

Written Testimony of Rushan Abbas
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for

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Chairman, Commissioners, and distinguished guests, thank you for the opportunity to testify before the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). My name is Rushan Abbas, and I am the Founder and Executive Director of Campaign for Uyghurs, established to advocate for the rights and freedoms of the Uyghur people. Our mission is to raise international awareness about the genocide and crimes against humanity committed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) against Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples, and to promote concrete policy action that defends fundamental human rights.

This issue is deeply personal to me. By the summer of 2017, more than twenty members of my husband Abdulhakim Idris’s family had gone missing. Three of his sisters and their husbands were among those taken. The so-called “excessive religious activities” that led to my sisters-in-law’s disappearance were nothing more than wearing headscarves and praying at home. Their husbands—ordinary, law-abiding men—were also detained simply for attending mosques and practicing their faith. My brother-in-law, Abdurehim Idris, was later sentenced to 21 years in prison for fasting during Ramadan and observing traditional Islamic dietary practices. In September 2018, only a few days after I spoke publicly about the detention of Uyghurs in concentration camps outlining the fate of my in-laws, my sister, Dr. Gulshan Abbas, was abducted by Chinese authorities as a retaliation. She is a retired medical doctor, a sister, a mother, a grandmother, and someone without involvement in activism or politics. Her imprisonment is a form of transnational repression, a reprisal meant to silence me and intimidate all Uyghurs abroad. For a very long time after her disappearance, my family has received no credible information about her condition or whereabouts. Her case reflects the cruelty of a system that punishes entire families for speaking the truth.

Today, I speak not only as a sister of a prisoner of conscience or as the representative of countless Uyghurs whose relatives and loved ones have disappeared into China’s vast network of prisons and camps, but also as an Uyghur American who is a defender of the future of the free world. What the CCP has built in my homeland is not confined to its borders. The same surveillance systems, propaganda tactics, and coercive control that have destroyed Uyghur religious life are being exported around the world and adopted by governments seeking to monitor and silence their own citizens. This model of repression is already shaping the future of global governance, eroding the

rule of law, freedom of belief, and digital privacy. Beijing's persecution of Uyghurs is a human rights crisis. But it is also a test of whether the international community will allow authoritarianism to set new norms for humanity. What happens to my people today foreshadows what could happen to any community tomorrow if the world continues to look away.

The purpose of my testimony is to provide this Commission with a clear record of how the CCP weaponizes its policies of "sinicization" to control and suppress religion, how these policies devastate Uyghurs' lives, and how they form part of a broader strategy of genocide and as well as the CCP's threat to the future of the free world. I will draw on personal experience, survivor accounts, and the growing documentation compiled by governments, international organizations, and human rights groups. By combining testimony and evidence, I hope to contribute to policy measures that defend the universal right to freedom of religion or belief.

I. The CCP's Ideological Control of Religion

The CCP has long viewed religion as a threat to its absolute control. From the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, the Party has treated religious belief as incompatible with loyalty to the state. During the Mao era, religious practices were banned outright.¹ Monasteries, mosques, and churches were destroyed, and believers were persecuted under the guise of rooting out "superstition." While certain allowances returned after Mao's death, these were never based on genuine respect for freedom of belief, but rather on the Party's calculation of how religion could be monitored and controlled.

The current phase of repression builds on this legacy. Under Xi Jinping, the CCP has launched the sinicization of religion. Announced at the National Religious Work Conference in 2016 and reinforced through new regulations in 2018 and 2021, this policy requires all religions to conform to "socialist society" and the leadership of the Communist Party.² In practice, this means stripping faith communities of independence, rewriting doctrine to align with Party ideology, and eradicating any expression of belief deemed "foreign" or "separatist." In order to bring all religious doctrine and practice in line with CCP doctrine, the Chinese government has compelled religious leaders to participate in political ideological training sessions, closely monitors worship activities, requires prior approval for sermons, and has even modified sacred texts—allegedly including biblical accounts of Jesus—to promote allegiance to the Communist Party and the state. (source: [International Religious Freedom Reports: Custom Report Excerpts - United States Department of State](#))

Religious leaders are pressured to act as agents of the state, not shepherds of their communities.

¹ Pew Research Center. "Measuring Religion in China." August 30, 2023.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2023/08/30/government-policy-toward-religion-in-the-peoples-republic-of-china-a-brief-history/>.

² USCIRF. "Factsheet: Sinicization of Religion: China's Coercive Religious Policy." September, 2024. <https://www.uscirt.gov/sites/default/files/2024-09/2024%20China%20Factsheet%20Sinicization.pdf>.

The consequences of this system are far-reaching. For Uyghur and other Turkic Muslims, it has meant bans on traditional dress, restrictions on fasting during Ramadan, imprisonment of imams, and the destruction of thousands of mosques.³ This system reflects a consistent trajectory: the CCP does not tolerate religion as a matter of conscience or personal belief. Instead, it treats faith as something to be domesticated, re-engineered, and subordinated to Party rule. The policy of “sinicization” is therefore not cultural adaptation but forced assimilation. It is designed to eliminate the independent authority of religious traditions and to ensure that loyalty to the Party outweighs loyalty to God, conscience, or community.

II. Stated Justifications

To justify the vast machinery of surveillance, detention, and assimilation operating in the Uyghur Region, the CCP relies on a set of recurring narratives designed to mask repression as security policy, governance, or modernization.

Since the early 2000s, and especially after 9/11, Beijing has framed Uyghur identity, including ordinary religious practice, as a national security threat. The CCP portrays restrictions on religious expression as necessary to “combat terrorism, separatism, and extremism,” even though the overwhelming majority of those targeted have never committed a crime. Peaceful acts such as fasting, growing a beard, studying the Qur’an, or traveling abroad for education are redefined as signs of “radicalization.”

The Counterterrorism Law of 2015 broadened the definition of terrorism to include “thoughts” and “ideologies” that challenge the Party, enabling the state to criminalize belief itself.

The CCP also claims that its policies promote “ethnic unity,” “poverty alleviation,” and “social stability.” This language reframes repression as benevolent governance, portraying internment camps as “vocational training centers” that “re-educate” individuals for employment. In reality, many detainees were professionals, teachers, or religious leaders before their detention. The language of “development” is used to obscure the coercive assimilation of an entire people.

Domestically and abroad, China invokes the “Three Evils,” terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism, to justify its campaign against Uyghurs. It uses this framework to win diplomatic support, framing criticism as interference in its internal affairs. By conflating peaceful religious life with extremism, Beijing delegitimizes dissent and reframes persecution as law enforcement.⁴

³ Amnesty International. “China: ‘Like We Were Enemies in a War’: China’s Mass Internment, Torture, and Persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang.” June 10, 2021.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/4137/2021/en/>.

⁴ Human Rights Watch. “‘Break Their Lineage, Break Their Roots’: China’s Crimes against Humanity Targeting Uyghurs and Other Turkic Muslims. 2022. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/19/break-their-lineage-break-their-roots/chinas-crimes-against-humanity-targeting>.

One striking example of this narrative-building is the establishment of the Counterterrorism Education Base in Urumqi, a government-run museum dedicated to showcasing alleged acts of “Uyghur terrorism.” Through dramatized exhibits, fabricated narratives, and selective historical accounts, the museum presents Uyghur identity as inherently violent and Islam as a source of instability. It is a propaganda tool designed not only to justify the regime’s policies but also to condition Chinese citizens and foreign visitors to view repression as necessary for national security.

This propaganda ecosystem shifts the narrative from one of persecution to one of “protection,” portraying the CCP as a defender of public safety even as it commits crimes against humanity.

III. The Uyghur Muslim Case: State Control and Suppression of Religious Life

Restrictions on Worship and Practice

The repression of Uyghur Muslims in the Uyghur Region is the most severe manifestation of the CCP’s policy of “sinicization” of religion. For Uyghurs, faith has always been inseparable from cultural identity. Islam shapes our daily lives, our family traditions, and our sense of community. The CCP has identified this connection as a threat and has sought to eradicate it systematically. The most basic acts of worship have been criminalized. Uyghur men are banned from wearing beards, while women are prohibited from wearing veils or modest dress. Regulations in the Uyghur region describe such choices as “signs of extremism,” despite being expressions of personal faith.⁵

Private prayer and study of the Qur’an have been treated as crimes. Families who teach their children about Islam face detention and long-term imprisonment. The Xinjiang Police Files, a leaked cache of data, found that Uyghur individuals had been arrested and detained for retroactively studying the Quran a decade ago in their youth. During Ramadan, fasting has been explicitly prohibited for students, government workers, and entire communities. During this most recent Ramadan, it was found that Uyghurs were required to send short videos of themselves eating food every day to Xinjiang authorities to prove that they were not fasting. Facial recognition cameras in university settings were also coded to surveil students who exhibited “suspicious behavior” such as not eating during lunch. Restaurants are ordered to remain open in defiance of the holy month, and Muslims are forced to eat or drink in public as a demonstration of loyalty to the Party rather than to their faith.⁶

⁵Amnesty International. “China: ‘Like We Were Enemies in a War’: China’s Mass Internment, Torture, and Persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang.” June 10, 2021.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/4137/2021/en/>.

⁶Hoshur, Shohret. “China forces Uyghurs to show video proof that they are not fasting during Ramadan.” *Radio Free Asia*. March 18, 2025. <https://www.rfa.org/english/uyghur/2025/03/18/uyghur-ramadan-fasting-proof/>.

Mosques, once central to Uyghur community life, have been demolished at an alarming rate. Satellite imagery and on-the-ground reports confirm the destruction or closure of thousands of mosques since 2017, with some estimates suggesting that nearly two-thirds of mosques in Xinjiang have been damaged or destroyed. In theory, Chinese law guarantees freedom of religion and the protection of places of worship. In reality, between 2017 and 2020, thousands of mosques, including those in regions where Hui Muslims reside, were demolished or stripped of Islamic symbols, violating China's own laws on "regional autonomy."⁷ Cemeteries have been razed, shrines desecrated, and prayer mats, Qur'ans, Hijabs, and other religious items have been confiscated or banned from homes, all as part of an effort to erase religious heritage and collective memory.

Targeting of Religious Leaders

Uyghur imams and religious teachers have been singled out for persecution. Many were detained during the first waves of mass internment beginning in 2017, accused of spreading "extremism" for teaching the Qur'an or leading prayers outside of state control. Those religious leaders who remain free are forced to serve as extensions of the state. The government designates "approved" clergy who must undergo political training, deliver sermons written by the CCP, and encourage obedience to the Party rather than devotion to God.⁸

Documented cases show the imprisonment of well-known imams, some sentenced to decades in prison. Human Rights Watch and Radio Free Asia have reported on respected community leaders, such as Imam Abduheber Ahmet, who disappeared after resisting government intrusion into religious practice.⁹ This persecution is not limited to imams. Intellectuals and advocates who spoke out for fundamental rights have also been silenced. Professor Ilham Tohti, a scholar who called only for the implementation of rights already guaranteed under China's constitution and autonomy law, was sentenced to life in prison for "separatism." His case illustrates how peaceful voices seeking dialogue and reform are crushed.

Evidence compiled by researchers such as Dr. Adrian Zenz confirms that religious repression is not incidental but systematic.¹⁰ The lived experience of detainees shows that the CCP's policies

⁷ Australian Strategic Policy Institute. "Cultural Erasure: Tracing the destruction of Uyghur and Islamic spaces in Xinjiang." September 24, 2020. <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/cultural-erasure/>.

⁸ USCIRF, "2022 Annual Report." April, 2022. Pgs. 16-17. <https://www.uscirt.gov/sites/default/files/2022%20Annual%20Report.pdf>.

⁹ Hoshur, Shohret. "Xinjiang Authorities Jail Uyghur Imam Who Took Son to Unsanctioned Religious School." *Radio Free Asia*. May 10, 2018. <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/imam-05102018155405.html>.

¹⁰ Zenz, Adrian. "The Xinjiang Police Files: Re-Education Camp Security and Political Paranoia in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region." *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies*, vol. 8. Pgs. 263-311. 2022. <https://journals.univie.ac.at/index.php/jeacs/article/view/7336/7843>.

go beyond surveillance or regulation. They amount to an all-out campaign to extinguish faith, to make being Uyghur and being Muslim incompatible under Party rule.

IV. Criminalizing Faith as a Tool of Genocide

The systematic assault on religion in the Uyghur homeland is a central pillar of a broader campaign that meets the definition of genocide under international law. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), to which China is a party, defines genocide as any of several acts committed *with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such*. These acts include:

1. Killing members of the group;
2. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
3. Deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
4. Imposing measures intended to prevent births;
5. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

When examined through this legal framework, it becomes clear that the Chinese Communist Party's persecution of Uyghur religious beliefs is designed to destroy the Uyghur people as a distinct group, spiritually, culturally, and physically. Religion is one of the most deeply rooted markers of Uyghur identity. To sever that bond is to dissolve the social fabric that binds the Uyghur people together.

Causing Serious Bodily and Mental Harm

Religious persecution is used as a weapon to break the spirit of the Uyghur people and inflict profound psychological trauma. Survivors of the so-called "re-education" camps recount being forced to renounce their faith, desecrate the Qur'an, consume pork and alcohol, and chant slogans pledging loyalty to the Party over God. Refusal was met with beatings, solitary confinement, or torture. Even those outside the camps endure a daily assault on their conscience: constant surveillance of religious behavior, threats for teaching faith to their children, and fear of imprisonment for attending services. This systematic effort to humiliate believers and sever their relationship with God constitutes serious mental harm, or Article II of the Genocide Convention.

Deliberately Inflicting Conditions Designed to Destroy the Group

Religion is not a private affair in Uyghur society; it is woven into language, education, family traditions, and community life. By destroying religion, the CCP deliberately dismantles the institutions that sustain Uyghur identity. This is evident in the state's campaign to erase Islamic life:

- **Mosques and sacred spaces:** Thousands have been demolished, desecrated, or converted into secular buildings. Shrines and cemeteries, sites of communal memory, have been razed, leaving families without places to mourn or gather.
- **Criminalization of practice:** Acts such as fasting during Ramadan, teaching Qur'an to children, wearing Islamic dress, or praying at home are criminalized as “signs of extremism.”
- **Control of leadership:** Imams are imprisoned, disappeared, or replaced with state-approved clerics who preach Party ideology. Religious education is banned outside state control, and doctrine is rewritten to align with “Xi Jinping Thought.”

They deliberately impose conditions that make it impossible for the Uyghur people to live according to their beliefs, thereby eroding their communal identity and paving the way for cultural destruction.

Preventing Births and Forcibly Removing Children

The persecution of religion is deeply intertwined with other genocidal acts. Uyghur women have been subjected to forced sterilizations and coerced birth control, often justified under narratives of “modernization” or “combating extremism.” These measures aim to prevent the transmission of both bloodline and belief. At the same time, Uyghur children are separated from their families and placed in state-run boarding schools where they are indoctrinated in atheist, Han-centric ideology and forbidden from speaking their language or practicing their faith. These actions satisfy two additional criteria under Article II: the imposition of measures intended to prevent births and the forcible transfer of children to another group.

Erasing Religion to Erase a People

The historical record of genocide shows that targeting religion is one of the most effective tools of erasure. From the forced Christianization of Indigenous children in residential schools to the suppression of Islamic and cultural identity in Bosnia, eliminating belief has long been a tactic to dissolve collective identity. The CCP’s campaign follows the same logic. By criminalizing faith and replacing it with loyalty to the Party, the state seeks to redefine and ultimately eliminate who the Uyghur people are.

This approach reveals the underlying intent behind Beijing’s policies. The CCP does not merely wish to suppress dissent or curb terrorism, as it claims. It seeks to dismantle the foundations of Uyghur life: language, culture, family, and, above all, faith. In doing so, it aims to destroy the Uyghur people *as such*, the very essence of genocide as defined in international law.

A Call to Recognize Religious Persecution as Genocide Evidence

Recognizing the assault on religious freedom as a component of genocide is essential for any credible policy response. It demonstrates that the CCP's campaign is not just about human rights violations in the abstract, but about the deliberate destruction of a people through the systematic annihilation of their spiritual, cultural, and communal life. Evidence of mosque demolitions, forced renunciations of faith, rewritten scripture, and coerced assimilation must be treated not only as abuses of religious liberty but as key indicators of genocidal intent.

The question before the international community is not whether these acts amount to genocide; they do. The question is whether we will respond with the resolve such a crime demands. It is a legal and moral imperative, a necessary step in preventing the destruction of an entire people.

V. Prisoners of Conscience and Religious Freedom Defenders

The CCP's repression of religion in China is not an abstract policy but a lived reality measured in human suffering. The stories of prisoners of conscience, those jailed for their beliefs, their scholarship, or their leadership, reveal the scale of this assault on faith and human dignity.

My own family has suffered this injustice. In September 2018, my sister, Dr. Gulshan Abbas, a retired medical doctor with no history of activism, was abducted by Chinese authorities. A few days prior, I had spoken publicly at the Hudson Institute in Washington about the mass detention of Uyghurs. In retaliation, the Chinese government disappeared my sister. She was later sentenced in a secret trial to 20 years in prison. Her only "crime" is being my sister, and through her punishment, the CCP seeks to silence me and all Uyghurs abroad who dare to speak out. She has been held for more than seven years, cut off from family contact, medical care, and legal rights. Gulshan's case is emblematic of how the regime weaponizes family ties to punish dissent and terrorize entire communities.

She is far from alone. Thousands of Uyghurs remain in detention, imprisoned for studying religion, traveling abroad, or simply maintaining ties with foreign relatives. Among them are prominent intellectuals and community leaders. Professor Ilham Tohti, a widely respected scholar who advocated dialogue and peaceful coexistence between Uyghurs and Han Chinese, was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2014 on fabricated charges of "separatism."¹¹ His case demonstrates how even those calling for the implementation of rights guaranteed in China's own constitution are silenced with the harshest punishment.

The persecution extends beyond Uyghurs. Tibetan Buddhists continue to face imprisonment for expressing loyalty to the Dalai Lama or teaching in the Tibetan language. Monks such as Tenzin Delek Rinpoche died in custody under suspicious circumstances, while others have disappeared

¹¹ USCIRF. "Ilham Tohti." <https://www.uscifr.gov/religious-prisoners-conscience/forb-victims-database/ilham-tohti>.

into prisons for refusing to denounce their faith.¹²

Christian leaders are also targeted. Pastor Wang Yi, leader of the Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, was sentenced to nine years in prison in 2019 for inciting to subvert state power after refusing to place his church under government control.¹³ His case illustrates how the CCP demands not only the obedience of congregations but also the co-optation of their leaders into Party service.

The scale of religious persecution in China is staggering. Rights groups estimate that tens of thousands of Uyghurs, Tibetans, Christians, and Falun Gong practitioners are imprisoned at any given time for their faith. The Dui Hua Foundation has documented thousands of individual cases, but the true number is likely far higher, hidden behind China's veil of secrecy.¹⁴ Each prisoner represents a family torn apart and an attempt to silence a community. Their imprisonment serves as a chilling warning to all seeking to exercise the universal right to freedom of religion or belief. Their courage and their suffering compel us to act.

VI. China's Global Campaign to Undermine Religious Freedom Norms

The CCP does not confine its campaign of religious repression to its own borders. It has also worked systematically to reshape international norms and silence global criticism. Beijing promotes a narrative at the United Nations and in other international forums that reframes human rights in terms of "development" and Party-led modernization, rather than universal freedoms. In this view, religion is tolerated only if it "adapts to socialism" and submits to the authority of the Communist Party.

This rhetoric echoes the pattern we have seen in the Uyghur Region. On paper, China's laws on regional autonomy guarantee political representation, cultural freedoms, and religious rights. In practice, these rights have been hollow promises used as propaganda. Just as the so-called "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region" is not genuine autonomy, China's claims to protect religious freedom at the international level are nothing more than a façade. Beijing showcases legal frameworks to the outside world while simultaneously violating every article within its borders.

Beyond multilateral forums, China deploys its United Front networks and state-controlled propaganda outlets to export its message and intimidate dissent. Uyghur activists abroad face surveillance, harassment, and threats to their families in the Uyghur Region. Universities and think

¹² International Campaign for Tibet. "Death in prison of revered Tibetan religious leader: armed forces deployed as Tibetans express their grief." July 13, 2015. <https://savetibet.org/death-in-prison-of-revered-tibetan-religious-leader-armed-forces-deployed-as-tibetans-express-their-grief/>.

¹³ Johnson, Ian and Paul Mozur. "China Sentences Wang Yi, Christian Pastor, to 9 Years in Prison." *The New York Times*. January 2, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/30/world/asia/china-wang-yi-christian-sentence.html>.

¹⁴ Dui Hua. "Political Prisoner Database." <https://duihua.org/resources/political-prisoners-database/>.

tanks have been targeted by Chinese influence operations designed to downplay religious persecution. Even international businesses are pressured to censor themselves or source from supply chains tainted with Uyghur forced labor. These efforts are part of a global campaign to normalize repression and undermine the international system meant to protect freedom of belief.¹⁵

China's strategies at the UN also illustrate this pattern. In 2022, when the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released its assessment documenting serious human rights violations in Xinjiang, Beijing dismissed it as "disinformation" and lobbied aggressively to prevent debate in the Human Rights Council.¹⁶ At the same time, it promoted resolutions emphasizing "sovereignty" and "non-interference," seeking to weaken the universality of human rights protections.

The CCP uses these tactics to suppress the voices of opposition and impose new rules. By eroding international standards and replacing them with its own authoritarian model, the CCP hopes to legitimize its repression as a sovereign right. This is why the international community must see through China's propaganda. Just as the autonomy law was a mask for control, Beijing's diplomacy at the UN is a mask for repression.

VII. Policy Recommendations for the U.S. Government

The Chinese Communist Party has built a machinery of repression that reaches from the Uyghur Region into global supply chains, international institutions, and diaspora communities abroad. Combating this requires policies that are both principled and practical. The United States has already taken important steps, but more is required to meet the scale of the challenge.

1. Strengthen enforcement of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA).

The UFLPA was a landmark step in recognizing the scale of Uyghur forced labor and barring goods tainted by it from entering the U.S. market. But enforcement remains inconsistent. Loopholes in supply chain reporting allow goods made with forced labor to reach American consumers. Congress and the Administration should expand Customs and Border Protection capacity, improve interagency coordination, and demand full transparency from companies sourcing from high-risk sectors such as cotton, solar, and tomatoes. The most current list of high-

¹⁵ U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)." February 8, 2023. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/415610_CHINA-2022-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf.

¹⁶ UN News. "China responsible for 'serious human rights violations' in Xinjiang province: UN human rights report." August 31, 2022. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/08/1125932>. See also: Amnesty International. "China: Xinjiang vote failure betrays core mission of UN Human Rights Council." October 6, 2022. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/china-xinjiang-vote-failure-betrays-core-mission-of-un-human-rights-council/>.

risk sectors is: aluminum, apparel, cotton and cotton products, polyvinyl chloride, seafood, silica-based products (including polysilicon), tomatoes, caustic soda, copper, jujubes, lithium, and steel. See [2025 Updates to UFLPA Strategy \(High-Priority Sectors\) Report](#) No American family should unwittingly buy products made by enslaved Uyghurs.

2. Expand targeted sanctions against perpetrators of religious persecution.

Global Magnitsky sanctions and other financial measures should be applied to Chinese officials, institutions, and companies complicit in designing or profiting from repression. This includes Party cadres who oversee “sinicization” campaigns, state-owned enterprises tied to forced labor, and technology companies that provide surveillance tools to monitor religious practice. These sanctions directly cut access to global capital and signal that crimes against conscience will have consequences.

3. Lead diplomatically to break the silence of Muslim-majority countries.

One of the most painful aspects of this genocide is the silence of governments that should be standing with their fellow Muslims. The CCP has used its economic leverage to buy silence from countries in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The United States must use its diplomatic influence to change this calculus. Working with allies in Europe and Asia, Washington should press these governments to speak up at the United Nations and to oppose China’s disinformation campaigns. The United States must insist that the rights of Uyghurs and other Muslims are not bargaining chips for investment.

4. Support Uyghur communities abroad.

Uyghurs in exile are the lifeline of truth in the face of China’s propaganda. Yet they live under constant pressure from surveillance, harassment, and threats to family members still inside East Turkistan. The United States should expand funding for Uyghur civil society organizations, advocacy groups, and diaspora media. Investments should also be made in language preservation and cultural programming so that Uyghur identity survives outside China’s control. Supporting Uyghur communities abroad strengthens the fight against CCP propaganda.

5. Elevate expertise within U.S. diplomacy.

Understanding the CCP’s authoritarian rule requires examining its persecution of religion. Every U.S. diplomatic post in China should have at least one officer fluent in the Uyghur language. This will enable accurate reporting on conditions, provide direct engagement with affected communities, and strengthen the U.S. government’s credibility as it speaks on these issues internationally. Beyond China, the State Department should expand its support for Uyghur

language training to ensure that a new generation of American diplomats and analysts is equipped to confront this challenge.

6. Demand Transparency and Accountability for State-Rewritten Sacred Texts

One of the most alarming aspects of the CCP's campaign against religion is its project to rewrite and "sinicize" sacred texts, including the Qur'an, the Bible, and Buddhist scriptures, to align them with Party ideology. It represents an attempt to replace divine authority with state authority and to reshape the moral foundations of faith traditions themselves.

The United States, in coordination with allies and multilateral bodies, should demand that the Chinese government release full, unaltered versions of these "sinicized" texts for independent review by religious scholars, theologians, and human rights experts. Access to these rewritten texts is essential to:

- Document and expose the extent of ideological manipulation undertaken by the state.
- Demonstrate the violation of freedom of belief inherent in rewriting scripture under government orders.
- Provide evidence of genocidal intent, as the rewriting of sacred texts aims to eradicate the theological foundations of Uyghur Islam, Christianity, Tibetan Buddhism, and other faiths.

Transparency would reveal the full scale of this ideological assault and strengthen efforts to hold Beijing accountable under international human rights and genocide law.

VIII. Conclusion

The Chinese Communist Party has constructed a system of control that criminalizes faith, erases culture, and imprisons conscience. These are not isolated violations. They are part of a deliberate, systemic campaign that meets the definition of crimes against humanity and, in the case of the Uyghurs, genocide. History has shown that when the world ignores such atrocities, repression only deepens.

The CCP's rhetoric of autonomy and rights is a mask. In theory, its constitution and laws guarantee freedom of religion, cultural preservation, and local self-rule. In practice, those rights are violated every day. What is promised on paper means nothing to the Uyghur children forbidden from learning their language, to the religious leaders disappeared into prisons, or to the families torn apart by mass detentions.

The United States must lead. Leadership means more than words. It means enforcing laws like the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, holding perpetrators accountable with sanctions, supporting Uyghur voices abroad, and pressing allies, especially in Muslim-majority countries, to break their silence. It means making religious freedom a central element of U.S.–China policy, not an afterthought. This is a test of conscience. Will we allow a government to erase entire communities of faith while the world looks away, or will we act? The answer will define not only the future of the Uyghurs but the credibility of every commitment to human rights.