

Position Paper : MUN 2022

**Country :** CHINA

**Agenda :** Investigating the Existence of Chinese Concentration Camps for Uyghur Muslims

The People's Republic of China was founded in 1949 after the Communist Party defeated the nationalist Kuomintang, who retreated to Taiwan, creating two rival Chinese states - the People's Republic on the mainland and the Republic of China based on Taiwan. China's history is rich with art, politics, science, and philosophy. It is home to the oldest of the major world civilizations. China was ruled by various dynasties. The Qin Dynasty ran from 221–206 BCE. The first emperor, Qin Shihuangdi, built the Great Wall to keep out northern invaders and centralized the Chinese government. The Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) is known its long reign and its achievements, which included the development of the civil service and government structure; scientific advancements such as the invention of paper, use of water clocks and sundials to measure time, and development of a seismograph.

The Uyghurs are recognized as native to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in Northwest China. They are one of China's 55officially recognised ethnic minorities. The Uyghurs are recognised by the Chinese government as a regional minority and the titular people of Xinjiang (Xinjiang -an autonomous territory in northwest China). Recent decades have seen a mass migration of Han Chinese (China's ethnic majority) into Xinjiang, allegedly orchestrated by the state to dilute the minority population there. China has also been accused of targeting Muslim religious figures banning religious practices in the region, as well as destroying mosques and tombs. Uyghur activists say they fear that the group's culture is under threat of erasure. Several countries, including the US, Canada and the Netherlands, have accused China of committing genocide - defined by international conventionas the "intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group". A UN human rights committee in 2018 said it had credible reports that China was holding up to a million people in "counter-extremism centres" in Xinjiang.

Human rights groups believe China has detained more than one million Uyghurs against their will over the past few years in a large network of what the state calls "re-education camps", and sentenced hundreds of thousands to prison terms. There is also evidence that Uyghurs are being used as forced labour and of women being forcibly sterilised. Some former camp detainees have also alleged they were tortured and sexually abused. The US is among several countries to have accused China of committing genocide in Xinjiang. The leading human rights groups Amnesty and Human Rights Watch have published reports accusing China of crimes against humanity. China denies all allegations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang, claiming its system of "re-education" camps are there to combat separatism and Islamist militancy in the region. China says the crackdown in Xinjiang is necessary to prevent terrorism and root out Islamist extremism and the camps are an effective tool for re-educating inmates in its fight against terrorism. It insists that Uyghur militants are waging a violent campaign for an independent state by plotting bombings, sabotage and civic unrest, but it is accused of exaggerating the threat in order to justify repression of the Uyghurs. More than 1 million Uighurs and other minorities from Xinjiang are believed to be held in internment camps, where they are forced to study Marxism, renounce their religion, work in factories and face abuse, according to human rights groups and first-hand accounts.   
 Ways by which this can be helped: **1)** Build an international coalition to help Uighurs in China   
2) Stop supporting forced Uyghur labours  
3) Support Uighurs and their affiliated groups directly wherever possible