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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0435/2020**

15.12.2020

## **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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

**on forced labour and the situation of the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region**

(2020/2913(RSP))

**Engin Eroglu, Petras Auštrevičius, Malik Azmani, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Olivier Chastel, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Svenja Hahn, Karin Karlsbro, Moritz Körner, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Javier Nart, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Ramona Strugariu, Hilde Vautmans, Marie-Pierre Vedrenne**  
on behalf of the Renew Group

**B9-0435/2020**

**European Parliament resolution on forced labour and the situation of the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region**

**(2020/2913(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- Having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, notably Article 4, which stipulates that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; Article 5, that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; Article 9, that no one should be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile; Article 18, and everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including to manifest one's religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance,
- having regard to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, notably Article 1, which stipulates that genocide is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish; and Article 2, that stipulates genocide means acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, with actions including deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part and imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, all three ratified by EU Member States on 12 September 1989,
- having regard to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 1930 Convention on Forced Labour (No. 29), as well as the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention,
- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights, which puts the protection and promotion of human rights at the heart of all EU policies;
- having regard to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which stipulates that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude and that no one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour,
- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights, which puts the protection and promotion of human rights at the heart of all EU policies,
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty, Torture, Freedom of Expression and Human Rights Defenders,
- having regard to its decision to award the 2019 Sakharov Prize to Ilham Tohti, an Uyghur economist fighting peacefully for the rights of China's Uyghur minority,
- having regard to the Canadian Subcommittee on International Human Rights' statement of 21 October 2020, which concluded from evidence hearings that the actions against Uyghurs by the Chinese Communist Party constitute genocide as laid out in the Genocide

Convention,

- having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - A. Whereas there has been a general strengthening of the Chinese regime and a toughening in the treatment of minorities Uyghurs, Tibetans and Mongols, with the aim of their assimilation, by the imposition of the Chinese majority lifestyle and communist ideology by force, intense campaign of mass internment in re-education camps, destruction of religious signs and places of worship, displacement and forced labour, intrusive digital surveillance (including facial recognition technology and data collection), political indoctrination and forced cultural assimilation; suppression of minority language education in favour of Mandarin;
  - B. whereas the situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) has rapidly deteriorated since the launch of the ‘Strike Hard against Violent Terrorism’ campaign in 2014 and the strategic location of Xinjiang as a core region for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), with ambitious production targets for textiles and other labour-intensive manufacturing products;
  - C. whereas, there is reliable information that Uyghurs and other ethno-religious minorities in the XUAR have been subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, egregious restrictions on religious practice and culture, and a digitised surveillance system so pervasive that every aspect of daily life is monitored – through facial recognition cameras, mobile phone scans, DNA collection, and an extensive and intrusive police presence;
  - D. whereas numerous credible estimates put the number of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims who have arbitrary detained, indefinitely without charge, without legal representation, and are forced to undergo political indoctrination to be between one and two million; the number of people that are or have been arbitrarily detained in what are being called ‘political re-education’ centres for undetermined periods of time on the pretext of countering terrorism and religious extremism;
  - E. whereas in its Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy, the EU pledged to step up its efforts to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law across all aspects of its external action, and to place human rights at the centre of its relations with all third countries, including its strategic partners;
  - F. whereas since President Xi Jinping assumed power in March 2013, the human rights situation in China has continued to deteriorate; whereas the Chinese Government has increased its hostility towards peaceful dissent, the freedoms of expression and religion, and the rule of law; whereas the Chinese authorities have detained and prosecuted hundreds of human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists;
  - G. whereas multiple media, NGOs and governments have reported that since April 2017, the PRC government arbitrarily detained more than an estimated one to two million Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Hui, and members of other Muslim groups, as well as Uyghur Christians, in purpose built detention camps, for which the Chinese government claims that such camps are built for re-education and vocation purposes;
  - H. whereas many of those imprisoned in such camps are thought to be subject arbitrary detention, forced labour, physical and psychological abuse, political indoctrination,

forced sterilizations, sexual abuse and torture; whereas the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau and Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps are thought to be directly linked to some of these cases;

- I. whereas the Chinese government claims that the internment camps were being closed, whereas recent research found that more than 380 suspected detention facilities have been newly built or expanded since 2017, with at least 61 detention sites newly constructed or expanded between July 2019 and July 2020;
- J. whereas the attempt to erase the Uyghur's distinctive cultural identity has also caused immense suffering of hundreds of thousands of Uyghur children; whereas research indicates that by the end of 2019, approximately 880,500 Uyghur children had been placed in boarding facilities, and increase of nearly 383,000 since 2017; whereas inside these boarding schools, Uyghur children are prohibited to perform every-day religious practices and have to renounce their cultural identity, being forced to undergo political indoctrination;
- K. whereas multiple NGOs and media have reported that 80,000 Uyghurs were enrolled in in conditions believed to amount to forced labour through labour transfer programs under a central government policy known as "Xinjiang aid" in factories across China between 2017 and 2019;
- L. China is one of the largest cotton producers in the world, with the Uyghur region producing more than 20 percent of the world's cotton; whereas foreign companies' supply chains are allegedly tainted by Uyghur forced labour, particularly in the textile, apparel and footwear industry; whereas more than 80 international brand-name corporations have been reported to allegedly profit directly or indirectly from Uyghur forced labour in their supply chains; whereas the current context of oppression prevents independent investigations and audits to be conducted in the Uyghur region;
- M. whereas strong evidence suggests that the production of the majority of Xinjiang's cotton involves a coercive, state-run program targeting ethnic minority groups;
- N. whereas NGOs and media have reported evidence of government campaigns to restrict population growth among Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities, especially in rural areas, seemingly to aim at sterilizing women of childbearing age with three or more children, through the use of forced abortions, intrauterine injections, sterilization and birth quotas, which if proven could meet internationally agreed genocide criteria; whereas in 2018, 80 percent of all new IUD placements in China were performed in the Uyghur region, despite the fact that it makes up only 1.8 percent of China's population;
- O. whereas Uyghur Muslims are thought to endure much government harassment, with the celebration of religious holidays, studying religious texts, or showing one's religion through personal appearance forbidden in state schools and other contexts, and the destruction of thousands of Mosques and other sites of religious and cultural importance;
- P. whereas Uyghur Muslims are thought to be subject to invasive surveillance, including heavy government monitoring of an individuals' movements, communications and religious activities, through means including digital surveillance and biometric technologies;

- Q. whereas Chinese government agents are thought to be monitoring, intimidating and harassing Uyghurs living in the EU and elsewhere outside of China, including the ceasing of political activity or selling information on the actions of other Uyghurs abroad in return for the safety of relatives in China;
- R. whereas in light of the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation in Xinjiang over recent years, these latest developments represent a highly concerning increase in human rights violations against the already vulnerable Uyghur minority in China;
- S. whereas Uyghurs who have fled China have been deported back to China, by states including Thailand, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, where they may face torture and arbitrary detention on return to China;
1. Strongly condemns the mass incarceration of Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Xinjiang region, where many are subject to arbitrary detention; denounces the use of forced labour, forced sterilizations and torture within government sponsored programmes; and strongly condemns the intimidation and harassment of Uyghurs living outside of China by Chinese government agents;
  2. Calls on the Commission to take the lead in urging the Chinese government to end the extrajudicial detention of Uyghurs and to ensure self-determination of citizens regarding labour and mobility;
  3. Calls on Chinese authorities to immediately cease programmes of mass incarceration of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Xinjiang region; calls on Chinese authorities to cease government sponsored programmes of forced labour and mass sterilization;
  4. Welcome the EU's repeated statements on Xinjiang at the UN Human Rights Council, but deeply regret that not all EU Member States support a Germany-led international statement the UN General Assembly in October; reiterate its call on Member States to act unitedly and resolutely to address China's abysmal human rights violations and its assault on the global human rights system, and to proactively work towards an independent UN inquiry on China with a view to ensuring accountability for the crimes committed;
  5. Calls on the Chinese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release the Uyghur scholar Ilham Tohti and all other human rights defenders, activists, lawyers, journalists and petitioners detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their freedom of expression, and to end the ongoing crackdown involving detention, judicial harassment and intimidation;
  6. Calls on Chinese authorities to provide unfettered and meaningful access for independent, international and impartial investigations into the treatment of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Xinjiang region;
  7. Urges the Chinese authorities to build a civic space in which the rights of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities to respect their freedom of religious belief, including the right to manifest one's religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance; calls on the Chinese authorities to cease the destruction of Uyghur cultural sites of historic or religious importance;

8. Urges the Chinese authorities to desist from the invasive surveillance of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Xinjiang region, in respect of the right of individuals to be protected against arbitrary interference with one's privacy, family, home or correspondence;
9. Notes that previous efforts such as the European Parliament Resolution on the Situation of Uyghurs in Xinjiang from 19 December 2019 and stressing the dire human rights situation in Xinjiang on 19 June 2020 in the Resolution on Hong Kong have not yet resulted in any meaningful change in behaviour from the Chinese government;
10. Strongly urges the Council to use the newly adopted Global Human Rights Sanctions Mechanism, the "EU-Magnitsky Act", to target Chinese officials who are guilty of human rights abuses against the Uyghurs, Tibetans, Hong Kongers, and other religious and ethnic minorities within China, and generally against any citizen of the People's Republic of China; including through the implementation of travel bans and asset freezes; calls on the Council and Member States to propose targeted sanctions against the individuals and organisations responsible for the gravest human rights abuses in the Uyghur region, including the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau, responsible for the mass surveillance and detention of millions of Uyghurs, and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a paramilitary organisation controlling many sites in which forced labour is prevalent, and six individuals holding senior positions within these organisations are also found to be directly responsible for these programmes, namely Chen Quanguo, Zhu Hailun, Sun Jinlong, Peng Jiarui, Wang Mingshan and Huo Liujun;
11. Is alarmed by recent reports which indicate that data from surveillance systems, such as from tech giant Huawei, which has tested facial recognition software that could send automated "Uyghur alarms" to government authorities, is used to identify and arbitrarily target Uyghurs for possible detention;
12. Calls for the EU to halt all exports and technology transfers of goods and services that are being used by China to extend and improve its cyber surveillance, by making effective use of appropriate export control mechanisms;
13. Calls on the Commission to urgently bring forward planned legislation on a Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence Framework, and extend the scope to hold companies, both from the EU and third countries, accountable for failures to publish and effectively implement adequate due diligence to ensure the removal of forced labour and child labour from supply chains and conduct due diligence obligations in regard to conflict-affected and high-risk areas (CAHRAs), to make the process more accessible, especially for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); calls on the Commission to issue special guidance for firms operating in the Xinjiang region on the risk of encountering the use of forced labour in supply chains;
14. Encourages the creation of a sustainable EU strategy, including financial support, to diversify production chains and relocate production facilities from China back to the EU
15. Calls on the Commission to ensure an enforceable strong trade and sustainability chapter, including labour and human rights, in the negotiations with China on a Comprehensive Investment Agreement; Strongly calls on the Commission to request China to ratify and implement the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 1930 Convention on Forced Labour (No. 29), as well as the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention;

16. Calls on the Commission to establish a direct channel of contact with relevant Chinese trade authorities to strengthen the process of monitoring and detection of exports and products that have been made and packaged using forced and child labour;
17. Calls on the Commission and Member States to work with states where Uyghurs are at risk of deportation to China to prevent such deportations from occurring;
18. Observes that the PRC continues to undertake an unprecedented crackdown on human rights and fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong under the National Security Law;
19. Calls on the Council and Commission to implement the package of measures agreed in July for Hong Kong, including the creation of a 'lifeboat scheme' for citizens of Hong Kong and other oppressed minorities following a further deterioration of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
20. Calls on the Council members to suspend extradition treaties with the PRC, to prevent the extradition of Uyghurs, Hong Kongers, Tibetans, or other Chinese dissidents in Europe to stand political trial in the PRC;
21. Calls on Member States to invoke China's responsibility for breaches of the Genocide Convention and take action in the appropriate multilateral forums, including the UN Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly;
22. Calls on EU member states to urge the UN Secretary-General to appoint a Special Envoy on China;
23. Calls on Member States to seek the establishment of international, impartial and independent investigation mechanisms through the UN Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly with a mandate to collect evidence on the treatment of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Xinjiang region;
24. Calls on Member States to support the opening of an investigation at the International Criminal Court on international crimes committed by Chinese officials, including the Complaint filed with the ICC Chief Prosecutor on 8 July 2020 on behalf of the Uyghur and other Turkic victims of international crimes committed by Chinese officials;
25. Calls on Member States to invoke China's responsibility for breaches of international obligations in bilateral and multilateral settings, including its obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
26. Calls for the European Union to put human rights at the top of the agenda in future discussions with the Chinese government; urges to ensure the inclusion of strong and enforceable human rights clauses in any trade agreement with China, including the EU-China Investment Agreement (CAI);
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of the People's Republic of China.