

= July 2009 Ürümqi riots =

The July 2009 Ürümqi riots were a series of violent riots over several days that broke out on 5 July 2009 in Ürümqi , the capital city of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) , in northwestern People 's Republic of China (PRC) . The first day 's rioting , which involved at least 1 @, @ 000 Uyghurs , began as a protest but escalated into violent attacks that mainly targeted Han people . People 's Armed Police were deployed , and two days later hundreds of Han people clashed with both police and Uyghurs . PRC officials said that a total of 197 people died , among those killed most of them are Hans , with 1 @, @ 721 others injured and many vehicles and buildings destroyed ; however , Uyghur exile groups say the death toll is higher . Many men disappeared during wide @-@ scale police sweeps in the days following the riots ; Human Rights Watch (HRW) documented 43 cases and said figures for real disappearances were likely to be much higher .

Rioting began when the police confronted the march calling for a full investigation into the Shaoguan incident , a brawl in southern China several days earlier in which two Uyghurs had been killed . However , observers disagree on what caused the protests to become violent . The PRC central government alleged that the riots themselves were planned from abroad by the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) and its leader Rebiya Kadeer , while Kadeer denies fomenting the violence in her fight for Uyghur " self @-@ determination . " Uyghur exile groups claim that the escalation was caused by the police 's use of excessive force .

Chinese media coverage of the Ürümqi riots was extensive , and was compared favourably to that of the unrest in Tibet in 2008 . When the riots began , communications were immediately cut off . In the weeks that followed , official sources reported that over 1 @, @ 000 Uyghurs were arrested and detained ; Uyghur @-@ run mosques were temporarily closed . The communication limitations and armed police presence remained in place as of January 2010 . By November 2009 , over 400 individuals faced criminal charges for their actions during the riots . Nine were executed in November 2009 , and by February 2010 , at least 26 had received death sentences .

= = Background = =

Xinjiang is a large central @-@ Asian region within the People 's Republic of China comprising numerous minority groups : 45 % of its population are Uyghurs , and 40 % are Han . Its heavily industrialised capital , Ürümqi , has a population of more than 2 @. @ 3 million , about 75 % of whom are Han , 12 @. @ 8 % are Uyghur , and 10 % are from other ethnic groups .

In general , Uyghurs and the mostly Han government disagree on which group has greater historical claim to the Xinjiang region : Uyghurs believe their ancestors were indigenous to the area , whereas government policy considers present @-@ day Xinjiang to have belonged to China since around 200 BC . According to PRC policy , Uyghurs are classified as a National Minority rather than an indigenous group ? in other words , they are considered to be no more indigenous to Xinjiang than the Han , and have no special rights to the land under the law . The People 's Republic has presided over the migration into Xinjiang of millions of Han , who dominate the region economically and politically .

Uyghur nationalists often incorrectly claim that 5 % of Xinjiang 's population in 1949 was Han , and that the other 95 % was Uyghur , erasing the presence of Kazakhs , Huis , Mongols , Xibes and others , and ignoring the fact that Hans were around one third of Xinjiang 's population in 1800 , during the time of the Qing Dynasty . Professor of Chinese and Central Asian History at Georgetown University , James A. Millward wrote that foreigners often mistakenly think that Urumqi was originally a Uyghur city and that the Chinese destroyed its Uyghur character and culture , however , Urumqi was founded as a Chinese city by Han and Hui (Tungans) , and it is the Uyghurs who are new to the city . While a few people try to give a misportrayal of the historical Qing situation in light of the contemporary situation in Xinjiang with Han migration , and claim that the Qing settlements and state farms were an anti @-@ Uyghur plot to replace them in their land , Professor James A. Millward pointed out that the Qing agricultural colonies in reality had nothing to do with Uyghur and

their land , since the Qing banned settlement of Han in the Uyghur Tarim Basin and in fact directed the Han settlers instead to settle in the non @-@ Uyghur Dzungaria and the new city of Urumqi , so that the state farms which were settled with 155 @,@ 000 Han Chinese from 1760 @-@ 1830 were all in Dzungaria and Urumqi , where there was only an insignificant amount of Uyghurs , instead of the Tarim Basin oases .

At the start of the 19th century , 40 years after the Qing reconquest , there were around 155 @,@ 000 Han and Hui Chinese in northern Xinjiang and somewhat more than twice that number of Uyghurs in southern Xinjiang . A census of Xinjiang under Qing rule in the early 19th century tabulated ethnic shares of the population as 30 % Han and 60 % Turkic , while it dramatically shifted to 6 % Han and 75 % Uyghur in the 1953 census , however a situation similar to the Qing era @-@ demographics with a large number of Han has been restored as of 2000 with 40 @.@ 57 % Han and 45 @.@ 21 % Uyghur . Professor Stanley W. Toops noted that today 's demographic situation is similar to that of the early Qing period in Xinjiang . In northern Xinjiang , the Qing brought in Han , Hui , Uyghur , Xibe , and Kazakh colonists after they exterminated the Zunghar Oirat Mongols in the region , with one third of Xinjiang 's total population consisting of Hui and Han in the northern are , while around two thirds were Uyghurs in southern Xinjiang 's Tarim Basin .

Although current PRC minority policy , which is based on affirmative actions , has reinforced a Uyghur ethnic identity that is distinct from the Han population , some scholars argue that Beijing unofficially favours a monolingual , monocultural model that is based on the majority . The authorities also crack down on any activity that appears to constitute separatism . These policies , in addition to long @-@ standing cultural differences , have sometimes resulted in " resentments " between Uyghur and Han citizens . On one hand , as a result of Han immigration and government policies , Uyghurs ' freedoms of religion and of movement are curtailed , while most Uyghurs argue that the government deliberately downplays their history and traditional culture . On the other hand , some Han citizens view Uyghurs as benefiting from special treatment , such as preferential admission to universities and exemption from the one @-@ child policy , and as " harbouring separatist aspirations " .

Tensions between Uyghurs and Han have resulted in waves of protest in recent years . Xinjiang has been the location of several instances of violence and ethnic clashes , such as the Ghulja Incident of 1997 , the 2008 Kashgar attack , widespread unrest preceding the Olympic Games in Beijing , as well as numerous minor attacks .

= = = Immediate causes = = =

The riots took place several days after a violent incident in Shaoguan , Guangdong , where many migrant workers are employed as part of a programme to alleviate labour shortages . According to state media , a disgruntled former worker disseminated rumours in late June that two Han women had been raped by six Uyghur men . Official sources later said they found no evidence to support the rape allegation . Overnight on 25 ? 26 June , tensions at the Guangdong factory led to a full @-@ blown ethnic brawl between Uyghurs and Hans , during which two Uyghur co @-@ workers were killed . Exiled Uyghur leaders alleged the death toll was much higher . While the official Xinhua News Agency reported that the person responsible for spreading the rumours had been arrested , Uyghurs alleged that the authorities had failed to protect the Uyghur workers , or to arrest any of the Han people involved in the killings . They organised a street protest in Ürümqi on 5 July to voice their discontent and to demand a full government investigation .

At some point the demonstration became violent . A government statement called the riots a " pre @-@ empted , organised violent crime [...] instigated and directed from abroad , and carried out by outlaws . " Nur Bekri , chairman of the Xinjiang regional government , said on 6 July that overseas separatist forces had taken advantage of the Shaoguan incident " to instigate Sunday 's unrest and undermine the ethnic unity and social stability " . The government blamed the exiled independence group World Uyghur Congress (WUC) for coordinating and instigating the riots over the internet . Government sources blamed the WUC leader Rebiya Kadeer in particular , citing her public speeches after the Tibetan unrest and phone recordings in which she had allegedly said that

something would happen in Ürümqi . Chinese authorities accused a man who they alleged to be a key WUC member of inciting ethnic tensions by circulating a violent video , and urging Uyghurs , in an online forum , to " fight back [against Hans] with violence " . Jirila Isamuddin , the mayor of Ürümqi , claimed that the protesters had organised online via such services as QQ Groups . China Daily asserted that the riots were organised to fuel separatism and to benefit Middle East terrorist organisations . Kadeer denied fomenting the violence , and argued that the Ürümqi protests and their descent into violence were triggered by heavy policing , discontent over Shaoguan and " years of Chinese repression " , rather than by the intervention of separatists or terrorists ; Uyghur exile groups claimed that violence erupted when police used excessive force to disperse the crowd .

All parties , then , agree that the protests were organised beforehand ; the main points of contention are whether the violence was planned or spontaneous , and whether the underlying tensions reflect separatist inclinations or a desire for social justice .

= = Events = =

= = = Initial demonstrations = = =

Demonstrations began on the evening of 5 July with a protest in the Grand Bazaar , a prominent tourist site , and crowd reportedly gathering at the People 's Square area . The demonstration began peacefully , and official and eyewitness accounts reported that it involved about 1 @, @ 000 Uyghurs ; the WUC said approximately 10 @, @ 000 protesters took part .

On 6 July , XUAR chairman Nur Bekri presented an official timeline of the previous day 's events , according to which more than 200 demonstrators gathered in People 's Square in Ürümqi at about 5 p.m. local time , and about 70 of their leaders were detained . Later , a crowd gathered in the mostly Uyghur areas of South Jiefang Road , Erdaoqiao , and Shanxi Alley ; by 7 : 30 p.m. , more than one thousand were gathered in front of a hospital in Shanxi Alley . At about 7 : 40 p.m. , more than 300 people blocked the roads in the Renmin Road and Nanmen area . According to Bekri , rioters began to smash buses at 8 : 18 p.m. , after police " controlled and dispersed " the crowd .

How the demonstrations became violent is unclear . Some say the police used excessive force against the protesters ; the World Uyghur Congress quickly issued press releases saying that the police had used deadly force and killed " scores " of protesters . Kadeer has alleged that there were agents provocateurs among the crowds . Others claim that the protesters initiated the violence ; for example , an Uyghur eyewitness cited by The New York Times said protesters began throwing rocks at the police . The government 's official line was that the violence was not only initiated by the protesters , but also had been premeditated and coordinated by Uyghur separatists abroad . The local public security bureau said it found evidence that many Uyghurs had travelled from other cities to gather for the riot , and that they had begun preparing weapons two or three days before the riot .

= = = Escalation and spread = = =

After the confrontation with police turned violent , rioters began hurling rocks , smashing vehicles , breaking into shops , and attacking Han civilians . At least 1 @, @ 000 Uyghurs were involved in the rioting when it began , and the number of rioters may have risen to as many as 3 @, @ 000 . Jane Macartney of The Times characterised the first day 's rioting as consisting mainly of " Han stabbed by marauding gangs of Uighurs " ; a report in The Australian several months later suggested that religiously moderate Uyghurs may also have been attacked by rioters . Although the majority of rioters were Uyghur , not all Uyghurs were violent during the riots ; there are accounts of Han and Uyghur civilians helping each other escape the violence and hide . About 1 @, @ 000 police officers were dispatched ; they used batons , live ammunition , tasers , tear gas and water hoses to disperse the rioters , and set up roadblocks and posted armoured vehicles throughout the city .

During a press conference , Mayor Jirila Isamuddin said that at about 8 : 15 p.m. , some protesters started to fight and loot , overturned guardrails and smashed three buses before being dispersed .

At 8 : 30 p.m. , violence escalated around South Jiefang Road and Longquan Street area , with rioters torching police patrol cars and attacking passers @-@ by . Soon , between 700 and 800 people went from the People 's Square to Daximen and Xiaoximen area , " fighting , smashing , looting , torching and killing " along the way . At 9 : 30 p.m. , the government received reports that three people had been killed and 26 injured , 6 of whom were police officers . Police reinforcements were dispatched to hotspots of People 's Square , Nanmen , Tuanjie Road , Saimachang and South Xinhua Road . Police took control of the main roadways and commercial districts in the city at around 10 pm , but riots continued in side streets and alleyways , with Hans attacked and cars overturned or torched , according to the mayor . Police then formed small teams and " swept " the entire city for the next two days . A strict curfew was put in place ; authorities imposed " comprehensive traffic control " from 9 : 00 pm Tuesday to 8 : 00 am Wednesday " to avoid further chaos " .

The official news agency , Xinhua , reported that police believed agitators were trying to organise more unrest in other areas in Xinjiang , such as Aksu and the Yili Prefecture . Violent protests also sprang up in Kashgar , in southwestern Xinjiang , where the South China Morning Post reported many shops were closed , and the area around the mosque was sealed off by a People 's Liberation Army platoon after confrontations . Local Uyghurs blamed the security forces for using excessive force ? they " attacked the protesters and arrested 50 people " . Another clash was reported near the mosque on Tuesday , 7 July , and an estimated 50 people were arrested . Up to 12 @,@ 000 students at the Kashgar Teaching Institute were confined to campus since Sunday 's riots , according to the Post . Many of the institute 's students had apparently travelled to Ürümqi for the demonstrations there .

= = = Casualties and damage = = =

During the first hours of the rioting , state media only reported that three people had been killed . The number rose sharply , though , after the first night 's rioting ; at midday on Monday , 6 July , Xinhua announced that 129 people had died . In the following days the death toll reported by various government sources (including Xinhua and party officials) gradually grew , with the last official update on 18 July placing the tally at 197 dead , 1 @,@ 721 injured . The World Uyghur Congress has claimed that the death toll was around 600 .

Xinhua did not immediately disclose the ethnic breakdown of the dead , but journalists from The Times and The Daily Telegraph reported that most of the victims appeared to have been Han . For instance , on 10 July Xinhua stated that 137 of the dead (out of the total of 184 that was being reported at that time) were Han , 46 Uyghur , and 1 Hui . There were casualties among the rioters as well ; for example , according to official accounts , a group of 12 rioters attacking civilians were shot by police . In the months following the riots , the government maintained that the majority of casualties were Han and hospitals said that two @-@ thirds of the injured were Han , although the World Uyghur Congress claims that many Uyghurs were killed as well . According to the official count released by the Chinese government in August 2009 , 134 of the 156 civilian victims were Han , 11 Hui , 10 Uyghur , and 1 Manchu . Uyghur advocates continue to question these figures , saying that the number of ethnic Uyghurs remains understated . Xinhua reported that 627 vehicles and 633 constructions were damaged .

The Ürümqi municipal government initially announced that it would pay ¥ 200 @,@ 000 as compensation , plus another ¥ 10 @,@ 000 as " funeral expense " for every " innocent death " caused by the riot . The compensation was later doubled to ¥ 420 @,@ 000 per death . Mayor Jirila Isamuddin estimated that the compensations will cost at least ¥ 100 million .

= = = After 5 July = = =

The city remained tense while journalists invited into the city witnessed confrontational scenes between Chinese troops and Uyghurs demanding the release of family members who they said had been " arbitrarily " arrested . Uyghur women told The Daily Telegraph reporter that police entered

Uyghur districts in the night of 6 July , burst through doors , pulled men and boys from their beds , and rounded up 100 suspects . By 7 July , officials reported that 1 @, @ 434 suspected rioters had been arrested . A group of 200 to 300 Uyghur women assembled on 7 July to protest what they said was " indiscriminate " detention of Uyghur men ; the protest led to a tense but non @-@ violent confrontation with police forces . Rebiya Kadeer claimed that " nearly 10 @, @ 000 people " had gone missing overnight . Human Rights Watch (HRW) later documented 43 cases of Uyghur men who disappeared after being taken away by Chinese security forces in large @-@ scale sweeps of Uyghur neighbourhoods overnight on 6 ? 7 July , and said that this was likely to be " just the tip of the iceberg " ; HRW allege that young men , mostly in their 20s , had been unlawfully arrested and have not been seen or heard from as of 20 October 2009

On 7 July , there were large @-@ scale armed demonstrations by ethnic Han in Ürümqi . Conflicting estimates of the Han demonstrators ' numbers were reported by the western media and varied from " hundreds " to as high as 10 @, @ 000 . The Times reported that smaller fights were frequently breaking out between Uyghurs and Hans , and that groups of Han citizens had organised to take revenge on " Uyghur mobs " . Police used tear gas and roadblocks in an attempt to disperse the demonstration , and urged Han citizens over loudspeakers to " calm down " and " let the police do their job " . Li Zhi , party chief of Ürümqi , stood on the roof of a police car with a megaphone appealing to the crowd to go home .

Mass protests had been quelled by 8 July , although sporadic violence was reported . In the days after the riots , " thousands " of people tried to leave the city , and the price for bus tickets rose as much as fivefold .

On 10 July , city authorities closed Ürümqi mosques " for public safety " , saying it was too dangerous to have large gatherings and that holding Jumu 'ah , traditional Friday prayers , could reignite tensions . Large crowds of Uyghurs gathered for prayer anyway , however , and police decided to let two mosques open to avoid having an " incident " . After prayers at the White Mosque , several hundred people demonstrated over people detained after the riot , but were dispersed by riot police , with five or six people arrested .

Over 300 more people were reported arrested in early August . According to the BBC , the total number of arrests in connection with the riots was over 1 @, @ 500 . The Financial Times estimated that the number was higher , citing an insider saying that some 4 @, @ 000 arrests had already taken place by mid July , and that Ürümqi 's prisons were so full that newly arrested people were being held in a People 's Liberation Army warehouse . According to the Uyghur American Association , several other Uyghur journalists and bloggers were also detained after the riots ; one of them , journalist Gheyret Niyaz , was later sentenced to 15 years in prison for having spoken to foreign media . In the most high @-@ profile case , Ilham Tohti , an ethnic Uyghur economist at Minzu University of China , was arrested two days after the riots over his criticisms of the Xinjiang government .

= = Reactions and response = =

= = = Domestic reaction = = =

= = = = Communications black @-@ out = = = =

Mobile phone service and internet access were limited both during and after the riots . China Mobile phone service was cut " to prevent the incident from spreading further " . Outbound international calls throughout Xinjiang were blocked , and Internet connections in the region had been locked down or non @-@ local websites blocked . Reporting from Ürümqi 's Hoi Tak Hotel on 9 July , Aljazeera reported that the foreign journalists ' hotel was the only place in the city with Internet access , although the journalist could not send text messages or place international phone calls . Many unauthorised postings on local sites and Google were removed by censors ; images and video

footage of the demonstrations and rioting , however , were soon found posted on Twitter , YouTube , and Flickr . Many Xinjiang @-@ based websites became inaccessible worldwide , and internet access within Ürümqi remained restricted nearly a year following the riots ; it was not restored until 14 May 2010 .

= = = = Government = = = =

Chinese state @-@ controlled television broadcast graphic footage of cars being smashed and people being beaten . Officials reiterated the party line : XUAR chairman Nur Bekri delivered a lengthy address on the situation and on the Shaoguan incident , and claimed that the government of both Guangdong and Xinjiang had dealt with the deaths of the workers properly and with respect . Bekri further condemned the riots as " premeditated and planned " ; Eligen Imibakhi , chairman of the Standing Committee of the Xinjiang Regional People 's Congress , blamed 5 July riots on " extremism , separatism and terrorism " .

The Chinese media covered the rioting extensively . Hours after troops stopped the rioting , the state invited foreign journalists on an official fact @-@ finding trip to Ürümqi ; journalists from more than 100 media organisations were all corralled into the downtown Hoi Tak Hotel , sharing 30 internet connections . Journalists were given unprecedented access to troublespots and hospitals . The Financial Times referred to this handling as an improvement , compared to the " public @-@ relations disaster " of the Tibetan unrest in 2008 .

In an effort to soothe tensions immediately after the riots , state media began a mass publicity campaign throughout Xinjiang extolling ethnic harmony . Local television programmes united Uyghur and Han singers in a chorus of " We are all part of the same family " ; Uyghurs who " acted heroically " during the riots were profiled ; loud @-@ hailer trucks blasted slogans in the streets . A common slogan warned against the " three forces " of terrorism , separatism and extremism .

President Hu Jintao curtailed his attendance of the G8 summit in Italy , convened an emergency meeting of the Politburo , and dispatched Standing Committee member Zhou Yongkang to Xinjiang to " guid [e] stability @-@ preservation work in Xinjiang " . South China Morning Post reported a government source saying Beijing would re @-@ evaluate the impact on arrangements for the country 's forthcoming 60th anniversary celebrations in October . Guangdong 's CPC Provincial Committee Secretary , Wang Yang , noted that the government policies towards ethnic minorities " definitely need adjustments " , otherwise " there will be some problems . " A security planner said the authorities planned to fly in more troops from other stations to raise the number of armed police presence to 130 @,@ 000 before the 60th anniversary celebrations in October .

After the riots , the Chinese government exercised diplomatic pressure on nations that Rebiya Kadeer was scheduled to visit . In late July , India declined Kadeer a visa " on the advice of Beijing " , and Beijing summoned the Japanese ambassador in protest of a trip Kadeer made to Japan . When Kadeer visited Australia in August to promote a film about her life , China officially complained to the Australian government and asked for the film to be withdrawn .

= = = = Internet response = = = =

The response to the riots on the Chinese blogosphere was markedly more varied than the official response . Despite blocks and censorship , Internet watchers monitored continued attempts by netizens to publish their own thoughts on the causes of the incident or vent their anger about the violence . While some bloggers were supportive of the government , others were more reflective of the event 's cause . On numerous forums and news sites , government workers quickly removed comments about the riots . Common themes were calls for punishment for those responsible ; some posts evoked the name of Wang Zhen , the general who is reviled and feared by many Uyghurs for repression after the communist takeover of Xinjiang in 1949 .

= = = International reactions = = =

= = = = International organisations = = = =

United Nations : Secretary @-@ General Ban Ki @-@ moon urged all sides to exercise restraint , and called on China to take measures to protect the civilian population as well as respect the freedoms of citizens , including freedom of speech , assembly and information . Human rights chief Navi Pillay said she was " alarmed " over the high death toll , noting this was an " extraordinarily high number of people to be killed and injured in less than a day of rioting . " She also said China must treat detainees humanely in a way that adheres to international norms .

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation : said it sympathised with the family members of those innocent people killed in the riot ; it said that its member states regard Xinjiang as an inalienable part of the People 's Republic of China and believe the situation in Xinjiang is purely China 's internal affairs . Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov condemned rioters for " Using separatist slogans and provoking ethnic intolerance . Officials from both neighbouring Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan said they were braced for " an influx of refugees " and tightened border controls . Despite the Kazakh government support , over 5 @, @ 000 Uyghurs protested on 19 July in former capital Almaty against Chinese police use of deadly force against the rioters .

Organisation of the Islamic Conference : decried the " disproportionate use of force " , calling on Beijing to " bring those responsible to justice swiftly " and urging China to find a solution to the unrest by examining why it had erupted .

European Union : leaders expressed concern , and urged the Chinese government to show restraint in dealing with the protests : German Chancellor Angela Merkel urged respect for the rights of minorities ; Italian President Giorgio Napolitano brought up human rights at a press conference with Hu Jintao , and said that " economic and social progress that is being achieved in China places new demands in terms of human rights . "

= = = = Countries = = = =

Turkey , which has a vocal Uyghur minority and is a majority @-@ Turkic nation , officially expressed " deep sadness " , and urged the Chinese authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice . Its Prime Minister , Recep Tayyip Erdo?an , said the incident was " like genocide " , while Trade and Industry Minister Nihat Ergün called for a boycott on Chinese goods . The violence against Uyghurs also caused lots of Turkish people to gather for protests against PRC , mostly targeting Chinese embassies and consulates in Turkey 's various cities . The Turkish stance sparked a significant outcry from Chinese media . Rebiya Kadeer claimed that Turkey is hampered from interfering with Uyghurs because it recognizes that its own Kurdish issue may get interfered with by China in retaliation . An appeal for Chinese products to be boycotted by Nihat Ergun failed .

Arab countries politically supported China in the OIC with especially Saudi Arabia and Egypt helping China squash any potential anti @-@ Chinese motion by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation on the Uyghurs , Egypt viewed its own internal sectarian problems like China 's and Sudan was also concerned about external interference in its internal problems as well , while Indonesia had to deal with its own internal Islamists and emphasized that there was no religious conflict but instead ethnic based disturbances in Xinjiang to calm the situation down . Pakistan , Saudi Arabia , and Egypt helped China kill off a statement on the Xinjiang situation in the OIC . There has been no public reaction by the Arab League , Saudi Arabia and Iran on the situation and China has built stronger relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia due to their influence in the Islamic world .

Afghanistan , Cambodia , and Vietnam said they believed the Chinese government was " taking appropriate measures " , their statements backed " the territorial integrity and sovereignty of China " . Micronesia Vice President Alik Alik condemned the riot as a " terrorist act " .

Iran said it shared the concerns of Turkey and the OIC , and appealed to the Chinese government to respect the rights of the Muslim population in Xinjiang .

The Japanese government was monitoring the situation , with concern ; Singapore urged restraint

and dialogue ; while the ROC government in Taiwan strongly condemned all those who instigated the violence . Premier Liu Chiao @-@ shiuan also urged restraint and expressed hope that the Chinese authorities will demonstrate the " greatest possible leniency and tolerance in dealing with the aftermath " and respect the rights of ethnic minorities . Taiwan denied a visa to Kadeer in September 2009 , alleging she had links to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement , classed as a terrorist organisation by the United Nations and United States .

Switzerland called for restraint , and sent condolences to the families of victims and urged China to respect freedom of expression and the press . Prime Minister Kevin Rudd of Australia urged restraint to bring about a " peaceful settlement to this difficulty . " Serbia stated that it opposed separatism and supports the " resolution of all disputes by peaceful means . " Belarus noted with regret the loss of life and damage in the region , and hoped that the situation would soon normalise .

There was violence in the Netherlands and in Norway : the Chinese embassy in the Netherlands was attacked by Uyghur activists who smashed windows with bricks , the Chinese flag was also burnt . There were 142 arrests , and China closed the embassy for the day . About 100 Uyghurs protested outside the Chinese embassy in the Norwegian capital . Eleven were detained , and later released without charge . Protesters from a coalition of Indonesian Islamist groups attacked guards at the Chinese embassy in Jakarta and called for a jihad against China . Pakistan said there were some " elements " out to harm Sino @-@ Pakistan ties would not damage or destabilise the interests of the two countries . Sri Lanka stressed the incident was an internal affair of China and was confident that efforts by the Chinese authorities would restore normalcy .

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon urged " dialogue and goodwill " to help resolve grievances and prevent further deterioration of the situation . The spokesman for the Obama administration said the United States regretted the loss of life in Xinjiang , was deeply concerned and called on all sides to exercise restraint . U.S. State Department spokesman Ian Kelly , said " it 's important that the Chinese authorities act to restore order and prevent further violence . " The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom expressed " grave concern " over repression in China , and called for an independent investigation on the riots and targeted sanctions against China .

== = Other organisations == =

Amnesty International : called for an " impartial and independent " inquiry into the incident , adding that those detained for " peacefully expressing their views and exercising their freedom of expression , association and assembly " must be released and others ensured to receive a fair trial .

Human Rights Watch : urged China to exercise restraint and to allow an independent inquiry into the events , which would include addressing Uyghur concerns about policies in the region . It also added that China should respect international norms when responding to the protests and only use force proportionately .

Al @-@ Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) : According to London @-@ based risk analysis firm Stirling Assynt , Algeria @-@ based AQIM issued a call to attack Chinese workers in North Africa .

== = Media coverage == =

Chen Shirong , China editor on the BBC World Service , remarked at the improvement in media management by Xinhua : " To be more credible , it released video footage a few hours after the event , not two weeks . " Peter Foster of the Daily Telegraph observed that " long @-@ standing China commentators have been astonished at the speed at which Beijing has moved to seize the news agenda on this event , " and attributed it to his belief that " China doesn 't have a great deal to hide " . A University of California , Berkeley academic agreed that the Chinese authorities had become more sophisticated . The New York Times and AFP recognised the Chinese learnt lessons

from political protests around the world , such as the so @-@ called colour revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine , and the 2009 Iranian election protests , and concluded that Chinese experts had studied how modern electronic communications " helped protesters organize and reach the outside world , and for ways that governments sought to counter them . "

But Willy Lam , fellow of the Jamestown Foundation , sceptically said that the authorities were " just testing the reaction " . He believed that if the outcome of this openness was poor they would " put the brakes on " as they did after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake . There were instances of foreign journalists being taken into custody by the police , to be released shortly thereafter . On 10 July , officials ordered foreign media out of Kashgar , " for their own safety . " Xia Lin , a top official at Xinhua , later revealed that violence caused by both sides during and after the riots had been downplayed or wholly unreported in official news channels , for the fear that the ethnic violence would spread beyond Ürümqi .

A People 's Daily op @-@ ed rebuked certain western media outlets for their " double standards , biased coverage and comments " . It said that China failed to receive fair " repayment " from certain foreign political figures or media outlets for its openness and transparent attitude . The author said " a considerable number of media outlets still intentionally or inadvertently minimised the violent actions of the rioters , and attempted to focus on so @-@ called racial conflict . " However , D 'Arcy Doran from Agence France @-@ Presse welcomed the increased openness for foreign media , but contrasted their reporting to Chinese media , which closely followed the government line to focus mainly on injured Hans whilst ignoring the " Uyghur story " or reasons behind the incident .

Many early reports of the riots , starting with one from Reuters , used a picture purporting to show the previous day 's riots . The photo , showing large number of People 's Armed Police squares , was one taken of the 2009 Shishou riot and originally published on 26 June by Southern Metropolis Weekly . The same picture was mistakenly used by other agencies ; it was on the website of The Daily Telegraph , but was removed a day later . In an interview with Al Jazeera on 7 July , WUC leader Rebiya Kadeer used the same Shishou photograph to defend the Uyghurs in Ürümqi . A World Uyghur Congress representative later apologised , explaining that the photo was chosen out of hundreds for its image quality .

On 3 August , Xinhua reported that two of Rebiya Kadeer 's children had written letters blaming her for orchestrating the riots . A Germany @-@ based spokesman for the WUC rejected the letters as fakes . A Human Rights Watch researcher remarked their style was " suspiciously close " to the way the Chinese authorities had described rioting in Xinjiang and the aftermath . He added that " it 's highly irregular for [her children] to be placed on the platform of a government mouthpiece [...] for wide dispersion . "

= = Aftermath and long @-@ term impact = =

= = = Arrests and trials = = =

In early August , the Ürümqi government announced that 83 individuals had been " officially " arrested in connection with the riots . China Daily reported in late August that over 200 people were being charged and that trials would begin by the end of August . Although this was denied both by a provincial and a local Party official , Xinjiang authorities later announced that arrest warrants had been issued to 196 suspects , of which 51 had already been prosecuted . Police also requested that the procuratorate approve the arrest of a further 239 people , and detention of 825 more , China Daily said . In early December , 94 " fugitives " were arrested .

The state first announced criminal charges against detainees in late September , when it charged 21 people with " murder , arson , robbery , and damaging property " . 14 @,@ 000 security personnel were deployed in Ürümqi from 11 October , and the next day a Xinjiang court sentenced six men to death , and one to life imprisonment , for their roles in the riots . All six men were Uyghurs , and were found guilty of murder , arson and robbery during the riots . Foreign media said the sentences appeared to be aimed at mollifying the anger of the Han majority ; the WUC denounced

the verdict as " political " , and said there was no desire to see justice served . Human Rights Watch said that there were " serious violations of due process " at the trials of 21 defendants relating to July protests . It said the trials " did not meet minimum international standards of due process and fair trials " ? specifically , it said that the trials were carried out in a single day without prior public notice , that the defendants ' choice of lawyers was restricted , and that the Party had given judges instructions on how to handle the cases . Xinhua , on the other hand , noted that the proceedings were conducted in both the Chinese and Uyghur languages , and that evidence had been carefully collected and verified before any decisions were made .

By February 2010 , the number of death sentences issued had increased to at least 26 , including at least one Han and one female Uyghur . Nine of the individuals sentenced were executed in November 2009 ; based on previous government statements , eight were Uyghur and one was Han .

= = = Later unrest and security measures = = =

Starting in mid @-@ August , there was a string of attacks in which as many as 476 individuals may have been stabbed with hypodermic needles . Officials believed that the attacks were targeting Han civilians and had been perpetrated by Uyghur separatists . In response to both concern over the attacks and dissatisfaction over the government 's slowness in prosecuting people involved with the July riots , thousands of Hans protested in the streets . On 3 September , five people died during the protests and 14 were injured , according to an official . The next day , the Communist Party Chief of Ürümqi , Li Zhi , was removed from his post , along with the police chief , Liu Yaohua ; the provincial Party secretary Wang Lequan was replaced in April 2010 .

While the city became calmer after these events , and the government made great efforts to show that life was returning to normal , an armed police presence did remain . As late as January 2010 , it was reported that police were making patrols five or six times a day , and that patrols were stepped up at night . Shortly before the first anniversary of the rioting , the authorities installed more than 40 @, @ 000 surveillance cameras around Ürümqi to " ensure security in key public places " .

= = = Legislation and investigation = = =

In late August , the central government passed a law outlining standards for the deployment of armed police during " rebellion , riots , large @-@ scale serious criminal violence , terror attacks and other social safety incidents . " After the protests in early September , the government issued an announcement banning all " unlicensed marches , demonstrations and mass protests " . The provincial government also passed legislation banning the use of the internet to incite ethnic separatism .

In November , the Chinese government dispatched some 400 officials to Xinjiang , including senior leaders such as State Council secretary general Ma Kai , Propaganda department head Liu Yunshan , and United Front chief Du Qinglin , to form an ad hoc " Team of Investigation and Research " on Xinjiang , ostensibly intended on studying the policy changes to be implemented in response to the violence . In April 2010 , hardliner party chief Wang Lequan was replaced by Zhang Chunxian , a more conciliatory figure . The government authorized transfer payments totalling some \$ 15 billion from eastern provinces to Xinjiang to aid in the province 's economic development , and announced plans to establish a special economic zone in Kashgar .

China has installed a grassroots network of officials throughout Xinjiang , its predominantly Muslim north @-@ west frontier region , to address social risks and spot early signs of unrest : Hundreds of cadres have been transferred from southern Xinjiang , the region 's poorest area , into socially unstable neighbourhoods of Ürümqi ; a policy has been implemented where if all family members are unemployed , the government arranges for one person in the household to get a job , ; official announcements are calling upon university students to register for those payouts . The areas around slums are being redeveloped to reduce social risks , opening way to new apartment blocks . However , independent observers believe that fundamental inequalities need to be addressed , and

the mindset must change for there to be any success ; Ilham Tohti warned that the new policy could attract more Han immigration , and further alienate the Uyghur population .

= = = Public services and Internet access = = =

It took until at least early August for public transport to be fully restored in the city . According to Xinhua , 267 buses had been damaged during the rioting ; most were back in operation by 12 August . The government paid bus companies a total of ¥ 5 @. @ 25 million in compensation . Despite the resumption of transportation services , and the government 's efforts to encourage visitors to the region , tourism fell sharply after the riots ; on the National Day holiday in October , Xinjiang had 25 % fewer tourists than it did in 2008 .

Ürümqi public schools opened on schedule in September for the fall semester , but with armed police guarding them . Many schools began first @- @ day classes by focusing on patriotism .

On the other hand , Internet and international telephone service in Ürümqi remained limited for nearly a year after the riots . As late as November , most of the Internet was still inaccessible to residents and international phone calls were impossible ; as late as December , most web content hosted outside the autonomous region remained off @- @ limits to all but a few journalists , and residents had to travel to Dunhuang 14 hours away to access the Internet normally . Within the city , only about 100 local sites , such as banks and regional government websites , could be accessed . Both incoming and outgoing international phone calls were disallowed , so Ürümqi residents could only communicate by calling intermediaries in other cities in China who would then place the international calls . The communications blackout generated controversy even within China : Yu Xiaofeng of Zhejiang University criticised the move , and many Ürümqi locals said it hurt businesses and delayed recovery , whereas David Gosset of the Euro @- @ China forum argued that the government had the right to shut down communications for the sake of social stability ; some locals believed that getting away from the Internet even improved their quality of life .

In late December , the government began restoring services gradually . The websites for Xinhua and the People 's Daily , two state @- @ controlled media outlets , were made accessible on 28 December , the web portals Sina.com and Sohu.com on 10 January 2010 , and 27 more websites on 6 February . But access to websites was only partial : for instance , users could browse forums and blogs but not post on them . China Daily reported that limited e @- @ mail services were also restored in Ürümqi on 8 February , although a BBC reporter writing at approximately the same time said e @- @ mail was not accessible yet . Text messaging on cell phones was restored on 17 January , although there was a limit to how many messages a user could send daily . Internet access was fully restored in May 2010 .