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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Society for Threatened Peoples, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 May 2022]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only. The views expressed in the present document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials.



Violence against Uyghur women

Even though China has ratified International Human Rights treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Slavery Convention, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, among others, China is violating each of these treaties and more. Uyghur women face discrimination and oppression at the intersection of gender, ethnicity and religion.

Forced Sterilization and Abortion, and Population Control

Countless Uyghurs have been arbitrarily detained in internment camps that the Chinese government disguises as “re-education centers”. They are also subjected to modern slavery, the erasure of their history, language and culture, organ harvesting, family-child separation, forced sterilization and abortion of women. Countries such as the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Australia, among others, have recognised what is happening to the Uyghurs as genocide. Moreover, the “Uyghur Tribunal”, an independent people’s “tribunal” held in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, came to the conclusion that China is committing genocide, torture and crimes against humanity against the Uyghur people.¹⁾ The “Tribunal” concluded that the genocide is being committed by the violation of Article II (d) of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: “Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group”.²⁾

The Chinese government has in fact put in place forced sterilization and forced abortion campaigns with the goals of reducing and managing the Uyghur population. An academic, Adrian Zenz, gives concrete evidence of these population control campaigns in his report entitled Sterilizations, IUDs, and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP’s Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China. He draws many of his findings from Chinese language sources and official documents from the Chinese government. In this report, Mr. Zenz states that the natural growth of the population in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China has declined drastically, showing that “growth rates fell by 84 percent in the two largest Uyghur prefectures between 2015 and 2018, and declined further in several minority regions in 2019. For 2020, one Uyghur region set an unprecedented near-zero birth rate target”.³⁾ This target was intended to be attained through the “family planning” policies put in place by the government.⁴⁾ Official government documents “bluntly mandate that birth control violations are punishable by extrajudicial internment in ‘training’ camps”.⁵⁾

Witness testimonies from camp survivors further support the already credible evidence of forced sterilization of Uyghur women in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China. Examples of survivors that have publicly given testimonies on Uyghur population control are:

- Gulbahar Jalilova⁶⁾
- Mihrigul Tursun⁷⁾
- Zumrat Dawut⁸⁾
- Tursunay Ziyawudun⁹⁾

These four women have testified that they had been subjected to birth suppressive measures in the camps as well as witnessed other detainees being subjected to these measures.¹⁰⁾ Former detainees all described having to forcefully ingest unknown pills¹¹⁾ and liquids and receiving injections making them feel sick and/or numb, stopping their period¹²⁾ or causing heavy bleeding and other health problems. Moreover, they were all forcibly sterilized against their will. Detainees also had to go through non-consensual medical examinations and blood drawings.¹³⁾

Sexual Violence in Internment Camps

The Chinese government has been causing serious harm to Uyghurs and bringing about their destruction by lodging them in internment camps where rape, forced labour, brainwashing and torture are rampant.

Former detainees have recounted stories of physical, psychological and sexual violence in the camps. There were cameras in every room, including the interrogation rooms. One former detainee, Jalilova, recalls four cameras in her cell: a big one above the entrance door, and three others around the cell, covering every angle, including the toilets. She stated that the detainees were closely monitored and that even the toilet was separated by a glass door.

“Due to the surveillance cameras, [the camp personnel] would see if someone spent too long in the toilet and would call her name. The next day, during the inspection before lunch, we would be asked why, and punished if they deemed necessary”.

Ms. Jalilova also recounts more ill-treatment:

“Every ten days, personnel would come in armed, ask four women to undress completely, and inspect them. Three male guards would stay in front of the cell to prevent any inmate from escaping, and ten female guards would come in and inspect the whole cell. If anyone cried or disobeyed, they would get electroshocked inside the cell”.

Another former internment camp survivor, Tursunay Ziawudun, also testified in a BBC interview about the sexual violence she has experienced and witnessed during their time in the camp. She explained that women would be taken from their cells every night and raped by one or multiple masked Chinese men.¹⁴) Ms. Ziawudun herself was tortured and gang-raped.¹⁵) The BBC also interviewed a Kazakh woman from Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China who was detained for 18 months in a concentration camp. She said she was “forced to strip Uyghur women naked and handcuff them, before leaving them alone with Chinese men”.¹⁶) In another interview, Gulzira Auelkhan stated that the Chinese men “would pay sums of money to have their pick of the prettiest young inmates”.¹⁷) Sexual violence isn’t unknown to the Uyghur male detainees, however, women seem to be the primary victims of such violence whether inside the internment camps, in forced labour factories or even in the “safety” of their home due to the homestay programs pairing Chinese officials to live with Uyghur families.

Conclusion

In the Chinese government’s 2020 report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the state stresses that it opposes “any form of coercion in family planning work, including the compulsory implementation of contraceptive measures and the forced artificial termination of pregnancies”.¹⁸) However, the Chinese government is implementing exactly what it condones by forcefully sterilizing Uyghur women and preventing the birth of the Uyghur population as part of its ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China.

Society for Threatened Peoples calls on the Human Rights Council to urge the Chinese government to:

- End its system of arbitrary detention and shut down all internment camps.
- End its campaign against Uyghur women described in this statement.
- End its campaign of genocide and crimes against humanity.

1) Uyghur-Tribunal-Summary-Judgment-9th-Dec-21.pdf (uyghurtribunal.com)

2) Ibid

3) Zenz, Adrian. (2020, June 29). Sterilizations, IUDs, and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP’s Control to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang. Jamestown. Retrieved from: Sterilizations, IUDs,

and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP's Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang - Jamestown

4) China cuts Uighur births with IUDs, abortion, sterilization (June 29, 2020). Associated Press. Retrieved from: China cuts Uighur births with IUDs, abortion, sterilization | AP News

5) Zenz, Adrian. (2020, June 29). Sterilizations, IUDs, and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP's Control to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang. Jamestown. Retrieved from: Sterilizations, IUDs, and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP's Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang - Jamestown

6) We could only comfort her with our eyes. (2020, 6 January). Safeguard Defenders. Retrieved from: We could only comfort her with our eyes | Safeguard Defenders

7) Hearing: The Communist Party's Crackdown on Religion in China: Testimony of Mihrigul Tursun. (2018, November 28). Congressional Executive Commission on China. Retrieved from: REVISED_Mihrigul Tursun Testimony for CECC Hearing 11-28-18_0.pdf

8) A voice for Xinjiang detainees. (2019, December 9). International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. Retrieved from: A voice for Xinjiang detainees - YouTube

9) Hoja, Gulchehra. (2019, October 30). Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor. Radio Free Asia. Retrieved from: Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor — Radio Free Asia (rfa.org)

10) Hoja, Gulchehra. (2019, October 30). Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor. Radio Free Asia. Retrieved from: Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor — Radio Free Asia (rfa.org)

11) Hoja, Gulchehra. (2019, October 30). Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor. Radio Free Asia. Retrieved from: Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor — Radio Free Asia (rfa.org)

12) A voice for Xinjiang detainees. (2019, December 9). International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. Retrieved from: A voice for Xinjiang detainees - YouTube

13) Hoja, Gulchehra. (2019, October 30). Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor. Radio Free Asia. Retrieved from: Female Detainees at Xinjiang Internment Camps Face Sterilization, Sexual Abuse: Camp Survivor — Radio Free Asia (rfa.org)

14) Hill M., Campanale D. and Gunter J. (2021, February 2) 'Their goal is to destroy everyone': Uighur camp detainees allege systematic rape. BBC News. Retrieved from: 'Their goal is to destroy everyone': Uighur camp detainees allege systematic rape - BBC News

15) Ibid

16) Ibid

17) Ibid

18) UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Third Periodic Report, People's Republic of China, supra n.29, para 26.