

Uyghur Situation 2.9.21 - Jewish Community Relations Council, Indianapolis JCRC

The Uyghur are a Turkic-Muslim minority that reside in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in northwest China. The Uyghurs have faced discrimination and oppression since the rise of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), but the most recent campaign of genocide began with religious crackdown in 2016. Since then, the CCP has developed a vast network of detention and forced labor camps. In an attempt to erase their ethnic identity, the CCP has sanctioned the rape of Uyghur women by ethnic Han Chinese men; performed forced sterilizations or abortions; Uyghurs are prohibited from practice their cultural customs and speaking their language; and “disappearing” Uyghur intellectuals. Uyghurs have been used for forced labor and illegal organ harvesting, which is what is most commonly known about the situation in the United States. It is currently estimated that there are up to 2 million Uyghurs in detention and forced labor camps.

How is this a JCRC issue? We should always serve as a voice for the oppressed, especially those facing violence based on their religious or ethnic identity. Personally, I see advocating for mass atrocity prevention today as a direct lesson of the Holocaust. So many Jews, among others, were permanently silenced because so few spoke out on their behalf. Currently, there are multiple US Congress members who have been very active in this area, which gives JCRCs more of an advocacy “in.” The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act will be re-introduced in the Senate and lobbying for its passage is an action step for JCRCs who want to get more involved in ending the genocide of the Uyghurs. Business engagement is another area of action. Eighty-three major companies have supply chains based in the XUAR and they in turn supply their products to local businesses. Pressuring businesses to know more about the source of their supply and advocating for an alternative is what will more than likely make the most impact on the CCP.

For more information:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-55973215>

<https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>