

# Tibetan Activists Detained for Second Time After Leaving The Press Conference

October 19, 2021

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Tibetan rights activist, Pema Doma, gave an update concerning the three protesters arrested on the 18th after their disruption of the Torch Ceremony in Olympia [2]. She said that they remain detained in Pyrgos and their charges are not yet clear at this time. Zumretay Arkin and Pema Doma both urged governments and the international community to take a stand against China’s widespread repression across East Turkestan, Tibet, Hong Kong and all countries and re-

gions under Chinese Communist Party rule, and to boycott Beijing 2022 or risk being complicit in the “Genocide Games.”

Immediately after leaving the press conference, two Tibetan activists, Tsering Gonpa and Tenzin Yangzom were stopped and detained by Greek police as they attempted to make their way back to their hotel. Both Tsering Gonpa (Tibetan-Swiss) and Tenzin Yangzom (Tibetan-American) had been previously detained on 18 October despite not engaging in any protest nor breaking any local or international laws.

At the close of the press conference Pema Doma, Zumretay Arkin, Mandie McKeown, and one other activist, remained at the venue for security reasons. During this time the group were visited by two men (who later identified themselves as Chinese) who wandered into the private press conference room and took photographs of the activists. When confronted the two men did not respond to questions about why they were there or why they were recording the group. Two other men of Greek descent also entered the private room as well as searching the entire floor of the venue. Again, they refused to answer any questions about who they were or what they were looking for. They did enquire as to the whereabouts of Zumretay Arkin – who had left the room at the time.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Olympic Torch Ceremony at the Acropolis, Tsering Gonpa and Tenzin Yangzom were released from police custody after nearly 4 hours. They were not charged with a crime nor given a reason for their detention. They also reported seeing a number of individuals who appeared to be of Asian ethnicity in police custody who had no links to the No Beijing 2022 campaign nor any understanding as to why they had been detained.

**Tenzin Yangzom, Grassroots Director at Students for a Free Tibet, said:**

“It is outrageous that I was detained by Greek police for the second time in twenty four hours. I came to Greece to help raise awareness about human rights violations in Tibet and the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) human rights abuses; I did not engage in any protests nor break any Greek laws and my detention exemplifies how easily fundamental freedoms are eroded when the Chinese Communist Party is in town.”

**Mandie McKeown, Executive Director of International Tibet Network, said:**

“As Thomas Bach and the Olympic Committee once again attempt to gloss over Beijing 2022 hosts’ egregious human rights abuses – the genocide of the Uyghur people and the brutal and illegal occupation of Tibet – we are buoyed to see the extent of the coverage of the widespread concern that the forthcoming Winter Games cannot simply go ahead as usual and that they must be cancelled, moved, or boycotted.”

**Zumretay Arkin, Program and Advocacy Manager at World Uyghur Congress, said:**

“Today’s press conference was held in a completely open, legal, and transparent way and yet we felt pressure and intimidation by both Greek authorities who were in touch with the venue about our plans, and indivi-



duals who were monitoring us and who we believe were Chinese agents. It is absolutely unacceptable that this kind of intimidation is allowed to take place in a free and democratic country and it only reinforces our argument that China should not be allowed to host the Winter Olympics of 2022. We may be safe now, but millions of Uyghurs, Tibetans, Southern Mongolians, Chinese and Hong Kongers are being persecuted and we demand a boycott of Beijing 2022.”



## Exposing The Chinese Government’s Oppression of Xinjiang’s Uyghurs

*Vicky Xiuzhong Xu, James Leibold and Daria Impiombato, 10, 19, 2021*

In China’s distant northwest city of Ürümqi, capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the Political and Legal Affairs Commission sends ‘micro clues’ to neighbourhood committees and the police when someone does something irregular. That might be having an unexpected visitor at home, driving a car that belongs to someone else, receiving an overseas phone call, or using a file-sharing app.



The committee is a powerful organ of the Chinese Communist Party that oversees the ‘political and legal affairs system’, which includes the police, the procuratorate or Prosecutor General’s Office which controls the investigation and prosecution systems, the courts, the justice department and other security organs.

Elsewhere in China, the committee is typically a coordinating body without operational capabilities, but in Xinjiang it has prompted millions of investigations at the grassroots level. Between July 2016 and June 2017, it flagged 1,869,310 Uyghurs and other citizens in Xinjiang for using the Zapyia file-sharing app.

China's leader, Xi Jinping, has dubbed the political and legal affairs system the party's 'knife handle' and insists that it must be firmly in the hands of the CCP and the masses.

How this vast system of coercive state control works is examined in a new project from ASPI's International Cyber Policy Centre, *The architecture of repression: unpacking Xinjiang's governance*.

Analysing thousands of pages of leaked police files, ASPI researchers have gained rare insights into the methods used by the CCP to oppress Uyghurs and other indigenous communities in Xinjiang.

The project includes an interactive organisational chart, profiling over 170 offices that have participated in Xinjiang's governance in the past seven years. Within the chart, guided tours can take the viewer through five key sets of Xinjiang's repressive policies: mass internment, forced labour, mass at-home surveillance, coercive birth control and ubiquitous propaganda.

An 82-page research report draws on previously unpublished material from thousands of Chinese-language sources, including police records and budget documents obtained by scraping Chinese government websites. Since mass Uyghur internment was first reported in 2017, a rich body of literature has documented the ongoing human rights abuses in Xinjiang. However, there is little knowledge of the government processes or actual perpetrators of these now well-known atrocities, and only a small number of entities or individuals have been identified for their involvement.

This project exposes these activities, and those responsible, to further public scrutiny. Amid international debates about whether recent events in Xinjiang constitute genocide, and while Chinese officials are actively scrubbing relevant evidence and seeking to silence those who speak out, it is important

to carry out a timely and detailed investigation into Xinjiang's governance now.

The report highlights, as an example, the treatment of Anayit Abliz, then 18, who was caught using a file-sharing app in 2017. He was interned in a re-education camp and eventually 'sentenced' by his neighbourhood committee, a nominally service-oriented voluntary organisation responsible for local party control, to three years in prison.

While he was detained, officials from the committee visited his family members six times in a single week, scrutinising their behaviour and observing whether they were emotionally stable.

Our report is the first English-language report to analyse Xinjiang's 'Trinity' mechanism, which grants the neighbourhood committees extraordinary powers to police the movements and emotions of residents, subjecting many to 'management and control' orders akin to house arrest.

The crackdown against the Uyghurs has a striking resemblance to Mao-era mass political campaigns.

Even though Xi had declared such campaigns to be costly and burdensome, the party-state is using them in Xinjiang, and elsewhere. In addition to mass internment and coercive labour assignments, Xinjiang residents are compelled to participate in acts of political theatre, such as show trials, public denun-



ciation sessions, loyalty pledges, sermon-like ‘propaganda lectures’ and chants for Xi’s good health.

They are mobilised to attack shadowy enemies hiding among them, the so-called ‘three evil forces’ and ‘two-faced people’.

The report highlights the whole-of government and whole-of society approach to Xinjiang’s crackdown, naming an astounding number of offices and officials involved in its repressive policies. They include obscure agencies such as the Forestry Bureau, which looked after Kashgar City’s re-education camps’ accounts for a year.

Three Xinjiang county party secretaries are profiled, including Yao Ning, who was a visiting fellow at Harvard University and now sits atop a chain of command overseeing nine newly built or expanded detention facilities in southern Xinjiang. Erken Tuniyaz, who was appointed Xinjiang’s new acting governor on 30 September, also spent time at Harvard as a visiting fellow.

Highly destructive mass political campaigns are not artefacts of a bygone era. Rather, they are occurring at a time when Chinese society is more closely connected with the world than ever. Consequently, through long and complicated supply chains, liberal democracies have found themselves consuming (often unknowingly) the outputs of China’s mass political campaigns, such as products made with forced labour. Pursued along racial and religious lines, Xinjiang’s campaign against the Uyghurs has also led to accusations of genocide.

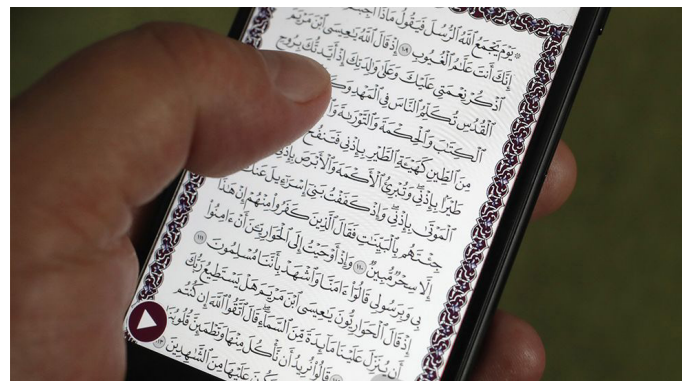
Since the spring of 2017, it has been widely accepted that between several hundred thousand and a million Uyghurs and other indigenous people in Xinjiang have been rounded up and interned in what Chinese authorities call ‘vocational education and training centres’. Yet these re-education camps are only the most visible components of a vast architecture of repression in the region.

## Apple Takes Down Quran App in China

By James Clayton, 10, 15, 2021

**Quran Majeed is available across the world on the App Store - and has nearly 150,000 reviews. It is used by millions of Muslims. The BBC understands that the app was removed for hosting illegal religious texts. The Chinese government has not responded to the BBC’s request for comment.**

The deletion of the app was first noticed by Apple Censorship - a website that monitors



Apple has taken down one of the world’s most popular Quran apps in China, following a request from officials.

apps on Apple’s App Store globally. In a statement from the app’s maker, PDMS, the company said: “According to Apple, our app Quran Majeed has been removed from the China App store because it includes content that requires additional documentation from Chinese authorities”.

“We are trying to get in touch with the Cyberspace Administration of China and relevant Chinese authorities to get this issue resolved”.

The company said it had close to one million users in China.

The Chinese Communist Party officially recognises Islam as a religion in the country. However, China has been accused of human rights violations, and even genocide, against the mostly Muslim Uyghur ethnic group in Xinjiang.

Earlier this year the BBC reported that Uyghur imams had been targeted in China’s Xinjiang crackdown.

Apple declined to comment, but directed the BBC to its Human Rights Policy, which states: “We’re required to comply with local laws, and at times there are complex issues about which we may disagree with governments.” However, it is not clear what rules the app has broken in China. Quran Majeed says it is “trusted by over 35 million Muslims globally”.

Last month, both Apple and Google removed a tactical voting app devised by jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Russian authorities had threatened to fine the two companies if they refused to drop the app, which told users who could unseat ruling party candidates.

China is one of Apple’s biggest markets, and the company’s supply chain is heavily reliant on Chinese manufacturing.

Apple chief executive Tim Cook has been accused of hypocrisy from politicians in the US for speaking out about American politics, but

staying quiet about China.

Mr Cook criticised Donald Trump’s ban of seven Muslim-majority countries in 2017.

However, he is also accused of complying with the Chinese government over censorship - and not publicly criticising it for its treatment of Muslim minorities.

The New York Times reported earlier this year that Apple takes down apps in China if deemed off limits by the Chinese government. Topics that apps cannot discuss include Tiananmen Square, the Chinese spiritual movement Falun Gong, the Dalai Lama, and independence for Tibet and Taiwan.

Benjamin Ismail, project director at Apple Censorship, said: “Currently Apple is being turned into the censorship bureau of Beijing. “They need to do the right thing, and then face whatever the reaction is of the Chinese government.”

Another popular religious app, Olive Tree’s Bible app, was also taken down this week in China. The company told the BBC they had removed the app themselves.

“Olive Tree Bible Software was informed during the App Store review process that we are required to provide a permit demonstrating our authorization to distribute an app with book or magazine content in mainland China,” said a spokesperson.

“Since we did not have the permit and needed to get our app update approved and



Screengrab from Quran Majeed promotional material

out to customers, we removed our Bible app from China's App Store."

On Friday, The Mac Observer reported that Audible, the Amazon owned audiobook and podcast service, removed its app from the Apple store in mainland China last month "due to permit requirements."

On Thursday, Microsoft said it was shutting down its social network, LinkedIn, in China, saying having to comply with the Chinese state had become increasingly challenging. The decision was made after the career-networking site faced questions for blocking the profiles of some journalists.

## 43 Countries Including Turkey Call on China to Respect Uyghur Rights

*By Daily Sabah with AFP, OCT 22, 2021*

**Forty-three countries including Turkey on Thursday at the United Nations urged China to "ensure full respect for the rule of law" with regard to the Muslim Uyghur community in Xinjiang, where human rights violations remain "particularly" worrying. "We call on China to allow immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for independent observers, including the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and her office," the countries said in a joint statement, read at the U.N. by France.**

"We are particularly concerned about the situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region," the statement said, citing "credible" reports that "indicate the existence of a large network of 'political reeducation' camps where over a million people have been arbitrarily detained."

The declaration, signed by the United States, European countries, Asian states and others, spoke of torture, cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based violence and forced sepa-



*A security person watches from a guard tower around a detention facility in Yarkent county in East Turkistan Region, March 21, 2021. (AP Photo)*

ration of children, which it said "disproportionately continues to target Uyghurs and members of other minorities."

China's ambassador to the United Nations, Zhang Jun denounced what he termed the "lies" and "a plot to hurt China." He quickly stepped in to reject "unfounded accusations."

"Xinjiang enjoys development and the people are emancipating themselves every day and are proud of the progress made," he said, supported by Cuba, which criticized any interference in China's internal affairs.

In 2019 and 2020, a similar declaration was made public in the same way by Britain and Germany. After garnering 23 backers two years ago, the declaration gained the support of 39 countries last year. They were joined this year by Turkey, Eswatini, Portugal and the Czech Republic, according to diplomats. On the other hand, Haiti dropped its backing for the declaration after its relations with China were complicated by Port-au-Prince recognizing Taiwan. Switzerland also dropped its signature from the statement because, diplomatic sources

said, it recently hosted a high-level meeting between the United States and China and decided to prioritize its role as facilitator between these two powers rather than signing the annual declaration calling for respect of human rights in Xinjiang. According to diplomats, China is increasing pressure every year to dissuade U.N. members from signing the declarations, threatening not to renew peace missions in said countries or preventing others from building new embassies in China.

## Wang Junzheng, “Butcher of Xinjiang,” Becomes Party Secretary of Tibet

*By Bitter Winter Lupsang Gurung, OCT 22, 2021*

**The bureaucrat responsible for several re-education camps and Uyghur forced labor has been called to apply his repressive methods on Tibetans.**

The highest authority in Tibet is the Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the Region. From 2011 to 2016, this position was held by the notorious Cheng Quanguo, who experimented in Tibet with the brutal methods he would later apply on an even large scale in Xinjiang, where he became CCP Secretary in August 2016.

That the CCP wants to crack down on Xinjiang Uyghurs and other Muslims and on Tibetan Buddhists with increasingly similar strategies has now been proved by the fact that on October 18, Wang Junzheng has been appointed as the new CCP Secretary in Tibet.



*Wang Junzheng (from Weibo). 21, 2021. (AP Photo)*



Wang Junzheng's reign promises to be for Tibetans as bad as Cheng Quanguo's, or worse. Wang has been sanctioned by the U.S. "in coordination with Canada and European allies" on March 22, 2021, as responsible of serious human rights violations. Indeed, his appointment in Tibet is a slap in the face of the United States and democratic countries in general. The "butcher of Xinjiang" not only is not reined in by Beijing, he is promoted to higher office.

Wang was the boss in Xinjiang of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), which the U.S. have described as a "paramilitary structure" of the CCP. In fact, it is much more. In Xinjiang, the XPCC controls much of the economy, including the cotton industry, and is directly responsible for Uyghur forced

labor. In addition, the XPCC directly administers several Xinjiang cities. It is not subject to the authority of Xinjiang authorities but answers directly to the Politburo in Beijing.

A typical "state within the state," the XPCC oversaw the gigantic operation of ethnic engineering importing Han Chinese into Xinjiang, and also directly managed several transformation through education camps. On all these activities, Wang reigned supreme.

Tibetans have all reasons to be concerned. Re-education camps and forced labor exist in Tibet too. Wang may have been sent to Tibet to escalate this system into Xinjiang-like proportions, further destroying Tibetan identity and culture as he worked, successfully in the eyes of Beijing leaders who promoted him, to destroy Uyghur identity in Xinjiang.



**Amnesty International sent an open letter to UN member states calling for action due to China's human rights violations in East Turkistan. The petition collected signatures from 323832 people from 184 countries.**



The Olympic flame was lit,  
but the world became darker.



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