around the world were highly critical of the May 2022 visit to the XUAR by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, saying she failed to hold Chinese authorities accountable for their repression of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in the region. In advance of her visit, officials in the XUAR warned residents not to speak out about mass internment camps or other rights abuses. As of August 8, 2022, Bachelet’s office had yet to issue a long-awaited report on human rights in the XUAR, despite Bachelet having told the UN Human Rights Council in late 2021 that her office was finalizing the report.

Forced Labor Involving Turkic and Muslim XUAR Residents

During this reporting year, authorities in the XUAR maintained a system of forced labor that involved former mass internment camp detainees and other Turkic and Muslim individuals. In its annual report released in February 2022, the International Labour Organization (ILO) expressed “deep concern” over forced labor in the XUAR and asserted that the “extensive use of forced labor” involving Turkic and/or Muslim minorities in the region violated the Employment Policy Convention of 1964. In April 2022, the National People’s Congress Standing Committee ratified the ILO’s Forced Labour Convention of 1930 and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957. In June, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada were among countries who called on the ILO to establish a mission to investigate labor abuses in the XUAR. Scholar Adrian Zenz wrote that “Beijing’s ratification of these conventions is likely a calculated strategy to allay criticism.”

According to research Zenz published in June 2022, XUAR authorities intensified and institutionalized the placement of Turkic Muslims in forced labor, likely forcing hundreds of thousands of mass internment camp detainees to work within the XUAR and transferring millions of “rural surplus laborers” within and outside of the XUAR. Zenz’s research indicates that authorities increased “the scope and scale” of forced labor transfers in 2021 and published plans to move increasing numbers of rural laborers into industrial work, as well as to train workers for coercive labor programs involving higher skilled labor.
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**XINJIANG COTTON CONTINUES TO BE, AND TOMATO PRODUCTS LIKELY CONTINUE TO BE, EXPORTED TO UNITED STATES**

Reports published this past year by international scholars, analysts, and journalists documented the continued presence of products containing cotton originating in the XUAR, and products containing tomatoes possibly originating in the XUAR, in the international supply chain and in goods imported into the United States. In a report published in November 2021, researchers from Sheffield Hallam University documented how cotton products, often cotton-based apparel, entered the United States and other countries, after the raw cotton and semi-finished cotton goods were processed in intermediary countries. These cotton products were imported into the United States in spite of U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s January 2021 ban on cotton and tomato products from the XUAR prompted by the prevalence of forced labor in the region. An investigative report published by non-profit research organization C4ADS in August 2021 showed that cotton and tomato products likely made with forced labor by companies owned by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) may have continued to be sold in the United States, in the wake of the January 2021 ban on cotton and tomato products from the XUAR and in violation of sanctions placed on the XPCC by the U.S. Treasury Department in July 2020. In a report published in January 2022, BuzzFeed News reporters described shipment records from between January 2021 and December 2021, showing that Hugo Boss, Ralph Lauren, and PVH Corporation had imported shipments from Esquel Group, which gins and spins cotton in the XUAR, into the United States. BuzzFeed’s report cited procurement records and company statements showing that a Guangdong province-based subsidiary of Esquel Group that had been exporting clothes to the United States had been working with cotton spinning factories in the XUAR, although the U.S. Government had restricted trade with a XUAR-based Esquel subsidiary in July 2020 over concerns of forced labor. Hugo Boss removed Esquel companies from its list of suppliers following the publication of BuzzFeed’s report.

[For more information on forced labor involving Turkic and Muslim XUAR residents, see Section VIII—Business and Human Rights.]

**Persecution of Ethnic Minority Women in the XUAR**

**ACCOUNTS OF RAPE IN MASS INTERNMENT CAMPS**

The London-based independent tribunal known as the Uyghur Tribunal found in its December 2021 judgment that rape, other sexual violence, and forced sterilization perpetrated against Turkic Muslims in the XUAR constitute crimes against humanity, and said that it was “beyond reasonable doubt” that population control measures imposed in the XUAR constitute genocide. Turkic women who had been detained in mass internment camps in the XUAR provided evidence to the Tribunal that many female detainees were raped in the camps. Ethnic Kazakh Gulzire Auulganqizi, also known as Gulzira Auelhan, who was detained in four different camps beginning in July 2017, testified that unmarried, divorced, and widowed women were raped in one of the camps.
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where she was detained. Gulzire Awulqanqizi said that she was responsible for helping the women shower after they were raped, and that men paid to come to camps to rape the women.

GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER AND POPULATION CONTROL MEASURES

The State Council Information Office issued a white paper in September 2021 on XUAR population developments that made unsupported claims about population growth and failed to address the documented decrease in birth rates in southern areas of the XUAR, which resulted from forced population control measures. The white paper reports that according to census data, the population of five prefectures in the southern part of the XUAR, an area dominated by ethnic minority populations, experienced an absolute growth rate of more than two million people. At the same time as authorities heightened population control measures for ethnic minority women in the XUAR, officials throughout China had relaxed the enforcement of population control measures for the majority Han Chinese population, and recently a number of public hospitals in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou municipalities reportedly stopped performing vasectomies in response to government pressure.

Forcible Displacement and Assimilation of Ethnic Minority Children

Reports published during the past year described authorities’ systematic separation of ethnic minority children in the XUAR from their families and their forcible placement in state-run orphanages, boarding schools, or other facilities. This forcible displacement of children has been carried out in violation of the PRC Law on the Protection of Minors and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the PRC has signed and ratified. Many of the children placed in these facilities reportedly had at least one parent in detention, and authorities placed some children in orphanages or other state-run facilities while forcing or coercing their parents to work. According to American researcher Elise Anderson, the removal of Uyghur children from their families for placement in such facilities, “where Mandarin is the predominant language,” “ensures their acculturation into a linguistically and culturally Chinese world.” In its December 2021 judgment regarding mass atrocity crimes committed against Turkic Muslims in the XUAR, the United Kingdom-based Uyghur Tribunal described acts of forcible placement of children in state-run institutions as “grave threats to the integrity of the Uyghur group [that] could be a means by which the State could effect its destruction over the longer term.”

Two Uyghur children now living in Turkey who were forced into boarding schools in Urumqi municipality in February 2018 described undergoing harsh mistreatment at two separate boarding schools in the city. Age four and six at the time authorities placed them at the schools, the children said teachers often hit them, confined them in dark rooms, and forced them into stress positions as punishment during their nearly 20 months at the schools. Now suffering from mental trauma, they said students
who spoke in the Uyghur language were hit with rulers; the two children left school no longer able to communicate in Uyghur.\textsuperscript{111} Authorities sent the children to the schools after officials deported their father to Turkey and detained their mother, later sentencing her to 20 years in prison.\textsuperscript{112}

\textit{Pomegranate Flower Plan}

In September 2021, official media in the XUAR announced a new plan pairing Uyghur children with children from across the country, a move that observers believe is designed to control Uyghurs’ lives and eliminate Uyghurs’ cultural identity.\textsuperscript{113} Called the “Pomegranate Flower Plan,” the initiative matched Uyghur toddlers and elementary school students from a village in Kashgar prefecture with predominantly Han Chinese children from other parts of China, which officials said was designed to establish “kinship” ties between the children.\textsuperscript{114} The coerced familial relationships assigned by officials under the plan, under which mainly Han Chinese “relative” children would place phone calls and make visits to the XUAR, bear similarities to the forced family relationships assigned under the “Becoming Family” homestay program implemented in recent years, under which cadres and government workers, usually of Han Chinese ethnicity, live with ethnic minority families in their homes to conduct surveillance and compile information on family members.\textsuperscript{115} In addition, the plan appears to encourage the celebration of Han Chinese cultural norms among the paired children, such as Chinese holiday celebrations, but not the exchange of Uyghur cultural norms.\textsuperscript{116}

\textit{Repressive Surveillance Technology and Security Measures}

Authorities used both technological and human surveillance to comprehensively monitor and control Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Turkic and Muslim groups in the XUAR.\textsuperscript{117} Facial recognition and mobile phone technology were key aspects of the digital surveillance system.\textsuperscript{118} According to American scholar Darren Byler, based on a government manual from 2018, at the time of its publication, more than 100,000 people had been either questioned or detained after authorities detected religious content or other “untrustworthy” content on their cell phones through a digital scan.\textsuperscript{119} Chinese artificial intelligence company DeepGlint, which the United States sanctioned in 2021,\textsuperscript{120} cooperated with security personnel in the XUAR to integrate facial recognition technology that can identify ethnic characteristics into systems used to surveil and detain Uyghurs.\textsuperscript{121} Public security personnel surveilled local Uyghurs through centralized camera feeds monitored at “command centers” located in counties and cities in the XUAR.\textsuperscript{122} Officials also integrated data gathered from surveillance technology and other forms of policing into a system called the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP), which automatically identifies people for detention.\textsuperscript{123}

Reports this past year indicated that authorities used surveillance technology such as IJOP and human surveillance to conduct “predictive policing,” preventatively identifying behaviors considered dangerous or disloyal to the PRC by analyzing large quantities
of video and other surveillance data. American journalist and technology writer Geoffrey Cain testified at a Commission hearing that the surveillance technologies employed in the XUAR constituted a “system of mass psychological torture,” telling Commissioners that residents of the XUAR had a “feeling of constantly being watched, not by humans, but by crude software algorithms designed to predict future crimes and acts of terrorism with great inaccuracy.”

Former mass internment camp detainees described being under intense surveillance both while in detention, with cameras placed throughout camp facilities, and following their release from detention. Former camp detainee Ovalbek Turdakun said cameras placed in cells constantly monitored detainees, whom authorities punished if they did something that violated the rules, such as talking, eating, or sleeping. He said detainees had to face the camera to request permission to use the cell’s crude toilet. Authorities continued to closely monitor former camp detainees following their release from detention—they fitted Ovalbek Turdakun with a GPS tracker and tracked his movements through the many cameras installed in his neighborhood; Baqitali Nur, an ethnic Kazakh former camp detainee, said authorities placed him under home confinement and installed a camera inside his home.

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 in-person and digital methods, in order to prevent them from seeking refuge outside China or to stop them from conducting advocacy on behalf of detained relatives and on other human rights issues. A report published by the Wilson Center in April 2022 indicated that, according to publicly available reports, more than 400 Uyghurs were refouled to China, primarily from the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia, between 1997 and 2022. This figure is likely a small fraction of the total number of Uyghurs deported to China from other countries, since many refoulements go unreported. During this reporting year, observers expressed concern about reports that four Uyghurs in Saudi Arabia and a Uyghur man in Morocco were at risk of imminent deportation to China. In Saudi Arabia, authorities reportedly planned to extradite Hemdulla Weli (or Abduweli), Nurmemet Rozi, and Nurmemet Rozi’s ex-wife Buhelchem Abla and their 13-year-old daughter. In Morocco, authorities reportedly planned to extradite Uyghur computer engineer Idris Hasan, in connection with a bilateral extradition treaty signed in 2016 that was tied to economic cooperation between the two countries. If they deported these individuals to China, Morocco and Saudi Arabia would be violating the customary international law principle of non-refoulement. In addition, as States Parties to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Morocco and Saudi Arabia are required to refrain from repatriating individuals if there are “grounds for believing that [they] would be in danger of being subject to torture.” A body of evidence from international organizations indicates there is a high likelihood they would face torture upon their return to China.
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In addition to the detention of Uyghurs in, and their deportation from, other countries, which security agencies in host countries in some cases carried out under pressure from Chinese officials, authorities have in recent years carried out transnational repression through methods including “asset freezes; passport controls; cyberattacks and malware; intimidation and surveillance from . . . embassies and consulates; pressure on families and coercion-by-proxy; spying through informants; [and] smear campaigns.” A September 2021 Coda report illustrated the varied methods of transnational repression used by Chinese authorities and described the methods organizers of the London-based Uyghur Tribunal suspect were used by Chinese authorities to intimidate individuals who were participating in the Tribunal. In addition, a person identifying himself as a Kazakh state security agent harassed by telephone an ethnic Kazakh in Kazakhstan who had been detained in a mass internment camp in the XUAR after he agreed to provide testimony at the Tribunal; a border official in Almaty, Kazakhstan subsequently refused to allow him to board the flight he was taking to attend the Tribunal. Other actions taken by Chinese authorities to disrupt the Tribunal included the imposition of sanctions against the Tribunal and its organizers, pressure placed on the host venue, possible hacking attempts targeting organizers and participants, and a Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs press conference aimed at contradicting witnesses’ testimony. [For more information on the transnational repression of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims, see Section XII—Human Rights Violations in the U.S. and Globally.]

Freedom of Religion

XUAR government officials curtailed Muslim residents’ freedom to practice their religious beliefs, including by implementing restrictions on prayer and detaining, continuing to hold in detention, and sentencing Uyghurs for practicing Islam. As in previous reporting years, XUAR officials reportedly imposed controls on Muslims’ observance of Ramadan. During the 2022 Ramadan period, from April 1 to May 1, authorities in parts of Urumqi municipality and Kashgar and Hotan prefectures reportedly enforced quotas for the number of local Muslims who were allowed to fast during the holiday, and required them to register with officials. In July 2021, during the Islamic holiday of Eid al-Adha, also known as Qurban Heyt, in Aykol township, Aksu city, Aksu prefecture, police detained more than 170 Uyghurs for questioning after they violated regulations related to the holiday stipulating that they must be at least 50 years old in order to pray. During the Eid al-Adha holiday, in a move a Uyghur and an ethnic Uzbek living abroad described as propaganda, officials held a news conference in Urumqi during which Uyghurs from different parts of the XUAR spoke of ethnic unity and how happy their lives were, and a live feed showed Uyghurs in Aksu and Hotan celebrating the holiday.

Reports published this past year showed that authorities have sentenced Türkic Muslims in the XUAR to lengthy prison terms and have also sentenced many Muslim clergy members to prison. In one example, according to a January 2022 Radio Free
Asia report, in 2019, authorities in Korla (Ku’erle) city, Bayangol (Bayinguoleng) Mongol Autonomous Prefecture, jointly sentenced five Uyghur women from one family to long prison terms for engaging in “illegal religious activities.” The Korla Municipal People’s Court reportedly sentenced 78-year-old Helchem Pazil, her three daughters, and a daughter-in-law on charges including “gathering a crowd to disturb public order” and “inciting ethnic hatred” after they held family gatherings to talk about practicing Islam and to talk about their children. According to a July 2021 Radio Free Asia report, in early 2018, authorities detained seven clergy members from one mosque in Ghulja (Yining) city, Ili (Yili) Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, later sentencing them to prison, and leaving the local community without any clergy able to officiate at religious ceremonies. In recent years, the detention and imprisonment of religious leaders from other mosques in the city have similarly led to an absence of clergy able to conduct weddings and funerals, and authorities have forbidden clergy members’ relatives from disclosing information about their prison terms. [For more information on official restrictions on Muslims’ right to practice their faith throughout China, see Section III—Freedom of Religion.]
Notes to Section X—Xinjiang


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