



Plenary sitting

B8-0461/2018

2.10.2018

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on mass arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and Kazakhs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
(2018/2863(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B8-0461/2018

European Parliament resolution on mass arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and Kazakhs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (2018/2863(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 10 March 2011 on the situation and cultural heritage in Kashgar (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China),
- having regard to its resolution of 12 September 2018 on the state of EU-China relations,
- having regard to the 36th round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue held in Beijing on 9-10 July 2018,
- having regard to EU Statement - Item 4 issued at the 39th session of the UN Human Rights Council on 18 September 2018 entitled ‘Human rights situation that requires the Council’s attention,
- having regard to the EU-China Strategic Partnership launched in 2003,
- having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in the North-West of China is home to around 10 million ethnic Uyghurs and Kazakhs;

B. whereas during the past years, a number of terrorist attacks attributed to Uyghur perpetrators have taken place in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China, and there have been reports of Uyghur fighters joining armed extremist groups abroad;

C. whereas the human rights situation in Xinjiang has deteriorated rapidly over the past years, especially since the launch in Xinjiang of the ‘Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism’ in 2014; whereas the Chinese Government’s war on terror in Xinjiang is increasingly turning into a war on religion and ethnicity; whereas the repressive efforts have been dramatically scaled up since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Secretary Chen Quanguo assumed leadership in Xinjiang in 2016; whereas in the name of combatting ‘religious extremism’ and maintaining ‘social stability’, Muslim Uyghur and Kazakh minorities are being arbitrarily detained in pre-trial detention centers, prisons and extrajudicial political re-education facilities;

D. whereas credible estimates place the number of detainees who are or have been detained in political re-education facilities around one million; whereas these re-education facilities are also referred to as ‘vocational training centers’, ‘rehabilitation correction centers’ or ‘legal system schools’;

E. whereas the detainees are subject to the concept of ‘transformation through education’ -

jiaoyu zhuanhua - in the context of de-extremification, subjecting large parts of the Muslim population as well as Christian converts to extensive extrajudicial and political indoctrination procedures for days, months, and even over a year, depending on the risk category and the pace of transformation of the ‘focus subjects’; whereas detainees are supposedly taught to distinguish illegal religious activities from ‘normal’ cultural customs, though reportedly people are often forced to recant any religious beliefs; whereas there have been reports of deaths in the political education camps, raising concerns about physical and psychological abuse, as well as stress from poor conditions, overcrowding, and indefinite confinement;

F. whereas the Chinese government consistently denies the existence of re-education camps or counter terrorism training centers in Xinjiang; whereas, however, there exists comprehensive evidence of the existence of such facilities, based on witness reports, analyses of government procurement and construction bids and recruitment notices correlating with the start of Chen Quanguo’s re-education initiative;

G. whereas in recent years the Chinese government has devoted enormous financial, human, and technical resources for social control in Xinjiang to ensure the ‘comprehensive supervision’ via electronic surveillance, installations of GPS trackers in motor vehicles, use of facial recognition scanners at checkpoints, and a blood-collecting effort by Xinjiang’s police to further expand China’s DNA database;

H. whereas the authorities are closely monitoring people’s familial and social networks as indicators of their level of political trustworthiness; whereas the government detains people and subjects them to greater levels of controls not only based on their own behaviour or beliefs, but also those of their family members – a form of collective punishment contrary to international human rights law;

I. whereas the Xinjiang authorities have made foreign ties a punishable offense, targeting people with connections to an official list of “26 sensitive countries,” whereas people who have been to these countries, have families, or otherwise communicate with people there, have been interrogated, detained, and even tried and imprisoned;

J. whereas the insidious and brutal repression of the Uyghur people in Xinjiang is one facet of a broader attack on religious freedom throughout China, further strengthened by amendments to the legal framework, such as the 2015 National Security Law, the 2016 Counter-Terrorism law, the 2017 Cybersecurity law and the Religious Affairs Regulations Law amended in 2018, tightening the grip on Xinjiang Uyghur and other ethnic and religious minorities and establishing broad definitions on national security offences related to ‘terrorism’ and ‘extremism’;

K. whereas people of other faiths are also facing assaults on their right to congregate, worship and believe freely; whereas Christians have been pressured into replacing their religious imagery and Bible verses with posters of Xi Jinping, Christian summer camps have been raided and several churches have been forcibly closed or demolished; whereas the common goal behind these incidents is the the subordination of free thought and faith to the specific ideology of the Communist Party of China;

1. Underlines that the promotion of human rights and the rule of law must be at the core of the EU's engagement with China; stresses the importance for the EU and the international community to robustly act to promote full respect for human rights in the context of its relationship with China;
2. Expresses its deepest concern at the system of political re-education camps which has been established in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and at the implementation of the vast range of surveillance measures in the region; is worried at the forced political indoctrination and reported ill-treatment of detainees in the re-education facilities; reminds the Chinese authorities that the re-education facilities have no legal basis;
3. Urges the Chinese authorities to immediately close all political re-education camps in Xinjiang and to free those reportedly detained for their beliefs and cultural practices; calls on the Chinese government to respect the rights to freedom of expression, assembly, association, religion and culture;
4. Calls on the EU and the international community to establish an independent investigation mechanism to gather information on arbitrary detentions and other abuses in Xinjiang;
5. Calls on the EU to closely monitor the human rights situation in Xinjiang and to raise the issue in all relevant meetings with the Chinese counterparts at all levels;
6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the European External Action Service, the Member States, the Government of the People's Republic of China and the National People's Congress.