

CANADA AND WORLD SHOULD STAND WITH UYGHURS AND OTHER MUSLIMS IN CHINA

Remarks by Hon. David Kilgour, Montreal Dorchester Square, 23 Aug 2020



The World Uyghur Congress, Stop Uyghur Genocide, the Coalition for Genocide Response, and Christian Solidarity Worldwide recently welcomed a statement signed by 76 leaders of U.K. faith communities. It called for action to stop crimes against Muslims in East Turkestan, which Beijing terms Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). The leaders termed it “one of the most egregious human tragedies since the Holocaust...”

The 20 UK rabbis who signed added: “We’ve seen many persecutions and mass atrocities ... needing our attention. But there is one that, if allowed to continue with impunity, calls into question most seriously the willingness of the international community to defend universal human rights for everyone – the plight of the Uyghurs...After the Holocaust, the world said ‘Never Again.’ Today, we repeat those words ‘Never Again’ all over again. We make a simple call for justice, to investigate these crimes, hold those responsible to account and establish a path towards the restoration of human dignity.”

The president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Marie van der Zyl, wrote earlier to China’s ambassador in the UK, including a message from former Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks. Both of them took the rare step of making comparisons between the Holocaust and crimes committed against the Uyghurs. “At least one million Uyghurs... in China are incarcerated in prison camps facing starvation, torture, murder, sexual violence, slave labour and forced organ extraction. Outside the camps, basic religious freedom is denied. Mosques are destroyed, children are separated from their families, and acts as simple as owning a Holy Quran, praying or fasting can result in arrest.”

Recent Canadian Hearing

At the Ottawa meeting of the House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights on July 20th, Dr. Adrian Zenz, Senior Fellow in China Studies, Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, made a number of observations, including:

- Since 2017, up to 1.8 million Uyghurs and other groups in the northwestern Chinese region of Xinjiang have been swept up in probably the largest incarceration of an ethno-religious community since the Holocaust.
- New research gives strong evidence that Beijing's actions in East Turkistan also meet the physical genocide criterion cited in section (d) of article II of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, "Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group".

Quebecois/Quebecoise and Canadian legislators and governments at all levels have a similar responsibility to act. To quote Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil ... Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act".

The Beijing party-state's oppression of Uyghurs increasingly appears to be "Genocide" planned by the central government and executed by the provincial government in East Turkestan. It includes mass incarceration, birth control, large police/digital surveillance. The population of Uyghurs is down from 20 million down to 11 million.

When coupled with a policy of racial domination, as the Beijing party-state brought millions of Han Chinese settlers into the region with promises of high salaries, jobs and free housing, the goal becomes even more criminal.

The Genocide Convention from 1948 specifically says the suppression of birth is genocide. The Beijing regime must face consequences by exclusion or sanctioning from multilateral institutions, political and/or economic sanctions such as Magnitsky ones, given that there is now also the widescale practice of forced labour.

Zenz says the international community should give much thought as to the kind of actions it's going to back up our professed moral values. All of us here today want strong action by the Government of Canada.

Merci mille fois.