

## **Written Testimony for the USCIRF Hearing *A Religious Minority Enslaved: Uyghur Forced Labor and Complicity of U.S. Companies***

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After the short-term strategy of subjecting Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Turkic ethnic minorities in Xinjiang to internment in re-education camps, Beijing is increasingly shifting into a longer-term strategy of coercive assimilation.

The state's long-term stability maintenance strategy in Xinjiang is predicated upon a perverse and extremely intrusive combination of forced or at least involuntary training and labor, intergenerational separation and social control over family units. Much of this is being implemented under the heading and guise of "poverty alleviation".

Through two distinct programs, the state seeks to place the vast majority of adult Uyghurs and other minority populations, both men and women, into different forms of coercive or at least involuntary, labor-intensive factory work. The first program is the transfer of agricultural rural surplus laborers into secondary or tertiary sector work. The second program is to release those in vocational internment camps into forced labor. This is achieved through a combination of internment camp workshops, large industrial parks, and village-based satellite factories.

While the parents are being herded into full-time work, their children are put into full-time education and training settings. This includes children below preschool age (infants and toddlers), so that ethnic minority women are being "liberated" and "freed" to engage in full-time wage labor. Notably, both factory and educational settings are essentially state-controlled environments that facilitate ongoing political indoctrination while barring religious practices. As a result, the dissolution of traditional, religious and family life is only a matter of time. The targeted use of village work teams and village-based satellite factories means that these "poverty alleviation" and social re-engineering projects amount to a scheme that penetrates every corner of ethnic minority society with unprecedented pervasiveness.

In addition, labor transfers constitute forcible transfers of civilian populations in the form of intentional displacements that are designed to tear apart families and communities, reduce population density, and alter a regions demographic composition in order to facilitate the state's goals. Factory parks and satellite factories are closed and surveilled, even securitized environments. Documents describing the transfer of ethnic minorities to other parts of China state that they are not permitted to practice their religion. These full-time labor-intensive work environments prevent religious practice through a lack of related religious facilities and mandatory work weeks that often extend from Monday to Saturdays, mandating work on

Fridays. These intentionally secular work environments also preclude other religious practices such as praying or fasting. The tearing apart of family and community units further disrupts the practice and transmission of religiosity and other cultural practices.

In addition, in order to “liberate” minorities to participate in labor transfer, the state has arranged for the centralized care of children and elderly in state-run full-time boarding and care facilities. All of this effectively inhibits the intergenerational transmission of culture, religion and language by reducing joint family time and instead drastically increasing parents’ and children’s exposure to secular government teaching and training.

Most recently, the Nankai Report, a non-public document compiled by Chinese academics, openly testifies to the fact that Xinjiang’s labor transfer program is designed to assimilate Uyghurs and reduce their population density in their traditional heartland. Numerous other reports produced by Chinese academics describe labor transfers as a crucial means to “crack open the solidified [Uyghur] society” and to mitigate the negative impact of religion. They state that lax family planning policies produced a “severely excessive” number of Uyghur rural surplus laborers that now constitute a “latent threat to the current regime.”

The achievement of all these goals through labor is highly consistent with CCP ideology. Labor is imputed with a transformative power that transforms “backward” minorities and “unproductive” religious figures with their otherworldly worldviews and non-materialist (i.e. spiritual) preoccupations to “useful” members of society. Economic growth not only promotes social stability but also provides an ideological justification of a materialist worldview. As a result, the Party can claim credit for improving everyone’s material conditions, and rightfully demand “gratefulness” and wholehearted support from all citizens.

Attached are the author’s extensive research reports on the subjects of forced labor and forced human displacement through labor transfers:

<https://jamestown.org/product/coercive-labor-and-forced-displacement-in-xinjiangs-cross-regional-labor-transfer-program/>

<https://newlinesinstitute.org/china/coercive-labor-in-xinjiang-labor-transfer-and-the-mobilization-of-ethnic-minorities-to-pick-cotton/>

<https://www.jpolicy.com/beyond-the-camps-beijings-long-term-scheme-of-coercive-labor-poverty-alleviation-and-social-control-in-xinjiang/>

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/12/11/cotton-china-uighur-labor-xinjiang-new-slavery/>

Also attached are related publications on parent-child separation:

<https://adrianzenz.medium.com/story-45d07b25bcad>

<http://www.jpolrisk.com/break-their-roots-evidence-for-chinas-parent-child-separation-campaign-in-xinjiang>