

THE UNHRC



STUDY GUIDE

JB MUN 2025

LETTERS FROM THE EB

Director:

Dear Delegates,

I am Aarefa Patel and it gives me great pleasure to serve as your director for the United Nations Human Rights Council. Addressing “the Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang and the Protection of the Uyghur Minority.” I’m thrilled to see each of you take on this important and complex agenda, one that challenges us to think deeply about justice, culture, sovereignty, and the shared values that connect humanity.

I’ve always been a quiet student, the kind who preferred observing over speaking. But MUN completely changed that for me. It taught me how to voice my thoughts, defend my opinions, and step confidently into discussions I once would’ve avoided. Outside of MUN, I spend most of my free time creating art, it’s been my safe place since childhood, a space where I can think, relax, and express myself freely. When I need a break, I love unwinding with sitcoms, especially Friends, which never fails to make me laugh no matter how many times I’ve seen it. In committee, I truly value people who think smartly and creatively, those who bring calm, thoughtful solutions to the table rather than just raising their voices.

Every Mun is nerve-racking at first, when you have to negotiate, come up with multilateral solutions, and cooperate. Every time a new crisis is thrown at you, it’s a challenge, a new puzzle that you need to solve. Every 2v2, every on-the-spot speech, and every open floor seems scary; however, it’s this process that you will cherish after the mun, and the work you put in is what teaches you the most valuable skills. It’s important to enjoy this process and take it as a challenge to take in your stride to truly feel the essence of MUN.

The issue of human rights in Xinjiang is one of the most sensitive and debated topics in international relations today. It requires delegates to approach the matter with maturity, open-mindedness, and respect for both legal principles and cultural diversity. You’ll need to find the fine balance between protecting human rights and respecting state sovereignty — a challenge that mirrors real-world diplomacy.

Remember, MUN is not about who speaks the loudest, but about who listens, collaborates, and leads with purpose. Use this platform to test your ideas, sharpen your diplomacy, and discover your own voice in global affairs.

I encourage you to give your best, research thoroughly, engage respectfully, and most importantly, enjoy the experience. Every speech, every clause, and every discussion will help you grow as a thinker, speaker, and leader.

I look forward to seeing the creativity, passion, and intellect each of you brings to the table.

Warm Regards,
Aarefa Patel,
Director.

Assistant Directors:

Dear Delegates,

As Assistant Director of the UNHRC, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all delegates participating in this year's edition of the J.B. Petit Model United Nations.

While some delegates may be participating in their first ever conference, others may be looking to add to their extensive list of achievements. I would like to assure you that regardless of your experience, this committee will both test you and teach you.

Needless to say, delegates will be expected to display their tenacity every step of the way, from the quality of position papers to be submitted to the manner in which you lobby, deal with rapid crises and present and defend your stance in committee.

A perusal of this Study Guide is meant to be a mere commencement of the efforts delegates must take to shine in this committee. A tool to familiarise you with key concepts relating to the agenda, you must expand your research beyond this document until you attain a firm grasp upon the stance you will present for your portfolio.

The Executive Board wishes all delegates the very best of luck and eagerly anticipates to see the culmination of your efforts in November.

Regards,
Your Assistant Director,
Aditya Merchant

Dear Delegates,

My name is Kahaan Jalan, and it's an absolute privilege to serve as your Assistant Director for the United Nations Human Rights Council at JBMUN 2025. I'm currently pursuing the IB Diploma Programme with Math AAHL, Economics HL, and Physics HL subjects that constantly push me to become a better version of myself on the daily.

When I'm not debating or studying, I'm usually on the football pitch, playing padel, or rewatching episodes of Suits(because, let's be honest, Harvey Specter's confidence is hard not to admire). Over the past three years in MUN, I've come to appreciate something deeper than just procedure or policy: the beauty of diplomacy. The ability to hold strong opinions while respecting others, to disagree intelligently, and to build consensus out of disagreement, that's what keeps me coming back to MUN.

This year, our committee will address "Addressing the Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang and the Protection of the Uyghur Minority." It's a complex, sensitive, and deeply consequential issue. It sits at the crossroads of state sovereignty, human rights, and global politics. You'll be challenged to navigate competing narratives, question official positions, and find realistic solutions in an environment where the answers are rarely black and white.

In this room, confidence and calm will be your greatest allies. Delegates who not only know their stance but also listen, adapt, and build bridges will stand out. Remember, research forms your foundation, but diplomacy gives it strength. The best speeches don't just make a point, they move the debate forward.

The Executive Board and I are here to make sure this committee is intense, meaningful, and fun. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or want to discuss ideas. I look forward to watching each of you bring your country's position to life and shape a debate worthy of the agenda.

Warm regards,
Kahaan Jalan
Assistant Director

KEY TERMS

1. Chinese Communist Party (CCP): The founding and ruling party of the People's Republic of China. Established by Mao Zedong in 1949, it is now led by the party's General Secretary, Xi Jinping. A Marxist-Leninist party, it is a proponent of state capitalism and has led the country toward massive economic expansion.

2. Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region: A region in northwestern China home to a largely Muslim, Turkic population of 12 million, consisting primarily of the Uyghurs. It covers a sixth of China's land area and is the primary site of the CCP's controversial, "Strike Hard" campaign against alleged terrorism and separatism. Uyghur activists frequently refer to the region as "East Turkestan" while the Chinese government maintains it to remain an inseparable part of China.

3. Uyghurs: A Turkic ethnic minority group, primarily Muslim, which is native to Xinjiang. They speak the Uyghur language and have Islamic and Central Asian heritage. In recent years, they have been subjected to intense surveillance, religious restrictions and mass detention by the Chinese government. Uyghur diaspora are spread across Turkey and Central Asia.

4. Internment Camps: Detention facilities in Xinjiang dating back to 2017 where over a million Uyghur and other Muslim minorities have been detained without formal judicial charge. They are termed "Vocational Education and Training Centres" by the CCP, who claim they are aimed at deradicalization and job training. Detainees have alleged harsh conditions, indoctrination, and forced renunciation of their faith under torture and physical and psychological abuse.

5. Crimes Against Humanity: Weighty crimes, including mass murder, torture, enslavement, false imprisonment, enforced disappearance and persecution, committed as part of a systemic or widespread attack against a civilian populace. These are defined by the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute.

6. Genocide: Defined by the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, it is constituted by acts such as killing of, causing serious harms to, imposing sterilization upon, or forced relocation of children of a certain national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, with intent of its destruction, in whole or in part. It is the most severe violation of human rights and international law. Several countries have accused China of committing genocide against the Uyghurs, although China vehemently denies this.

7. **Forced Labour:** Work or services extracted from a person or group of persons under threat of coercion. Evidence has emerged of forced labour programmes within Xinjiang wherein detainees have been coerced to work in factories or on plantations after “graduating” from camps.

8. **Cultural Assimilation** (Sinicization): A co-ordinated system of state policy that aims at assimilating ethnic minorities into the larger, more prevalent culture Han Chinese culture. This encompasses practices that include the restriction of the Uyghur language, discouraging or banning Islamic religious practices like daily prayers or fasting, and the demolition or defacing of mosques and cemeteries. It is also referred to as “Cultural Genocide.”

9. **‘Surveillance State’:** A state, such as Xinjiang, with extensive and high-tech surveillance. This includes CCTV cameras with facial recognition, police checkpoints with biometric checks, smartphone monitoring, and a massive digital database (the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP)) to track and flag suspicious behaviour. Some reports claim that simply praying or using certain apps could trigger investigation or even detention.

10. **Counter-Terrorism:** The Chinese government positions its actions in Xinjiang as necessary measures to counter the ‘Three Evils’, namely - terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism.

11. **East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM):** A militant separatist group founded by Uyghur extremists, it seeks to establish the independent state of East Turkestan in Xinjiang. ETIM has been designated a terrorist organization by China. It is often blamed for violence in Xinjiang and also operates from neighboring Afghanistan and Pakistan, sometimes aligning with broader jihadist networks.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) stands as the UN system's foremost instrument for examining, debating, and advancing the global condition of human rights. Born in March 2006 through General Assembly Resolution 60/251, it succeeded the defunct Commission on Human Rights which was corrupted by political bias and lack of legitimacy. It is headquartered in Geneva and comprises 47 Member States, each of whom serve staggered three-year terms.

Mandate: The UNHRC's mission is to: "promote universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all." While it lacks some of the enforcement apparatus held by the Security Council, for instance - the ability to sanction or issue binding resolutions, it is tasked with naming, documenting and issuing recommendations. It functions through resolutions, investigative bodies and "Special Procedures" (individual experts and rapporteurs).

Procedure: The UNHRC usually convenes triannually, in March, June and September, for a total period of roughly ten weeks. Extraordinary sessions may be called during crises (at the request of a third of the member states). Sessions consist of the tabling of reports, presentations of inquiries and dialogue between states as well as experts. A central mechanism is the Universal Periodic Review (URP), which is a peer-review of every nations' human rights record every four to five years. China itself has recently undergone its fourth URP in January of 2024. We encourage you to look into the outcomes of the same. Decisions in the council are made by a vote satisfying a simple majority of members present.

Decision-Making and Resolutions: Resolutions may only be passed by a majority vote. These documents are formally non-binding, however, they are substantively consequential as they may condemn, advise or mandate internal inquiry. These resolutions often trigger investigations or fact-finding missions by the UNSC.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

The agenda to be set by this committee is “Addressing the Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang and the Protection of the Uyghur Minority.” The committee shall focus on the alarming reports and evidence of widespread violations of human rights against the Uyghur Muslim minority in China’s Xinjiang region. It shall seek to find ways to safeguard the rights and dignity of that community. Over the past several years, Xinjiang has become synonymous with what observers describe as an unfolding human rights crisis. Various accounts detail mass arbitrary detentions, religious and cultural oppression, forced labor, disproportionate surveillance, and even alleged genocide.

Nature of Abuses: Documentation by UN experts, human rights organizations, and journalists indicates a Chinese campaign of repression targeting Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups (such as Kazakhs) in Xinjiang, dating back to 2017. Important features of this include:

- 1. Mass Detention:** Over a million people are estimated to have been detained without due process. They are held in “re-education” camps. Within these facilities, detainees are forced to abandon Islamic practices, memorize Communist Party doctrine, and learn Mandarin Chinese. Some allege these camps to be overcrowded, and employ punitive discipline, physical and psychological torture, and others also report death in custody.
- 2. Cultural & Religious Oppression:** Outside the camps, everyday life for Uyghurs is tightly controlled. The government has banned visible expressions of faith (like beards or veils), restricted religious instruction and practice, and heavily policed language and cultural traditions. Mosques have been closed or demolished and Islamic architecture replaced with secular or Chinese symbols. Children of detained Uyghurs have been separated from their families and placed in state-run boarding schools, where they are raised in Chinese language and culture.
- 3. Unprecedented Surveillance:** The entire region is subject to an unprecedented level of high-tech surveillance. Xinjiang is described as a virtual police state. Surveillance cameras are frequent, several police checkpoints monitor the public, and big-data systems track personal behavior (from how often one prays to whom one contacts abroad). This environment means Uyghurs experience a constant fear of being flagged for “suspicious” activity and sent to a camp.

4. Forced Labor: Evidence has emerged of Uyghurs being used as forced labor in factories, often as a continuation of “training” from the camps or through coercive labor transfer programs.

5. Population Control: Xinjiang’s birth rates have plummeted in recent years. Reports attribute this to coercive birth control measures imposed on the Uyghur community. This includes forced sterilizations and IUD insertions as part of the state’s effort to reduce Uyghur population growth. These actions, if proven, raise the gravest concern as they could indicate an intent to biologically diminish an ethnic group - constituting clear grounds for convicting China of genocide.

The gravity of these abuses has been recognized at the highest international level, including the UN. In August 2022, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report stating that “serious human rights violations” have been committed in Xinjiang. It alleges the extent of arbitrary detentions, along with other abuses, may constitute crimes against humanity. Earlier, dozens of UN Special Rapporteurs termed the situation a “collective repression” of religious and ethnic minorities.

China’s Position: The Chinese government categorically denies any allegations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang. China declares that its policies in Xinjiang are focused on counter-terrorism, anti-extremism, and poverty alleviation. It credits these measures with preventing terrorism and improving the region’s stability and development. Chinese officials cite that Xinjiang has not experienced a terrorist attack in several years and bring up statistics such as rising GDP and improved living standards in the region. They characterize the internment camps as voluntary “vocational education and training centers” where participants learn job skills and “deradicalization”. They further claim that all trainees had “graduated” by 2019. Moreover, China frames international criticism as politically motivated “interference in China’s internal affairs”. They actively work to rally other countries in support of its narrative, much to their success. This makes the agenda highly controversial.

Potential Consequences: The situation in Xinjiang is widely regarded as one of the most pressing human rights challenges in the world today, often invoked alongside other mass atrocity situations such as North Korea, Eritrea, and Turkmenistan. For millions of Uyghurs, their freedom, culture, and in the most extreme view, their very existence as a people is at stake. If the reports of abuses are as severe as alleged, they represent a gross violation of internationally upheld human rights. This raises questions such as whether or not the UN and concerned states protect a minority group inside a sovereign state's borders? The issue also has broader implications upon the fight against Islamophobia and persecution of religious minorities, especially with the OIC states' unclear position. Moreover, Xinjiang, being an important centre in China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), may possibly have enabled China to leverage its economic partnerships to shield itself from censure, especially from Muslim-majority nations that are economically dependent on China. This agenda will therefore require delegates not only to address humanitarian and legal aspects, but also to navigate complicated bloc politics .

Committee's Role: As the UNHRC, this committee must deliberate upon these alleged abuses and seek cooperative, international strategies to address them. While the UNHRC cannot bind China to any action, it has the ability to issue strong recommendations, establish monitoring mechanisms, and steer international opinion on the issue. Delegates will need to ideate soft solutions that encourage China to change course. For example, proposing incentives for allowing independent investigations, releasing arbitrarily detained persons, and respecting Uyghurs' cultural rights. The urgency of this is underscored by testimonies from survivors and leaked official documents. Each passing day means more people in camps, more families torn apart, more heritage destroyed. In short, this agenda asks: How can the international community effectively respond to credible allegations of large-scale human rights abuses in Xinjiang and ensure the protection of the Uyghur minority's rights?

HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Historical Background: The region of Xinjiang (“New Frontier” in Chinese) has a long and complex history. It was formally incorporated into the Qing Dynasty in the 18th century. Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples, who are culturally and ethnically closer to Central Asians than to China’s Han majority, intermittently resisted Chinese rule. In the early 20th century, there were short-lived attempts at an independent East Turkestan state. After the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, Xinjiang was designated as an “Autonomous Region” in 1955, theoretically to acknowledge its non-Han nationalities. In practice, Beijing maintained tight control, encouraging Han Chinese migration into Xinjiang and exploiting its natural resources. During the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 76), Uyghurs, like other groups, suffered greatly; mosques were closed and religious leaders persecuted.

In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a brief period of relative cultural relaxation, but ethnic tensions simmered. The fall of the Soviet Union (creating independent Muslim-majority Central Asian states next door) and periodic local unrest kept Chinese authorities wary of separatism. By the 1990s, small Uyghur militant groups like the ETIM emerged and sporadic protests or uprisings occurred, e.g., violence in Baren in 1990 and Ghulja (Yining) in 1997, which were met with force. During this period, China began referring to Uyghur dissent as driven by “the three evils” (terrorism, separatism, extremism), linking local unrest to global Islamist movements.

A turning point came on July 5, 2009, when ethnic riots erupted in Urumqi, Xinjiang’s capital. What began as a peaceful protest by Uyghur students (over a brawl in Guangdong where Uyghur migrant workers were killed) escalated into the worst communal violence Xinjiang had seen in decades. Over several days, Uyghur rioters attacked Han Chinese civilians, and vigilante Han groups retaliated. Chinese official death tolls claimed around 200 people were killed (mostly Han Chinese) and many more injured. The riots shocked the nation and deeply scarred ethnic relations in Xinjiang. In the aftermath, the state flooded Urumqi with security forces. Dozens of Uyghurs were prosecuted and some executed for their roles. The government also clamped down on internet and communications in Xinjiang for months. The 2009 Urumqi events are widely seen as a catalyst for Beijing’s subsequent hardline approach: they convinced China’s leaders (including Xi Jinping, who became CCP General Secretary in 2012) that separatist sentiment in Xinjiang posed a serious threat to national unity.

In the early 2010s, a series of violent incidents attributed to Uyghur militants further galvanized Beijing’s resolve. These included a horrifying knife attack at a Kunming train station in 2014 and a suicide car attack in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square in late 2013 (both blamed on Xinjiang militants). In response, in May 2014 China launched a “Strike Hard against Violent Terrorism” campaign in Xinjiang. This campaign, personally endorsed by President Xi, brought a dramatic increase in securitization: thousands of additional troops and armed police were deployed; neighborhood police stations (“convenience police posts”) proliferated; and Xinjiang’s budget for internal security skyrocketed. New anti-extremism regulations were introduced that criminalized a wide range of behaviors deemed as signs of “religious extremism” or separatism.

Around 2016, the hardline approach intensified further with the arrival of a new Xinjiang Party Secretary, Chen Quanguo, transferred from Tibet (where he had enforced tough security measures). Chen rolled out a high-tech police state in Xinjiang. It was at this juncture (2017) that reports of large-scale detentions in re-education camps began to surface. Local authorities were ordered to achieve “transformation through education” of those infected with extremist or separatist thoughts. Over a short period, countless Uyghurs, from religious figures, intellectuals, to ordinary villagers, often entire families, disappeared into secretive facilities without trial.

By 2017-2018, the world began to learn of the scope of what was happening, through satellite imagery of expanding camps, testimony from escaped detainees, and leaked Chinese government documents. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in August 2018 cited reports of mass detention camps holding up to a million Uyghurs and urged China to shut them down. China at first denied the camps’ existence, then shifted to claiming they were benign training centers. Concurrently, policies of forced assimilation accelerated: officials instituted the “Becoming Family” program where Han Chinese cadres were sent to live in Uyghur homes as “relatives” to monitor and indoctrinate them. Mosques were bulldozed or repurposed; traditional Uyghur education was curtailed in favor of Mandarin-only schooling. There were credible reports of coerced sterilizations of Uyghur women and sharply declining birth rates in predominantly Uyghur areas (birth rates in Hotan and Kashgar prefectures fell by more than 60% from 2015 to 2018). Taken together, observers described these measures as an effort to socially re-engineer an entire population, destroying its cultural and religious identity while embedding it into the dominant Han Chinese fabric.

The revelations led to increasing international condemnation. Notably, in July 2019, a group of 22 countries wrote to the UN Human Rights Council condemning China’s actions, only to be countered by a letter from 50 other countries praising China’s “achievements” in Xinjiang. This divide illustrated how contentious the issue had become globally. Throughout 2020, investigative reporting (e.g., the China Cables leak of internal documents, and researcher Adrian Zenz’s reports) provided further evidence of the organized campaign from the top levels of the Chinese state. In response, the U.S. and some allies imposed sanctions on certain Chinese officials and companies. In late 2020, as the Trump administration ended, the U.S. Secretary of State officially declared China’s actions a “genocide.” The Chinese government vehemently rejected this, calling it the “lie of the century” and attacking the credibility of researchers like Zenz.

China claims that by late 2019 it had “graduated” most individuals from the vocational centers, suggesting the mass internment phase was winding down. However, many of those released from camps were reportedly moved into either forced labor assignments or formal prisons with long sentences on vague charges. Family members abroad still have no contact with many of their loved ones. In 2021, as international pressure mounted, China allowed a few tightly orchestrated visits to Xinjiang (for example, foreign diplomats and journalists on guided tours, who saw model facilities and were met by pre-screened Uyghurs declaring gratitude to the Party). In May 2022, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet visited China and Xinjiang, the first such visit in 17 years. She was given limited access and her trip drew criticism for being too controlled; her subsequent report, however, was critical and put a UN stamp on many allegations.

IMPORTANT BLOC POSITIONS

● People's Republic of China (PRC): China's stance is one of absolute denial of wrongdoing and proactive defense of its policies. The Chinese government maintains that there are no human rights abuses in Xinjiang, describing the allegations as Western propaganda intended to undermine China. Beijing asserts that its actions in Xinjiang are legitimate counter-terrorism and development measures. Chinese officials often repeat that "Xinjiang-related issues are not about human rights, but about fighting violence, terrorism and separatism." According to China's narrative, the region was plagued by terror attacks and religious extremism, and the government's response – including the vocational training centers – has been effective in restoring peace, stability, and improving livelihoods. China emphasizes outcomes like no terror incidents in the last several years, rising per-capita income in Xinjiang, and the eradication of extreme poverty in the region. It also frequently highlights that the Uyghur population has continued to grow (citing an increase from 2 million in the 1950s to over 12 million today) as supposed proof that claims of "genocide" are false. On the international stage, China has been actively working to shape the narrative: it invites select diplomats to visit Xinjiang (under controlled conditions), it speaks at the UNHRC to tout Xinjiang's "progress," and it leverages its influence to prevent any formal condemnatory action. China frames external criticism as interference in its internal affairs and has warned countries against "politicizing human rights." In this committee, China (if represented or when considering its viewpoint) will likely oppose any resolution that explicitly criticizes it, and instead push language about sovereignty, counter-terrorism, and the importance of "dialogue" over "confrontation." It's worth noting that China often finds ways to acknowledge some concern (for instance, it has said it's working to improve vocational training and economic opportunities for all ethnic groups in Xinjiang) without conceding any human rights violations. China will also point to its counter-narrative: e.g., organized testimonies of Uyghurs who praise the government, and claims that Uyghurs enjoy full freedoms and that the region's cultural heritage is protected (China showcases festivals, rebuilt mosques under state-approved imams, etc., albeit in a tightly controlled manner).

● **Allied Supporters of China (“Like-Minded” States):**

A sizable bloc of countries, particularly in the developing world, has echoed China’s position or at least refrained from criticism. These include Russia, most countries in Central and South Asia, many in the Middle East and North Africa, and numerous African nations. Their general stance is that Xinjiang is China’s internal matter and that external forces should not politicize human rights or interfere in China’s sovereignty. For example, in UN settings:

- In 2019, 37 countries initially wrote a letter supporting China’s Xinjiang policy, commending China’s “remarkable achievements” in counter-terrorism and deradicalization. By August 2019, that pro-China coalition grew to 50 states (including Russia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Nigeria, etc.) plus the State of Palestine. These states praised China for bringing security and development to Xinjiang and opposed what they called the “politicization of human rights”.
- In October 2022, at the UN General Assembly’s Third Committee, Cuba read a joint statement on behalf of 66 countries voicing support for China’s stance – emphasizing principles of sovereignty and non-interference, and rejecting “double standards” on human rights. Separately, Saudi Arabia led a statement on behalf of the six Gulf Cooperation Council states plus Yemen and Libya also backing China. And Venezuela, on behalf of 19 members of the “Group of Friends in Defense of the UN Charter” (a coalition of mostly authoritarian governments), likewise supported China and criticized unilateral sanctions by the West.

● **The motivations of these supporters vary:**

- Some, like Russia, align with China as a geopolitical partner countering Western influence; Russia itself faces Western criticism on human rights and thus stands by China in mutual solidarity. Moscow has outright praised China’s handling of “extremism” and echoed the narrative that the West is using Xinjiang to meddle .
- Many Muslim-majority countries (discussed below) have significant economic ties with China (investments, infrastructure, energy projects via the BRI) and thus have been reluctant to jeopardize relations by criticizing Beijing.
- Numerous African and Asian states see China as a crucial development partner and also subscribe to a principle that each country’s human rights issues should be addressed without finger-pointing (often because they dislike being criticized themselves). They often stress the universality and indivisibility of human rights, including the importance of development and security – essentially mirroring China’s talking points that economic development is a human right and that Xinjiang’s people are now safer and more prosperous.

● In this committee, expect these countries to resist any strong action against China. They may push amendments to water down language (e.g., replacing “condemn” with “note,” removing the name “China” in resolutions, or adding praise for China’s economic development in Xinjiang). They will likely invoke the need for “respectful dialogue” and highlight China’s invitation of Bachelet as a sign of openness. State sovereignty and the non-interference principle will be their mantra. However, it’s important to note some nuance: a few of these states might privately have concerns about the reports from Xinjiang but feel bound by diplomatic or economic considerations to publicly back China. Delegates representing such countries will have to carefully balance any humanitarian concern with their official government line.

● Western Democracies and Allies (Critical of China): On the opposite side, a coalition of mostly Western and allied countries has been strongly critical of China’s actions in Xinjiang. This bloc includes the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the European Union member states, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and several others (often referred to as “the West and like-minded”). Their position is that the treatment of Uyghurs amounts to egregious human rights violations that the international community cannot ignore. They have used stark language: the U.S. government and legislatures in Canada, the UK, the Netherlands, Lithuania and others have formally declared that China’s policies in Xinjiang constitute genocide and crimes against humanity. The European Parliament in June 2022 passed a resolution recognizing that “the violence perpetrated by the [Chinese] authorities against the Uyghurs” is “crimes against humanity” and that there is a “serious risk of genocide.” Many of these countries have also taken concrete actions:

- The United States has imposed Global Magnitsky Act sanctions on several Chinese officials implicated in Xinjiang abuses (including Xinjiang’s Party Secretary Chen Quanguo) and banned imports of goods from Xinjiang via the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (assuming all such goods are tainted by forced labor unless proven otherwise). The U.S. State Department spearheaded the international criticism, calling China’s campaign a “genocide” (in January 2021) and urging international partners to act.
- Canada, the United Kingdom, and the European Union coordinated in March 2021 to sanction a handful of Chinese officials and security entities for Xinjiang abuses. (China retaliated fiercely with its own sanctions on European parliamentarians, researchers, and entities.)
- Countries like Germany and France have voiced strong concern as well. While the EU as a whole tries to maintain some diplomatic engagement with China, its member states delivered joint statements at the UN (for example, France and Germany have often spoken on behalf of the EU and others at the UNHRC). In June 2021, Canada (on behalf of 44 countries) delivered a statement urging China to allow unfettered access to Xinjiang and implement CERD recommendations.
- Japan has shifted in recent years from a quieter stance to a more critical one, with its parliament adopting a resolution expressing concern for Uyghurs. Turkey, which has ethnic and cultural ties to the Uyghurs, has at times criticized China – Turkish officials in early 2019 called the treatment of Uyghurs “a great shame for humanity,” and public sentiment in Turkey is sympathetic to Uyghurs. However, Turkey’s position has been inconsistent, balancing its criticism with efforts not to rupture relations with Beijing (recently Turkey has been more muted as it seeks Chinese investment).

● The Western bloc's demands include: that China close the camps, release all arbitrarily detained individuals, account for the fate of missing Uyghurs, stop measures that restrict Uyghur births or family unity, and allow independent international investigations. They also call on China to cooperate with UN mechanisms (such as granting full access to the new High Commissioner and Special Rapporteurs). In October 2022, a record 50 countries (mostly this Western/allied group, joined by some Latin American and other states) issued a joint statement at the UN GA urging discussion of the Xinjiang report and calling on China to comply with its international human rights obligations.

In terms of tone, these countries have used some of the harshest rhetoric, openly accusing China of “persecution,” “institutionalized repression,” and “atrocities.” They frame the issue as a test for the international human rights system, arguing that even a powerful state must be held accountable when crimes against humanity may be occurring. Delegates from these countries will likely push for a robust response: a strong resolution that condemns the abuses, possibly references the findings of genocide/crimes against humanity, and establishes some form of monitoring or reporting on the situation. They will emphasize the credibility of evidence (including the UN's own report) and the moral imperative to act. They may also bring up the failure of the UNHRC to act in 2022 as a stain on the Council's credibility that must be rectified. However, they will need to be tactful in negotiating language to win over or at least neutralize opposition from China's supporters. Likely, they will underscore that this is not about attacking China's sovereignty but about upholding universal human rights standards to which China has committed. Some might suggest compromises like an investigation with China's consent or a special envoy who works cooperatively – anything to get broader buy-in. Sanctions or punitive measures per se would be outside the UNHRC's remit, but these countries might allude to unilateral measures (like import bans on forced-labor goods) as something the international community is undertaking in parallel.

● Muslim-Majority Nations and the OIC: One of the most striking aspects of the Xinjiang issue has been the response of the Islamic world. Despite the fact that Uyghurs are Muslims facing religious repression (mosques being closed, Qurans confiscated, imams imprisoned), the majority of Muslim-majority countries have not condemned China – in fact, many have sided with Beijing. This includes Arab states (such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt), South Asian states like Pakistan and Bangladesh, and Central Asian neighbors. In 2019, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) – which represents 57 Muslim-majority countries – adopted a resolution that praised China’s efforts in Xinjiang in the context of caring for its Muslim citizens. The OIC commended China for providing care to Muslims and indicated a desire for greater cooperation with China, pointedly omitting any criticism. This stance shocked many human rights observers, given the dissonance with reports of widespread mosque destruction and bans on Islamic practices. It’s widely believed that geopolitical and economic factors heavily influenced this: China is a major investor and political partner across the Islamic world (from Pakistan’s infrastructure to Saudi Arabia’s energy partnerships). Some leaders, like Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, explicitly defended China by saying “China has the right to take anti-terrorism and de-extremism measures to safeguard national security” during a 2019 visit. Pakistan’s former ambassador in Geneva likewise was a leading voice backing China at the UN, despite Pakistan’s role as a vocal defender of Muslims internationally on other issues. These countries often argue that outsiders are politicizing the Uyghur issue to antagonize China, and they highlight China’s explanation that the camps are vocational schools. It’s notable that a few OIC members did break consensus: for instance, Turkey (after some hesitation) co-sponsored one of the critical statements at the UN in recent years, and Indonesia – while not openly condemning China – privately expressed concerns and at times pushed China to treat Muslims better (Indonesia’s mass Muslim organizations have called for an end to Uyghur persecution). Malaysia under some leaders quietly allowed Uyghur refugees safe passage instead of deporting them to China, bucking China’s requests.

Overall, however, the important bloc position here is that of the pro-China Muslim states: they are likely to either actively support China’s narrative (e.g., praising China’s “development” in Xinjiang, as Emirati and Saudi delegates have done in UN forums) or at least remain neutral/silent. In a UNHRC context, they might advocate for any resolution to be stripped of direct criticism and instead contain benign language urging “all states to combat extremism while respecting human rights” without naming China. Their stance often invokes the principle of non-interference and respect for national sovereignty, echoing China’s view. This creates a stark moral question: can the “collective voice of the Muslim world” continue to stay quiet in the face of what many call persecution of a Muslim minority? Some Muslim-majority countries (like Albania, Turkey, Bosnia – note Albania and Bosnia actually joined the critical statements – and Kazakhstan to an extent) have nuanced or shifting positions. Delegates from Muslim countries have a potentially pivotal role: they could use their credibility to either challenge China (which would carry moral weight) or to shield China (which undercuts the narrative of this being an anti-Islam campaign). Their internal politics may affect this (for instance, public opinion in many Muslim countries is sympathetic to Uyghurs, even if governments are not, leading to a quiet diplomatic balancing act).

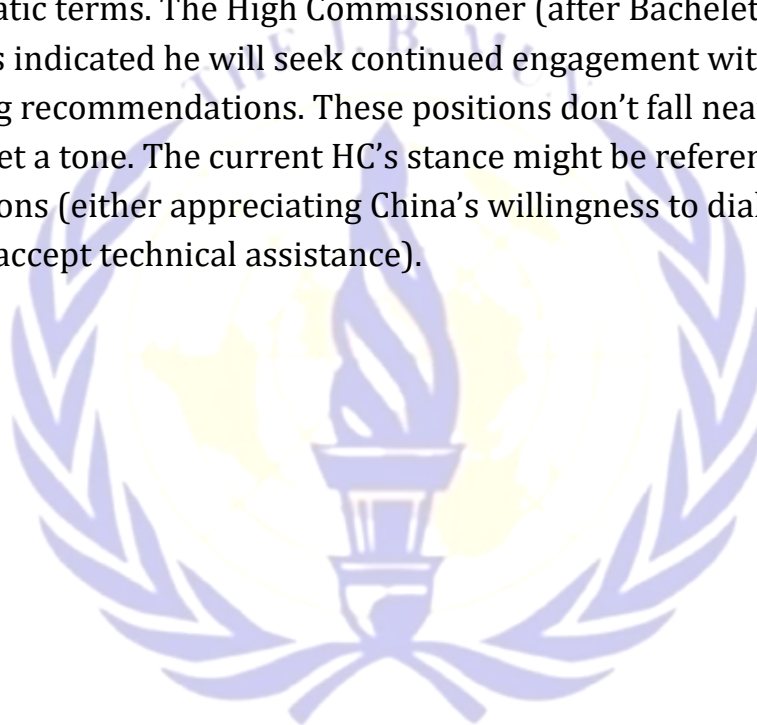
● Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and Developing Countries at Large: Beyond the specific East-West or Muslim-world divides, there is a large group of developing countries (in Asia, Africa, Latin America) whose positions range from supportive of China to passive/undecided. Many of these states see this issue through a political lens: they are wary of setting precedents for international scrutiny of domestic issues (since some have their own minority or human rights issues). They also observe the great power rivalry aspects – some resent what they perceive as Western countries’ selective focus (arguing that Western powers themselves have human rights issues, or that other crises deserve equal attention). China has assiduously courted these countries with the narrative that Western human rights criticism is a tool to contain rising developing powers. This “Like-Minded Group” of states often votes as a block in the HRC. For example, when the motion to debate Xinjiang at the HRC was put forward in October 2022, besides OIC and Russia/China, countries like Bolivia, Cuba, Eritrea, Cameroon, Indonesia, Namibia, Senegal, Venezuela, Vietnam and others voted against or abstained – defeating the motion. Only a narrow group of mostly Western and a few Latin American/African states voted in favor. The failure of that vote (19 against vs 17 for) showed how China had successfully convinced many in the Global South to either support it or at least not challenge it.

In bloc terms, this means any strong action on Xinjiang at the UNHRC will require persuading some of these non-aligned states to support (or at least abstain and not oppose). Their position is not always one of enthusiastic support for China, but often caution – they place a premium on sovereignty and may only be swayed by arguments that this is an extraordinary situation of possible crimes against humanity (thus warranting UN attention) and not a mere “naming and shaming.” Some also want to ensure that human rights remains a cooperative dialogue rather than punitive. Delegates from such countries might take the floor to urge a “depoliticized” approach – e.g., perhaps calling on China to implement recommendations in cooperation with the UN but opposing any condemnatory language or investigative mechanism. They might propose alternative text that “acknowledges China’s progress in economic development of Xinjiang” or welcomes China’s stated commitments, to balance a resolution. Essentially, they could act as swing votes and mediators.

● International Human Rights Organizations (Observers/NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch): While not states, these actors have significant influence on shaping the discourse. Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (HRW) have conducted extensive research and advocacy on Xinjiang, concluding that China's conduct amounts to crimes against humanity (HRW) and possibly genocide. Amnesty in 2021 released a comprehensive report calling it a "dystopian hellscape" and launched the #FreeXinjiangDetainees campaign profiling individuals detained. HRW has jointly documented the abuses with Stanford's clinic and has been calling for a UN inquiry since 2020. These NGOs strongly criticize countries that shield China; for instance, Amnesty's Secretary-General said the UNHRC's failure to act "protects the perpetrators... rather than the victims". In the UNHRC, NGOs have the opportunity to deliver briefings or statements as observers. We can expect that if NGO input is considered, it will be uncompromising in urging accountability: they support measures like a UN special rapporteur on China or a fact-finding mission. They reject China's narrative and often provide detailed evidence to delegations. While they don't have a vote, their moral stance influences the debate. For delegates in this committee, NGO reports are valuable sources of information and will likely be cited (as we have done throughout this guide) to substantiate claims of abuse. In terms of bloc dynamics, NGOs align with the Western bloc in calls for action, but they often push even further (they would want names named and independent investigations launched).

● Other Actors:

- The European Union (EU) as a bloc (beyond individual members) has taken a strong line. The EU Parliament resolutions (as noted) have recognized the atrocities, and the EU has an import ban in progress for forced labor goods. Yet, key EU members also have economic ties with China, making them cautious in purely bilateral contexts. In the UN, EU states have consistently joined joint statements condemning China.
- United Nations Leadership: The UN Secretary-General and the High Commissioner are somewhat constrained but have roles. Guterres has engaged China quietly; he raised the issue privately and has publicly called on China to follow through on the UN report's recommendations, albeit in diplomatic terms. The High Commissioner (after Bachelet, now Volker Türk) has indicated he will seek continued engagement with China on implementing recommendations. These positions don't fall neatly into blocs, but they set a tone. The current HC's stance might be referenced by various delegations (either appreciating China's willingness to dialogue or urging China to accept technical assistance).



Past UN and International Action

● **UN Treaty Bodies – Early Warnings (2018):** One of the first public international critiques came from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in August 2018. During China’s periodic review, CERD experts voiced alarm at “credible reports” that hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs were being detained in extrajudicial camps in Xinjiang. The committee’s concluding observations formally urged China to halt arbitrary detentions and implement eight recommendations related to Xinjiang – including releasing detainees and ensuring no discrimination against Uyghurs. China was asked to report back quickly on its progress. (China responded by denying the existence of “re-education camps,” but soon after acknowledged “vocational training centers.”) This CERD review was significant as it put the issue on the UN record early.

● **Joint Letters at the UN Human Rights Council (2019):** In July 2019, a pivotal diplomatic exchange occurred at the Human Rights Council. First, 22 countries (mostly European states, Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand) sent a joint letter to the HRC President condemning China’s mass detention of Uyghurs and calling on China to allow unfettered access to Xinjiang for UN observers. This letter expressed concern about “credible reports of arbitrary detention in large-scale detention facilities” and urged China to uphold its international commitments. Just days later, China coordinated a counter-letter, delivered by Belarus, on behalf of 37 states praising China’s Xinjiang policies. This second letter asserted that China’s actions were justified for counter-terrorism, and it “commend[ed] China’s remarkable achievements in protecting human rights through development,” while opposing “politicizing human rights”. By the end of that month, the pro-China letter’s signatories grew to 50 states (after Qatar withdrew, but others added, plus the Palestinian Authority). These dueling letters – the “22 vs. 50” split – marked an unprecedented divide at the Council. Although they were not formal resolutions, they set the tone for all subsequent UN discussions: a bloc of predominantly Western democracies versus a larger bloc of China-aligned states.

● UN Special Procedures Appeal (June 2020): In an extraordinary move, 50 UN Special Procedures mandate-holders (independent human rights experts, such as Special Rapporteurs) issued a joint statement on 26 June 2020 calling attention to China's human rights record. They highlighted a "systematic repression" of religious and ethnic minorities in Xinjiang (and Tibet), and referenced the mass detention, surveillance, and cultural erasure of Uyghurs. The experts called for several actions: they urged the Human Rights Council to hold a special session on China, to establish an independent UN mechanism (such as a special rapporteur or panel) to monitor China, and they implored UN Secretary-General António Guterres to appoint a special envoy on the issue. This was a notable moment – never before had so many UN experts collectively spoken out against a Permanent Member of the UN in this way. Human Rights Watch described it as "throwing down the gauntlet" to both China and UN member states to act. However, despite this powerful appeal, no special session on China was convened (largely due to insufficient support among states). Nonetheless, the Special Procedures' intervention added considerable moral weight and set the stage for later initiatives.

● High-Level Statements and Bilateral Sanctions (2020–2021): Outside the UN, countries began taking their own measures:

- In 2020, the U.S. enacted the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, sanctioning Chinese officials, and in 2021 its Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act banning Xinjiang goods. The U.S. also declared that China's actions constitute genocide (Jan 2021).
- In March 2021, the European Union, UK, U.S., and Canada in a coordinated effort sanctioned several Chinese officials/entities (the first such EU sanctions on China since 1989). China retaliated with its own sanctions, causing diplomatic rifts (especially between the EU and China).
- Numerous national parliaments passed non-binding motions condemning the Uyghur abuses as genocide or crimes against humanity (e.g., in Canada, Netherlands, UK, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Belgium – as noted by the World Uyghur Congress, "the tenth legislative body worldwide" did so by mid-2022).
- A diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics was undertaken by the U.S., UK, Canada, Australia, and others, explicitly citing Xinjiang's human rights situation as the reason

● While these are not UN actions, they form part of the international response framework. They increased pressure on China and signaled a growing consensus among liberal democracies of disapproval and willingness to act (e.g., barring imports made with forced labor is a tangible measure).

● UN Human Rights Council Joint Statements (2020, 2021, 2022): Building on 2019, cross-regional groups continued raising Xinjiang at the UN:

○ Oct 2020: At the UN General Assembly Third Committee, 39 countries (including many European states, plus Japan, U.S., etc.) made a joint statement strongly criticising China's conduct in Xinjiang (as well as Hong Kong). In response, 45 countries (led by Cuba) made a counter-statement supporting China.

○ June 2021 (HRC 47th Session): Canada read a joint statement on behalf of 44 countries urging China to allow immediate access to Xinjiang, citing reports of a million detained, widespread surveillance, torture, forced sterilization, etc. This statement explicitly called on China to implement CERD's recommendations and cooperate with the High Commissioner. Signatories spanned North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific and even some Muslim-majority nations like Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina – notably, still none of the major Muslim countries from the Middle East or Africa.

○ Oct 2022 (UNGA Third Committee): Following the release of the UN Xinjiang report, Canada (on behalf of 50 countries) delivered a strongly worded statement in New York. This welcomed the High Commissioner's report and repeated its findings that the abuses may constitute crimes against humanity. It urged China to implement the report's recommendations – notably the release of arbitrarily detained persons – and called for further attention to Xinjiang. This was the largest joint statement to date on Xinjiang. Conversely, the pro-China camp grew as well: at the same meeting, Cuba (66 countries), Saudi Arabia (on behalf of GCC+), and Venezuela (on behalf of 19 "Friends of the Charter") all spoke defending China, lauding China's development efforts and slamming interference. China's ability to garner 66 supporters (including many OIC members and African states) to speak for it was noted by its envoy as a triumph of the "vast majority of Member States" opposing Western "smear campaigns".

● **UN High Commissioner's Visit (May 2022):** After years of requesting access, UN High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet visited China from 23–28 May 2022, including a short, controlled trip to Xinjiang. Bachelet described the visit “not as an investigation” but as an opportunity for direct dialogue with senior Chinese leaders. During the visit, she raised concerns about the application of counter-terrorism measures and their impact on human rights in Xinjiang, and urged China to review its policies to ensure they comply with international standards. She also visited a prison and a former “VETC” (camp) in Kashgar under supervision. In her end-of-mission statement, Bachelet cautiously acknowledged improvements in poverty reduction but stressed that independent scrutiny was needed and that allegations of human rights violations required investigation. Her visit was criticized by some Western officials and NGOs as being tightly stage-managed by China (state media quoted her seeming to praise China, though her office later clarified some remarks were taken out of context). Nonetheless, the visit kept engagement open and set the stage for the release of her office's report.

● **OHCHR Assessment Report (31 August 2022):** In a significant development, on her final day in office, High Commissioner Bachelet released the long-awaited “Assessment of human rights concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.” This detailed 45-page UN report found that the Chinese government's actions in Xinjiang – including arbitrary mass detention, restrictive policies targeting Uyghur culture and religion, credible allegations of torture, sexual violence, and forced labor – “may constitute international crimes, in particular crimes against humanity.” It called the extent of arbitrary detentions “unparalleled” and expressed concern over credible reports of forced sterilizations. The report made concrete recommendations: it urged China to release all those detained in training centers or prisons without a legitimate basis, to clarify the whereabouts of missing Uyghurs to their families, to suspend any discriminatory population control measures, and to invite independent experts to Xinjiang. It also called on businesses to exercise due diligence to ensure supply chains are free of forced labor. The release of this report was a watershed – it gave UN imprimatur to concerns activists had raised for years. China attempted to block its release and, after its publication, vehemently rejected the findings, issuing its own lengthy rebuttal. From a “past action” perspective, this report is now a key reference document for any UN discussion on Xinjiang.

● **UN Human Rights Council Vote (October 2022):** Following the OHCHR report, a group of states led by Western countries attempted a procedural move at the Human Rights Council's 51st session: they submitted a draft decision (A/HRC/51/L.6) simply to hold a debate at the Council's next session on the human rights situation in Xinjiang in light of the report. This modest proposal (not even a commission of inquiry, just a debate) was put to a vote on 6 October 2022. In a historic result, the Council rejected the proposal 19–17 (with 11 abstentions). It was only the second time ever that the HRC voted down a draft decision. Countries like Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico and others abstained, while decisive no votes came from e.g. Pakistan, Qatar, UAE, Kazakhstan, and many African states – reflecting China's lobbying. This failure was seen as a setback for accountability, with Amnesty International stating that the Council was “ignoring the findings of its own human rights office”. However, supporters noted the slim margin and vowed to keep the issue alive. The vote showed the political hurdle: any stronger resolution (like establishing a monitor) would likely also face defeat under current dynamics. Still, the mere fact this vote happened kept Xinjiang on the HRC's agenda informally, and it does not preclude re-introducing the issue in future sessions as alliances shift or new evidence emerges.

● **Engagement with UN Labor Agency (ILO):** There has also been action in the context of forced labor allegations. In Feb 2022, at the International Labour Organization, worker representatives filed a complaint about Xinjiang. In June 2022, an ILO committee noted “deep concern” over Xinjiang forced labor claims and urged China to invite a technical advisory mission. China in 2022 ratified two ILO Conventions on Forced Labor (No. 29 and 105) – presumably to show it opposes forced labor – but as of mid-2022 had not provided evidence of compliance. The ILO's move is ongoing (China may face more scrutiny at the ILO governing body meetings). This strand of action complements UN human rights efforts by tackling the labor rights dimension.

● **International Court of Justice (ICJ) Attempt:** In July 2020, a consortium of Uyghur activist groups filed a complaint urging the International Criminal Court to investigate Chinese officials for genocide and crimes against humanity. The ICC, however, said it lacked jurisdiction since most alleged crimes occurred in China (a non-State-party). Separately, no state has yet initiated a case against China at the ICJ under the Genocide Convention – unlike the Gambia did against Myanmar for the Rohingya. The lack of such a case could be due to China's likely non-compliance and the political weight needed for a state-to-state lawsuit. Thus, legal avenues remain mostly unpursued at the UN level (likely due to China's clout and jurisdictional issues).

Important Resolutions

Despite extensive discussion, there have been no UN Security Council or General Assembly resolutions directly addressing the human rights situation in Xinjiang, largely due to China's influence and veto power. However, several resolutions and formal decisions by various bodies are relevant to this issue:

- **UN General Assembly Resolution 260 A (III) – Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948):** This foundational treaty, which China has ratified, defines genocide and obligates states to prevent and punish it. While no formal legal determination of genocide in Xinjiang has been made at the UN, the Genocide Convention provides a frame of reference often invoked by states accusing China of genocide. It's a reminder that if the international community believes a genocide is occurring or at serious risk, it has a duty under international law to act. (This is cited in many parliamentary resolutions listed below).
- **UN Human Rights Council Draft Decision A/HRC/51/L.6 (2022):** This was the proposal to hold a debate on Xinjiang, tabled at the 51st HRC session. In October 2022, it was rejected by vote (19 against, 17 for, 11 abstentions). While not a resolution per se (it was a procedural decision), this is an important official record. Its failure showed the divisions in the Council, and it is effectively a past resolution attempt that informs how future efforts might be calibrated. The draft decision was straightforward, simply expressing concern at the allegations in the High Commissioner's report and deciding to discuss them – yet it did not pass. No other HRC resolution on China's human rights has ever been adopted; China each year manages to avoid country-specific resolutions against it.
- **OIC Council of Foreign Ministers Resolution (March 2019):** At the OIC's 46th session (Abu Dhabi, 2019), a resolution on "Safeguarding the Rights of Muslim Communities in Non-Member States" included language commending China. It praised China's efforts in providing care to its Muslim citizens and noted the OIC's appreciation for China's explanation of the situation in Xinjiang. It pointedly did not express concern or criticism. This resolution effectively gave a green light (or at least a cover) to OIC members to support China's narrative. It has been heavily criticized by human rights groups as a betrayal of the Uyghurs. From a UN perspective, while the OIC resolution is not a UN resolution, the OIC's stance influences the voting of its member states in UN fora.

● **European Parliament Resolutions:** The European Parliament has passed multiple resolutions on Uyghurs:

- In December 2019, it condemned China's mass detention camps.
- In June 2021, it froze the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment in response to sanctions related to Uyghurs.
- Most notably, on 9 June 2022, the European Parliament adopted a resolution that "officially recognizes that the Chinese government's abuses in Xinjiang constitute crimes against humanity and present a serious risk of genocide." It also called for tough measures including banning products made with forced labor from Xinjiang. While this is an EU body resolution (not UN), it reflects the strongest condemnation at a multinational level and has persuasive value. The resolution passed with overwhelming support in the EU Parliament.
- Parliaments of several countries (UK, Canada, Netherlands, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Belgium, France, Ireland as noted in the WUC press release, as well as others like Germany's Bundestag more recently) have passed resolutions or motions condemning the treatment of Uyghurs, some explicitly labeling it genocide. These are not binding on their governments but indicate a broad consensus in democratic societies.

● **UN Human Rights Council Thematic Resolutions:** While none specifically name China, there are relevant thematic resolutions. For instance:

- HRC Resolution 47/21 (2021) on "promoting mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of human rights" – sponsored by China – emphasizes dialogue and cooperation over monitoring (China often cites this to argue against "confrontational" approaches).
- HRC Resolution 16/18 (2011) on "Combating intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief" – championed by OIC and Western states together – commits states to combat religious hatred. One could argue China's actions violate this spirit, though China claims it is fighting extremism not religion.
- Third Committee (UNGA) resolutions on religious freedom or minority rights are passed annually (for example, resolutions upholding the Declaration on Minority Rights). None single out China, but they affirm principles that apply (e.g., that states must protect minority cultures and refrain from discrimination).

● Security Council and Others: The UN Security Council has not addressed Xinjiang – any attempt would be vetoed by China. However, in September 2020 the then U.S. Ambassador arranged an informal UNSC meeting on Uyghurs (an Arria-formula meeting) to raise awareness among members. No formal outcome came of it. Similarly, the UN's counter-terrorism bodies have not taken up the issue directly (China's influence there prevents it).



QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

1. How can the UNHRC ensure independent investigation and verification of human rights abuses in Xinjiang?
2. What concrete steps must China take to release arbitrarily detained individuals and close all extrajudicial “re-education” centers?
3. How can the international community guarantee unfettered access to Xinjiang for UN officials, humanitarian agencies, and journalists?
4. What mechanisms can be established to monitor and report on ongoing human rights conditions in Xinjiang?
5. How should the UN and Member States protect Uyghur refugees and uphold the principle of non-refoulement?
6. What measures can prevent forced labor and coerced population control, ensuring accountability within global supply chains?
7. How can the Council promote preservation of Uyghur culture, religion, and language within China’s legal framework?
8. In what ways can China’s sovereignty be respected while still ensuring compliance with international human rights obligations?
9. What role should regional and religious organizations (such as the OIC and ASEAN) play in constructive engagement and oversight?
10. What form of follow-up mechanism or periodic review should the UNHRC establish to track implementation of recommendations and progress on Uyghur protection?

COMMITTEE MATRIX

Bold indicates a current member state of the UNHRC. All other allocations shall function in the capacity of observers.

1. People's Republic of China
2. United States of America
3. Amnesty International
4. Russian Federation
5. European Union
6. Democratic People's Republic of Korea
7. Human Rights Watch
8. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
9. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
10. State of Qatar
11. French Republic
12. Republic of Türkiye
13. Federal Republic of Germany
14. Organization of Islamic Cooperation
15. State of Palestine
16. Republic of Korea
17. Japan
18. Federative Republic of Brazil
19. Republic of Cuba
20. Kingdom of Morocco
21. Republic of South Africa
22. United Mexican States
23. Republic of the Sudan
24. People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
25. Swiss Confederation
26. Plurinational State of Bolivia
27. Republic of Indonesia
28. Kingdom of the Netherlands
29. Kingdom of Belgium
30. People's Republic of Bangladesh
31. Republic of Côte d'Ivoire
32. Kingdom of Spain
33. Kingdom of Thailand
34. State of Kuwait
35. Socialist Republic of Vietnam
36. Republic of Maldives
37. Republic of Iceland
38. Czech Republic
39. Georgia
40. Republic of Costa Rica



POSITION PAPERS

Position Papers are vital for delegates to make the stance of your country and foreign policy clear to the Executive Board. A position paper must be succinct and address the issue at hand, the response of your country to the issue at hand, as well as your own unique solutions that you wish to contribute to the committee.

All position papers must be in font Times New Roman, size 12.

Please note that the deadline for submission of position papers is 4th November 2025.

It must be submitted to ebforunhrc@gmail.com in PDF format.

