

Committee: United Nations Human Rights Council

Country: Norway

Agenda: "Deliberating upon the Humanitarian Condition of the Uyghur Muslims."

### **Introduction to Uyghur Muslims:**

- The Uyghurs are a Turkic ethnic group originating from and culturally affiliated with the general region of Central and East Asia.
- Uyghur Muslims are significantly present in countries such as China, Kazakhstan and Turkey. They are one of China's 55 officially recognized ethnic minorities.
- The Uyghur people have had a long and colourful history. Modern Uyghurs are thought to be the descendants of a myriad of empires and kingdoms - the Huns, Tocharians and Scythians, Hotan, Chaghatay, Altisheher, and most recently the two republics of East Turkistan.
- Due to its abundance of natural resources and strategic location between East and West, the Uyghur region has been subject to many a political upheaval. However, it has also given rise to a rich and wonderful culture.
- They have also made significant contributions to Asian literature, medicine, architecture, music, song, dance, and fine arts.

### **Situation of Uyghur Muslims in China:**

- China has been accused of committing crimes against humanity and possibly genocide against the Uyghur population and other mostly-Muslim ethnic groups in the north-western region of Xinjiang. The Uyghur people of Xinjiang have long faced prejudice and persecution. Following the fall of the Soviet

- Union in the 1990s, Beijing launched policies of assimilation and strict police control on the pretext of fighting terrorism and secession.
- Chinese authorities suppressed Uyghur calls for autonomy and their religious expressions.
- These policies have in recent years developed into a program of ethnic and religious persecution.
- More than one million Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities are held in more than 300 detention facilities, while twice as many are reportedly receiving “re-education”. Many people have experienced torture and forced-labour in detention.
- Outside the detention facilities, Chinese authorities have imposed a pervasive system of mass surveillance, controls on movement, arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance, cultural and religious erasure, and family separation on Turkic Muslims.
- Many countries are reluctant to raise concerns about human rights violations in Xinjiang because of their economic ties with China. China’s “debt trap diplomacy” explains how the Chinese government uses loans to smaller nations for its geopolitical purposes, and put pressure on states not to criticise human rights violations. Therefore, the role of rich democratic countries in stepping up support for the Uyghurs is crucial.

### **Ways in which Norway can improve this situation:**

- Norway, not being a major country cannot help much in this situation.
- However, it can provide asylum to those who are fleeing from repression in Xinjiang.

- It can condemn the ongoing systematic and widespread human rights violations against Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in Xinjiang.
- Urge Chinese authorities to release those who have been unjustly detained or imprisoned.
- Call on Chinese authorities to comply with their obligations under international human rights treaties.
- Impose targeted sanctions together with like-minded states against Chinese officials, responsible for the most serious human rights violations.
- Ensure that Norwegian companies are not engaged in trade or transportation of mass surveillance tools (malware, cameras, software, etc.) with China.
- State that Uyghurs, residing in third countries (especially in Arab States) should not be returned to China, where they risk detention, torture, and other serious human rights violations.
- Ensure that imported products from China do not include goods, produced by the use of forced labour in Xinjiang.