



**Uyghur Human Rights Project Written Statement  
Submitted to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China**

Hearing: The Threat of Transnational Repression from China and the U.S. Response  
June 15, 2022

The Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) welcomes the opportunity to submit a written statement for consideration by the Commission in connection with its hearing on the threat of transnational repression from China and the U.S. response. UHRP conducts research-based advocacy to promote the rights of the Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim peoples in East Turkistan, referred to by the Chinese government as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, in accordance with international human rights standards.

UHRP has documented the transnational repression (TNR) experienced by Uyghurs in a series of ten reports, published from 2011 through 2022. In addition, we have called attention to the issues and made policy recommendations in 25 statements and published commentaries since 2016.

UHRP's 2019 report, [\*Repression Across Borders: The CCP's Illegal Harassment and Coercion of Uyghur Americans\*](#), documents how the Chinese government routinely carries out surveillance, threats and coercion on American soil to control the speech and actions of Uyghur Americans. We pointed out that the Chinese government's program of transnational repression is an ambitious and well-resourced campaign affecting all Uyghur Americans, especially the many brave journalists, activists, and students engaged in raising awareness about the crisis of repression in their homeland.

UHRP also pointed out that the intimidation campaign constitutes an ongoing series of crimes committed with impunity on U.S. persons. It is illegal under U.S. federal and state law to issue threats that interfere with free-speech rights. For the Uyghur American community, the enduring and menacing presence of the Chinese government in their daily lives deprives them of their constitutionally protected rights and freedoms.

UHRP was pleased to see our analysis of the violations on U.S. soil confirmed on every point, in the [\*Unclassified FBI Counterintelligence bulletin on violations of Uyghur civil rights on U.S. soil \(PRC\)\*](#), issued on August 11, 2021.

We also commend the FBI's general factsheet on TNR: [\*Transnational Repression — What is it, How you can get help to stop it | FBI\*](#) (undated).

UHRP's 2019 report details Chinese state pressure placed on Uyghur Americans to end activism highlighting dire human rights conditions in the Uyghur region. The threats come by text, chat apps, voicemail, email, and messages delivered by third parties; some members of the community report receiving such messages on a weekly or even a near-daily basis. Non-compliance could result in family members being taken to a concentration camp.

These communications illustrate the way Chinese agents apply pressure against Uyghurs abroad through their family members at home, adding to the extreme emotional distress of separated Uyghur families. That so many speak out, despite the dire risks, demonstrates the resilience of Uyghurs in the United States.

In his 2014 book, *The Globalization of Chinese Propaganda*, Kingsley Edney describes how the Chinese state seeks “cohesion” between its overseas and domestic messaging. The method is to enlist actors abroad to rearticulate pro-Beijing viewpoints and suppress counternarratives. Silencing Uyghurs overseas is not only about control of all Uyghur bodies, regardless of location, but also an attempt to promote China’s ludicrous claim that the concentration camps are indeed “vocational training centers.” Denying overseas Uyghurs a voice means the world is deprived of knowing the true extent of China’s ongoing crimes against humanity.

PRC transnational repression is also a challenge to the sovereignty of the United States and the authority of the U.S. government to protect the rights of its citizens and legal residents. Like other illegal Chinese government influence operations on U.S. soil, Chinese government harassment and abuse of Uyghurs from California to Virginia should be a U.S. government priority. It is a test of U.S. resolve and impacts all of us, as the limitation of some U.S. citizens’ rights by a foreign power should always be unacceptable.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Strengthen refugee resettlement programs by increasing quotas and streamlining procedures.** The US government should increase their quota of refugees from China and from third countries that are likely to extradite citizens to China, such as Turkey and Thailand.
- **Uphold the non-refoulement principle.** Under international law, governments are prohibited from sending individuals back to countries where they would be at risk of persecution, torture, ill-treatment, or other serious human rights violations.
- **Restrict the export of surveillance technology.** The potential for malicious use of technology by Chinese companies active in the campaign of repression in the Uyghur Region should make countries hesitant about allowing them to operate within their borders without scrutiny. The US government should work to achieve clear standards on transparency for such dual-use technologies.
- **Increase outreach to Uyghur communities.** The US government should recognize the unique dangers faced by Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples residing within their borders. Outreach initiatives could include teaching Uyghurs about their legal and political rights or about basic digital security strategies to counteract the growing threat of Chinese malware and hacks.
- **Form a caucus of democratic states within Interpol.** Democracies make up 14 of the 15 top statutory funders of the body. These democracies could caucus together on key general assembly votes, support common candidates for key positions, and adopt policies to insulate Interpol against abuse, such as pushing for abusers to be suspended from accessing Interpol databases, as stipulated by Article 131 of the Rules on the Processing Data.
- **Continue to speak publicly, with allies, about transnational repression.** Raising awareness of the threat transnational repression poses to national sovereignty and to the human rights of targeted individuals is critical to formulating a coalition and a coherent multilateral response in forums such as Interpol and the UN.

### **UHRP Reports and Briefings:**

1. [New UHRP Report Finds Arab States have Deported or Detained 292 Uyghurs at China’s Bidding](#), March 24, 2022

2. [“Your Family Will Suffer”: How China is Hacking, Surveilling, and Intimidating Uyghurs in 22 Liberal Democracies](#), November 10, 2021
3. [“Nets Cast from the Earth to the Sky”: China’s Hunt for Pakistan’s Uyghurs](#), August 11, 2021
4. [No Space Left to Run: China’s Transnational Repression of Uyghurs](#), June 24, 2021
5. [Weaponized Passports: The Crisis of Uyghur Statelessness](#), April 1, 2021
6. [“The Government Never Oppresses Us”: China’s proof-of-life videos as intimidation of Uyghurs abroad](#), February 1, 2021
7. [Repression Across Borders: The CCP’s Illegal Harassment and Coercion of Uyghur Americans](#), August 28, 2019
8. [‘Another Form of Control’: Complications in obtaining documents from China impacts immigration processes and livelihoods for Uyghurs abroad](#), August 10, 2018
9. [‘The Fifth Poison’: The Harassment of Uyghurs Overseas](#), November 28, 2017
10. [‘They Can’t Send Me Back’: Uyghur Asylum Seekers in Europe face pressure to return to China](#), September 20, 2011

**Statements:**

1. [UHRP Encouraged by US Visa Ban to Oppose Transnational Repression, Urges Multilateral Action](#), March 22, 2022
2. [UHRP Welcomes Prosecutions of Chinese Secret Police Harassing and Spying in the U.S.](#), March 16, 2022
3. [12 years after July 5 unrest in Ürümchi, UHRP again calls for safe haven for Uyghur refugees](#), July 5, 2021
4. [On World Refugee Day 2021, UHRP Calls for Global Protections for Uyghur Refugees](#), June 20, 2021
5. [UHRP Calls for Due Process in Turkish Case Regarding Dolkun Isa](#), June 8, 2021
6. [UHRP welcomes Senate legislation to support safe haven for Uyghurs abroad](#), April 13, 2021
7. [UHRP welcomes House bill to provide Uyghurs safe haven](#), March 9, 2021
8. Op-ed: [How Beijing uses family videos to try to discredit Uyghur advocates](#), Emily Upson in the HK Free Press, February 28, 2021
9. [UHRP submits statement on issues facing Uyghur refugees to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom \(USCIRF\)](#), February 12, 2021
10. [Uyghurs fear deportation if Turkey-China extradition agreement comes into force](#) December 30, 2020
11. Op-ed: [China’s Barbarity Toward Uyghur Families Should Shock Our Consciences and Spur Action](#), Omer Kanat in the Diplomat, October 22, 2020
12. [Uyghur camp survivor arrives safely in the United States](#), September 25, 2020
13. [On World Refugee Day, UHRP Urges UNHCR to Address Looming Uyghur Statelessness](#) June 19, 2020

14. Op-ed: [Uyghurs Without Passports: Forced Legibility and Illegibility](#), Henryk Szadziewski in The Geopolitics, May 12, 2020
15. [UHRP welcomes rescue of Uyghur camp survivors](#), April 29, 2020
16. [Open threats against Uyghur activist in Germany lay bare China's lawless persecution](#), January 15, 2020
17. [China's propaganda videos are an ineffective attempt to discredit #StillNoInfo](#), January 14, 2020
18. OP-ED: [China's Cross-Border Campaign to Terrorize Uyghur Americans](#), Omer Kanat in The Diplomat, August 29, 2019
19. [World Refugee Day 2019: Thailand should free Uyghur refugees](#), June 19, 2019
20. Op-ed: [Uyghur refugees deserve freedom](#), Omer Kanat in the Bangkok Post, November 20, 2018
21. [World Refugee Day 2018: End Forced Returns of Uyghurs](#), June 19, 2018
22. [Media Advisory: UHRP-WUC EVENT: Dolkun Isa Speaks on Removal of INTERPOL Red Notice After 20 Years](#), March 5, 2018
23. [World Refugee Day 2017: UHRP calls for information on returned Uyghur refugees](#), June 17, 2017
24. [China: Reveal condition and whereabouts of Uyghur refugees forcibly deported from Thailand to China one year ago](#), July 7, 2016
25. [World Refugee Day 2016: End Forced Returns of Uyghur Refugees and Resettle Remaining Uyghurs in Thailand to Safe Third Country](#), June 20, 2016

Uyghur Human Rights Project  
1602 L Street, NW, Suite 613  
Washington, DC 20036  
[info@uhrp.org](mailto:info@uhrp.org) | [www.uhrp.org](http://www.uhrp.org)