

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Security Council!

My name is Philip Spyrou and I am a senior at Noble and Greenough school. I am incredibly excited to act as your chair for the UNSC, and hope to make our short time in committee together as rewarding and enjoyable as possible. I have been competing in Model UN since the 6th grade and as of this year have completed over six competitions in the UNSC . The Security council holds a special place in my heart and a special place in regard to other MUN committees. It is one of the most competitive and challenging committees that exists and alliances and goals can shift on a dime as the committee reacts to a new development or recently passed directives. I look forward to our discussion of the Uyghur Muslims and China.

A little more about me: I will be attending Bowdoin college in the fall as a chemistry or physics major. I love biology, chemistry and STEM in general. At Nobles, I run cross country, am a wrestling captain and play tennis. At home I have a cocker spaniel puppy named Weston and several fish. My hobbies include pottery, gardening, electronics, and hiking. Enough about me, however, and on to a small note on the topic at hand.

In this committee we will be discussing the Uyghur Muslim crisis that is currently active in China. This is an incredibly important and complex issue, however it is also a difficult topic to discuss being quite a sensitive and developing issue where the lines of what is reality and what is not have become blurred. I hope that the delegates can navigate the issue with grace and avoid any overly offensive speech or damaging discussions. Furthermore I urge each delegate to extensively research this topic. There are many historical parallels to the current situation and much writing on the issue as it develops. I encourage each delegate to understand specifically how their own country's foreign policy and actions on this matter will affect their positions in committee, and as this situation is continually develops each delegate should be aware of the most recent information that has become available and any recent changes in country policy.

Finally I would like to emphasize my excitement to see what each delegate is capable of bringing to the table, and affirm my commitment to create a welcoming and comfortable environment for you. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions and I will do my best to respond in a timely manner.

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## **Committee Overview & Important terminology**

This Committee will simulate the meeting of the United Nations security council with its P5 nations and 10 non permanent members. The 10 non permanent members of the council are Estonia, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, and VietNam. These member nations will discuss the current treatment of Uyghur muslims in China, and through the passage of directives and other actions in committee will attempt to address this developing issue. Each delegation will represent the values of their own country and will represent the value and goals of their government.

### **Procedure:**

This committee will follow standard MUN parliamentary procedure for the security council including the writing of directives, utilized in this committee to streamline the writing process, comminques, and press releases. The security council has access to extensive resources and is arguably the most powerful UN committee. The delegates will have full access to the powers of the security council in their directives and should pursue creative and interesting methods of addressing the issue at hand.

### **A Note on Directives:**

Directives while similar to resolutions are different in a few key ways. Directives require a simple majority to be passed, simple majority and the required number of signatories will be determined at the start of committee session. Furthermore directives lack preambulatory clauses and are extremely operative focussing on addressing the issue at hand rather than reaffirming past actions. Structurally each directive should be titled, include a list of sponsors, and organized in clause structure.

### **Comminques and Press releases:**

Comminques and press releases are traditionally a part of any UNSC committee. Communiques in our committee may be used to receive information from bodies or persons that are outside the committee. Communiques will be read to the entire committee. Due to our presence as a non crisis simulation of the UNSC a communique could be an interesting way to introduce some new information to the committee and to keep debate spicy. I remind the committee of our short time however and would prefer a small amount of communiques that are generally agreed upon by the entire committee.

Press releases are written statements by delegates that are announced from the chair to the entire committee. To reaffirm while this is a resource available to you it is rare that press releases play a significant role in committee and in my experience I have only encountered a single press release.

To further emphasize we are not a crisis committee and thus we lack Crisis arcs and notes and because of this comminques should not be abused by any delegation. Now to Business!

## **History of the Issue**

### **Historical context:**

The nation of China is home to a fairly large population of Muslim citizens with a total population of 22 million Muslims, around 1.6% of the total population.<sup>1</sup> Islam was first introduced to china by envoys from the middle east though the first large ingress of Islamic people occurred in the 13th century. Furthermore, many Muslims were forced or recruited from major Muslim cities to serve as administrators for the new Mongol empire. For hundreds of years, Muslims remained influential in the Chinese government, often holding high and powerful positions. In the 18th century, however, the relationship between the Chinese state and its Muslim administrators changed. Many revolts occurred as the Muslim population attempted to resist the expansion and solidification of the Chinese state in the provinces where Muslims traditionally lived. With the creation of the People's Republic of China, the Muslim citizens were recognized as a regional minority within the nation. Throughout the cultural revolution, mosques and other Muslim sites were defaced and damaged. Indeed the outlawing of religious expression in China during the ruling of Mao ze Dong further damaged the Uyghur's religious freedom.

### **The Events of 2009:**

2009 represented the final breaking point for the tensions between Uyghur Muslims and the Chinese state. A large riot broke out in Urumqi, the capital of the Uyghurs native province, Xinjiang. Interestingly while Uyghurs are the largest ethnic group in Xinjiang, Urumqi is over 70% Han Chinese due to governmental encouragement of Han Chinese migration. This migration of Han Chinese further fuelled resentment between the Uyghurs and Muslims. Urumqi is also a deeply segregated city with little mixing between the major ethnic groups and almost complete cultural separation. On July 5th, Over 1000 rioters clashed with police and Han Chinese throwing stones, lighting fires, and resulting in the death of three Han Chinese, one policeman, and twenty other injuries. The result of the riot was the arrest of dozens of Uyghur men who were allegedly leading and inciting the riot. The official position of the Chinese state is that Rebiya Kadeer, a human rights activist focusing on Uyghurs, incited the riot though she often faces these allegations from the Chinese state and denies starting this specific event.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://theconversation.com/the-history-of-chinas-muslims-and-whats-behind-their-persecution-117365>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/06/world/asia/06china.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=6BD4EE699B76C1228E1803DA3E46D4D4&gwt=pay>

## **2013 Beijing Terrorist Attack:**

A large vehicle was doused in flammable liquid and driven into a group of people in Beijing right outside of the historical Forbidden city. This attack resulted in the death of two tourists, the three men involved in the crime, and the injury of 38 other people at the scene. The Chinese state quickly began to label the event as a terrorist attack and identified the individuals involved in the attack as Uyghur Muslims. In fact, of the original eight suspects identified by the Chinese state, 7 had names that were traditionally Uyghur. The eventual arrest and trial of 5 Uighur suspects were reinforced by a radical Islamist group who claimed responsibility for the attack and warned of future attacks throughout China.<sup>34</sup>

## **Surveillance:**

Ever since the riots of 2009, the Chinese state has slowly increased restrictions on the movement and culture of Uyghur Muslims. The use of high-tech surveillance and facial recognition systems in order to identify and restrict Uyghur Muslims and other minorities has greatly expanded. Surveillance systems utilize neighborhood informants, track individual actions through camera monitoring, analyze and predict potential future crime and then deploy security forces to the area. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that these systems increase the segregated nature of Xinjiang by forcing ethnic minorities to submit monitoring and surveillance data whilst generally ignoring the Han Chinese population.

The technology extends far enough to where actions such as no longer using a cellphone, discreetly leaving the house, or utilizing someone else's car are all analyzed and labeled as suspicious behavior as the citizen attempts to evade surveillance. The system is also used to restrict travel in certain areas where police check the record of any individual wishing to travel through certain checkpoints, and if they are deemed a threat or suspicious in any way, they are not allowed to travel onwards. Furthermore, the movement of any individuals that have been deemed a threat will trigger an alarm to the police.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/25/islamist-china-tiananmen-beijing-attack>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/29/china-hunt-xinjiang-men-tiananmen-car-crash>

Identity cards are also used in order to restrict the population from purchasing simple goods such as sugar, gasoline, or computers by requiring the presentation of ID and the logging of that purchase in the state database to be analyzed for threat. Identification cards are also required to enter public places such as mosques, banks, and schools, each containing a massive system of surveillance. Furthermore, the presence of fast lanes or Green channels that are accessible to the Han Chinese and other ethnic groups that haven't been deemed a threat by the Chinese government further demonstrates the discriminatory aspects of this system.

### **DNA Sampling**

Another example of the Chinese government's surveillance was the systematic collection of DNA samples and fingerprints from its population especially focusing on the collection of Uighur Muslim samples. This statewide collection could then be utilized to chase down any Uyghurs who are resistant to the campaign of reeducation and reform that China has currently stated as its primary goal for the Uyghur people. The citizens who were required to give DNA samples were not informed of their future use and were told that they represent a health check-up. The program "Physicals for all" collected biometric data such as iris's fingerprints and DNA but also personal data from each citizen. The program was heavily coercive as well, with each citizen receiving a text or notification that the physicals were required and, in some cases utilizing police forces to bring people to the checkups.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/21/business/china-xinjiang-uyghur-dna-thermo-fisher.html>

## Present situation

### Uyghur Internment camps

Perhaps the most complicated and important aspect of this developing situation is the internment camps that China has constructed for the re-education of Uyghur Muslims. The goal of these camps is to change the mindset of the Uyghur people and to make them into better Chinese citizens by removing the independent and individualistic streak that is present in these people. Current estimates suggest that there are over 380 facilities in the Xinjiang region. China's official statements say that these camps are an attempt to combat poverty and religious extremism in the region. Foreign nations have likened these camps to the equivalent of concentration camps. Several new camps have reportedly been constructed in a higher security fashion suggesting a transition to a more prison-like environment. However, around 70 camps have seen the removal of perimeter fencing and high walls.<sup>6</sup> The camps supposedly utilize a mixture of legal theory, Chinese language, and other lessons to increase positive sentiments towards China within the Uyghur population. Former detainees, however, have described a different environment where detainees are treated brutally and punished heavily for their mistakes. The incorrect recitation of Chinese laws, for example, would result in a beating. Not running fast enough during exercise would result in being beat with a belt and being kicked. Several Detainees have independently described the same program of exercise, bullying, and brainwashing.<sup>78</sup>

There are also reports that Uyghur children are being separated from their parents and families as a result of these camps. One detainee describes a small child being dragged away from their mother and then eventually taken out of the camp. The BBC recently filed a report that hundreds of Uyghur children were being separated from their interned parents. China then sends the children to centralized care or boarding schools where they are provided with a similar reduction environment that the camps embody. Boarding schools represent an environment where it is easy to cut children off from their roots and to raise them separate from their ethnic identity.<sup>9</sup>

Women also face difficulty in these internment camps. Several female detainees have described a system of systemic and organized sexual abuse where masked men are brought into the camp in order to rape the female detainees. Some women have described Chinese men paying to participate in this system where female detainees were undressed and handcuffed in

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-54277430>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/China\\_hidden\\_camps](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/China_hidden_camps)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/24/china-has-built-380-internment-camps-in-xinjiang-study-finds>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-48899475>

order to make them more compliant.<sup>10</sup> Another issue faced by women in these camps is a policy of sterilization and a sudden drop in Xinjiang birth rate.

### **Sterilization programs**

A policy of sterilization is another aspect of these internment camps where Uighur women forcibly undergo the implantation of IUDs, surgical or chemical sterilization, or even abortion. Many of the women who have undergone these procedures describe a lack of any Han Chinese among the women waiting to be sterilized. Furthermore, the local authorities often threaten these women to ensure their cooperation by exerting pressure on family members or threatening arrest. This attempt by the Chinese government to prevent the birth of a new Uighur generation has been described as a form of genocide. Births in primarily Uighur regions have collapsed by 60%, while nationwide births fell only at a rate of 4%.<sup>11</sup>

China has confirmed the dropping birth rate but has completely denied any program of sterilization. China has claimed that any sterilization measures were completely voluntary, while official Chinese documents put the sterilization rate at 250 individuals per 100,000, a massive increase. Chinese officials have called any accusations of genocide “pure nonsense.”<sup>12</sup>

### **Continued research**

As you continue your research into this topic, I encourage you to consider many different sources and to expand your knowledge of each topic that I have provided a summary of. Because of the nature of this topic, your best sources will likely be unconfirmed reports in various international news journals or individual testimony from Uyghurs or state officials. I encourage you as well to learn about the history of the conflict to better understand the context of these issues. Delegates should have a wide range of research and knowledge without a heavy emphasis on a singular topic as our committee hopes to address many aspects of the situation, not only specifics. Furthermore, I would encourage you to look at the UN human rights charter, and the UN genocide charter as these documents should inform your policy moving forward. As with almost every topic that MUN discusses, the truth is not completely clear, and neither is the best solution; thus, I encourage each delegate to come up with creative and interesting solutions.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55794071>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/04/muslim-minority-teacher-50-tells-of-forced-sterilisation-in-xinjiang-china>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-uighur-muslim-population-forced-sterilisation-xinjiang-genocide-women-b512409.html>

### **Country Positions:**

This is a general guideline for each country's policy though each delegate should have a much deeper understanding.

#### China-

The Uyghurs are undergoing re educational programs due to religious extremism. The treatment of all detainees is pleasant and imperative to the security of the state.

#### France-

Has continually pressured China into improving conditions for Uyghur Muslims. France has called for the closure of internment camps.

#### Russia -

Strongly supports Chinese Uyghur policy. Russia stands in contrast to western criticism and supports the sovereignty of China in this policy.

#### United Kingdom

Incredibly critical of Chinese policy, has called for the closure of camps and further investigation of events in China.

#### United States

The most critical of the Chinese state has often compared the internment camps to concentration camps; however, present foreign policy under Biden could be changing.

#### Estonia

Critical of Chinese policy has joined an international statement expressing concern over the treatment of Uyghurs.

#### India

The government has remained fairly quiet on this issue; however, many Muslim citizens of India are protesting china's treatment of Uyghurs.

#### Ireland

Has condemned the actions of China, and the Irish people have also spoken out against Chinese policy. Has signed a letter against China's treatment of Uyghurs

#### Kenya-

Has also remained relatively quiet on this issue though many other African nations have spoken in defense of China

Mexico-

Has not been involved in this conflict but maintains diplomatic ties with China. However, it would be unlikely to support Chinese policy due to previous sentiments.

Niger-

Has not been overtly involved in the conflict but is a heavily Muslim nation and thus is unlikely to support china.

Norway-

Has denounced China's actions and has signed a letter criticizing Chinese policy. Is strongly against internment camps

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines-

No foreign policy on this issue; Not a majority Muslim nation but has close ties to the United States and the United Kingdom.

Tunisia-

No overt foreign policy; however, Tunisian Muslims have spoken out against china's treatment of Muslims.

Vietnam-

Wishes to protect the Uyghur Muslim community but cannot overly offend China.

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## Quick Links

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