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Cultural Erasure in Xinjiang: Mass internment, torture, and forced assimilation of Muslims in northwest China

# 1. Executive Summary

Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other predominantly Turkic Muslim peoples living in Xinjiang have long faced discrimination and persecution. In 2017, under the guise of an intensifying counterterrorism campaign, the government of China commenced a massive escalation of its historical abuses against these peoples. An objective of the government’s campaign is to eradicate Islamic religious beliefs and Turkic Muslim ethno-cultural practices and replace them with secular state-sanctioned views and activities, and ultimately to “transform” members of these ethnic minorities into obedient supporters of the Chinese Communist Party and President Xi Jinping.

To achieve this political indoctrination and cultural erasure, the government commenced a campaign of mass internment and forced assimilation. More than a million men and women – Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Tatars, Tajiks, and Hui– have been arbitrarily detained in what the government refers to as “vocational training centres” or “transformation through education” centres, but which are more accurately described as internment camps. In these camps, detainees are subjected to a ceaseless indoctrination campaign as well as physical and psychological torture and other forms of ill-treatment.

The internment camp system is one part of a larger system of subjugation in Xinjiang. The government has enacted far-reaching policies that severely restrict behaviour of ethnic minorities outside the camps. These policies violate fundamental human rights, including security of person, movement, peaceful assembly, expression, thought, belief, conscience, religion, equal protection under the law, and privacy. These abuses are carried out in such a widespread and systematic manner that they are now an inexorable aspect of daily life in Xinjiang for millions of members of ethnic minorities.

The government has gone to extraordinary lengths to cover up it abuses in Xinjiang and, in particular, to prevent foreigners from obtaining information about the internment camps. The whereabouts of many of the people sent to internment camps is not known. Many remain in indefinite incommunicado detention in the camps. Hundreds of thousands have been transferred to situations of forced labour or given long prison sentences. Those who have been permitted to return to their homes do so under strict conditions limiting their movement and associations.

The brutal effectiveness and tremendous scale of the government’s campaign – and the associated cover-up – derive from the government’s unprecedented use of surveillance technology coupled with its ability to mobilize huge portions of the population to enforce its will. The government relies on a nearly inescapable in-person and electronic surveillance operation designed to ensure that the behaviour of ethnic monitories is continuously monitored and evaluated. Ubiquitous government cadres, violent security forces, and a subservient legal system act in concert – along with a substantial portion of the civilian population who have been terrorized into complicity – to conduct the surveillance, enforce illegal policies, and administer the internment camps, prisons, and forced labour. As a result, members of the targeted ethnic groups, including those who have never been sent to an internment camp, a prison, or a situation of forced labour, live in constant fear under the highly credible threat of detention, torture, and disappearance under a draconian system of social control that denies them their basic human rights and is a constant affront to basic human dignity.

This report details human rights violations committed by the Government of China in Xinjiang between 2017 and 2021. The findings are based primarily on first-hand testimonial evidence from XX survivors and witnesses interviewed by Amnesty International, XX of whom had never shared their stories publicly before. The report also draws on leaked government documents and a substantial body of public reporting by journalists and other investigators. Evidence demonstrates that the Government of China knowingly and purposefully targeted ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, including by unlawful restriction of their basic human rights, as well as by an ethnically targeted campaign of mass detention, and torture and other ill treatment. The government’s actions evince a clear intent to target certain populations collectively on the basis of their ethnicity and religion and to use serious violence and intimidation to outlaw their religious practices and eradicate their ethno-cultural identify. On the basis of the evidence gathered by Amnesty International and from other sources that Amnesty has concluded to be credible, this report concludes that the Government of China has committed serious violations of international human rights law and international criminal law, including crimes against humanity.

The report has 12 chapters:

* Chapter 2 describes the research methodology and details the obstacles to conducting human rights research in Xinjiang.
* Chapter 3 provides background information Xinjiang and gives an overview of the cycles of violence, discrimination, and repression that occurred in Xinjiang from the 1980s to 2016.
* Chapter 4 describes major human rights violations in Xinjiang since 2017 that have occurred outside the camps, including the severe restrictions on freedom of religion, freedom of movement, and privacy.
* Chapter 5 focuses on what happens to detainees from the time they are detained until they enter an internment camp: the process of arbitrary detention, interrogation, biometric data collection, and transfer to a camp.
* Chapter 6 details life for detainees inside the internment camps, including the conditions in the camps, the highly regimented daily routines, and the content of the “re-education” curriculum. Chapter 6 also provides information about the structure and scale of the internment camp system and, using satellite imagery, provides estimates of the number, size, and location of operational camps.
* Chapter 7 describes the widespread and systematic use of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in the internment camps.
* Chapter 8 examines the process that determines whether detainees are released from internment camps or sent to prisons or situations of forced labour.
* Chapter 9 describes the restrictions on the rights and freedoms placed on ex-internees and their families after internees are released from the camps, including the surveillance by government minders, who often live with ex-detainees; other restrictions on movement and association; continued “re-education” classes; and social ostracization.
* Chapter 10 argues that the abuses committed in Xinjiang since 2017 meet the all elements of the elements of crimes against humanity under international criminal law.
* Chapter 11 concludes
* Chapter 12 provides recommendations to the Government of China and UN bodies and member states

# 2. Methodology

This report is a product of field and remote research carried out between October 2019 and April 2021. The report’s findings and conclusions draw heavily from first-hand testimonies that Amnesty International gathered from survivors and witnesses, as well as an analysis of satellite imagery and data. The report also draws on testimonial evidence and confidential government documents gathered from journalists, diaspora groups, and other human rights organizations.

Between October 2019 and April 2021, Amnesty International interviewed XXX people with knowledge of the situation in Xinjiang, China: XX (XX men and XX women) were survivors of internment camps, XX had lived in or visited Xinjiang since 2017, X had worked in the internment camp system, XX were family members of detainees.

These testimonies represent a significant portion of all public testimonial evidence gathered about the situation in Xinjiang since 2017. According to the Shahit database – a website that aggregates and synthesizes all publicly available testimony related to the Xinjiang internment camps – excluding the survivors interviewed in this report, only XX camp survivors have ever spoken publicly.[[1]](#footnote-1) XX of the XX survivors and witnesses interviewed for this report had never shared their story publicly before, and XX had never shared a significant portion of their story.

Amnesty informed interviewees about the nature and purpose of the research and about how the information they provided would be used. Oral consent was obtained from each interviewee before the interview. No incentives were provided to interviewees in exchange for their accounts. Interviews generally lasted between four and 12 hours and were often conducted over the course of two days. The vast majority of interviews were conducted using translators fluent in Chinese, Uyghur, Kazakh, and Kyrgyz; a few were conducted in English. Interviews were conducted in person in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey and remotely in XX other countries in Asia, Europe, and North America. Interviews with survivors and witnesses were conducted individually.

For reasons related to the security of the potential interviewees, no interviews were conducted in Xinjiang either in person or remotely. The Government of China threatens, detainees, tortures, and “disappears” individuals who speak publicly about the human rights situation in Xinjiang. Many survivors and witnesses are rightly afraid of being identified as having spoken with Amnesty International. ***As a result, nearly all interviews were conducted on the condition that Amnesty International refrain from publishing the interviewee’s name and/or any information that could be used to identify the interviewee, the interviewee’s family, or anyone else who might be at risk if they were to be identified. Pseudonyms have been used in all cases.***

Moreover, since only a small number of internment camp survivors (likely a few hundred) are believed to have left China, and because the government likely knows the identify of each of them as well as details about their life and their time in the internment camps, Amnesty took a very conservative approach to including any information that could be identifying. For example, none of the testimony in this report is associated with a specific internment camp where an interviewee was detained or with a specific village or town where an interviewee lived, and only rarely with a specific age or occupation of the interviewee.

## 2.1 Obstacles to investigating the human rights situation in Xinjiang

The Government of China has taken extraordinary measures to prevent accurate information about the situation in Xinjiang from being documented. Chinese citizens living in China – particularly internment camp survivors – have been effectively prevented from speaking or otherwise sharing information about the situation in Xinjiang. The possibility of speaking from Xinjiang over a genuinely secure form of communication is remote and the consequences of being identified are severe. All members of ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang are under heavy surveillance (see Chapter X). Anyone living in Xinjiang who does speak out about the internment camps, is perceived to have spoken out, or is accused of speaking out risks arrest, detention, imprisonment, torture, and disappearance, not only for themselves but also for their family members.

The risks are even more severe for ex-detainees and their families, who already face heightened levels of suspicion and surveillance. For at least several months after being released from a camp, all ex-internees are under near constant electronic and in-person surveillance (see Chapter X). Every internment camp survivor who spoke with Amnesty signed a document that forbid them from speaking with anybody – especially journalists and foreigners – about what they experienced in the camp. The document reportedly specifies that if they violate this prohibition they will be interned again, along with members of their family (see Chapter X).

As a result of the obstacles and risks facing people in Xinjiang, with few exceptions the vast majority of credible testimonial evidence about the situation has been gathered from survivors and witnesses who have left Xinjiang and spoken from abroad. Speaking from abroad is also difficult and comes with serious risks, especially for family members of the person speaking who remain in China. Since at least 2017, obtaining permission to travel abroad – and, in many cases, domestically – has been nearly impossible for Uyghurs, and extraordinarily difficult for other Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Members of ethnic minority groups who have obtained permission to travel abroad since 2017 appear to require a connection to a foreign country (usually citizenship or immediate family) and one or more “guarantors” in Xinjiang who agree, in writing, that they will be sent to a camp if the person they were guaranteeing speaks or shares information about the internment camps or does not return to China on time. As documented in this report and elsewhere, these are not empty threats: family members of people who speak about the issue from abroad have been sent to internment camps and in some cases disappeared (see Chapter X).

Independent journalists and human rights investigators have all been denied unfettered access to the region. A few have entered disguised as tourists but have found it nearly impossible to speak safely with people about the internment camps.[[2]](#footnote-2) Those who have travelled to the region officially have encountered a coordinated effort by government officials to block them from speaking with survivors and witnesses and from accessing internment camps, except in situations where the government tries to exercise complete control over where they visit, who they speak with, and what is said to them.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Reporting about the situation from abroad also carries significant risk. In several instances, when journalists with family in Xinjiang have reported on or spoken about the situation in Xinjiang from abroad, family members have been arrested, sent to a camp or prison, or disappeared.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Chinese government officials have also made a concerted effort to disseminate misinformation and disinformation, both to foreigners and to the local population, about the human rights situation in Xinjiang. Several internment camp survivors told Amnesty International that they were forced to give false statements to their families or to the media, both while interned and after they had been released.[[5]](#footnote-5) Several survivors told Amnesty that while they were detained they had been coached about what to say to foreign journalists or Chinese government delegations that visited their camp.[[6]](#footnote-6) [Pseudonym Q1], told Amnesty how he was trained to speak with journalists who were expected to come to the camp he was in:

**“One day they told us journalists were coming. And that when you see them to smile. And to say what you were told or you will be taken to an underground room [where people are tortured] … [During the days before the journalists were scheduled to arrive] our Chinese language classes stopped. And we practised answering questions for journalists, for more than 10 days… we practised saying that the food is good and the Chinese Communist Party is great. I don’t know if the journalists ever came because we were not allowed to go out. I heard they came, but I didn’t see them.”[[7]](#footnote-7)**

[Pseudonym X2], who spent more than a year in multiple internment camps, told Amnesty that she was part of group that was coached for 20 days about what to say to visiting journalists. “[We were coached] to say that we are studying well, deepening our knowledge, and we are thankful to the state, are getting a salary, that our family is taken care of, that we are here for the daytime only, and here voluntarily,” she said.[[8]](#footnote-8) None of this was true.

In 2019, leaked government documents published by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), *The New York Times*, and other media outlets and scholars appear to have triggered attempts to put even tighter controls on information coming out of Xinjiang, including through the physical destruction of documents related to the internment camp system.[[9]](#footnote-9) Amnesty International received several account of government cadres being made to burn files related to the internment camp system in the aftermath of the leaks.[[10]](#footnote-10) One camp survivor – a former government cadre – told Amnesty that he participated in burning files. “I attended the burning. It was in… 2019, after I was released… I was helping to carry the files…It was not only the [detainees’] files. It is any re-education related materials. For example, all notes from meetings… it took five or six days to burn everything [in the office],” he said.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The government’s attempts to silence the affected population and destroy the evidence echo a directive from one of the leaked government documents – known as the “Telegram” – obtained by the ICIJ, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining “strict secrecy” with respect to everything that happens inside camps.[[12]](#footnote-12) While the leaked portion of the directive lacks significant details about how the secrecy will be maintained beyond the statement that “[i]t is necessary to strengthen the [internment camps’] staff’s awareness of staying secret, serious political discipline and secrecy discipline,” the experiences of survivors and witnesses documented in this report and elsewhere illustrate the immense resources that have been devoted to this cover-up effort, as well as the often violent methods used ensure the silence of the civilian population.

# 3. Background

The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) is in the far northwest of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). A huge area – 1.66 million km2 – it encompasses approximately one-sixth of China’s landmass and is bordered by eight countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, India, Pakistan, Russia, and Afghanistan.[[13]](#footnote-13) The area comprises vast semi-desert steppes in the north and severe desert basins ringed by historic oasis towns in the south.

The XUAR is one of the most ethnically diverse regions in China. According to China’s 2010 census the region had a population of approximately 22 million. More than half of the region’s population belongs to mostly Turkic and predominantly Muslim ethnic groups, including Uyghurs (around 11.3 million), Kazakhs (around 1.6 million), Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and other populations whose languages, cultures, and ways of life vary distinctly from those of the Han, who are the majority in “interior” China.

The area covered by the XUAR was renowned over centuries for the ancient Silk Road and its flourishing conduit of trade and culture between China and the rest of the world. Rich in coal, natural gas, and oil, the XUAR is intertwined with many of China’s economic, strategic, and foreign policy goals. China’s leaders now consider stability in the XUAR vital to the success of the “Belt and Road Initiative”, a massive global infrastructure development programme aimed at strengthening China’s links to Central Asia and beyond.

The XUAR is one of the five autonomous regions of the PRC, where the officially recognized “national minorities” are granted some formal representation in the organs of regional government. The autonomy conferred to these regions by the PRC Constitution and Law on Regional Autonomy has remained largely symbolic. In the XUAR, as in the rest of the PRC, all major policy decisions are taken by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The Government of China considers the XUAR to have been an inseparable part of China for millennia. But this history is disputed by many, particularly Uyghurs, who often perceive China as a colonizing force and aspire to independence. Aspirations towards independence have their roots in both the distant past and recent history. During the 1930s and 1940s, two independent Republics of Eastern Turkestan were formed successively in Kashgar (1933) and Ili (1944) as attempts to resist Chinese rule.[[14]](#footnote-14) Both republics were short-lived, but they have continued to inspire nationalist opposition since 1949, particularly among Uyghurs. Over the years, various opposition groups militating for Eastern Turkestan’s independence were formed clandestinely in the XUAR. Some of these groups have resorted to violence (see below).

The region has been an important target for population resettlement from interior China since 1949. In 1949, the local Turkic population, in majority Uyghur, accounted for at least 93% of the region’s population, while ethnic Chinese in the region amounted to about 6 or 7% of the population. According to official statistics, Han Chinese now make up approximately 40% of the population. With the massive influx of Han Chinese, the indigenous population has felt increasingly marginalized in what they regard as their ancestral land.[[15]](#footnote-15)

During the first three decades of the PRC, resettlement of Han Chinese into the XUAR was facilitated by what is now called the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (commonly known as the Bingtuan), an institution established in the early 1950s. The Bingtuan, described by many scholars as an institution that served to colonize Xinjiang, is both an administrative organ with a somewhat military structure and a large development corporation. It is established along the border and in pockets of territory roughly across the centre of the XUAR, separating the north, where most Kazakhs in Xinjiang live, from the mainly Uyghur south. The Bingtuan has jurisdiction over several million hectares of land and the vast majority of the population in this area is ethnic Han Chinese. It is a unique institution in the PRC and enjoys special status. It is administered independently from the XUAR regional government and has its own police force, courts, and agricultural and industrial enterprises, as well as its own large network of labour camps and prisons.[[16]](#footnote-16)

## 3.1 Cycles of discrimination, violence and repression from the 1980s to 2016

Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other predominantly Turkic Muslim peoples living in Xinjiang have long faced discrimination and persecution by their government, including with respect to their freedom of movement and freedom of religion and cultural practice as well as access to employment, education, and health care. This historical discrimination lessened with the “open door” policy launched in the late 1970s and the subsequent economic reforms, which catalyzed a religious revival in the XUAR as in the rest of the PRC. The authorities allowed the reopening of mosques, many Muslims were allowed again to travel to Islamic countries, and contacts with Muslims abroad were encouraged.[[17]](#footnote-17)

The emergence of independent Central Asian states with the breakup of the Soviet Union, protracted conflicts in other neighbouring countries, fears that Islam might provide a rallying point for ethnic nationalism, and concerns that Islamist movements abroad might inspire young Uyghurs who had gone to study in foreign Islamic schools all appear to have heightened the Chinese authorities’ fears of organized political opposition in the XUAR, leading to a reversal of the relatively liberal policies implemented during the 1980s. Since the late 1980s, the return to restrictive policies and other factors have generated growing ethnic discontent in the XUAR. The continuing influx of Han Chinese migrants, discrimination, unequal economic opportunities, curbs on religious and cultural rights, and enforcement of the government’s birth control policy are among the factors fuelling unrest. The increasing interethnic tensions have led to cycles of sporadic violence and heavy-handed repression

These fears were reinforced by incidents of violence during the mid-1990s.[[18]](#footnote-18) At that time, the government closed many mosques and Qur’anic schools, stopped the use of Arabic script, imposed tight controls on the Islamic clergy, and dismissed or arrested religious leaders deemed to be too independent or “subversive”. Muslims working in government offices and other official institutions were prohibited from practising their religion under threat of losing their jobs. In 1996, the government intensified its campaign against “national separatists”, “religious extremists”, and “illegal religious activities”, launching at the same time an “in-depth atheist education” campaign to purge grassroots Communist Party committees and other institutions of Muslim believers.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the start of the “Global War on Terror”, restrictions on Muslims increased as China began to classify Uyghur dissidents as terrorists and to pressure the rest of the world to designate Uyghur separatist groups as terrorist organizations.[[19]](#footnote-19) The authorities cultivated informants to report on the content of sermons in an attempt to monitor imams and prevent mosques from being used to disseminate separatist ideas or extremist religious thought. The government carried out “ethnic unity education” campaigns during religious festivals,[[20]](#footnote-20) and specifically targeted the celebration of Ramadan, with authorities forbidding fasting by students and government employees.[[21]](#footnote-21) Religious education was strictly prohibited for minors, who were also banned from entering mosques.[[22]](#footnote-22) The authorities also outlawed private religious instruction outside the auspices of officially sanctioned religious organizations.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Policies of repression grew further in the aftermath of several incidents of violence that occurred between 2009 and 2013, including the riots in Ürümqi that erupted on 5 July 2009. According to official counts, the rioting left nearly 200 dead and at least 1,700 injured, with most of the casualties reported to be Han.[[24]](#footnote-24) Many hundreds of Uyghurs were detained as police made house-to-house sweeps following the riots, and swift justice was handed down to those alleged to be responsible for the violence. The courts handed down numerous death sentences and heavy prison terms.[[25]](#footnote-25) Dozens of other detainees are reported to have been victims of enforced “disappearances”, being held by authorities without any notification to family members.[[26]](#footnote-26)

In addition to repressive criminal-justice measures, other measures that fall under the broad category of “social management” were designed to prevent instability in the first place. These included an increase in the number of police in Xinjiang: 8,000 officers were hired with the goal of establishing a police presence in more rural parts of the region.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Campaigns aimed at further restricting religious practice and equating such practice with “extremism” expanded. Prohibiting the wearing of beards by men and veils and headscarves by women has been a particular focus.[[28]](#footnote-28) In some of the region’s villages, the authorities compelled residents to pledge to abide by codes of conduct (*cungui minyue*) aimed at preventing “illegal religious activity”.[[29]](#footnote-29) Around this time, the mass surveillance of ethnic minorities also intensified.[[30]](#footnote-30) Tens of thousands of high-definition cameras were installed in locations throughout the region, especially in Ürümqi of, in an effort to achieve “seamless” surveillance.[[31]](#footnote-31) In 2013 President Xi Jinping announced an internment strategy and put 200,000 cadres into villages in the region.[[32]](#footnote-32)

In 2014, in the aftermath of several stabbing and bombing attacks, the surveillance and repression increased significantly with the start the government’s “Strike Hard Against Violent Terrorist Activity” campaign.[[33]](#footnote-33)[[34]](#footnote-34)

According to scholars, the 2014 Strike hard campaign marked a turning point in the government persecution of ethnic minorities with the start of a “people’s war, which identified the terrorist threat as coming from Uyghur culture itself.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Religious practice was even more tightly restricted. The government imposed bans on religious appearances and religious education and restricted halal food. Travel to Mecca was banned.[[36]](#footnote-36) The government also sent religious “extremists” in southern Xinjiang to “transformation through re-education” camps.[[37]](#footnote-37) A national security law authorized sending people to 15 days of “re-education” at the government’s discretion.[[38]](#footnote-38) Reports emerged of “re-education camps” in limited settings.[[39]](#footnote-39)

As part of the Strike Hard campaign, Uyghurs were required to obtain new identification, which restricted their mobility.[[40]](#footnote-40) All SIM cards and electronic communication devices were required to be registered.[[41]](#footnote-41) Virtual private networks were outlawed.[[42]](#footnote-42) Security officers regularly checked smartphones.[[43]](#footnote-43) The government also began a “voluntary” campaign of mass biometric data collection, which was anything but voluntary: refusal to participate could lead to being flagged as “suspicious”.[[44]](#footnote-44)

China also began a policy of predictive policing to identify people likely to become “terrorists”.[[45]](#footnote-45) The intrusive nature of the data gathered to support the predictive policing campaign was justified by the government’s anti-terrorism law.[[46]](#footnote-46) It gave the authorities access to communication, travel, and work history; social media profiles; Internet search history; financial information; and family connections.[[47]](#footnote-47) The data is aggregated and entered into the government’s Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP), which is a big data collection program that analyzes the information gathered by government cadres and electronic surveillance systems throughout Xinjiang and determines whether the person is “normal” or “untrustworthy”.[[48]](#footnote-48) (For more on IJOP see Chapter 4 below.)

In 2015, China passed a new counterterrorism law, which further violated ethnic minorities’ rights to freedom of religion and expression by giving legal justification for persecuting people who peacefully practice religion or criticize the government.[[49]](#footnote-49) The law also required technology firms to help the government to decrypt information.[[50]](#footnote-50)

In August 2016, two years into the government’s Strike Hard campaign, Chen Quanguo become Party Secretary of the XUAR.[[51]](#footnote-51) Chen was notorious for the draconian security restrictions he had placed on Tibetans, included instituting “grid policing”.[[52]](#footnote-52) Shortly after he became Party Secretary, the government advertised 100,000 new security-related jobs and constructed an estimated 7,500 checkpoints or “convenience police stations”.[[53]](#footnote-53) The government also clamped down on the movement of ethnic minorities. Uyghur students were ordered to come home on 20 May 2017.[[54]](#footnote-54) Ethnic minorities were required to turn in their passports.[[55]](#footnote-55)

In March 2017, new “Regulations on de-Extremification” were passed, prohibiting “extremist” behaviour, which includes wearing burkas, having “abnormal” beards, and refusing to take part in state cultural and recreational activities. The notoriously vague and overbroad regulation essentially criminalized many standard religious and cultural practices.[[56]](#footnote-56) The de-extremification regulations provided the “legal” cover for the government to expand its then-nascent internment camp system in southern Xinjiang to the rest of the region. People were no longer targeted for detention and re-education selectively; rather, huge swaths of the population were targeted collectively.[[57]](#footnote-57)

In April 2017, huge numbers of individuals from ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang began being sent to the camps. Hundreds of buildings were built, expanded, or repurposed as internment camps. The camps aimed to eliminate religious practice and emphasize political re-education in order to wipe out terrorism and extremism.[[58]](#footnote-58) (For more on the internment camps see Chapter 6-9.). The government initially denied reports of the camps, then tried to justify them as rebrand them as “vocational training camps” set up as part of a national poverty-alleviation program.[[59]](#footnote-59)

# 4. Serious Human Rights Violations Outside of Internment Camps since 2017

In 2017, under the guise of an intensifying counterterrorism campaign, the Government of China commenced a massive escalation of its historical abuses of Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. While the government had severely restricted the human rights of ethnic minorities for decades (see Chapter 3 above), the new restrictions were dramatically more severe than anything imposed previously. An objective of the government’s campaign is to eradicate Islamic religious beliefs and Turkic Muslim ethno-cultural practices and replace them with secular state-sanctioned views and activities, and ultimately to “transform” members of these ethnic minorities into obedient supporters of the Chinese Communist Party and President Xi Jinping.

To achieve this political indoctrination and cultural erasure, the government commenced a campaign of mass internment. More than a million men and women have been arbitrarily detained in internment camps (see Chapter X). The internment camp system is one part of a larger system of subjugation and forced assimilation in Xinjiang. The government has enacted other far-reaching policies that severely restrict behaviour outside the camps. These policies violate fundamental human rights, including security of person, movement, expression, thought, belief, conscience, religion, equal protection under the law, and privacy. These abuses are carried out in such a widespread and systematic manner that they are now an inexorable aspect of daily life in Xinjiang for millions of members of ethnic minorities.

The brutal effectiveness and tremendous scale of the government’s campaign – and the associated cover-up – derive from the government’s unprecedented use of surveillance technology coupled with its ability to mobilize huge portions of the population to enforce its will. The government relies on a nearly inescapable in-person and electronic surveillance operation designed to ensure that the behaviour of ethnic minority groups is continuously monitored and evaluated. Ubiquitous government cadres, violent security forces, and a subservient legal system act in concert – along with a substantial portion of the civilian population who have been terrorized into complicity – to conduct the surveillance and enforce illegal policies. As a result, members of the targeted ethnic groups, including those who have never been sent to an internment camp, a prison, or a situation of forced labour, live in constant fear under the highly credible threat of arrest, detention, torture, and disappearance under a draconian system of social control that denies them their basic human rights and is a constant affront to basic human dignity.

## 4.1.1 Witness accounts of restrictions on freedom of religion and cultural practice.

Since 2017, numerous behaviors that are widely considered fundamental to the practice of Islam has essentially been criminalized in Xinjiang[[60]](#footnote-60) Nearly all standard religious practice is treated as “suspicious” or “extremist” behaviour and is grounds for being sent to an internment camp.[[61]](#footnote-61) [Pseudonym 19] who worked for the government said that government officials would regularly visit the houses of Muslim families in her village to check for any signs of religious practice, and that if religious artefacts were found that those families were ask risk of being sent to camps. [[62]](#footnote-62)

Although restrictions reportedly vary in different parts of the region, the government has largely prohibited praying, attending mosques, teaching religion, wearing religious clothing, having religious content on your phone, eating halal food, owning religious books, films, or photographs, and having artifacts with images of Allah on them.[[63]](#footnote-63) Many Turkic Muslim cultural practices have also been banned or restricted.

Amnesty international interviewed XX Muslim men and woman who lived in Xinjiang between 2017 and early 2020. All of them described an environment that was extraordinarily hostile to the practice of Islam.[[64]](#footnote-64) None of them felt comfortable displaying any signs of religious practice when they were living in Xinjiang and all believed that doing so would result in them being detained. Many said that appearing insufficiently secular – that is, not drinking alcohol, not smoking, eating non-halal foods ­– was also grounds for being classified as suspicious and sent to an internment camp.[[65]](#footnote-65) [Pseudonym 65], who had been involved with his local mosque for most of his life before being taken to an internment camp, told Amnesty he found that people in his village had stopped praying after his release: “Not a single person [in my village] can pray anymore. It is because the government is against religion. They are against Muslims.”[[66]](#footnote-66)

[Pseudonym p1], who had been sent to a camp for his affiliation with a government-sanctioned mosque, told Amnesty how people’s behavior in his village had been modified as a result of the new restrictions that be put in place in 2017 and were still in place when he was released from the camp in 2019:

**“Now [in 2019] people have stopped talking about religion… No one comes to Friday prayers [in our village] anymore. … Every village has its own policies. In our village woman were eventually allowed to wear headscarves again… in other villages they cannot. … I’ve heard that in some villages you could read the Koran, but in our village is completely forbidden, even today.”[[67]](#footnote-67)**

[Pseudonym 11], a Kazakh woman, described how she observed that between 2016 and 2017 government officials in her area went from targeting certain “categories” of religious people – for example, those who dressed in a religious manner or government officials (who are required to be secular) – to targeting all Muslims. She told Amnesty that in 2016 the government started imprisoning Uyghur men with religious beards and women who wore hijabs. “This was before the internment camps [started],” she said. In 2017, she said the local government officials started searching all Muslims and Muslim households for signs of religious practice. She described the lengths her family went to try to hide the religious artefacts in their house:

“**[Security agents] stated checking phones in the street and searching for Korans and prayer mats and prayer beads [in our house] … We had to get rid of these things. … We couldn’t just throw [our Korans] away so we put them in a pot and boiled it, then we threw it away. We believed that if we boiled it then the police couldn’t find the finger prints on the books.”[[68]](#footnote-68)**

Traditional cultural books and artefacts associated with Muslim ethnic minorities have also been banned; members of ethnic minority groups were pressured to destroy these and replace them with Chinese books and art.[[69]](#footnote-69)Several people who spoke with Amnesty reported that their houses was searched and many reported burning or destroying all of their books and cultural artefacts related to Islam or Uyghur or Kazakh culture.[[70]](#footnote-70) “There was an announcement that everyone should bring in their books [to the government office] … We had a bookshelf. We had Uyghur books. We didn’t submit the books, because that would be supplying evidence. So we just hid the books. Some people burned the books. We hid them while I was there,” [Pseudonym Q2] said.[[71]](#footnote-71) Several people also said that they had to destroy their traditional art and replace and replace it with Chinese art.[[72]](#footnote-72)

Pseudonym 11 also told Amnesty that civil servants had been prohibited from fasting and attending mosques for several years but that, in 2016, the government started to try to prevent everyone from fasting and praying. “They forbade us from fasting, especially during Ramadan. They would call us to [the village administration office] and feed us. And during Ramadan they would monitor whose light was on in the house [to see who was praying]. … People started to be afraid of [being seen] not drinking alcohol,” she said.[[73]](#footnote-73)

Amnesty International also interviewed several people who said the government prevented them from carrying out traditional rituals and ceremonies for marriages, baby-naming and funerals. [[74]](#footnote-74) “Now if someone dies only direct relatives come to funerals,” [Pseudonym P1] said.[[75]](#footnote-75) [Pseudonym 19], a Uyghur woman and camp survivor, recounted how government officials had stripped the religious aspects from traditional ceremonies in her village:

**“Weddings are now held according to instruction of government. In our tradition, the Imam reads verses [from the Koran] and gives names to newborn babies, but now it is [a government official] who give name and there is no reciting the Koran. … And there are forbidden names [to give to your children], the Islamic names … They also started to change the names of people who already had Islamic names, like Mohammed.”[[76]](#footnote-76)**

## 4.1.2 Involuntary miscegenation

Journalists and academics have reported that the government has enacted policies to incentivize and pressure compel members of ethnic minority groups to marry Han Chinese.[[77]](#footnote-77) Several witnesses told Amnesty that the government was openly pressuring ethnic minorities – particularly Uyghurs – to marry people from the Han ethnic group. Others stated that some people are choosing to intermarry because they believe it will stop the problems they have with the government.[[78]](#footnote-78) “The government encourages people to intermarry, and give privileges [to those who do], like exempting you from re-education and also some economic benefits… people intermarrying with Hans get the same rights as Hans. … All of this is on television. It is in gazettes. They promote it,” [Pseudonym M2] told Amnesty.[[79]](#footnote-79)

## 4.1.3 Destruction of mosques, shrines, and gravesites

Journalists and investigators have gathered significant evidence showing that mosques, shrines, gravesites and other religious and cultural sites have been systematically destroyed or repurposed throughout Xinjiang. [[80]](#footnote-80) Using satellite imagery, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute has estimated that over 16,000 mosque have been destroyed or damaged in Xinjiang since 2017.[[81]](#footnote-81)

Amnesty interviewed numerous people who said that mosques in their towns and villages had been destroyed or repurposed.[[82]](#footnote-82) [Pseudonym X21] told Amnesty that his township used to have 15 mosques, including two in his village, but now 13 of them had been repurposed:

**“Only two mosques are operating now. 13 closed down…. Only a very small number of people still pray. They are all are very old. … I couldn’t even pray at home. They were monitoring me. I was afraid.... some [of the closed] mosques are empty, some are clothing factories… but all minarets are demolished and Islamic decorations removed. … both mosques in my village [including the one that is still operating] had minarets demolished. [[83]](#footnote-83)**

Many camp survivors reported witnessing dramatic changes in their villages, including the destruction or repurposing of mosques, shrines, and other cultural artifacts in their villages when they returned home.[[84]](#footnote-84) [Pseudonym E1] told Amnesty what it was like when he see his village for the first time after being released from the camp. “They removed crescents from every mosque…. And from the furniture in homes. … Now every house had to have a picture of [President] Xi Jinping. Before we had a picture of a mosque,” he said.[[85]](#footnote-85)

## 4.2.1 Witness Accounts of an Omnipresent Police Surveillance State

Coming soon…

# 5. Arbitrary Detention and Torture and other Ill-Treatment in Police Stations

## 5.1.1 Arbitrary detention

Since March 2017, an estimated one million or more men and women from predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in Xinjiang have been detained and sent to what the government refers to as “vocational training centres” or “transformation-through-education”.[[86]](#footnote-86) These facilities are more accurately described as internment camps. Amnesty International interviewed XX people – XX men and XX woman – who had been sent to these camps. All of these survivors were detained arbitrarily for non-violent and, by all reasonable standards, lawful conduct.

The process by which survivors were detained appears to be taking place outside the scope of the criminal justice system and other existing domestic law. The process is also in violation of numerous fundamental aspects of international human rights law . All of the detainees were denied due process during and after their initial detention. None were allowed access to legal counsel. None were provided with an arrest warrant or even a reason for their detention that included a credible allegation of a known criminal offense under Chinese law or for any offense that would traditionally be considered a crime in any country that guarantees equal protection under the law.

Nearly all of the internment camp survivors Amnesty International interviewed were detained without warning.[[87]](#footnote-87) Many were detained from their houses in the middle of the night.[[88]](#footnote-88) Many were called by the police or by their village administration office and told to report to a police station – often under the pretence of being requested to hand in their passport – and then detained once they arrived. [[89]](#footnote-89) Several were pressured by government officials or employers to come back from working, studying, or living abroad and then detained shortly after returning, often at the airport or land border.[[90]](#footnote-90)

[START TEXT BOX]

## LEGAL TEXT BOX: Arrest and detention under Chinese and international law

Under international human rights law, everyone has the right to liberty.[[91]](#footnote-91) Arrest or detention is permissible only for reasons, and according to procedures, that are established by law.[[92]](#footnote-92) Domestic law authorizing arrest and detention and setting out procedures for arrest and detention must conform to international standards.[[93]](#footnote-93)

Arbitrary arrest or detention is always prohibited under international standards.[[94]](#footnote-94) Arrests and detention must not be based on discriminatory grounds. Policies and procedures allowing arrest and detention based on racial, ethnic, or other profiling should be prohibited.[[95]](#footnote-95) The prohibition of arbitrary detention is a norm of customary international law. It cannot be the subject of treaty reservations and must be respected at all times, including in times of war or other public emergency.[[96]](#footnote-96) Enforced disappearance and secret detention are arbitrary per se.[[97]](#footnote-97)

When anyone is arrested or detained, they must be notified of the reasons for their arrest or detention and of their rights, including their right to legal counsel.[[98]](#footnote-98) They must be informed promptly of any charges against them.[[99]](#footnote-99) This information is essential to allow persons to challenge the lawfulness of their arrest or detention and, if they are charged, to start preparing their defence.

International standards require that anyone arrested or detained be informed of their rights and be provided with an explanation of how they may avail themselves of such rights. These standards variously require notification of rights, including the right to notify a third person, the right to legal counsel, the right to medical assistance, the right to challenge the lawfulness of detention, the right not to incriminate oneself, including the right to remain silent, and the right to complain and recourse for complaints about ill-treatment or conditions.[[100]](#footnote-100)

The right not to be compelled to incriminate oneself or confess guilt is broad. It prohibits any form of coercion, direct or indirect, physical or psychological. Such coercion includes, but is not limited to, torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. (See section X for more about torture and other ill-treatment under international law.)

All people are entitled to equality before the law and to equal protection under the law. Prosecutions or anti-terrorism laws targeting one ethnic group are discriminatory and never permitted. There can never be objective and reasonable grounds for subjecting a person to exceptional criminal procedures or specially constituted courts or tribunals on the grounds of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

*Biometric data must be collected in a way that respects human rights.[[101]](#footnote-101)* Rights to privacy and bodily integrity in Chinese law.[[102]](#footnote-102)

[END TEXT BOX]

## 5.1.2 ‘Reasons’ for detention

Some detainees were provided with a reason for their detention at the time they were initially detained; however, many were not provided with a reason for their detention until after they were sent to an internment camp, and often not until shortly before they were released, when they were forced to “confess” to “crimes”.[[103]](#footnote-103) Several were given different reasons for their detention when they were detained than they were when they were released.[[104]](#footnote-104) Some were never given a reason.[[105]](#footnote-105)

Individuals interviewed by Amnesty International said that the reasons they were given for their detention were often not tied to specific acts; rather, detainees were informed that they had been detained because they had been classified as a “suspicious” or “untrustworthy” person, or as a “terrorist” or an “extremist.”[[106]](#footnote-106)[[107]](#footnote-107) The criteria for such classifications are not known; however, the government of China has used these terms – particular “terrorist” and “extremist” -- in overbroad ways in the context of counterterrorism legislation.[[108]](#footnote-108)

When specific acts were mentioned, they generally fell into a few broad categories. One category includes offenses related to foreign countries. Numerous survivors were detained for living, travelling, or studying abroad or for communicating with people abroad.[[109]](#footnote-109) Many were detained for being “connected” with people who lived, travelled, studied, or communicated with people abroad.[[110]](#footnote-110)

Another category includes offenses related to unsanctioned digital software or communications technology. Many survivors were arrested for using or having forbidden software applications on their mobile phones, especially WhatsApp.[[111]](#footnote-111)

Another common category includes anything related to religion. Several survivors were arrested for reasons related to Islamic beliefs or practice, including working in a mosque, praying, having a prayer mat, or possessing a picture with a religious theme. [[112]](#footnote-112)

Other survivors said they were detained for having too many children or otherwise violating China’s family planning policies.[[113]](#footnote-113) One survivor said they had been detained for refusing to work for the government.[[114]](#footnote-114) [Pseudonym D2], who while detained helped dozens of other inmates fill in “confession” forms on which they were required to list their “crimes”, said the most common reason she observed was “having multiple household registrations”, which is prohibited under Chinese law.[[115]](#footnote-115) (For more on self-confession forms, see Chapter X below.) One survivor, who was told just prior to her release that one of the reasons she had been arrested was for having multiple household registrations, told Amnesty that she had no idea that multiple registrations was illegal and had no idea she was still registered at her family’s home where she grew up. She believed that the government was just using this a pretext to detain whoever they wanted.[[116]](#footnote-116)

Several survivors told Amnesty they had been detained after receiving explicit permission to do the very thing they were reportedly arrested for. [Pseudonym B3] told Amnesty he was detained for travelling domestically, even though he had obtained prior approval to do so from the appropriate authorities.[[117]](#footnote-117) [Pseudonym C1] told Amnesty he was detained twice for travelling – once abroad and once domestically – even though he had gotten permission from the appropriate authorities to do so both times.

**“[After I was detained the second time] I asked the village chief [why I was arrested]. He said: ‘We are doing what we are told. We don’t know why. All people who are travelling abroad go to the camp. You have no right to ask questions. If you ask it will be seen as resistance. It will not be good for you. You will get answers in the camp.’”**[[118]](#footnote-118)

The reasons for detention provided by camp survivors to Amnesty International are consistent with testimonial and documentary evidence that journalists and other human rights investigators have gathered.[[119]](#footnote-119) Most significantly, the reasons are broadly consistent with two leaked government documents, which together contain government records of over 2,300 people who were arrested and sent to internment camps in Xinjiang between 2017 and 2019.[[120]](#footnote-120) The documents – referred to as the Karakax list[[121]](#footnote-121) and the Aksu list,[[122]](#footnote-122) after the prefectures in Xinjiang where the people named in the documents live – contain, among other things, the official reasons the individuals were detained and interned.

The Aksu list includes government records on over 2,000 people who were detained and interned after being flagged by China’s Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP),[[123]](#footnote-123) a big-data collection programme that gathers information about people in Xinjiang (see Chapter 3). The list reveals that “suspicious” behaviour often leading to arrest and detention includes regular religious practice, such as reciting the Qur’an or wearing religious clothing, having more children than permitted by China’s policies, using certain computer software, such as Skype or a virtual private network (VPN), travelling abroad, or travelling domestically without permission, having “extremist thoughts”, being untrustworthy, or being young.[[124]](#footnote-124)

The Karakax list includes government records on over 400 people. The most common reason for arrest – shared by nearly half the detainees – was that they violated China’s birth control policies.[[125]](#footnote-125) A scholarly analysis of reasons revealed that they fall broadly into eight non-mutually exclusive categories, including untrustworthiness, anything religion-related, and anything linked to [countries/locations] abroad.[[126]](#footnote-126)

According to another internal document leak – the so-called China Cables – hundreds of thousands of individuals have been arrested for using certain mobile phone applications. The documents also explicitly instruct authorities to arrest Uyghurs with foreign citizenship and to deport those living abroad back to China.[[127]](#footnote-127)

The Xinjiang Victims Database documents the testimonies of internment camps survivors, their families, and other witnesses.[[128]](#footnote-128) While the data the project has collected is not necessarily representative of the interned population as a whole, analysis of 3,613 testimonies shows that the most common suspected reasons for detention are related to religion, going abroad, having contact with the outside world, or the behaviour of the internees’ relatives. Additionally, an analysis of the official reasons 1,486 individuals were detained indicates that other common reasons include separatism, violating birth policies, and extremism, as well as vague reasons such as belonging to heterodox groups, being an untrustworthy person, or disturbing public order.[[129]](#footnote-129)

Government officials have also reported that they were required to fulfil arrest quotas and that people were essentially arrested randomly.[[130]](#footnote-130)

The instances of arbitrary detention documented in this report are violations of international law. Moreover, collectively, the acts constitute the crime against humanity of imprisonment (for more on crimes against humanity, see Chapter 10).[[131]](#footnote-131)

## 5.1.3 Guilt by association

Analyzed in concert with the Aksu and Karakax lists and other testimonial and documentary evidence gathered by journalists, the testimonial evidence Amnesty International has gathered, demonstrates that ethnic minorities in Xinjiang are often detained on the basis of “guilt by association”. Many were interned as a result of their relationships, or perceived or alleged relationships, with family, friends, or community members – many, if not most, of whom were themselves only “guilty” of behaviour that would be considered lawful by any reasonable standard.[[132]](#footnote-132) Many survivors were arrested for having a family member who was suspicious, untrustworthy, or considered to be an extremist, separatist, or “terrorist”, or for contacts with terrorists or unreliable or suspicious people.[[133]](#footnote-133)

Amnesty International interviewed several survivors who believe that their behaviour was the reason their family members were arrested.[[134]](#footnote-134) [Pseudonym X4] went abroad and did not return on time. He told Amnesty his father was sent to the camps because of his decision.[[135]](#footnote-135) [Pseudonym A1], who also did not return from abroad on time, said the police called him from his house in China and had his son ask him to return from abroad and tell him the family would be sent to the camps if he did not. Since then, he has not been able to communicate with his family. “I do not know where my children are,” [Pseudonym A1] said.[[136]](#footnote-136) [Pseudonym 14], a camp survivor, told Amnesty that his father was taken to an internment camp because he “let” him go abroad after he was released. “When my father was about to be detained, the police call me and said come [back to China]… they said we will let your father go if you come back.”[[137]](#footnote-137)

In addition to often being grounds for detention, guilt by association is now a pervasive theme in the life of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. It is a tool for the social control that the Government of China imposes on the population. As illustrated in a variety of ways throughout this report, the behaviour of members of ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang affects their family, their community, and the group as a whole. Credible threats against family members are regularly used to control or modify behaviour (see chapter X and X below).

## 5.2 Interrogations, torture and other ill-treatment in police stations

The majority of survivors Amnesty interviewed were interrogated at police stations before being sent to a camp.[[138]](#footnote-138) Several survivors reported being interrogated multiple times in police stations.[[139]](#footnote-139) A minority were sent directly to the camps without being interrogated.[[140]](#footnote-140) Most of the interrogations focused on questions about what the person had purportedly been detained for (that is, anything related to foreign countries, to religion, or to having “illegal” photos, videos, or software on their phone). Interrogations usually lasted several hours. Several people reported being extorted during the interrogations, saying they were told that if they paid the police they would not be sent to a camp.[[141]](#footnote-141)

The content of the interrogations in police stations was very similar to interrogations survivors went through inside the camps and after their release. Many survivors described being asked the same questions over and over again by different government officials during multiple interrogations over the course of months and even years while in detention.[[142]](#footnote-142)

Several survivors were tortured or otherwise ill-treated during interrogations in police stations before being transferred to the camps.[[143]](#footnote-143) Interrogations and torture were often carried out by members of the domestic security police, known as Guobao;[[144]](#footnote-144) some were carried out by local police.[[145]](#footnote-145) Survivors were often interrogated in “tiger chairs”— steel chairs with affixed leg irons and handcuffs .[[146]](#footnote-146) Several were hooded and shackled during interrogations.[[147]](#footnote-147) [Pseudonym W1], who spent a year in the camps for visiting Kazakhstan, said he was interrogated for several hours while immobilized in a tiger chair: “I was seated on a metal chair. Hands were cuffed. I was interrogated. My feet were also cuffed… It’s a metal chair that contains a board that your hands are cuffed to. And there is an iron base that you put your legs inside. [The interrogation started late at night,] I was questioned until 3am.”[[148]](#footnote-148)

[Pseudonym V1], who was arrested for going abroad, told Amnesty he was repeatedly beaten and assaulted with an electroshock weapon during interrogations:

**“They took me to the office [in the police station]. They took me into the interrogation room… There was a tiger chair in [the room]. It was made of steel. I sat on** the **tiger chair and they gave me a notebook, and gave me** a **half hour to write down everything that I did... Then at 2am they started to beat me. Four [police] had electric sticks. [All four] tased me until the batteries on the electric sticks died… They were asking me about who I met abroad.”**

[Pseudonym VI] was released after his interrogation and was subsequently interrogated and tortured several more times before being sent to a camp.[[149]](#footnote-149)

Many survivors told Amnesty International that they were held in crowded conditions before being sent to the camps. [Pseudonym F1], who was held in a detention centre for three weeks before being transferred to a camp, told Amnesty he was forced to stand in a small crowded cell with 50 other inmates all day. “We don’t even put cows in that terrible condition… We slept side by side touching each other,” he said.[[150]](#footnote-150)

Journalists and other organizations have reported approximately a dozen similar accounts of torture and ill-treatment, including beatings and sleep deprivation in police stations and detention centres.[[151]](#footnote-151)

## 5.3 Medical examinations and biometric data collection

Before being sent to a camp, nearly all detainees were subjected to a medical examination.[[152]](#footnote-152) [Pseudonym X2], a camp survivor who worked at a hospital where some people were examined before they were sent to the camps, witnessed large numbers of detainees being brought to the hospital, as well as part of the medical examination process.

**“In [the city I lived in] there were four hospitals – infection, military, traditional, and regular**.I**n 2017 they all started being used for people sent to re-education camps… At first it was Uyghurs and Dungans. They were simple people, but police treated them as serious criminals. There were six guards per person [brought for a medical examination]. Their eyes were covered, hooded, and their hands were cuffed [when they arrived at the hospital]. The whole medical examination was top secret… [The staff at the hospital] had to make sure they were healthy. [The staff] had to draw their blood to make sure they were healthy… They were all young. I was there helping with [redacted]… The targets were young graduates. [At the time, at the hospital I worked at it was] mainly Dungans who studied [abroad].”** [[153]](#footnote-153)

In addition to medical exams, all survivors told Amnesty International they were required to allow government officials to collect their biometric data.[[154]](#footnote-154) This almost often included multiple photographs, fingerprints, an iris scan, a voice recording, and writing sample. Biometric data was often collected at police stations. Several survivors said they believe DNA samples were taken: “Then we went to a police station for what I think was a DNA exam… They took our blood, spread it on something, and put it in a plastic wrap,” [Pseudonym X2] told Amnesty when describing her arrest.[[155]](#footnote-155)

These reports of health checks and biometric data collection are consistent with other survivor accounts reported elsewhere and with reports of widespread campaigns for biometric data collection from all people in Xinjiang, not just those sent to the camps.[[156]](#footnote-156)

After undergoing a medical exam and having their biometric data collected, nearly all detainees are taken to internment camps.[[157]](#footnote-157) Nearly all were handcuffed while being transferred to the camps. Many are hooded and shackled.[[158]](#footnote-158) “You can’t see through the hood. You can’t see where you are. … I was terrified about where I being taken,” [Pseudonym 40x] said.”[[159]](#footnote-159)

Many were driven to the camps in vans or buses with large numbers of detainees.[[160]](#footnote-160) [Pseudonym B2], who was arrested for visiting Kazakhstan, told Amnesty about being transferred to the camp: “They came in the morning. The police entered our cell [in the police station]. They put a black hood [on me]. Handcuffed me. And dragged me to the bus. And then took us to the camp,” he said.[[161]](#footnote-161)[Pseudonym 63], an older woman who was arrested for praying, told Amnesty she was taken from a police station in the middle of the night, handcuffed to another woman, put into a truck with about 20 other detainees from her village, and then driven to a camp.[[162]](#footnote-162)

# 6. Life Inside the Internment Camps

Amnesty International interviewed XX survivors of XX internment camps. From the moment they enter a camp, detainees’ lives are extraordinarily regimented; the conditions in camp are “prison-like”. They are essentially stripped of their personal autonomy; every aspect of their lives is dictated to them. Detainees who deviate from the conduct proscribed by camp authorities – even in the most seemingly innocuous ways – are reprimanded and regularly physically punished, often along with their cellmates.

Detainees have no privacy. They are monitored at all times, including when they eat, sleep, and use the toilet. Detainees have no right to speak. They are forbidden from talking freely with other detainees. When detainees are permitted to speak – to guards or in class – they are required to speak in Mandarin, a language many of them, especially older people and people from more rural areas, do not speak or understand.[[163]](#footnote-163) Detainees have been physically punished if they speak in a language other than Mandarin.[[164]](#footnote-164)

Detainees are constantly evaluated. According to survivors as well as the leaked government document known as the Telegram, detainees are given scores. According to the Telegram, the scores measure the detainees’ “ideological transformation, study and training, and compliance with discipline.” A detainee’s behaviour effects his or her score, which factors into the treatment they receive in the camp, including “rewards, punishments, and family visits”, as well as when they are released.[[165]](#footnote-165) (For more on the release process, see section 8.1 below.)

Upon arrival at the camps, detainees are searched, their personal effects are confiscated, and they are made to remove certain items of clothing, including shoelaces, belts, buttons, and anything else that could be used as a weapon or as an implement with which to take their own life.[[166]](#footnote-166) Women internees often have their hair cut off after arriving.[[167]](#footnote-167) Religious men have their heads and beards shaved.[[168]](#footnote-168)

Shortly after being searched, detainees are taken to their cells. Cells in internment camps are basic rooms, usually holding about eight to 20 people. The cells normally consist of bunkbeds and small stools or chairs.[[169]](#footnote-169) Most internees had their own bed, but some share a bed.[[170]](#footnote-170) Several survivors stated that all people in their cell shared one large bed, which was on the ground, and that people were packed “shoulder to shoulder.”[[171]](#footnote-171) A few survivors stated that when there were more beds than people that some people slept on the floor.[[172]](#footnote-172) There is usually a TV in the cell[[173]](#footnote-173) and often a Chinese flag on the wall.[[174]](#footnote-174) Windows, if they exist, are barred and usually black out.[[175]](#footnote-175) There is a loudspeaker in the room through which camp staff speak to detainees.[[176]](#footnote-176) There are several closed-circuit television cameras – usually four – in each cell.[[177]](#footnote-177) Most detainees reported that the lights in the cell remain on at all times, including during the night.[[178]](#footnote-178) A few said that the lights were turned off at night.[[179]](#footnote-179) Several cells had a list of camp rules or the camp rules and “crimes” hanging on the wall.[[180]](#footnote-180)

Cell doors often have two holes, one for the guards stationed in the hallway to look in and another to pass food through.[[181]](#footnote-181) Cell doors were often positioned so that detainees cannot see any other rooms from their door.[[182]](#footnote-182) The door to the cell is chained to the wall.[[183]](#footnote-183) [Pseudonym X13] told Amnesty International how humiliating it was to go under the chain every time he needed to leave the cell. “The door is just half open. It was chained to the wall. We had to crawl under the chain one by one, like dogs,” he said.[[184]](#footnote-184)

[START OF TEXT BOX]

## LEGAL TEXT BOX: Detention conditions under international law

Every person deprived of liberty has the right to be held in conditions that are consistent with human dignity.[[185]](#footnote-185) This right is a norm of general international law: it applies at all times, in all circumstances, including in times of emergency.[[186]](#footnote-186) People deprived of their liberty must be held only in a place of detention that is officially recognized; states must ensure that no one is held secretly in prison.[[187]](#footnote-187)

Everyone, including an individual in custody, has the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.[[188]](#footnote-188) The right to health extends not only to timely and appropriate health care, but also to underlying determinants of health, such as adequate food, water, and sanitation,[[189]](#footnote-189) as well as fresh air, natural light, and access to some form of exercise.[[190]](#footnote-190) Cramped and unhygienic accommodation and lack of privacy in custody can amount to inhuman or degrading treatment.[[191]](#footnote-191) Law enforcement officials and prison authorities are responsible for protecting the health of people in their custody. Failure to provide access to adequate health care has been held to violate rights to respect for dignity and health as well as the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment.

Detained and imprisoned people have a right to communicate with the outside world, subject only to reasonable conditions and restrictions that are proportionate to a legitimate aim.[[192]](#footnote-192) Detention without access to the outside world (incommunicado detention) facilitates torture and other ill-treatment and enforced disappearance. Depending on the circumstances, it can itself constitute torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.[[193]](#footnote-193)

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## 6.1 Classification of internees

According to government documents and testimony from survivors, detainees are placed into one of three classifications or categories: normal management, strict management, and very strict management[[194]](#footnote-194) Detainees in different classifications are detained in the same camps; however, detainees are placed in cells with other detainees in the same classification.[[195]](#footnote-195) Detainees’ uniforms correspond to their classification. Those in the normal management classification have blue uniforms, those in strict management have yellow uniforms, and those in very strict management have red.[[196]](#footnote-196) A detainee’s classification can be adjusted in accordance with their “performance and point situation [that is, their score]”.[[197]](#footnote-197) According to government documents, being in the normal management group is a necessary condition for being released from the camp (for more on criteria for release see chapter 8).

The exact reasons why specific internees are placed in different categories are not well understood by survivors; however, there is a general belief that detainees who were arrested for reasons related to religion are more likely to be placed in the two stricter categories.[[198]](#footnote-198) According to several survivors, the normal management group was for “ordinary” crimes, such as having prohibited software on your phone; strict management was for crimes related to religion; and very strict management was for imams and for people who had previously been convicted of serious crimes “serious crimes.”[[199]](#footnote-199) Some survivors believe the classification system is, at least in part, based on a detainee’s ethnicity, because Uyghurs in their camps were much more likely to be placed in one of the stricter categories.[[200]](#footnote-200)

The type of treatment detainees are subjected to in the camp corresponds to the classifications. Several survivors stated that they observed detainees from the different classification being treated differently.[[201]](#footnote-201) [Pseudonym E2], a detainee who also worked in the camp for part of the time she was interned, described some of the differences she observed with respect to the treatment of detainees, especially related to their ability to move around the camp and to communicate with family members.

**“Most of the people in the strict management group are there for being religious clerics or somehow involved with religion… I know this because interrogations [**f**or detainees] sometime took place in staff room where [I spent time] … [In the camp I worked in,] the normal management group learned Chinese and were allowed to walk in the yard, the strict [management] [are allowed to] sit on their beds [some of the time], the very strict learn in their cell, are not allowed to move, and never get fresh air.[[202]](#footnote-202)… The normal group gets to make a call once a week and strict group once every two weeks and visits once a month… The very strict group is not permitted to have visitors.”[[203]](#footnote-203)**

With two possible exceptions, the survivors Amnesty interviewed were in the normal management category when they arrived in the camp.[[204]](#footnote-204) As a result, nearly all the conclusions made in this report – like nearly all the testimonial evidence gathered about the camps from journalists and other organizations – come from evidence provided by survivors who experienced only the normal management treatment. However, given the second-hand accounts about the two stricter categories – which are observations made by survivors and staff who were in the same camps as internees in the stricter categories – it stands to reason that detainees in the stricter categories are treated much more severely and are much less likely to have been released from a camp and instead remain detained or have been transferred to prison.[[205]](#footnote-205)

[Pseudonym XZ], one of the two survivors Amnesty spoke with was given a yellow uniform for part of his stay. His “offense” was related to religion, also suggesting that he was likely in the strict management category during that time. Some of his treatment appears demonstrably worse than that of detainees in the normal management category: He was detained for over two years, was not allowed to call family members when others in his camp not detained for religious crimes were, he was never allowed out of his cell, and his feet were continuously shackled together for several months. “For two years, my family didn’t know if I was alive or dead,” [Pseudonym XZ] told Amnesty International.[[206]](#footnote-206)

## 6.2.1 Daily routine

The life of a camp detainee is highly regimented. With the exception of a few survivors describing the portion of their detention that took place in early 2017, every detainee stated that nearly every minute of their lives in the camps was prescribed, including the position in which they sat, when they stood, and where they looked.[[207]](#footnote-207) [Pseudonym], who was detained for having WhatsApp on her phone, told Amnesty International how strict the schedule was and how physically draining each day was.

**“It was like a prison… [Every day] you get up at 5am and have to make your bed, and it had to be perfect. Then there was a flag**-**raising ceremony and an ‘oath**-**taking’. Then you went to the canteen for breakfast. Then to the classroom. Then lunch. Then to the classroom. Then dinner. Then another class. Then bed. Every night two people had to be ‘on duty’ [monitoring the other cellmates] for** two **hours… There was not a minute left for yourself. You are exhausted.”[[208]](#footnote-208)**

[Pseudonym], who was detained in early 2017 because he was labelled a terrorist for travelling to Kazakhstan and for having attended a religious school, told Amnesty International the daily regimentation became much stricter in late 2017, to the point where even resting and the direction of your gaze were regulated:

**“Before October 2017, it was a little relaxing in class. We could go to the canteen [to eat] by ourselves and we could sit relaxed in class. But after the national [security] meeting in October [2017] it became very serious… We had to be ‘on duty’ at night [monitoring our cellmates]. We were escorted to the canteen. We had no more contact with our family… We must ‘sit tight’. We cannot even turn our heads from the TV… [After it became strict]** w**e got up at 5am. Breakfast was done at 7. Class at 8. We have to [walk] to class through a two-met**r**e**-**high metal fence with metal ceiling; it was basically a cage… [we are escorted] to class by two guards with clubs… There is a bucket in the back of class [to urinate]. You needed permission to go [defecate]… Rest [after lunch] was mandatory, with heads on desk for two hours. You were punished if you lifted your head.” [[209]](#footnote-209)**

## 6.2.2 Limited communication with family

According to a leaked government document, internees are supposed to be able to communicate regularly with their families.[[210]](#footnote-210) Some survivors were able to call home every week or every month.[[211]](#footnote-211) A few were able to see family members in person a few times during their detention.[[212]](#footnote-212) Many, though, were never able to call or see their families.[[213]](#footnote-213) However, all calls and interactions are monitored and recorded.[[214]](#footnote-214) Internees are often coached on what to say to their family members.[[215]](#footnote-215)

## 6.2.3 Inadequate hygiene, restrictions on urination and defecation, and insufficient food and water

Detainees are woken at five or six every morning by an alarm coming through the loudspeaker or by a loud knock on the cell door.[[216]](#footnote-216) They are required to get up immediately, quickly make their bed, and then brush their teeth and wash their face in a sink.[[217]](#footnote-217) Most cells do not have sinks and detainees must crawl under the chain attaching the cell door to the wall and then be escorted to a washroom by a guard. [[218]](#footnote-218) Detainees are rarely permitted to shower. Some detainees showered once a week; others reported not showering for weeks or even months after they arrived.[[219]](#footnote-219) A few survivors report having showers in their cell, and that they were monitored on video while showering.[[220]](#footnote-220) “In the new camp, beside the toilet there was a shower and a sink. … There is a small partition around the shower, but it is not very tall. If you are standing in the shower they can see you [on camera].”[[221]](#footnote-221)

Detainees require permission to use the toilet.[[222]](#footnote-222) Some cells have squat toilets; others have a bucket.[[223]](#footnote-223) “Even to go urinate in the bucket [inside the cell] we had to get permission from the guard first,” [Pseudonym Q1] said.[[224]](#footnote-224) Detainees are monitored by cameras when using the toilet.[[225]](#footnote-225) Guards routinely shouted at internees if they did not go to the bathroom quickly.[[226]](#footnote-226) “They used to give us one minute to [use the bucket] or they would yell at us,” [Pseudonym L1] said.[[227]](#footnote-227)

Several survivors reported they were permitted to use the toilet only at certain times.[[228]](#footnote-228) [Pseudonym A3], who spent a year in a camp, told Amnesty he was made to go long period without being able to use a proper toilet:

**“At 6am they let us go out one by one to wash and use the toilet… There is a bucket in the cell… Even in the morning there is no guarantee we’ll be let out [to use the toilet]. Sometimes we went 24 hours without being allowed to use the toilet… The bucket is for [urinating]; if you have to [defecate] then you have to use the intercom and they will send two guards… and then you go out under chain. Here you have to squat and put hands on head [when you exit the cell]… the process is like in a prison.”**[[229]](#footnote-229)

After washing and using the toilet, detainees have breakfast, which is either eaten in their cell or at the canteen. Detainees are given very little time to eat.[[230]](#footnote-230) Many survivors reported they were given very little to eat or drink.[[231]](#footnote-231) “They didn’t give us water at night. I was thirsty all the time. We got just half a cup [of water] at meals,” [Pseudonym Y8] told Amnesty International.[[232]](#footnote-232)

## 6.2.4 ‘Red songs’

After breakfast, detainees attend a flag-raising ceremony.[[233]](#footnote-233) During the ceremony, detainees stand at attention and sing the national anthem.[[234]](#footnote-234) Detainees spend a significant portion of the day singing the national anthem and “red” songs about the greatness of China, the Chinese Communist Party, or Xi Jinping.[[235]](#footnote-235) Songs are nearly always sung before breakfast and other meals and often throughout the day. [[236]](#footnote-236) Detainees must often sing for hours on end, until their throats became sore from singing.[[237]](#footnote-237) They are punished for not singing and for singing the songs incorrectly.[[238]](#footnote-238)

## 6.2.5 Insufficient exercise, fresh air, and natural light

The majority of survivors reported rarely, if ever, being allowed outside during their detention, except when walking from their cell to their class if it was in another building.[[239]](#footnote-239) A minority were given a short amount of time outside each day, often to do “military exercises”.[[240]](#footnote-240) Some were not allowed out at all for the first few months in the camps.[[241]](#footnote-241) Later, they were given a couple of minutes a day during the remainder of their internment.[[242]](#footnote-242) Some were given time outside every couple of weeks.[[243]](#footnote-243) A guard who worked at the camp said new detainees were not allowed outside during the first three months of their detention, and then were allowed a half hour outside per day.[[244]](#footnote-244) [Pseudonym E2] told Amnesty he was not permitted outside at all during the first half of his year-long detention, but in the second half was permitted some time.

**“[For the first six months] we never saw sunlight. We were always in cell. Only during interrogations [did we leave our cell]. One corner of cell has [a window], but it is covered by a dark net. You can see a bit of the sky… We sat still all day. We ate food in our cell… The beds were in one room. Then there was another door beside the toilet, [which goes to a small area] with fresh air. There was a metal net [over this area]. We had one hour a day in this [outside enclosure] … before 2018 we would sit still all day. After 2018 we would sit still and then be allowed into that area.”**[[245]](#footnote-245)

For internees who walked to class in another building, that was often the only time they got to walk or leave their rooms during the day.[[246]](#footnote-246) “The second camp was worse because there was no walk to class [the class was in our room], so we were never outside,” [Pseudonym] said.[[247]](#footnote-247) A few survivors said that the only time they were ever outside was to empty the bucket that he and he cellmates urinated in.[[248]](#footnote-248) [Pseudonym B2], who was sent to the camp because she had WhatsApp on her phone, told Amnesty she was never able to get any exercise or have sunlight or fresh air.

**“…There is no fresh air. There is no daylight. The windows [in the cell] are blocked… The windows were covered by film. There is no sunlight. Only opportunity to go outside was to take the trash out. We were never outside, except at the very beginning when there were few people. Once more people arrived we never went out… and once the number grew they stopped taking us to the canteen and brought food to our room.”**[[249]](#footnote-249)

[Pseudonym 65], who was detained for a reason related to religion told Amnesty that during the three months he was detained in the first facility he was sent to that the only time he went outside was an “evacuation” test drill in case of an earthquake. “When we got out into the yard we saw so many police pointing their guns at us, like we were enemies in a war.”[[250]](#footnote-250)

Survivors often reported that their room was very cold.[[251]](#footnote-251)

Many survivors reported that there was little or no natural light in their cell.[[252]](#footnote-252) The rooms usually have either no windows or one very small window, often covered.[[253]](#footnote-253) “There is a metal net over the window so no finger can reach the glass. And the window is covered by communist slogans. You can’t see outside… we sat in chair the whole day from December to April… during these four months we never saw the sun,” [Pseudonym] said.[[254]](#footnote-254)

## 6.2.6 Night ‘duty’

At around nine or 10 at night, detainees are given a few moments to wash and use the toilet, and then they go to bed.[[255]](#footnote-255) Talking was forbidden at night. Some survivors reported being made to sleep head to toe so that they would be unable to communicate with each other at night.[[256]](#footnote-256) “You can’t talk. They regulate [how we are positioned when we] sleep so that we can’t talk – our head is [positioned] next to someone’s feet,” [Pseudonym X5] told Amnesty International.[[257]](#footnote-257)

All detainees are required to ‘work’ one- or two-hour shifts monitoring their cellmates every night.[[258]](#footnote-258) The shifts were spent either walking continuously back-an-forth or around the cell or sitting still on the edge of the bed. One survivor reported that he was instructed to reposition people’s heads or lower the bedding if someone was not sleeping with their face visible and facing the camera.[[259]](#footnote-259) Several claimed that this policy was instituted to ensure no one killed themselves.[[260]](#footnote-260) Several had no idea why they were “on duty”.[[261]](#footnote-261)

[Pseudonym A4], who was arrested for allegedly failing to get permission to travel domestically, told Amnesty that at night, internees were responsible for monitoring each other and for ensuring their faces were always visible to the CCTV cameras in the cell:

**“The lights [in the cell] are always on. At 10pm we had to lie in bed. Two cellmates were on night watch. From 10 to 12, 12 to 2, 2 to 4, and 4 to 6… these two people are [always] walking between the window and the door. Their job is watching us. At night we have to sleep with head facing camera and face uncovered. And if not they wake us and put us in the right position.”**[[262]](#footnote-262)

Most survivors reported that the lights in the cell are alwayson, even at night.[[263]](#footnote-263) Even if you were not on duty it was difficult to sleep because of regular noise from the loudspeaker in the cell.[[264]](#footnote-264)

## 6.3.1 Health care without consent and health problems

All survivors experienced health care without their consent. This occurred both during their pre-detention health check and during their time in the camp. Nearly every survivor reported being given injections, and have their blood drawn.[[265]](#footnote-265) Almost none were told what the injections or blood samples were for, even after they asked. “They injected me with a liquid, to clean inside my artery. They didn’t have my consent. They said that if I didn’t [allow them] then they would put me in the strict group,” [Pseudonym x40] told Amnesty International. A few were told that some of the injections were flu shots or vaccinations.[[266]](#footnote-266) There is a widespread belief amongst detainees that they are being injected for other reasons: to affect their memory or to sterilize them.[[267]](#footnote-267)

While government documents indicate that detainees are required to be vaccinated, the frequency that some detainees report being injected seems suspicious. [[268]](#footnote-268) A few survivors claim that they were give injections every couple weeks.[[269]](#footnote-269) “They give pills regularly in camp. Sometimes every 2-3 weeks. You don’t know what pill is – no box, no paper – just blue pills. Everyone gets them… heard that they prevent you from having child,” [pseudonym 19] told Amnesty international.[[270]](#footnote-270) Several survivors remarked that after people received injections they were ‘happy’ or seemed inebriated. [[271]](#footnote-271) “All of us were injected [before entering the camp]. They explained that is was to prevent the flu. … After the flu shot people looked happy. I’m not sure why,” [Pseudonym F2] told Amnesty International. [[272]](#footnote-272) Many journalists have also documented instances of detainees being injected repeatedly without explanation.[[273]](#footnote-273)

Most survivors reported become sick and weak while in the camps. Most claim they did not receive adequate health care. Many report chronic health problems. Many stated that they could no longer sit for long period with being in pain.[[274]](#footnote-274) Many stated that they had problems with their memory, sleeping, and sexual performance.[[275]](#footnote-275)

According to former detainees interviewed by journalists, women held in internment camps are made to attend family planning classes and are force-fed birth control pills, injected with pregnancy prevention shots or subjected to forced IUDs.[[276]](#footnote-276) [Pseudonym x87] told Amnesty that her husband was “forced” to come to her internment camp for a conjugal visit. After the visit she was made to take a pill that she was told prevented pregnancy. [[277]](#footnote-277) Beijing’s interference into the reproductive autonomy of Uighur and other ethnic minority women has been documented.[[278]](#footnote-278) Journalists have that minority women in Xingjian are regularly forced to undergo intrauterine device insertions, pregnancy checks, sterilisations and even abortions, in an attempt to curb their birth rates.[[279]](#footnote-279) While these practices are decreasing nationwide, they are dramatically rising in Xinjiang.[[280]](#footnote-280) These aggressive forms of population control and assimilation are closely intertwined with the internment camps system, which is used both to intimidate women into compliance and to punish those who refuse to submit to these measures. Leaked government documents have shown, for example, that the most common reason for detention among camp detainees in Karakax county in Xinjiang was breaching birth control policies.[[281]](#footnote-281) Some accounts seem to indicate that similar pills are also administered to men, who later become sterile, impotent or cognitively weakened.[[282]](#footnote-282) Many women say that, following these procedures, they stopped getting their periods and some that upon release they went to a doctor only to be told they have become sterile.[[283]](#footnote-283) Some women also claim that all detainees are forced to undergo gynaecology exams in the camps and that some are either forced to abort or terminate the pregnancy on their own account for fear of being punished.[[284]](#footnote-284)

## 6.3.2 People detained in ‘hospitals’

Four survivors told Amnesty International they were not interned in a formal camp, but instead spent the majority of their internment detained in hospitals.[[285]](#footnote-285) This included three elderly survivors who were kept inside hospital rooms for nearly a year. They were nominally told to learn Chinese, but reported essentially just sitting in the room for months on end. [Pseudonym S1], an elderly woman, told how she spent most of her detention in a hospital room with other old women, none of whom were permitted to leave the floor.

**“I was at the hospital the whole summer… it is the [top] floor of a normal hospital, but it is blocked from other floors, and the windows are barred, only doctors can come in and out… I was kept in a room with six other elderly people… we were not allowed to go outside… We spent most of the day just sitting on our bed… We had lessons but I had problems hearing and my eyes were bad; they didn’t pressure me. They just demanded that I sign my name in Chinese… and we had to sing red songs.”**[[286]](#footnote-286)

Similarly, [Pseudonym Y1], another elderly woman, was kept in a hospital room with a group of elderly woman for several months. She told Amnesty how they spent the time:

**“[During the day] we would wake up and have breakfast in the room. We were handed papers and books. I pretended to read, but I didn’t understand anything. We would pretend to learn all day. Then we would have a meal and sleep. They taught some ‘red’ songs. They wanted us to learn Chinese words. We weren’t allowed out. We just wanted to be released. We were only allowed to go to the toilet. Otherwise we stayed in the room.”**[[287]](#footnote-287)

Family members of the detainees were required to pay for their stay in the hospital.[[288]](#footnote-288)

## 6.3.1 Doing “Nothing” and ‘Self-study’

Before the start of classes, during the first few days, weeks, or sometimes months after arriving at the internment camps, many of the survivors reported that they were essentially forced to do nothing for nearly the entire day. The only breaks were for meals or to sleep. Nearly all survivors were forced to sit or kneel in positions for hours on end, with straight backs and their hands positioned on their knees. [[289]](#footnote-289) “We were given a small stool. We were made to sit in two lines. With straight backs and hands on knew. All day. If one guy [in the cell] moved then the guards outside would bang on the door with a baton and shout, “ [Pseudonym 12] said.[[290]](#footnote-290)

Many survivors reported that this position was very painful for their knees and other parts of their body[[291]](#footnote-291); some developed haemorrhoids and other health problems.[[292]](#footnote-292) Many reported that inmates were physically punished if they were unwilling or unable to sit straight.[[293]](#footnote-293) Several reported not being permitted to look anywhere but straight ahead.[[294]](#footnote-294) [Pseudonym 19] said that she was told that if the people monitoring her cell on the cameras noticed anyone moving their lips that they would deduct from their “scores”.[[295]](#footnote-295)

Several survivors reported having to sing songs or to recite basic Chinese words while they sat still, or in a few instances stood still; others were made to watch Chinese propaganda films. Some literally had to do nothing except sit perfectly still on a small chair or stool in their room, or, in a few cases, stand still.[[296]](#footnote-296) “I just sat on stool for three months from morning to 11pm… there was no class, nothing,” [Pseudonym 10] said.[[297]](#footnote-297)

[Pseudonym Q1], who was sent to the camp for visiting Kazakhstan, told Amnesty he was in a camp for several months before they started taking him to class.

**“During the days before classes [started] we had to sit on stools [all day]. For 16 hours a day we had to sit on stools with our hands on our knees. We were up at 6am, then sit on stool, then breakfast… Then sit until lunch. Sometimes we were given a book [to learn from]. We could not talk to other people. We had our lunch sitting on the stool. During lunch we could have a nap of an hour or less, sometimes not at all… Then we sit again until it gets dark.”**[[298]](#footnote-298)

[Pseudonym XM], who was detained for visiting Kazakhstan, told Amnesty that for the first two months after he arrived at the camp, he was forced to sit still in an uncomfortable position for hours each day:

**“After breakfast we had to sit on our beds with our hands on our knees and a straight back. If we moved, they spoke to us through a loudspeaker [in the room] and said ‘don’t move’. Then around 11.30/12 they brought lunch. Then from 12.30 to 2 we could lie down [on our bed]. Then at 2pm they told us to maintain the seated position. We sat like that until dinner, but they sometimes said through loudspeaker that we had five minutes to move, lie down, or to urinate in the… Around 7pm we had dinner, and then we watched TV [while sitting] … At 9pm they ordered us to go to bed… We spent [the first] two months without leaving the room, [except] during the day they took us to the toilet which was outside the room to [defecate]. They took us two times a day… We never went outside.”**[[299]](#footnote-299)

The survivor testimony gathered by Amnesty is consistent with survivor accounts gathered by journalists and other organizations.[[300]](#footnote-300) According to a letter from a former camp guard, inmates were not allowed to show emotion.[[301]](#footnote-301)

Based on survivor testimony, it is unclear whether doing nothing was a deliberate policy to demoralize or break the will or spirit of newly arrived detainees or if it was a consequence of the fact that at the start of the government campaign of mass incarceration certain camps were not set up to provide any formalized instruction at certain times. It is plausible that it was a deliberate policy in certain camps at certain times but not in others.

## 6.3.2 ‘Class’ or ‘Re-education’

The Government of China has referred to the internment camps as “vocational training centres” or “transformation-through-education”. The part of the day not spent eating or sleeping – usually 12 hours – is devoted to so-called “re-education”. The re-education in the camp is normally delivered via lectures in classrooms. In many cases, however, formal classes did not begin until an internee had been at a camp for several weeks, and often not for several months.

At some point after arriving in the camp, nearly all detainees are subjected to highly regimented classes, either in person, via video lectures, or both. The classes were mostly about Chinese language, history, law, and “ideology”. Some involved memorizing and reciting “red” songs. The typical schedule includes three or four hours of class after breakfast. Then detainees have lunch and a short “rest”, which often involves sitting still on your stool or with your head still on your desk.[[302]](#footnote-302) After lunch there is another three or four hours of class, and then dinner, followed by a few hours to sit or kneel on your stool and silently “review” the day’s material or to watch more “educational” videos.[[303]](#footnote-303) At nearly all times during class, internees are required to look straight ahead and not to speak with their classmates.[[304]](#footnote-304)

Classes are usually held in classrooms beyond the cells. Inmates from two or more cells are regularly brought together in one larger class with approximately 50 people. Several survivors reported having classes in their cell.[[305]](#footnote-305)

Internees would often have to line up or sit and wait for hours in the morning because of the logistical constraints of transferring thousands of people from cells to classrooms.[[306]](#footnote-306) [Pseudonym A3] told Amnesty he spent a large portion of the day waiting to be escorted to class: “After classes started, we got moving at 6am. It took two to three hours to send all inmates to class. The class was one kilometre away. The cage line, beginning from dorm to class, is really narrow, we can only walk single file. It takes two to three hours for everyone to get there.”[[307]](#footnote-307)

While walking to the classroom – or anywhere else in the camp – internees have to walk between yellow lines painted on the ground of the facility.[[308]](#footnote-308) Anyone who steps on or over the lines risks physical punishment.[[309]](#footnote-309) [Pseudonym X6], who had been sent to a camp because she refused to work for the government, told Amnesty she remembered a staff member speaking about the two yellow lines on the floor of the camp. The guard reportedly said, “‘You people went outside of the path. [In this camp] you will learn to go inside the path.’”[[310]](#footnote-310)

Internees are escorted to class by guards. Some guards have shields and electric batons.[[311]](#footnote-311) When travelling from the cell to the classroom, internees sometime walk outside to another building but are almost always under some sort of caged enclosure. “The roads from the dorm to classroom were surrounded by wires and armed guard who looked like they were ready to shoot you,” [Pseudonym] said.[[312]](#footnote-312) Internees were often required to march to class in a military-type formation, shouting slogans.[[313]](#footnote-313) [Pseudonym M2] told Amnesty that inmates were required to march to and from class “like soldiers” and that while marching they were required to shout, “study hard, elevate yourself, eliminate separatist forces, and long live Xi Jinping!”[[314]](#footnote-314)

The teacher and guards enter the classroom using one door and the students enter through another, which, like the cell doors, is chained to the wall. Guards are stationed inside or immediately outside the classroom.[[315]](#footnote-315) Classes begin and end with the class thanking the teacher for their sacrifice.[[316]](#footnote-316)

Students and teachers are physically separated at all times. Classrooms have a hard plastic, wooden, or metal divider, usually just over a metre high, separating the students and the teachers or ‌guards.[[317]](#footnote-317) A wire or metal net often fills the space above the divider.[[318]](#footnote-318) Several survivors reported that there were multiple guards with weapons in the classroom with them at all times.[[319]](#footnote-319) “[In my class] there were three guards on the same side as the teacher. They wore police uniforms. … They wore bullet-proof vests. … They had a metal shield that was about one metre high. … One had a long spear, it was longer than the guard’s height.”[[320]](#footnote-320)

Desks and stools in the classroom are often chained together.[[321]](#footnote-321) Several survivors reported being given short pencils to write with, or the plastic tube of ink and tip from inside a disposable pen,[[322]](#footnote-322) presumably because a full-size pencil or a pen could be used as a weapon. [Pseudonym W1/2] described his experience in the classroom:

**“Every day was almost the same… We are brought to a place where you have to sit for 17 hours. It was in another room in the same building. [In the classroom] there are five or six armed guards and a teacher. The door to class is also chained, you must crawl to get in… The teacher is behind a barrier, [the barrier] is maybe neck height. You can see them but you can’t cross [the barrier]. The guards are on the teacher’s side. They taught us verses from Confucius. We had to read [the verses] out loud and repeat them hundreds of times. And there were loudspeakers in the classroom. Several times I heard [a voice on the loudspeaker saying] ‘give more pressure’.”**[[323]](#footnote-323)

Internees were made to sit absolutely straight while at their desks. Survivors reported people being taken out of class and beaten or otherwise punished if they did not sit straight and look straight ahead.[[324]](#footnote-324) [Pseudonym M2] told Amnesty International that failure to sit straight could also affect an internee’s score: “We had to sit straight with our hands behind our back. In our classroom, there were old woman. Their hands and feet swell up. If you miss your home, if you cry, they will deduct from your score – they give scores to everyone – and they will say that your mind still has problems, that your ideas didn’t change.”[[325]](#footnote-325)

Include teacher accounts.[[326]](#footnote-326)

## 6.3.3 Language training

Teaching Chinese is a primary objective of the re-education classes. Speaking in any other language is forbidden and is a punishable offense.[[327]](#footnote-327) Language classes take up the majority of the time in a day.[[328]](#footnote-328) Nearly all survivors reported having to regularly pass language exams and being required to learn a certain number of Chinese characters – often 3,000[[329]](#footnote-329) – before being released.[[330]](#footnote-330) This is consistent with leaked government documents, which stipulate regular examinations and state that test scores “will be aggregated to form study points, which are used to evaluate the effect of the education and training and form the main basis to determine whether a student has completed (their course).”[[331]](#footnote-331) Inmates who fail to memorize words or songs often received physical punishments.[[332]](#footnote-332)

Detainees were sometimes divided according to their language abilities; however, many survivors who spoke fluent Chinese reported being forced to sit in basic classes and many survivors who did not speak any Chinese reported not understanding anything said in class for months.[[333]](#footnote-333) Many detainees expressed difficultly with the classes. “The classes were mainly Chinese language but it wasn’t helpful. Each day they just wrote hundreds of characters on the board. We just copied. No one tried to explain,” [Pseudonym] told Amnesty International.[[334]](#footnote-334) “We were under pressure to learn 3,000 characters. There were many exams. I graduated high school and it was hard for me. It was very hard for old people, and for farmers,” [Pseudonym D1] told Amnesty.[[335]](#footnote-335)

[Pseudonym], who spent a year in the camp for visiting Kazakhstan and for an offense related to religion, told Amnesty how the language classes involved rote memorization:

**“During the class there is a Han teacher who writes Chinese characters on a board and we just copy it without knowing what it was. That was it. We just write characters… It was just language… we were not allowed to speak Uyghur in class. If you do [speak a language other than Mandarin] you get punished. You are taken to a room with tiger chair… I was taken twice.”**[[336]](#footnote-336)

The survivors’ accounts of language classes are consistent with testimony given by other survivors[[337]](#footnote-337) and with leaked government documents.[[338]](#footnote-338)

## 6.3.4 ‘Political education’

Most survivors reported attending some combination of “history”, “law”, and “ideology” classes or, as many survivors refer to it, “political education”. These classes are largely focused on indoctrinating detainees about the evils of Islam and about how prosperous, powerful, and benevolent China, the CCP, and Xi Jinping are.[[339]](#footnote-339) These classes were often taught by government officials or delivered on video by state-sanctioned imams talking about religion, or judges and lawyers speaking about terrorism, extremism, and separatism.[[340]](#footnote-340) Many also involve films of CCP sessions[[341]](#footnote-341) or speeches by Xi Jinping or propaganda plays about families turning into terrorists.[[342]](#footnote-342)

[Pseudonym], who was arrested for his relationship to a “suspicious” person, told Amnesty International he attended classes focused on pushing people away from Islam and from travelling abroad, and towards certain Chinese cultural practices, such as smoking and drinking.

**“They taught us not to visit other countries, to stay in China. That going abroad might give you the wrong ‘ideology’. They told us to start smoking and to drink alcohol. If you don’t [drink and smoke] it is a sign of being religious. We were told not to go to mosques when we are released, that you could get 20 years [in prison] … They told us to only greet people in Chinese. And to only have your children watch Chinese television.”**[[343]](#footnote-343)

[Pseudonym], who was sent to a camp for reasons related to religion, told Amnesty about how his classes focused on the problems with Islam.

**“We watched videos by … an official religious figure, about how we should follow the country’s law… there were three or four videos that we watched on repeat… In the video he says ‘… there is no such thing as jihad, don’t follow the terror idea, it is illegal to kill or do violence.’ We watched [the same] video for four hours a day, or for the whole day if there was an inspection.”**[[344]](#footnote-344)

[Pseudonym], who was arrested for having a forbidden messaging application on her phone, told Amnesty that afternoons were spent in a class she described as propaganda about the greatness of China.

**“[T]here were ‘law’ classes, but it’s not really law, it’s ideology… it was about how a country should have one language… about how China was great and excellent, and how Kazakhstan is bad… And [they would show us a big] bridge that China built… and talk about fighting terrorism, and how those in the [re-education] camps are terrorists themselves… they were brainwashing us to say that without the Chinese Communist Party there is no China, no prosperity, and that Xi Jinping is great… they made us sing ‘Xi Jinping is the father of China, father of the world’.”**[[345]](#footnote-345)

[Pseudonym], who was sent to multiple camps, told Amnesty how at the first camp he was made to watch videos about all the things the government does to help the poor and about all the sacrifices that people made for China in World War II.

**“They also told us it took 39 million people to die to build a new China, and you Uyghurs are only 16 million… why are you Uyghurs looking for something bad? Why don’t you enjoy your life? They used to show us wars between China and Japan. They used to make us write essays about how we think and feel about the movie, what we think about millions of deaths to build a new China. They repeated the same movies every day. They told us not to bite the hand that feeds you, and don’t spit in the water you are drinking. We would ask what our crime is. They would say the fact that you are talking back right now is a crime in itself, that you shouldn’t speak. We would sit there quietly.**

**“Three or four people came during the day and lectured us. They would make us memorize communist slogans, law, and tell us that the Communist Party is good. We had to sit and listen and memorize… In the second camp they would show us photos of Uyghurs who left to Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan, and say that this guy is in prison for so many years, this guy for so many years. They said that if you go [abroad] we will catch you and detain you… This is how they would make the day go.”**

The survivors’ accounts of language classes are consistent with testimony given by other survivors.[[346]](#footnote-346)

## 6.4 Interrogations, forced confessions, and ‘self-criticism’

Detainees are questioned or interrogated regularly. The manner and frequency of the interrogations appears to vary widely from camp to camp and person to person. Some survivors report being interrogated once or twice during their entire stay; others report weekly interrogations.[[347]](#footnote-347) As during the interrogations in police stations and detention centres (described in Chapter X), the interrogations focused on the internees’ religious practices, foreign contacts, and relationships with “suspicious” people.[[348]](#footnote-348) Numerous survivors reported being forced to “confess” to their “crime” during interrogations; several told Amnesty they had done what they were being accused of (for example, travelling abroad, downloading WhatsApp) so while they did not consider their actions criminal, they considered their confession to be honest.[[349]](#footnote-349)

Many interrogations took place in rooms where internees sat across a desk from a government official and did not involve any ill-treatment.[[350]](#footnote-350) Many also took place in “punishment rooms”, which were usually in the basement of the camp and often involved torture and other ill-treatment (see Chapter X below). [Pseudonym O1], who was arrested for working in Kazakhstan, told Amnesty how he was interrogated in a room in the basement of his camp:

**“[Security agents] took me to an underground room and put my legs into an iron bar. My hands were handcuffed to the chair. They asked me about my biography. Where I was born, when I started school, where did I go after high school, which did I study. I told them I went to Kazakhstan. They asked me how many times I visited and were I went, and where I stayed. They asked for the names of my relatives, and what [my relatives] did, did they pray? … they asked which cities in Kazakhstan I visited, which countries I visited. They also asked about [my siblings] … they asked ‘when you were in Kazakhstan did you learn how to pray?”**[[351]](#footnote-351)

Internees are also regularly required to engage in “confession” or “self-criticism” letters in which they admit to their “crimes” in writing. Some survivors reported having to write self-criticism letters once or twice during their interment; others reported this was a weekly or biweekly activity.[[352]](#footnote-352) Several survivors reported being given a list of “crimes” from which to choose two to confess to.[[353]](#footnote-353) Several said that the list had 75 crimes.[[354]](#footnote-354) Journalists have also reported there were 75 types of crimes to choose from.[[355]](#footnote-355) Several survivors told Amnesty they believed that people who chose – or were made to choose – certain crimes, particularly crimes related to religion, were given prison sentences (see chapter 8).[[356]](#footnote-356)

In addition to confessing one’s crimes, as part of the self-criticism, internees were made to describe in writing what they did wrong, to explain that as a result of the education they were receiving they had recognized the error of their ways and that their thoughts had been “transformed”, to express gratitude to the government for the education, and to promise not to return to their old habits.[[357]](#footnote-357) [Pseudonym], who was put in a camp for having contact with people who had “extremist” thoughts, said he was forced to admit his crime and that he was told that if he did not confess he would be sent to a punishment room.[[358]](#footnote-358) “Once a month there was self-assessment acknowledging that you did a crime and that you are not a good person,” [Pseudonym XX] told Amnesty International. [Pseudonym Q1] told Amnesty he was forced to choose two crimes from a list of 75 to confess to:

**“They started teaching us about 75 [crimes][[359]](#footnote-359)… We had to write our names and IDs and to choose at least two. The more the better… What I read is that it is a crime not to drink and not to smoke. And that thick thread – to bind straw – if you have too much then it is a crime… you have to choose which you have… for example, if you brought too much food at once to your house… and if you visited a mosque not in your home town it is a crime… I visited a mosque in another county to attend a funeral…. So I chose two. And I put my fingerprint on it.”**[[360]](#footnote-360)

[Pseudonym X7], who was in a camp for a year, told Amnesty that civil servants who lived outside the camp, and who she likened to case managers, used to come to do interrogations and what she referred to as self-assessment’ and confessions, in which detainees were required to confess to their crime, reflect on their “progress”, and often to disavow the Muslim religion.

**“At the beginning [the civil servants] tell you your crime – [one of mine was] having WhatsApp [and travelling to Kazakhstan] – then you have to write: ‘I didn’t know having WhatsApp was a crime. I didn’t know it caused damage to CCP. Because of WhatsApp my mind was ‘compromised’. Now, after this education, I am getting better. I will not have WhatsApp on my phone again… [My other crime was going to Kazakhstan. I had to write:] I was in Kazakhstan. I got infected by ‘ideas’. Now I will do better and get rid of ideas… And [we also have to write] we have mistakenly chosen the religion of Islam. We will not choose this religion again… And there was also a list of ‘misdoings’ of Muslim believers against China. For example, praying before bed. So you would have to write that you were sorry for this and that you would not do it again.”**

[Pseudonym X7] told Amnesty International she was required to do a self-assessment once a week. “It was the same every week, except that you must acknowledge some progress, like learning Chinese,” she said.[[361]](#footnote-361)

### TEXT BOX: Satellite imagery analysis

Coming soon…

# 7. Torture and Other Ill-Treatment in Internment Camps

Every camp survivor Amnesty International interviewed was tortured or subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (in this report referred to as “torture and other ill-treatment”) during their internment. Torture and other ill-treatment are constitutive elements of life in the internment camps.

The torture and other ill-treatment that detainees experience in the camps fall into two broad categories. The first category includes the physical andnon-physical (that is, mental or psychological) torture and other ill-treatment experienced by *all* detainees as a result of the cumulative effects of daily life in the camps. This includes being made to sit, kneel, or stand in stress positions for hours every day; sleep deprivation; and insufficient food, water, exercise, and exposure to natural light. It also includes various forms of psychological abuse, including not knowing when their detention will end, not being able to communicate with their family or anyone outside the camp, not being able to speak in their native tongue, living under the constant threat of violence, and being made to see and hear other detainees being tortured or otherwise ill-treated. The camps are designed to ensure that these types of torture and other ill-treatment are an inescapable aspect of daily life for every detainee.

The second category includes physical torture and ill-treatment that occurs during interrogations or as punishment for misbehaviour. This type of treatment commonly includes beatings, electric shocks, solitary confinement, deprivation of food and water, exposure to cold, and the prolonged use of restraints, such as tiger chairs.

The instances of torture and other ill-treatment documented below (and in Chapter 5) are violations of international law. Moreover, collectively, the acts constitute the crime against humanity of torture (for more on crimes against humanity, see Chapter 10).[[362]](#footnote-362)

[START TEXT BOX]

## LEGAL TEXT BOX Torture and other ill-treatment under international law

States have a legal obligation to treat people in detention humanely and with dignity.[[363]](#footnote-363) Under international law, torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment are absolutely prohibited and cannot be justified under any circumstances whatsoever. The prohibition, enshrined in Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has become a rule of customary international law, which is binding on states even if they have not ratified the relevant human rights treaties. It is also a peremptory norm, a *jus cogens* rule, with no reservations or derogations permitted.[[364]](#footnote-364)

The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment – which the Republic of China has ratified[[365]](#footnote-365) – defines torture as

“any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.”[[366]](#footnote-366)

The use of force against detainees is strictly limited under international law. Prohibited interrogation techniques include stress positions.[[367]](#footnote-367) Blindfolding and hooding should also be prohibited, as should prolonged sleep deprivation, threats (including threats of torture and death threats), using cold air to chill the detainee, electrocution, and beating.[[368]](#footnote-368) Other forms of coercion include interrogation techniques designed to offend personal, cultural, or religious sensitivities.[[369]](#footnote-369) Prolonged incommunicado detention and secret detention violate the prohibition against torture or other ill-treatment and are therefore forms of prohibited coercion.[[370]](#footnote-370) Other techniques that may violate the rights of detainees include withholding clothing or hygiene products, permanently keeping lights on in the cell, and sensory deprivation.[[371]](#footnote-371)

The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners provide that instruments of restraint should be used only as strictly necessary to prevent risk of harm to individuals or others, and they are not to be used for punishment.[[372]](#footnote-372) International standards prohibit the use of chains or irons, and regulate the use of other restraints, such as handcuffs and strait-jackets.[[373]](#footnote-373) Permitted instruments and methods of restraint may be used only when necessary and proportionate; they must not be applied for longer than strictly necessary and must never be used as a punishment.[[374]](#footnote-374)

Psychological or mental harm can constitute torture. *[[375]](#footnote-375)* Courts have recognized that there is no necessary physical element to torture.[[376]](#footnote-376) Psychological torture can include isolation, threats, humiliation, sleep deprivation, exposure to light, intimidation, deprivation of communication, exposure to cold, a restrictive visiting schedule, and witnessing others being tortured.[[377]](#footnote-377) Attempts to destroy a detainee’s sense of self by removing control over their environment (i.e., learned helplessness) is also torture.[[378]](#footnote-378)

[END TEXT BOX]

## 7.1.1 Torture and other ill-treatment during interrogations and as punishment

Amnesty International interviewed XX women and XX men who were tortured or subjected to other ill-treatment during interrogations or punishments in internment camps in Xinjiang between 2017 and 2019.[[379]](#footnote-379) Amnesty also interviewed X woman and X men who either witnessed the torture or other ill-treatment of other detainees, or spoke with other detainees – usually their cellmates – who informed them that they had been tortured or otherwise ill-treated during interrogations or as punishment.[[380]](#footnote-380)

Torture methods included beatings, electric shocks, stress position, the unlawful use of restraints (including being locked in a tiger chair), sleep deprivation, being hung from the wall, being subjected to extremely cold temperatures, and solitary confinement.[[381]](#footnote-381) Amnesty International documented one account of a killing in an internment camp caused by torture.[[382]](#footnote-382)

Survivors and witnesses described a broadly consistent pattern of treatment of detainees by Chinese security forces. Some of this treatment reflects patterns of torture and other ill-treatment that Chinese security forces have carried out in Xinjiang and other parts of China for decades.[[383]](#footnote-383) According to survivors, the torture and other ill-treatment was carried out both by camp guards and by domestic security police officers (Guobao) who came to the camps for the purposes of interrogating detainees.[[384]](#footnote-384)

Torture and other ill-treatment usually took place in interrogation or punishment rooms. These rooms are usually windowless and contain at least one tiger chair, which is used for interrogations. Some survivors reported that tiger chairs were brought into their cells. A few survivors reported being punished in rooms with multiple tiger chairs.[[385]](#footnote-385)

## 7.1.2 First-hand accounts of torture during interrogations or as punishments

X survivors told Amnesty International they were interrogated in a tiger chair or other metal chair, or while handcuffed to a regular chair.[[386]](#footnote-386) Several reported being hooded for all or part of the interrogation. Interrogations usually lasted an hour or more; punishments were often much longer. Several people reported being left tied to a tiger chair for 24 hours. A few reported being immobilized in a tiger chair for multiple days.[[387]](#footnote-387)

[Pseudonym P1], who was detained for an offense related to the practice of Islam, told Amnesty International that during the year he spent in an internment camp he was taken to punishment rooms twice, where he was immobilized in a tiger chair. The first time was for making his bed too early in the morning. The second time, he was taken along with the rest of his cellmates, who were punished together because one member of the cell had spoken in Kazakh.

**“[The first time I was taken I was on ‘night duty’ with an old Hui man. It was morning. We thought it was time to start making the beds. Then, on the loudspeaker, someone said it wasn’t time to start making the beds. Then [two guards] came into the room and took [the two of us who were on duty] to the [punishment] room. The room had eight chairs. We were there for maybe five hours. We didn’t have water. There was no food. And no toilet. They opened the window. It was very cold. We stayed strapped in chair. The chair is metal and we were cuffed with arms straight out. Our legs were cuffed… The second time, there was a guy [in my cell] who spoke in Kazakh. And the guards asked him if he spoke in Kazakh. And he said ‘no’. And then they took [everyone in the cell] to the tiger chair.”**[[388]](#footnote-388)

[Pseudonym X1], an elderly woman who spent a year in the camp without ever being given a firm reason for her arrest – although she believes it was because she had gone to Kazakhstan – was taken to a punishment room because she argued with a cellmate after trying to come to the defence of another woman who was hard of hearing and was being verbally abused. She described being taken by two female guards to a small, dark, cold, and windowless room in the basement of the camp, where she was handcuffed and shackled and made to sit on an iron chair for three days:

**“Two women took me to the room. They held me under my arms. They told me to sit on an iron chair… [They] cuffed my arms and legs… My hands were cuffed to each other, not to the chair... [I was taken because] there was a woman [in my cell] who couldn’t hear well. And there was another Uyghur woman [in the cell] who used to call her names. I said [to the Uyghur woman], ‘why are you taking advantage of her? You shouldn’t do that!’ [Then an argument started.] Then the guards came [in the cell] and asked us what happened and they took me to this room… It was a dark room. No toilet in it. Just a bucket… There was no bed, just a chair. They brought one piece of bread and water. I was getting pretty cold. I started shouting that I was getting cold… My hands and legs were cuffed [to the chair] … They told me I would be there for five days. [But] the following day they took my cuffs off and brought food. And [the guard] watched through the door and told me to eat. But I was cold and couldn’t eat… I was there for three days.”[[389]](#footnote-389)**

Several internees told Amnesty International they were sent to punishment rooms multiple times. [Pseudonym X8], a farmer, described to Amnesty how he was tortured multiple times in two camps during his time in detention – both during an interrogation and during multiple punishment sessions. He described his interrogation session:

**“That day two guards came to my cell. They said I would be interrogated. I stuck my hands out through the hole in the wall [door] and they cuffed me [from the other side of the door]… [I could hear] the guards talking on the walkie-talkie saying that ‘Guobao is waiting’… Two guards took me from the cell and dropped me off [at the room where I was interrogated]. Two men were inside. They locked the door from inside. The guards were in uniform but the plainclothes [Guobao officers] interrogated me… They started asking about personal information, ethnicity, date of birth, when I went to Kazakhstan, my occupation… [they asked] ‘did you pray there? What do your parents do?’ I said I only stayed with family, that I took care of livestock, and that I didn’t do anything illegal… they asked me about mosque and praying… If I told them I had been praying, I had heard that I would get sentenced for 20 or 25 years. So I told them I never prayed. Then they became upset. They said, ‘All that time with livestock, you became an animal too!’ Then they hit me with a chair until it broke… I was sitting on a chair and they hit me with another chair. They hit me until the chair broke. I fell to the floor. I almost fainted… Then they put me on the chair again. They said, ‘this guy hasn’t changed yet, he needs to stay [in the camp] longer’… then they walkied the guards, who helped me back to the cell.”**

[Pseudonym X8] was also sent to two punishment rooms on multiple occasions for trivial offenses.

**“[The first time I was taken in the first camp] it was because I tried to look out the window. There was a window with a bar [in my cell]. We were not allowed to look outside… [The first time I was sent in the second camp] was because they made me the responsible person for the cell. Leaders were inspecting the cell. When they came in [to inspect our cell] we had to stand up and show respect but my cell didn’t do it so I was sent to punishment room… [The second time I was sent to the punishment room in the second camp] was one day before I was released. It was because I didn’t sit still in the classroom.”**

[Pseudonym X8] was tortured in both camps. He told Amnesty he was repeatedly electrocuted while being asked repetitively whether he “would do it again”. “[I had to say that] ‘I made a mistake but will not do it again,” he said. “The first time they electric shocked me. Then they tied me up on a chair for 24 hours without food or water… The second time they chained me up [from the wall].” He told Amnesty he was left immobilized on a tiger chair multiple times, and the room was very cold. “They would open the window on winter days,” he said.

[Pseudonym X8] also described two of the punishment rooms, one of which had 20 tiger chairs.

**“You can see the chair across from you, but not beside you because there are [wooden] dividers [that go to the ceiling] … Above every tiger chair there is a camera and microphone and a small white light. The light is on the ceiling. Lights are dim… There is a window but no light. The window is close to the ceiling. It is very narrow… Everything was white. The walls, floors, ceilings. All new… It is in the basement where we live… There were several other people [in the room] but I could not see [most of] them. There was one guy in front of me. I could see him. The other guy [in front of me] was punished for using his Kazakh mother tongue… We talked to each other. We had to talk in Chinese.”**

[Pseudonym 65] also described being punished and sent to a place with numerous tiger chairs – in this case they were located in a corridor of a building in the camp:

**“I was punished once. … In class I raised my hand and asked a question then [the teacher] threw a plastic ruler at me and said ‘why do you speak!’ … then [the teacher] said to the guards to take me to the tiger chair. … They tied my hands and legs to the chair. … I was lucky [because I wasn’t there for too long] … There were 10-15 chairs. … It wasn’t a real room; it was part of a corridor. … There were partitions between the chairs, like in a public toilet. You could not see the chair beside you. … There was another person in front of me [who I could see] … When the guard left I asked the man in front of me how long he had been there. He said 24 hours.”**

Confinement in tiger chairs is also often a form of solitary confinement, as the person immobilized in the chair is often left alone for hours. One survivor stated that the camps she was interned in had a “dark” room, which was a windowless room without light, about two metres by one metre, where detainees were sent if they misbehaved. She told Amnesty how she was put in the room for two days:

**“On that day a 70-year-old lady spoke her mother tongue, Uyghur, in our cell. … The guards wanted to take her to a tiger chair. I argued with them and said put me in the tiger chair. … They said that I hadn’t learned and still had extremist thoughts, so they put me in the dark room. … It’s just a room for one person. I was just lying on the floor. … When you lie down [with your head at one end] your feet almost touch the wall. … There is a toilet in the room, nothing else.”**[[390]](#footnote-390)

Journalists and human rights organizations have reported XX accounts of first-hand torture and ill-treatment in the camps in Xinjiang.[[391]](#footnote-391)[[392]](#footnote-392)[[393]](#footnote-393)[[394]](#footnote-394)[[395]](#footnote-395)[[396]](#footnote-396)[[397]](#footnote-397)[[398]](#footnote-398)[[399]](#footnote-399)[[400]](#footnote-400)[[401]](#footnote-401)

## 7.1.3 Second-hand accounts of torture during interrogations or punishment

XX survivors provided Amnesty International with second-hand accounts of their cellmates being taken to punishment rooms and immobilized in tiger chairs – often for several days[[402]](#footnote-402) – and being beaten during interrogations. Many returned with visible injuries and stories of torture.[[403]](#footnote-403) [Pseudonym 61] told Amnesty that woman in her cell were punished by being made to stand still and look at the wall for hours.[[404]](#footnote-404)

[Pseudonym D1] told Amnesty that another internee in his cell told him that he was taken to a “punishment room” and hung on the wall with his feet off the ground.[[405]](#footnote-405) [Pseudonym 17] told Amnesty that while he was immobilized in a tiger chair that he could see the chains on the wall that were used to hang people.[[406]](#footnote-406)

[Pseudonym Z1] told Amnesty other internees would be taken out of her cell and return with physical injuries:

**“Some people would disappear for several days. When they came back their bodies were scarred… I know one, because her bed was next to me. She disappeared… [when she came back] her hands were swollen… she said don’t talk to me because there are cameras in the cell… [but she did talk later and said that] two police tortured her. She said she was beaten. They also beat her on the soles of her feet.”**[[407]](#footnote-407)

[Pseudonym 64] told Amnesty how he witnessed two of his cellmates immobilized in tiger chairs for extended periods of time. He and the other cellmates were forced to watch and forbidden from providing any assistance:

**“They used to make people sit in tiger chairs for hours. I saw it with my own eyes. They used to make the person sit on the tiger chair in front of us. They used to bring the chair into our cell if someone wasn’t obedient. … It happened twice. The first guy [was immobilized] for 24 hours. He was not allowed to eat or drink. He was taken to the toilet twice. … The second guy was made to sit for six hours.”[[408]](#footnote-408)**

Many internees appear to have been punished for very trivial offences. [Pseudonym Q1] told Amnesty, “In the second facility we had no lessons… we had to sit straight without moving… you can’t even look to the side… one man was taken away [for looking to the side] and came back with swollen feel and left and he said he was taken and cuffed to a bed and beaten.”[[409]](#footnote-409)

[Pseudonym 61] told Amnesty now she and her cellmates were often forced to watch others sit on tiger chairs, including one who urinated on herself after being made to sit in the tiger chair for 32 hours: “A female guard used to take us to show us how people were suffering… It was in a room [that was originally intended] to keep animals, surrounded by bars. It was dirty. … It was like a pound. It was made of bricks with an iron roof… I saw them sitting on the chair.”[[410]](#footnote-410).

Journalists and human rights organizations have reported XX accounts of first-hand torture and ill-treatment in the camps in Xinjiang.[[411]](#footnote-411)

## 7.1.4 Beatings and other ill-treatment

Physical ill-treatment takes place throughout the camps, most commonly through beatings. Guards routinely beat detainees who misbehave, even for the most trivial offences. Amnesty International interviewed XX people who reported being beaten during detention,[[412]](#footnote-412) including X woman.[[413]](#footnote-413) Electric batons were often used.[[414]](#footnote-414) Numerous survivors witnessed other internees being beaten,[[415]](#footnote-415) including older internees.[[416]](#footnote-416) [Pseudonym H2], a guard who worked in a camp, told Amnesty that internees were regularly beaten in his camp. “Every day someone is taken out [of the class] and beaten, with hands, feet, weapons, and baton,” he said.[[417]](#footnote-417)

**[Pseudonym C2] told Amnesty how he was beaten shortly after arriving at the camp when he resisted being strip-searched by guards: “When I said I wouldn’t take off my underwear they beat me with an electric baton. And then I fell. They beat me and I was electrocuted… when I can to my senses, they took off my clothes, they searched me, made me bend down, tied hands behind neck. It was very painful.”**[[418]](#footnote-418)

Numerous detainees and one former internment camp guard told Amnesty that people were routinely beaten if they did not learn appropriately during classes. [Pseudonym X8] told Amnesty guards routinely beat people as they walked to class and how a man in his class was taken out of class and beaten for not singing a song properly:

**“The guards would always beat people while walking to class… [name redacted] was beaten, he was an ethnic Uzbek; a Han Chinese [guard] beat him and put him in isolation for 24 hours… he came back with bruises. I was in his cell… and [the guard] would call people who couldn’t recite Chinese content to the door [then the person who was called would stick their hand through the hole in the door] and then cuff them to the door and beat them with an electric baton… I saw [people being beaten] two or three times… I could hear it [happening] in hall many more times.”**[[419]](#footnote-419)

[Pseudonym X9] was beaten by guards because he questioned an order, and then severely beaten after he tried to fight back.

**“[One of the guards] said, ‘squat and put your hands on the back of your head!’… I asked why. Then the police hit me with the back of a rifle… I wanted to protect myself so I hit back. He fell down. Then the other police all hit me. When I was being beaten up I heard one voice saying, ‘end him with one bullet’... I thought I was going to die… I wanted not to be killed and I scream… then they sprayed something in my eyes.”[[420]](#footnote-420)**

These types of beatings have been reported by other detainees interviewed by journalists and other human rights organizations.[[421]](#footnote-421)

## 7.1.5 Restraints

A few survivors reported having their legs shackled for much or all of their time in detention.[[422]](#footnote-422) One survivor, who also worked in an internment camp, told Amnesty that all detainees in the strict and very strict sections in the camp she worked in had to be shackled at all times.[[423]](#footnote-423)

[Pseudonym E1] told Amnesty his feet were shackled together for the first year he was in a camp.

**“It was a metal chain with 11 links. The two ends on feet with bolts. [It weighed about] 3kg. We could barely walk 20cm or more. I could barely walk. It was on 24/7. Every week the guards would check the chain. Every two weeks they would tighten the bolts… [Several months after I arrived in the camp] they offered us water for showering, but always with the chain on. The old inmates showed us how to take your pants off. We took our pants off through the space between the chain and ankle, but it takes a really long time.”**[[424]](#footnote-424)

[Pseudonym A3] told Amnesty he saw immobilized people tortured through exposure to the cold while walking from his cell to the medical clinic in the camp: “I saw how they torture [other people]. One time they set a young lady in metal chair outside [in January] in thin clothes… [I saw] seven Uyghur men handcuffed [outside] to metal bars and chain on their feet without shoes.”[[425]](#footnote-425)

These types of beatings have been reported by other detainees interviewed by journalists and other human rights organizations.[[426]](#footnote-426)

## 7.1.6 Pepper spray

Three survivors were sprayed with something, likely pepper spray, while they were in the camps. [Pseudonym] told Amnesty International he was sprayed with something while being interrogated twice while immobilized in a tiger chair. “I was taken [from my cell] to another room and seated on a tiger chair… they didn’t ask me anything. They sprayed something in the air that made it difficult to breathe. [The spray] was small, like [the size] of a bottle of pills. You could put it in your pocket, ” he said.[[427]](#footnote-427) [Pseudonym] told Amnesty that guards used to spray a white substance into his cell frequently, which made his throat sore and made it difficult to breathe.[[428]](#footnote-428)

## 7.1.6 Killings in custody[[429]](#footnote-429)

[Pseudonym C2] told Amnesty a man is his cell was made to sit in a tiger chair in the middle of their cell. The cellmates were made to watch him sit there, restrained and immobilized, for three days, and were expressly forbidden to help him.

**“He was a Dungan man. I can’t remember his name. There are many things I can’t remember [since I left the camp] … [The man] was in our room for more than two months, then he was taken to the doctor – I think he was taken for high blood pressure and because he fainted… As soon as he came back [to our cell] he was made to sit on a tiger chair. [I think the man was being punished for pushing a guard.] … They brought the chair into our room… Yes, we were watching. They told us that if we helped him then we would sit on the chair… It was an iron chair… his arms were cuffed and chained. Legs were chained as well. His body was tied to the back of chair… Two half [cuffs] were locked around his wrists and legs… A rubber thing attached to ribs to make person [sit] up straight... at some point we could see his testicles. He would pee and poo in the chair. He was in the chair for three nights… He died after he left. We found out through the Dungans in the room… He didn’t die in front of us. After 72 hours, he was peeing and pooping. We told the guards. They said to clean him. His bottom was wounded. His eyes look unconscious. Then [the guards] took him [out of the cell].”**[[430]](#footnote-430)

[Pseudonym] told Amnesty that he was told the man died after he was taken out of the cell. He visited the man’s family after he was released.[[431]](#footnote-431)

Journalists and investigators have also documented X second hand accounts of killings from torture or other ill-treatment in the internment camps.[[432]](#footnote-432)

## 7.1.6 Sexual and gender-based violence[[433]](#footnote-433)

[Pseudonym] told Amnesty International that she spoke with a friend who said she had been raped repeatedly by internment camp guards.

“I was terrified when I found out that I would be sent to a facility, because my neighbour, who was in her twenties, was at a camp, and she and I had a drink and she shared her secrets. She said she was raped and forced to have an abortion… She told me that she said several Han people raped her, that ‘two held my hands, two held my legs and one raped me’.”

Journalists have reported several first and second hand of rape and other forms of sexual violence among women formerly detained in the camps.[[434]](#footnote-434) Many formerly detained women say they were subjected to sexual degradation, including being filmed in the shower or ordered to apply chili paste on their genitals.[[435]](#footnote-435) Others describe younger women disappearing overnight with police officers only to reappear the following day, in pain, without explanation.[[436]](#footnote-436) There are also X accounts of rapes, both of women and men, sometimes with electric batons inserted into the vagina or anus.[[437]](#footnote-437) Some witnesses report police officers informally admitting to raping women and girls in the camps.[[438]](#footnote-438) Officers allegedly perpetrate gang rapes in front of other detainees, who are forced to witness the abuse.[[439]](#footnote-439)

## 7.2 Psychological torture

# 8. Ongoing Detention, Conditional Release, ‘Camp to Labour’, and ‘Camp to Prison’

In December 2019, shortly after the publication of the “China Cables” and “The Xinjiang Papers”, Shohrat Zakir, Chair of the XUAR regional government, announced that the “vocational training centres” (that is, the internment camps) in Xinjiang had been closed and that the people residing in these facilities had “returned to society.”[[440]](#footnote-440) The government provided no evidence to support its sweeping assertions and, after the announcement, it continued to go to extraordinary lengths to prevent the public from obtaining information about the internment camps and the detained population.

At the time of the government’s announcement, however, some of the internment camps had been dismantled and a significant number of detainees had been released from the camps.[[441]](#footnote-441) There is debate about whether the dismantling of certain camps was a consequence of there being fewer detainees, because newer facilities had been built to replace some of the original buildings, or some combination of the two. There is also significant debate about whether the decision to release at least some of the detainees was a consequence of a sea change in government policy or a result of what should be considered normal turnover for detainees who had already spent considerable time in the camps and fulfilled the criteria for being released (see below).

It is also plausible that many of the detainees were released as a consequence of a policy change with respect to one ethnic minority group only: ethnic Kazakhs. Testimonial evidence from survivors’ family members suggests that a significant portion of the ethnic Kazakh population detained in the camps has been released, particularly those with Kazakh citizenship or family ties to Kazakhstan.[[442]](#footnote-442) This is likely the result of effective pressure on the Government of Kazakhstan by civil-society groups in Kazakhstan to pressure the Government of China to release some ethnic Kazakh detainees.[[443]](#footnote-443)

The release of certain detainees notwithstanding, camp survivors, family members of detainees, journalists, and scholars have argued that the government’s broad claims are false.[[444]](#footnote-444) Credible evidence suggests the internment camp system is still operating and that many people – perhaps just as many as ever – remain detained in camps or in some other form of indefinite incommunicado detention, either in prisons or situations of forced residential labour. No survivors who were present in the camps after the government’s announcement in December 2019 have spoken publicly. But testimony gathered by Amnesty International and other organizations from survivors released before the government’s announcement and from friends and family of detainees indicates that many detainees remain in the camps and that many others have been sent to prisons or situations of forced labour (for more on forced labour see Chapter 8 below).[[445]](#footnote-445)

Moreover, scholars analyzing both the available testimonies from camp survivors and family members and public court documents have argued that while the government did begin to dismantle some of the internment camps and release some of the detainees as a result of international pressure, the situation of many detainees had gotten worse because they had been given long sentences and were transferred from camps to prisons.[[446]](#footnote-446)

The Chinese government’s own statistics support the contention that the prison system in Xinjiang has grown significantly since 2017. Journalists at *The New York Times*, relying entirely on government statistics, demonstrated that incarceration rates in Xinjiang increased dramatically in 2017 and 2018, with hundreds of thousands more people being sent to prisons than average, a 10- to 20-fold increase from previous years.[[447]](#footnote-447) The data reportedly includes prison sentences and “other criminal punishments, which can include suspended sentences or house detention.” It is not known if these numbers include people who were sent to camps and then transferred to prisons or only people sentenced and sent directly to prisons. Moreover, according to another report based on government statistics, in 2017 there was a dramatic increase in the number of lengthy sentences handed down by courts in Xinjiang. Before 2017, prison sentences longer than five years accounted for approximately 11% of the total number of people sentenced. In 2017, 87% of sentences were more than five years.[[448]](#footnote-448) Since *The New York Times* investigation, the government has not released any more data on incarceration rates.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) – a think tank that monitors and analyzes the situation in Xinjiang – has gathered satellite imagery that it argues shows that, while some camps have been dismantled, the internment camp system not only continued to operate after the government’s 2019 announcement but, in fact, grew substantially.[[449]](#footnote-449) ASPI identified more than 380 sites that it contends were newly built or expanded since 2017, including internment camps, detention centres, and prisons. Of these, ASPI categorized about 50% as what it identifies as higher-security facilities. Some argue that this suggests that minorities in Xinjiang are now being formally charged and detained in the newly expanded prisons or sent to factories for forced labour instead of being interned in the camps.[[450]](#footnote-450) According to ASPI, while in approximately 70 camps fences and perimeter walls have been removed, about 90% of those camps were what it identifies as lower-security facilities.[[451]](#footnote-451)

[START TEXT BOX]

## LEGAL TEXT BOX: Fair trials under international law

Everyone, including those accused of criminal offences and victims of crime, has an equal right to access the courts, without discrimination. A fundamental principle and prerequisite of a fair trial is that the tribunal charged with making decisions in a case must be established by law and be competent, independent, and impartial. The right to a public hearing is an essential safeguard of the fairness and independence of the judicial process and is a means of protecting public confidence in the justice system.

A fundamental principle of the right to a fair trial is the right of everyone charged with a criminal offence to be presumed innocent until and unless proved guilty according to law after a fair trial. If an accused alleges during the course of proceedings that he or she has been compelled to make a statement or to confess guilt, the judge should have the authority to consider the allegation at any stage. All those charged with criminal offences have the right to defend themselves, in person or through a lawyer. They have the right to be assisted by a lawyer of their choice, or to have a competent lawyer assigned to assist them. They have the right to confidential communications with their lawyer.

Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right to be tried in his or her presence and to an oral hearing so that they may hear and challenge the prosecution case and present a defence. Judgements must be made public, with limited exceptions. Everyone tried by a court of law has the right to a reasoned judgement. Punishments may lawfully be imposed only on people who have been convicted of a crime after a fair trial. Punishments must be proportionate and may not violate international standards. Conditions in prison must respect human dignity.[[452]](#footnote-452)

[END TEXT BOX]

## 8.1.1 The internment camp release process

The process to determine which detainees are released from camps and which are sent to prisons or situations of forced labour is not well understood, including by many detainees. Much like the process surrounding the initial detention and transfer to the internment camp, aspects of the release process appears to be extra-legal. Nothing that survivors experienced during the time leading up to their release describes a process that includes the substantive or procedural fairness required for a legitimate legal or even an administrative hearing.

Leaked Chinese government documents, particularly the Telegram, provide some insight into how the government intended – at least at one point – the release process to take place.[[453]](#footnote-453) Based on testimony from survivors and witnesses and on what we know from the Telegram, the decision to release or transfer someone is essentially the culmination of a process that begins when a detainee is first detained. From that moment, there is an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation, whereby people are given scores (for more on scores see Chapter X above). A detainee’s behaviour affects his or her score, which factors into the release determination.

According to the Telegram, once a detainee arrives at an internment camp there are five broad criteria that must be met to be designated as ready to be *considered* for release from the camp. The detainee must have

* been placed in the normal management group,
* been in the camp for at least a year,
* displayed some form of improvement with respect to his or her “problem” since arriving in the camp,
* achieved adequate scores with respect to “ideological transformation, academic achievement, compliance and discipline, etc.,” and
* have no “other circumstances that affect completion.”[[454]](#footnote-454)

Once these criteria are met, a detainee can proceed to the first of several additional evaluations undertaken by camp and other government officials. First, “a student evaluation team overseen by the Party organization secretary” undertakes a “preliminary” evaluation and then checks the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) to see if the platform has flagged any “new problems”. Then, in the absence of any new issues flagged by IJOP, the case is reported “up level-by-level” to three different groups of government cadres, the last of which is the “prefecture (state, city) vocational skills education and training service bureau” that, in concert with “comrades of the local committee”, makes the final determination about whether or not to release the detainee.

If the detainee is designated ready for release, the group that does the final evaluation also determines whether the detainee enters a “skills improvement class” for “intensive training” prior to being released.[[455]](#footnote-455)

## 8.1.2 Family involvement in the release process

The decision to release a detainee is based in part on the behaviour of the detainee’s family, which is also being monitored, evaluated, and incorporated into the detainee’s score. A 2017 government directive on how to answer questions from minority students who wonder where their relatives are instructed cadres to tell the students that their behaviour could hurt their relatives’ scores.[[456]](#footnote-456) Several survivors also said that after they were released they learned their family and friends had been questioned before their release and that their family members had to fill out a long questionnaire.[[457]](#footnote-457)

[Pseudonym J2], who worked in a village administration office and was responsible for looking through the files of people who had been sent to camps, explained to Amnesty how detainees were held responsible for the actions of their family members outside of the camps, and how family behaviour can lower the score of the individuals, which is the metric the government uses to determine who should be released.

**“When someone is [sent to a camp] it affects three generations of the family. For example, if parents are sent then it affects the son – he can’t get a job with government or police… Also, for example, the cadres staying with [the families of people who are in camps] overnight had to report back to village committee if anyone prayed. And if they find this, then the score [of the person in the camp] will be lowered*…* And if a person is sent to re-education camp then that person’s family had to attend classes. If they do [attend] then family will get good score and [the person in the camp will] get released sooner, or vice versa. We collected scores each week and sent them to re-education camps*.*”[[458]](#footnote-458)**

## 8.1.3 Survivors’ experiences of the release process

Detainees were not made explicitly aware of the government’s criteria for release; however, they generally understood that their behaviour was being constantly evaluated. Many were informed that their release was predicated on achieving certain goals, such as learning a sufficient number of Chinese characters.[[459]](#footnote-459) Many also understood that breaking any camp rules would likely prolong their detention.[[460]](#footnote-460)

Despite their awareness of the evaluation, very few survivors credited their release to anything that they did or did not do in the camps.[[461]](#footnote-461) Most attributed their release to factors that were largely or entirely outside their control, such as their Kazakh ethnicity and the fact that the government decided to release ethnic Kazakhs from the camps.[[462]](#footnote-462) Some believe they were released because of appeals for their release made by family members living abroad.[[463]](#footnote-463) Some have no idea why they were released.[[464]](#footnote-464) “They released 12 people the day I was released… They said, ‘your time is up and you can go home now.’ They didn’t say why. They just released Kazakhs, not Dungans or Uyghurs,” [Pseudonym XX] told Amnesty International.[[465]](#footnote-465)

Many survivors also believe their release was connected to the reason they were arrested; those arrested for certain “crimes” – especially religion-related offences – are believed to be much less likely to be released.[[466]](#footnote-466) This would be consistent with several other aspects of the mass incarceration campaign and the internment camp system. Because those sent to camps for religious reasons are generally classified in the strict or very strict management categories, it stands to reason that at the very least, it would take longer for them to progress from either of those categories into the normal management category, which, according to the Telegram, is a prerequisite for release. Moreover, this belief is consistent with the available evidence about the reasons for prison sentences (see section 8.2.2 below).

The interviews and other procedural steps survivors described undergoing before being released are broadly consistent with the process outlined in the Telegram. Many of the survivors were questioned by camp and other government officials before release, and often by several groups of officials from different government bodies.[[467]](#footnote-467) According to [Pseudonym 26], who was arrested for having WhatsApp on her phone, the release procedure involved officials from several levels of government, including the Autonomous District Level. “It’s like a parole hearing. Civil servants came to camp. They checked my documents, asked whether I improved, whether my family is complying. They asked your friend and your neighbours if you were reliable,” she said.[[468]](#footnote-468)

The questions asked in these pre-release interviews followed a similar script. Detainees were asked about their religious practice, their contacts abroad, and other topics they had been questioned about repeatedly throughout their internment.[[469]](#footnote-469) Nearly all detainees were required to confess to their “crimes”, to acknowledge that their past behaviour was wrong, to express how much they appreciated the education they had received, to explain how their thoughts had been “transformed”, to swear that they would not act that way again, and, often, to disavow Islam.[[470]](#footnote-470) Detainees were also required to explain what they were planning to do after they were released.[[471]](#footnote-471)

Survivors believed that to be released they needed to answer all the questions in the way the government officials wanted, regardless of whether it was the truth. [Pseudonym X18] told Amnesty that in the weeks before his release he was interviewed by four different groups of government officials – “school” level [that is, camp level], county level, prefecture level, and autonomous region level – all of whom asked him similar questions and, he believes, required certain answers:

**“All the [interviews] were the same. [They asked] ‘What did you learn? Have your thoughts transformed? Do you love China? What are you going to do when you are released? Do you appreciate your re-education?’ We had to answer all the questions positively or be sent to jail. We know this… Each [of the four interviews] was one to two weeks apart, and lasted for 30 to 60 minutes… When they [arrested] us they made up one reason [for our arrest] even though we didn’t do it… [Before you are released] you have to write something. [You have to start what you write] with that reason. Then you copy a form saying you won’t pray, won’t go to a mosque, and will follow all Chinese laws.”**[[472]](#footnote-472)

Towards the end of the interview process, detainees were made to write and sign several letters and sign several official documents, including a “confession” letter, a “gratitude” letter, and at least one document stating they would not disclose anything about their internment in the camp to anyone, including to members of their family, and especially not to foreigners.[[473]](#footnote-473)Several survivors said that they had to sign numerous documents before being released. “I had to sign 19 documents to be released,” [Pseudonym 12] said.[[474]](#footnote-474)

[Pseudonym I2], who was arrested for travelling to Kazakhstan, told Amnesty International he had to write and sign three letters before being released.

**“Before I was released I had to write a letter of gratitude to the Party, thanking them for feeding and educating us. And I had to write a confession letter, saying that I committed a mistake by going to Kazakhstan… you needed three letters to sign out. [The third] said [I was] not allowed to say anything about our experience in the camp and that if you do then you agree to be judged and sent back to the camp.”**[[475]](#footnote-475)

All detainees are told unequivocally that if they do disclose information about the camps they will be interned again or sent to prison.[[476]](#footnote-476) Several survivors were told that their family members would also be sent to camps if they disclosed anything. [Pseudonym F1], who was released along with a large group of Kazakh detainees, told Amnesty International that before their release, camp officials told the group that if they disclosed anything about the camps they would be sent back to the camps along with their wives.[[477]](#footnote-477)[Pseudonym I1] told Amnesty International he was required to write a letter of gratitude to the Party before being released and swear not to disclose anything under penalty of his family being sent to a camp:

**“[During the final time I was interrogated in the camp], a few days before I was released, I had to write down everything that happened to me in the foreign country [I visited]. And to write about communism and democracy. I knew that we had to praise communism and despise democracy so that is what I did. And I had to write that if I ever spoke about what happened in jail then my parents would be sentenced. Then I had to sign and put my fingerprint on the paper.”**[[478]](#footnote-478)

Some survivors were told to deny they had ever been to a camp.[[479]](#footnote-479) Several survivors said they were coached on what to say to friends and relatives after they were released.[[480]](#footnote-480) [Pseudonym Z1] told Amnesty International that before her release she was taken to a police station, where they put makeup on her and fed her. She was interrogated repeatedly over the course of a week, during which time they also told her what to do for the video they wanted her to make: “[Before I could be released] I had to make a video saying good things about the CCP and what they had done for me, and how strong the country was, and that the [an overseas Uyghur organization] did terrorist activities, and the president of the World Uyghur Congress is bad.”[[481]](#footnote-481)

[Pseudonym 66] told Amnesty that in order to be allowed back to Kazakhstan she had to make a very detailed video stating that here time in the camp had been voluntary, that she was treated well in the camp, and that she had learned many valuable things during her time in the camps, including why religion was bad. “I didn’t want to say these things. I had to say them to see my children,” she said.[[482]](#footnote-482)

Family members of detainees were also threatened with detention if they spoke about the fact that their family members had been to a camp. According to [Pseudonym J2], who worked in a village administration office, family members of about-to-be-released internees receive a call from government officials warning them not to disclose that their family member had been to a camp and threatening them with jail time if journalists ever found out anything about the family member’s internment.[[483]](#footnote-483)

Once detainees fulfil all the necessary conditions, they are permitted to return to their homes; however, they must do so under strict conditions limiting their movements and associations (see Chapter 9 below).[[484]](#footnote-484)

## 8.2.1 ‘’ Survivors’ experiences of the prison sentencing process

At least hundreds of thousands of people are in prisons in Xinjiang. Most are members of ethnic minority groups.[[485]](#footnote-485) Much of the incarcerated population is sent directly to prisons. Evidence suggests that significant numbers of camp detainees have also been transferred from camps to prisons.[[486]](#footnote-486) Scholars analyzing testimonies from camp survivors and family members, along with public court documents have argued that many detainees had been given long sentences;[[487]](#footnote-487) however, the true number are largely speculative at this point.

Like the release process to which it appears to be tied (see section 8.1.2 above), the process through which camp detainees are given prison sentences is not well understood, even by former detainees who appear to have had some exposure to the process. It is also unclear exactly how the release process and the sentencing process are connected and especially how, if at all, the prison sentencing process in the camp is integrated with the formal sentencing process outside of the camps.

Amnesty was not able to interview anyone who was given a sentence in the camp and then sent to a prison. Amnesty did interview, however, interview XX camp detainees who were given sentences that were subsequently “forgiven”.[[488]](#footnote-488) Amnesty International also interviewed XX survivors who said that while they were detained one or more of the people in their class received prison sentences,[[489]](#footnote-489) including several sentences of 20 years.[[490]](#footnote-490)

At some point during their detention, many camp detainees receive a verdict that lists their “crimes” and often includes a “sentence”, which detainees are told is expected to be served either in the camp or in a prison. Several survivors said the verdicts were given at the end of a process referred to as a trial. However, survivors interviewed by Amnesty experienced anything that resembled a fair legal or even administrative process. They had no opportunity to defend themselves, examine the evidence, or consult a lawyer. Some survivors did not recall any real process before they received a verdict and said their verdicts and the verdicts of their classmate were just read out in class.[[491]](#footnote-491)

[Pseudonym T1] told Amnesty International he was taken to a “court”, which involved him answering questions similar to those he had answered during previous interrogations. He was not given a sentence but many of his cellmates who were sent through the court were.

**“A month or so[[492]](#footnote-492) before I was released, people were taken to ‘courtrooms’ and given sentences… [when I was taken to the courtroom] they just asked me what I had done… I said I had been to Kazakhstan… [The woman presiding over the process] said you need more time here. She didn’t give me a sentence… If I’m not mistaken she was a Uyghur. She had a list of questions... I was good at answering… it was just the two of us, talking in Uyghur… She already had documents about me in front of her… Everyone [in my cell] went to court. Some came back [to the cell] and said they got prison terms. Some were the same as me [and were not given any sentence] … Some of those who did [get sentenced] were then [moved out of the cell].”[[493]](#footnote-493)**

[Pseudonym E1], who was one of the few survivors who was temporarily placed in the strict management category and given a yellow badge said that approximately a year into his time in the camp, several of his cellmates were taken to “court” and given sentences. “They took people to court. A few days later [those people] get verdicts. The staff in charge [of our cell] comes to cell and reads the verdict. We can hear it read,” he said. [Pseudonym E1] provided Amnesty with the full names of two of his cellmates who were sentences, and said that one was given 15 years for gathering with others and reading a book about religion and the another was five to seven years and six months years for insulting the police and country leaders.[[494]](#footnote-494)

[Pseudonym X9], who spent nearly a year and a half in different camps, told Amnesty International he was in a class of 50, which was approximately half Uyghur and half Kazakhs and Dungans. He said that all the Uyghurs, five Dungans, and two Kazakhs were given sentences. “They would read verdicts in class… [one man received] ‘three years for going to halal restaurant’… [another man received] ‘seven years for you having camping equipment or boxing [equipment], because then you were involved in terrorism,” he said.[[495]](#footnote-495)

Not everyone who receives a guilty verdict is sent to prison. It appears that some sentences are expected to be served in the camp. Two survivors told Amnesty International that people with verdicts under 10 years served them in the camp, and that people with verdicts over 10 years were sent to prison.[[496]](#footnote-496) This largely corresponds to accounts reported by journalists.[[497]](#footnote-497) It is also plausible that some verdicts are initially provided as scare tactics or that they could be altered with good behaviour. All survivors Amnesty interviewed were initially given guilty verdicts, and a few were given prison sentences; however, those sentences were rescinded and none of the survivors Amnesty interviewed was sent to prison.[[498]](#footnote-498)

[Pseudonym D1] told Amnesty that people who received sentences of 10 years or more were sent directly to prison, and that three men from his class – two Uyghurs and one Kazakh – were sent to prison. He said he was told this secretly by staff in the camp. “Those verdicts over 10 years are directly sent to prison, family gets verdict. Those teachers in camp, they talk secretly to us [and tell us that people were sent to prison],” he said.[[499]](#footnote-499)

[Pseudonym M2], who was in the camp for refusing to work for the government, told Amnesty International that officials started giving verdicts to people in her class several months after she arrived in the camp. “[Mine said] that I deserve five to 10 years, but that the government is merciful so I don’t need to go to prison… they said that my sin was going to a country that was on the sensitive country list and not cooperating with the neighbourhood committee.”[[500]](#footnote-500) [Pseudonym M2] was subsequently released after an appeal from family members abroad.

[Pseudonym], who was sent to a camp because of his involvement with his local mosque, told Amnesty that one day while in class people were called one by one to another room and told what their verdict was:

**“People who were religious got [between] two- and 10-year prison terms. The person who was an imam in a mosque in my village was given a seven-year sentence [his name is…] ... he told me about the sentence. We were in the same room… Initially I was given three to five years but then they forgave me and I wasn’t given a prison term… They didn’t explain why. Maybe because [a relative] did an appeal for [my release] from Kazakhstan.”[[501]](#footnote-501)**

The accounts of the release process given to Amnesty are consistent with accounts other survivors have provided to journalists.[[502]](#footnote-502) Testimonies given to journalists refer to “open court trials”, which can lead people to be transferred from the camps to prison.[[503]](#footnote-503) As part of this process, detainees are handed a list of infractions from which they retroactively choose a crime for which they were detained in the camps. The list allegedly includes more than 70 acts, including travelling or contacting people abroad, and religious acts, such as praying or wearing a headscarf. Some have pointed to the fact that this list could be based on brochures circulated in Xinjiang in 2014 setting out extreme religious activities and describing signs to look for and inform the police about.[[504]](#footnote-504) Internees who refuse to choose a crime from this list are reportedly threatened with indefinite detention and forced to confess.[[505]](#footnote-505)

## 8.2.2 Reasons for prison sentences

Testimony from survivors suggests that the reason for a detainee’s detention appears to be a significant factor in the decision to release him or her from a camp. Detainees sent to camps for religion-related “offenses” are believed to be much more likely to given prison sentences.[[506]](#footnote-506) Ethnicity also appears to be correlated with whether a detainee is sent to a camp. Many survivors reported that Uyghurs were much less likely to be released than Kazakhs. Most of the Kazakh survivors said the vast majority of the people released from their camps were Kazakh, not Uyghur,[[507]](#footnote-507) even though Uyghurs made up the overwhelming majority of the camp populations. [Pseudonym P1] told Amnesty that nearly all the Kazakh people were released from his camp: “I was one of the last [Kazakhs] in the camp because [I was in the camp for a reason related to religion].”[[508]](#footnote-508)

An analysis of the Xinjiang Victims Database comparing those who reportedly received prison sentences with those who were released from the camps reveals three trends[[509]](#footnote-509): (1) Men seem to be overrepresented among those who are sentenced; (2) Those who are initially sent to the camps for religious reasons appear to be more likely to be sentenced to prison than released. Second-hand testimonies of internees being sentenced to lengthy prison terms for having studied religion abroad or having been in contact with foreigners have also been reported in the news;[[510]](#footnote-510) and (3) younger people (age 18–35) seem to be represented slightly more among those who are sentenced to prison.

## 8.3 ‘Camp to labour’

Many detainees are sent from internment camps to situations of forced labour or are forced to work inside internment camps. According to the Telegram, after completing their “training” in the camp, detainees “will be sent to vocational skills improvement classes for intensive skills training for a school term of three to six months”.[[511]](#footnote-511) Local governments are responsible for designing and implementing the training in a manner that ensures detainees secure jobs shortly after leaving the camp in roles that take into account their “employment aspirations and the needs of society”.[[512]](#footnote-512)

Despite this being described as a voluntary skills training and job placement programme, some detainees are, in fact, forcibly transferred from internment camps to situations of forced labour, including to factories in Xinjiang.

Amnesty International interviewed seven survivors who were forced to do different types of labour in the aftermath of their release from a camp, including three who were sent to work in factories.[[513]](#footnote-513) X were made to work in village administration offices[[514]](#footnote-514) or police stations,[[515]](#footnote-515) where they often performed menial tasks.[[516]](#footnote-516) One was made to work on a state-owned farm[[517]](#footnote-517) and one was made to do chores by cadres for a Han Chinese man in the village.[[518]](#footnote-518)

[Pseudonym E1] told Amnesty that after spending six months[[519]](#footnote-519) in one camp he was transferred to another camp, where he was taught to sew in preparation for being sent to a factory. He was then forced to live and work in a factory for several months, making government uniforms.

**“During the day [at the second camp] we would sit on a plastic chair. A teacher teaches language and how to make clothes. During the 21 days [we spent in the second camp] we went to class two or three times, otherwise we were just in cell… The teachers from the screen were in [a different] class. They just showed us how to make clothes on the TV. Some guys were there [in this camp] for two years and never touched a machine… Then a list came out for people to transfer to a factory. Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and Uzbeks, not Uyghurs… Then I was sent to a factory for five months. To make government uniforms at first. Then we started making dresses. I worked for eight hours a day. I had one hour of exercise in yard… I was allowed to call family and friends, but not people abroad… There was no physical inspection but we were given phones and asked to install a police app… We worked five days a week. The salary was 1620 RMB a month… We were really ineffective. We didn’t know how to do it. They had some Chinese woman come in for one week to try to teach us.”[[520]](#footnote-520)**

[Pseudonym X10] told Amnesty he spent three months working in an ethnically segregated factory for low pay after being released from the camp:

**“[After I was released from the camp] they ordered me not to leave my house for 10 days… After a week they called me back and they registered me, and made a list of people who had been in the camp. Then they gathered all the people on the list and we went to a garment factory. We didn’t have a choice but to go there… The salary was low. It was impossible to take care of my family with the salary. The first month [we were paid] 200 RMB… The factory was on the outskirts of [redacted] county seat. Only ethnic minorities were working in the factory – Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and Hui. The [only] Hans were the heads of the factory... The factory made clothes, gloves, and bags.”[[521]](#footnote-521)**

The three survivors who provided Amnesty with accounts of being sent to work in factories after being released from detention were all ultimately able to leave the factory. This was because of a government policy that allowed factory workers to return to their homes if they had secured another job and if another employer was willing to sign a guarantor letter taking responsibility for them. [Pseudonym X10] was permitted to leave the factory at night because he lived nearby, although other people were required to live there. Every week he had to submit a written report of what he did [to the village administration].

**“I was at the factory for three months. After three months I asked if I could do my old profession. They said, ‘okay, but you need to get a letter from your work saying that they are taking responsibility for you and to give the address of the head of your workplace’… I got the paper [signed] and went back to [the place I used to work] after I finished school.”**[[522]](#footnote-522)

[Pseudonym Q1] told Amnesty he worked and lived in a factory for two weeks after being released from a camp. Some other workers in the factory had not been sent from camps; rather, they had been taken to the factory when another member of their family was taken to a camp:

**“They took us [to the factory] … there were many buildings and many people… I had to go to third floor… They taught us how to sew clothes. And while we were having lunch I spoke with women and girls [who worked there] and learned that those women’s husband or girls’ father were in camp, that is why they were taken there. I learned that if one family [member] is in camp you have to work so father or husband can get out quickly… I worked there for 12 days…. I had been a businessman before. I explained that and they let me go… The name of the factory is [redacted]… it was in the county seat… it was a linen factory… we produced clothes.”[[523]](#footnote-523)**

Other survivors provided second-hand accounts of people from their camps being sent to factories.[[524]](#footnote-524)

Journalists and scholars have reported that large numbers of detainees have been sent to situations of forced labour – inside and outside of camps – and in other parts of the country.[[525]](#footnote-525) And that these factories are ethnically segregated and the work is very low paid.[[526]](#footnote-526) Journalists and other organizations have also collected testimonies from detainees who describe being forced to work in sewing factories, silk factories, textile factories, tea factories, electric motor assembly plants, shoe factories, and noodle factories.[[527]](#footnote-527) Others were made to work as security guards[[528]](#footnote-528) and teachers.[[529]](#footnote-529) The ASPI’s “Uyghurs for Sale” report estimates that from 2017 to 2019 over 80,000 Uyghurs were transferred out of Xinjiang to work in factories across China, with some coming directly from detention camps.[[530]](#footnote-530) These reports have called into question the supply chains of numerous well-known global brands.[[531]](#footnote-531) Scholars have also argued that forced labour is being used as a tool for social transformation and is designed to erase cultural identities while engineering a stronger workforce and alleviating poverty, thereby facilitating acquiescence to CCP ideology.[[532]](#footnote-532)

# 9. Life after Release from Internment Camps

After being released from the internment camps, survivors are placed under electronic and in-person surveillance and are subjected to regular evaluations from government cadres. They also face severe restrictions on their rights and freedoms – particularly on their freedom of movement. These restrictions are in addition to the discriminatory policies directed at members of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang (see Chapter 1).

Family members of detainees also faced additional restrictions on their rights and freedoms during and after the release of their detained family member. These restrictions include being subjected to additional surveillance, having their house searched, and having their movements curtailed.[[533]](#footnote-533) [Pseudonym Q1] told Amnesty he found out how his family’s freedoms had been curtailed while he was in the camp: “While I was in camp, I thought my family had freedom, but I learned that they were under house arrest. They had to ask permission to move… a cadre was consistently visiting their house… there was a camera in the street [in front of their house],” he said.[[534]](#footnote-534)

Many survivors also report being ostracized by their friends, family, and community after their release.[[535]](#footnote-535) [Pseudonym] told Amnesty International that the social ostracization was a significant reason why he ultimately left China:

**“The reason I decided to come back [to Kazakhstan] was because after I was designated a ‘dangerous person’, even my friends and family relatives were avoiding me. Everyone was trying to exclude me, even from social gatherings… And security people kept asking me questions. And [so did] the head of the unit where I worked… Although I never committed a crime they considered me a criminal.”**[[536]](#footnote-536)

* Add in about fear…

The testimonial evidence about the situation of former detainees and their family members provided to Amnesty is consistent with evidence provided to journalists and other investigators as well as leaked government documents prescribing the treatment of former detainees during the months after their release. This evidence includes a directive in the Telegram proscribing that every ex-detainee must be strictly monitored, evaluated, and controlled, and “must not leave the line of sight for one year” after leaving the camp.[[537]](#footnote-537)

## 9.1 ‘Re-education’ continues

Nearly all former detainees were required to attend classes in language and ideology after they were released.[[538]](#footnote-538) Members of ethnic minorities who had never been detained were also often required to attend class; however, former detainees are normally made to go for two or three hours every day and other members of the village were required to go twice a week.[[539]](#footnote-539) Family members of some detainees were also made to go to classes several hours a day.[[540]](#footnote-540) Several ex-detainees reported that after they were released, during the classes they were required to continue to write confession and self-criticism letters and give them to local cadres to evaluate.[[541]](#footnote-541) One survivor reported that Kazakhs and Uyghurs in her village were required to attend separate classes.[[542]](#footnote-542) Han people were not required to attend classes.[[543]](#footnote-543)

Nearly all ex-internees were required to attend flag-raising ceremonies every Monday morning after they were released.[[544]](#footnote-544) During the ceremony, ex-detainees are often made to publicly confess their crimes,[[545]](#footnote-545) to speak out against extremism, to apologize for being an extremist, and to extol the virtue of the education they had received.[[546]](#footnote-546) Several survivors told Amnesty that only ethnic minorities were required to attend the village flag-raising. According to [Pseudonym M2], members of the village who were not in camps were also required to go, but only ethnic minorities were truly compelled to attend: “Only Uyghurs go. Chinese people, they laugh at us,” she said.[[547]](#footnote-547)

[Pseudonym 66], who spent more than a year in the camps, was told to write and then read a statement praising the CCP and instructing others not be practice religion at a flag raising shortly after she was released from the camps:

**“I was told to say… ‘I [Pseudonym 66] am the daughter of… I have been to a camp… because I made a mistake and now, with thanks to the Party, I have reversed my mistakes… and now I live in the right was thanks to the Party. They put me on the right path.” I also had to say that ‘We shouldn’t be religious, that it is wrong. We shouldn’t pray. We should always follow the party.”**

Family members of internees also had to speak at flag-raising ceremonies. [Pseudonym C1] told Amnesty International his brother was made to speak about him at a flag-raising ceremony. “[My brother] had to confess that his brother had ‘disease’ and that he was ashamed and sorry,” he said.[[548]](#footnote-548)

## 9.2 Government minders

As discussed in Chapter 4, one of the most invasive aspects of life in Xinjiang for ex-detainees is the presence of government minders. Many survivors reported that after they were released from a camp, government cadres were required to stay with them in their houses for several nights per month.[[549]](#footnote-549)

Some reported that cadres checked in on them during the day but did not stay overnight.[[550]](#footnote-550) The cadres took pictures of them and their family, monitored their behaviour, and tried to teach them the correct ideology.[[551]](#footnote-551) Minders also checked the homework from the language and ideology classes.[[552]](#footnote-552) [Pseudonym X12] told Amnesty that minders would come and inspect her house every day to make sure she was home, and they would check her homework from the night school. “If you passed the homework test they leave, or they would stay and help you do work,” she said.[[553]](#footnote-553)

Several survivors reported that while they were in the camp, their family members were required to have minders stay with them.[[554]](#footnote-554) [Pseudonym X13] told Amnesty International that when her father was sent to a camp, she and her mother were forced to move back to their home village and have a government minder stay with them. She described what the minder did while staying with the family: “She eats with us. Listens to what we are saying. Tells us about politics. About our crimes. For example, [she said] ‘do not go abroad. Do not contact outside world. Be thankful for government. Confess that your father committed crimes.’”[[555]](#footnote-555)

Similar cadre “home stays” have been widely report by journalists and other organizations.[[556]](#footnote-556)

## 9.3 Restriction on freedom of movement

All survivors faced significant restrictions on their freedom of movement after they were released from the camp. Nearly all were prohibited from leaving their village or township. If they were allowed to leave they were required to get written permission from the authorities beforehand.[[557]](#footnote-557) Several survivors were put under house arrest for several months. Many were required to check in with the police or village administrators daily.[[558]](#footnote-558) Several were forced to live at the village administration office or police station for a few week or months.[[559]](#footnote-559)

[Pseudonym D1] told Amnesty how his movements were restricted after he was released: “I spent five months being monitored. I just stayed in village. I couldn’t leave without permission. I had to report to the village [administration] office each morning. I needed permission to leave village from the village chief,” he said.[[560]](#footnote-560)

Many survivors reported that for months after they left the camp their ID cards were programmed such that an alarm would sound whenever they travelled through checkpoints or whenever they left their village.[[561]](#footnote-561) When IDs triggered an alarm ex-internees were often interrogated about the very same things they were questioned about after their arrest and during their detention.[[562]](#footnote-562) [Pseudonym X11], a woman in her fifties who had been detained for a year for visiting Kazakhstan, told Amnesty International how her movement was restricted after she was released from the camps:

**“After I was released… it was house arrest. Every time I scanned my ID it went off… I wasn’t allowed to go to another town. Even in the streets, the camp follows you… Even when I went to buy a meal I had to fill in a form saying I had been to a camp. It was shameful… my daughter was living [in another town] I couldn’t visit her because of this. Can you imagine going into the street and the police surround you every time?”**[[563]](#footnote-563)

Other survivors told Amnesty their ID was confiscated for a time after their release. “[When I wasn’t in class or at a flag-raising ceremony] I had to stay at home the rest of the time, because the inspector could come at any time. I had to be found in one of these places at all times. My ID was taken. I wasn’t free,” [Pseudonym M1] told Amnesty International.[[564]](#footnote-564)

After several months some of the movement restrictions begin to decrease. Many survivors reported that some restrictions were lifted after six months.[[565]](#footnote-565) Several told Amnesty the restrictions on their movements lasted a year.[[566]](#footnote-566) One survivor told Amnesty the restrictions on his movement were removed at the same time as others released when he was.[[567]](#footnote-567)

Family members of internees also had severe restrictions placed on them while their family member was in a camp. Several survivors reported that their family members needed to get permission from local officials to leave their village.[[568]](#footnote-568)

## 9.4 Restrictions on leaving the country

It has been difficult for minorities in Xinjiang to travel abroad for years.[[569]](#footnote-569) The restriction became more severe in 2015 and 2016, when ethnic minorities were required to hand in their passports to authorities.[[570]](#footnote-570) Since 2017, it has been nearly impossible for Uyghurs to leave China.[[571]](#footnote-571) The Uyghurs who have gotten out have ties to foreign countries and have left after international pressure on China or after paying bribes[[572]](#footnote-572) (see Chapter 4).

Kazakhs have also been restricted; however, after the intervention of the Government of Kazakhstan, some Kazakhs with Kazakhstan citizenship or strong family ties to Kazakhstan have been able to leave China. Before leaving, people must go through a labyrinthine bureaucratic process to get their passports back and to secure permission to go abroad.[[573]](#footnote-573) Ex-detainees face a further round of interrogations by security personnel and must sign additional documents stating they will not say anything about being in a camp or their family members will be sent to a camp.

Several detainees were forced to give video testimonies before leaving the country. [Pseudonym], who spent several months trying to secure permission to travel to Kazakhstan, told Amnesty International he was forced to make a video extolling the benefits of the education he received in the camp before he was allowed to leave.

**“One week [after I got my passport back], people from police called me again. Then they took my passport again and said they would keep it until a county-level official signed [the form]. And then they gave me a piece of paper to sign saying I would not disclose anything about the camp or the secrets of the People’s Republic of China, and I signed it. I made an oath that I would not disclose… After I signed, three or four cadres came to my house. They came with cameras. Before they started filming me they told me what to say – that I went to school and that I got knowledge and that I was happy with the government and with the opportunity to gain knowledge… In front of the camera I said that the Party is taking good care of me and that the government is helping the poor people… and that during the seven or eight months of my school the teacher and others were friendly and that they taught me well… I was instructed to say this so I said it. They saved the tape. They repeated to me not to say anything bad. Then I signed the paper where I said I would. Then they gave me my passport back. [Then I left the country].”**

[Pseudonym] told Amnesty he was interrogated several times while trying to get passports for his family to go to Kazakhstan. He was repeatedly told by security officials that he could not talk about what happened in the camps and that he had to swear on video that he would never disclose anything about the situation. His parents were also required to sign guarantor letters. “My parents had to say, ‘I do give my consent and I will be taken to a camp if my son ever speaks to foreign media and discloses what happened in camp’,”[[574]](#footnote-574) he told Amnesty International. Several months later his family was given their passports.

Many camp survivors told Amnesty International that regaining their freedom of movement – to travel abroad and, in some cases, to travel within China outside of their home village – was contingent upon having one or more guarantors who agreed in writing that they would be sent to a camp if the person they were guaranteeing spoke or shared information about the internment camp system.[[575]](#footnote-575) One older woman needed many guarantors to leave.[[576]](#footnote-576)[[577]](#footnote-577)

## 9.5 Survivors abroad harassed, families punished

Survivors who manage to go aboard are often threatened if they do not return on time.[[578]](#footnote-578) Several survivors reported that government officials called them and threatened to send their family members to camps if they did not return or if they spoke out. [Pseudonym] told Amnesty that when he left Xinjiang he was told he would be sent to a camp if he did not return on time. When he did not return on time, police called him and said they would take his father and father-in-law to a camp if he did not return.[[579]](#footnote-579)

Several survivors were called by family members in Xinjiang – who were in the presence of government officials – asking them to return and saying that if they did not, the family member would be sent to a camp. [Pseudonym] told Amnesty that police called him with his son, and his son said he was going to be detained if the man did not return.[[580]](#footnote-580) Survivors told Amnesty they believe their family members were sent to a camp because they left the country.[[581]](#footnote-581)

[Pseudonym] told Amnesty she was continually harassed by officials after she arrived in Kazakhstan. “Once I came to Kazakhstan, I thought I was free… But [government officials] kept calling. I realized that they would never let me live in peace,” she said.[[582]](#footnote-582)

# 10. Crimes Against Humanity

Crimes against humanity are particularly a heinous type of serious crimes. They are prohibited actions committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population pursuant to or in furtherance of a state or organizational policy. They are prohibited during war or peace.[[583]](#footnote-583) The Rome Statute – the treaty that established the International Criminal Court – contains articles that define Crimes Against of Humanity that are now customary international law; that is, they are binding on all states, regardless of whether or not a state is party to the Statute.[[584]](#footnote-584)

The contextual elements of crimes against humanity require that each individual act be perpetrated in the context of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population and with knowledge of the attack. “Attack directed against any civilian population” is defined in Article 7(2)(a) of the Rome Statute as “a course of conduct involving the multiple commission of acts referred to in paragraph 1 against any civilian population, pursuant to or in furtherance of a state or organizational policy to commit such attack.”[[585]](#footnote-585)

Such attack does not need to be both widespread and systematic. “Widespread” is determined by the number of victims or magnitude of the acts.[[586]](#footnote-586) “Systematic” has been held to “signif[y] the organised nature of the acts of violence and the improbability of their random occurrence.”[[587]](#footnote-587) Courts have commonly held the “systematic” threshold to be met when there is a “[p]atterns of crimes—that is the nonaccidental repetition of similar criminal conduct on a regular basis.”[[588]](#footnote-588) The presence of each of these requirements must be proved before any accused person can be convicted of crimes against humanity. Moreover, individual culpability for crimes against humanity requires that the perpetrator have a certain degree of knowledge about the crime. Notably, perpetrators must have knowledge of the fact that their actions were part of a widespread or systematic attack.[[589]](#footnote-589) However, an individual does not need to be personally responsible for widespread or systematic attacks to be found guilty; a single act can be sufficient if and only if it was carried out in the context of a broader attack of which the perpetrator was aware.[[590]](#footnote-590)

Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) enumerates twelve crimes against humanity: Murder; Extermination; Enslavement; Deportation or forcible transfer of population; Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law; Torture; Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity; Persecution against any identifiable group or collectively on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender … or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court; Enforced disappearance of persons; The crime of apartheid; Other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.[[591]](#footnote-591)

Under international law, states may, and in some cases must, exercise universal jurisdiction over crimes against humanity.[[592]](#footnote-592) Any state may, under customary international law, undertake one of the following actions against suspected perpetrators of crimes against humanity, even where the suspects are neither nationals nor residents of the state concerned, and the crime(s) did not take place in its territory: bring such persons before its own courts; extradite such persons to any state party willing to do so; or surrender such persons to an international criminal court with jurisdiction to try persons for these crimes. Regarding certain crimes described in this report, in particular torture, exercising universal jurisdiction over perpetrators is a legal obligation, not a choice.[[593]](#footnote-593)

[Insert number] of members of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang have been the victims of the government’s widespread and systematic attack in furtherance of a state policy – in this case as part of the Chinese government’s campaigns to eradicate “terrorism, extremism, and separatism” and to forcibly assimilate ethnic minorities in Xinjiang.

Specifically, Amnesty International has concluded that the contextual elements have been met for the the following five crimes:

* Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, including through the arbitrary detention of one million or more men and women in internment camps throughout Xinjiang.
* Torture, including the physical torture of a significant portion of the internment camp population by beatings, electric shocks, stress position, the unlawful use of restraints (including being locked in a tiger chair), sleep deprivation, and solitary confinement. And the physical and non-physical torture of all internment camp detainees as a result of the cumulative effects of daily life in the camps. This includes being made to sit, kneel, or stand in stress positions for hours every day; sleep deprivation; and insufficient food, water, exercise, and exposure to natural light. It also includes various forms of psychological abuse, including not knowing when their detention will end, not being able to communicate with their family or anyone outside the camp, not being able to speak in their native tongue, living under the constant threat of violence, and being made to see and hear other detainees being tortured or otherwise ill-treated.
* Persecution based on ethnic and religious grounds, including through the ethnically-targeted campaign of arbitrary detention, the restriction on freedom to practice Islam, and restriction on freedom of movement for ethnic minorities.
* Enforced disappearance of persons, including by the detention of [insert number] of people who the government refuses to give information on about their fate or whereabouts with their families and other concerned parties.
* Other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health

The survivor testimonies Amnesty International has gathered form the basis of these conclusions; however, these testimonies are corroborated by leaked government documents and other credible testimonial, photographic, and documentary evidence collected by journalists and investigators. Taken together, this evidence clearly illustrates that the serious abuses documented in this report follow a very consistent pattern of criminal conduct and are part of well-documented government policy that is knowingly and purposefully being carried out on a massive scale by government officials all over Xinjiang. As a result, an independent, impartial, and effective criminal investigation is needed to establish individual responsibility for these crimes.

# 11. Conclusion

Coming soon…

# 12. Recommendations

## To the Government of China:

* Close the political “re-education” camps and release the people detained in these camps immediately and unconditionally.
* Immediately allow independent journalists and human rights investigators unfettered access to all of Xinjiang, including to internment camps and prisons.
* Repeal or amend all laws and regulations, and end all related measures, that impermissibly restrict the rights of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups and stop using “extremism” and “terrorism” as an excuse to restrict religious and cultural practices. T
* Provide camp survivors and the families of victims of crimes under international law and other human rights violations, with full, effective, gender-sensitive, and transformative reparations in accordance with international standards.
* Cooperate with a UN-led international investigation (see below)
* Become a party to key human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and their respective protocols.
* Allow Muslims the freedom to manifest their religion peacefully through worship, observance, practice, and teaching, both publicly and privately.

## To the UN Security Council:

* Hold regular, formal public meetings on the situation in Xinjiang, China, to allow relevant UN entities, as well as members of civil society and human rights defenders, to brief members directly on the latest situation on the ground.
* Adopt a resolution that sends an unambiguous message to the Chinese authorities condemning the situation and demanding the dismantling of the internment camp system, as well as all laws, regulations, and related measures, that impermissibly restrict the rights of Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups. In addition, the resolution should demand immediate and unfettered access for independent investigators.

## To the UN General Assembly:

* Adopt a comprehensive resolution on the human rights situation in Xinjiang, China, that must include strong language condemning human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang and specific calls for international investigations into the abuses and accountability for such abuses.
* Express support for a UN-led mechanism to investigate human rights violations and abuses in China, to collect and preserve evidence, and to prepare cases for criminal prosecution, and pledge to provide financial, technical, and other support to it.
* Immediately act to initiate the creation of an investigative mechanism, as the General Assembly has done in the past, if the Human Rights Council is unable or unwilling to set up such a mechanism.

## To the UN Secretary-General:

* Send a clear message to the Chinese authorities that their actions and practices in Xinjiang are unlawful and must end immediately.
* Encourage the UN Security Council to take action by offering to brief members, whether in private or publicly, on the grave situation.

## To the UN Human Rights Council:

* Hold a Special Session to urgently dispatch an independent, international Fact-Finding Mission or similar mechanism to investigate grave human rights violations in Xinjiang, with a view to ensuring accountability, including through the identification of perpetrators. The mechanism should:
  + have a mandate to monitor, report, and make recommendations to prevent further deterioration of the situation, and to collect, consolidate, preserve, and analyze evidence of and establish individual responsibility for crimes under international law and build cases to criminal law standards that can be used by future prosecutorial and judicial mechanisms that meet international standards of fairness and do not involve seeking or imposing the death penalty;
  + be staffed with independent international experts, including experts on international human rights law, international criminal law, security force command structures, sexual and other gender-based violence, video and image verification, and forensic analysis;
  + have sufficient resources, including financial and technical, to carry out its mandate; and
  + be requested to provide regular updates and a comprehensive report on the situation to the HRC and the UNGA and be invited to brief the UNSC and other relevant parts of the UN.

## To the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights:

* Conduct remote monitoring and assessment of the situation in Xinjiang, and issue a public report on the situation, in line with the independent mandate provided by General Assembly resolution 48/141, with concrete recommendations for next steps.
* Brief the HRC on the situation as a matter of urgency, in line with HRC resolution 45/31, which clearly requested that the High Commissioner bring information concerning “patterns of human rights violations that point to a heightened risk of a human rights emergency… to the attention of the members and observers of the Human Rights Council in a manner that reflects the urgency of the situation… including through briefings.”

## To UN member states:

* In addition to working toward the implementation of the above recommendation, UN member states should use all interactions with the Chinese authorities to insist that the government comply with its international human rights obligations, and allow access to independent human rights monitors, including the UN High Commissioner, Special Procedures, civil society actors, and any other UN-mandated investigation.

## To the international community as a whole:

* Allow all persons fleeing violence and persecution in Xinjiang, China, to enter your country without delay or restrictions. Strictly observe and apply the principle of non-refoulement to all refugees from Xinjiang. Guarantee that no one will be forced back to a situation where they risk serious human rights violations, including systematic discrimination and persecution.
* Impose a comprehensive “surveillance equipment” embargo on China that covers the direct and indirect supply, sale, transfer, transit, or trans-shipment of all property – including intellectual property – and other surveillance equipment, as well as the provision of training related to the use of this equipment.
* Express support for a UN-led mechanism to investigate human rights violations and abuses in China, to collect and preserve evidence, and to prepare cases for criminal prosecution, and pledge to provide financial, technical, and other support to it.
* Exercise universal and other forms of jurisdiction to investigation any person who may reasonably be suspected of committing crimes against humanity or other crimes under international law in Xinjiang, China. Where there is sufficient admissible evidence, prosecute the suspect in proceedings that meet international standards of fairness and do not involve seeking or imposing the death penalty, or extradite the suspect to a jurisdiction that will do so.
* Use all bilateral, multilateral, and regional platforms at your disposal to urge the Chinese authorities to immediately end crimes under international law and other human rights violations; to allow independent investigators access to Xinjiang; and to establish the conditions necessary, including by dismantling the system of discrimination and persecution of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang.

1. See ‘Xinjiang Victims Database’, <https://shahit.biz/eng/#filter>, which tracks all publicly-available testimonial evidence related to the internment camps. As of 11.29.2020, there were 11,000+ testimonies, 90 of which are from ‘eyewitnesses’, about half of whom are survivors and half are witnesses; For other primary accounts of survivors see: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/an-inside-look-at-muslim-reeducation-camps-in-china-a-1238046.html>; https://believermag.com/weather-reports-voices-from-xinjiang/ ; <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/09/asia/xinjiang-china-kazakhstan-detention-intl/index.html> (video of man saying forced to stand for long hours) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Cite PBS and Vice [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cite Channel 4, BBC, etc [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Add in examples from RFA and others, and from our campaign “cases” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. CITE AI EXAMPLES OF SURVIVORS BEING FORCED TO GIVE FALSE STATEMENTS: B2, Z1, etc; And other examples: [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. CITE AI EXAMPLES OF SURVIVORS BEING COACHED: Q1, I2, y2 – made to sing and dance; And other examples: [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. X2 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Cite leaked docs; <https://apnews.com/article/c1d08873154907be8a3dd93562d6785c> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. CITE AI EXAMPLES OF AI INTERVIEWS WHO WITNESSED PHYSICAL DESCRUTION OF DOCUMENTS: J2, 9, G2 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. G2 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/24/china-cables-leak-no-escapes-reality-china-uighur-prison-camp>; https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6558510-China-Cables-Telegram-English.html [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Xinjiang [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See Linda Benson, “The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949", M.E. Sharpe, New York, 1990; and Dru C. Gladney, “Internal colonialism and the Uyghur nationality: Chinese nationalism and its subaltern subject”, in CEMOTI (Cahiers d’Etudes sur la Mediterranee Orientale et le monde Turco-Iranien), No.25, janvier-juin 1998, pp.47-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See Lillian Craig Harris, “Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China’s Policy in the Islamic World”, in The China Quarterly, No.133, March 1993, pp.111-129, and Nicholas Becquelin, “Trouble on the Marches”, in China Perspectives No.10, March/April 1997, pp.19-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See “New Ghosts Old Ghosts – Prisons and Labor Reform Camps in China”, by James D. Seymour and Richard Anderson, M.E. Sharpe, 1998, p.45. Chapter 3 of the book includes detailed information about the Bingtuan and its network of labour camps and prisons, as well as the separate penal establishments under the Department of Justice of the XUAR regional government. 7 During the 1990s, the Bingtuan has been placed directly under the authority of the central government in Beijing and has been granted privileges giving it the same status as the XUAR regional government (see South China Morning Post, 17 April 1997, and Ming Pao, 28 August 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
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34. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
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42. Wong nytimes article; Robert 206 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
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44. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/uyghur-biodata-collection-in-china/>; see byler ghost world. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Roberts 202 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
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48. Liepold – surveillance in china [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. See: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/03/china-draconian-anti-terror-law/ [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-security-idUSKBN0UA07220151228 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
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52. Insert footnote about chen and grid policing [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
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55. New York Times, December 1, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/01/world/asia/passportsconªscated-xinjiang-china-uighur.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/08/china-must-scrap-new-laws-tighten-authorities-grip-on-religious-practice/>; <https://www.prcleader.org/leibold?fbclid=IwAR38OsGVP3ZYJwSUXy80gct52ywNid3RZjl0Q3BhOfSDx_OruGW-2K7L3mA>; For an unofªcial translation, see “Xinjiang Autonomous Region Regulations on De-Extremiªcation” (New Haven, Conn.: China Law Translate, March 30, 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
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58. . See “Full Transcript: Interview with Xinjiang Government Chief on Counterterrorism, Vocational Education, and Training in Xinjiang,” Xinhua, October 16, 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-10/16/c\_1375 35821.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
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62. 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. M2 (can’t go to mosques); Q2 (afraid to wear a headscarf); J2 (asked to make a list of arabic sounding names); n1; q2; <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/language-07282017143037.html>; <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/language-07282017143037.html>; p1 [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. O2 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Examples. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. 65 [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. P1 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. 25 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. R2; p1, etc; 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Q2 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Q2; m2 [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
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77. Wong – to temper unrest inwestern china officials offer moneyfor intermarriage; Eva exiao children of intermarriage; Byler – uyghurlove ina time on interethnic marriage; Roberts 234 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
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83. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Check if we want to use the February announcement or march/april when people started being rounded up in large number; For the start date: <https://www.prcleader.org/leibold?fbclid=IwAR38OsGVP3ZYJwSUXy80gct52ywNid3RZjl0Q3BhOfSDx_OruGW-2K7L3mA>; For NUMBERS: HRW: Adrian Zenz, “New Evidence for China’s Political Re-Education Campaign in Xinjiang,” China Brief, vol. 18, issue 10, May 15, 2018, https://jamestown.org/program/evidence-for-chinas-political-re-education-campaign-in-xinjiang (accessed August 24, 2018); Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD) and Equal Rights Initiative (ERI), “China: Massive Numbers of Uyghurs & Other Ethnic Minorities Forced into Re-education Programs,” August 3, 2018, https://www.nchrd.org/2018/08/chinamassive-numbers-of-uyghurs-other-ethnic-minorities-forced-into-re-education-programs (accessed August 24, 2018). Zenz estimated the detainee number by extrapolating from a leaked Xinjiang police report, released by a Turkish TV station run by Uyghur exiles, as well as from reports by Radio Free Asia. CHRD and ERI made the estimate by extrapolating the percentages of people detained in villages as reported by dozens of Uyghur villagers in Kashgar Prefecture during interviews with CHRD. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. CITE DETENTION WITHOUT WARNING: XX19, XX65 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. CITE DETENTION FROM HOUSE DURING THE NIGHT: U1, C2 [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. CITE CALLED TO POLICE STATION: A2, A1 [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. CITE COERCED BACK FROM ABROAD: C2, O1, Z1 (coerced back because of issue with pension or retirement benefits), K2 (retired teacher made to come back for benefits) [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration, Article 9(1) of the ICCPR [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Article 9(1) of the ICCPR, Article 17(2)(a) of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance; An arrest is “the act of depriving a person of liberty under governmental authority for the purpose of taking that person into detention and charging the person with a criminal offence”. It covers the period from the moment the person is placed under restraint up to the time the individual is brought before a competent authority that orders release or continued custody; The term detention is used to describe when a person has been deprived of his or her liberty by a state authority (or with the state’s consent or acquiescence) for any reason other than being convicted of an offence. The person may be held in a public or private setting that they are not free to leave, including a police station, a pre-trial detention facility or under house arrest. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
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94. Article 9 of the Universal Declaration, Article 9(1) of the ICCPR; The Human Rights Committee has clarified that the term “arbitrary” in Article 9(1) of the ICCPR must be interpreted broadly to include elements of inappropriateness, injustice and lack of predictability. – see amnesty fair trail manual [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/docs/GC31Rev\_En.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. 4 HRC General Comment 24, §8, HRC General Comment 29, §11; WGAD Deliberation No.9, UN Doc. A/HRC/22/44 (2012) §§37-75; Report to the Human Rights Council, Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, UN Doc. A/HRC/22/44 (2012), paras 37-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. See Articles 2 and 17(1) of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Article 9(2) of the ICCPR, [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. a Article 9(2) of the ICCPR, Article 14(3) [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. a Principles 13 and 14 of the Body of Principles, Guidelines 2 §42(c) and 3 §43(i) of the Principles on Legal Aid [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. 6 European Court: Schmidt v Germany (32352/02), Decision (2006), Jalloh v Germany (54810/00), Grand Chamber (2006) §§67-83, P.G. and J.H. v United Kingdom (44787/98), (2001) §80; see HRW: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/09/09/eradicating-ideological-viruses/chinas-campaign-repression-against-xinjiangs#_ftn239> – section on “rights to privacy and bodily integrity” [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. 39 Criminal Procedure Law (CPL), art. 130. However, the CPL give no legal guidelines or limitations on how long biometric samples can be stored, shared, or used, or how their collection or use can be challenged. While there are Ministry of Public Security internal departmental rules that focus on the administrative and technical aspects of voice pattern collection, most are not publicly available. See also, “The Legitimacy of the Collection of Basic Personal Data by Public Security (⍵᷀ޜᆹส [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. NOT PROVIDED WITH REASON AT START: C1 [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. GIVEN DIFFERENT REASONS: K1; m1 - For WhatsApp and Kazakhstan, after being told it was for terrorism; 108 – WA at start, WA, kaz, and registration after. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. NEVER GIVEN A RESONS: V1 (check) + old people [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Cite examaples of people being told they were suspiciousor exemists [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. H1 (guard), D1, Z1, N1, M1, R1 (on phone) [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/03/china-draconian-anti-terror-law/ [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. ANYTHING ABROAD: Kazakhstan: A1, K2 (female), e2 (female), q1, I2 (“We told every student to come home.”) M2, K1; Kyrgyzstan: H1; Egypt: V1; i1 (studying abroad) ; communication: N1 (turkey) [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. CONNECTED WITH PEOPLE ABROAD: G1 [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. FORBIDDEN TECHNOLOGY: K1, B2 (female), F2 (female), k2 (female), Y2, U1 [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. RELATED TO RELIGION: F1, P1 (thinks only released because of pressure from abroad), g2 (arrested with 120 Muslim clerics); P2 father was arrested); d1 (check); E1. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. E2 (second hand account) [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. D2 [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. HOUSEHOLD REGISTRATION: 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. B3 [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. C1 (and check b3) [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. EXAMPLES OF ARITCLES ABOUT REASONS FOR ARREST: Tenner greer, 48 ways to ge sent to a Chinese contenciton camp, foreign policy 13 spet 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Check dates [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Adrian Zenz – Journal of Political Risk (<https://www.jpolrisk.com/karakax/?__cf_chl_jschl_tk__=1bf107f177c74e6a374534a5b67f318bd3c20654-1593419000-0-AarOWg7fOY15RU81T9S4iyxxdRuWk_gcXH3o3btoqCg12v3VFqb4dsrbQakV_ifhZbEBMSoBxSdiESh1_vWLp_4swN7WQYjrY53t29JrQcYBK2v0UHgy8Fzo8FkYvXmvSTnwZfKOEcoG--U27mBxY4DS73KHW6aW-NisulkwRGWLBlE6ZRzIrOz-08BGdJrdFtYbj8doa6FZq1DT8c-Ls2V6En8CqQhzKz2YjOWzhz3hFwlS7hhxCnAG9_CrPFoqz5VfIBpaKYCfv14nc0a2P7qTkbdOvqIYz8KuASXqWD7q>) [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. HRW -- <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/09/china-big-data-program-targets-xinjiangs-muslims> [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. HRW [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. For a complete list see HRW [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. https://apnews.com/article/269b3de1af34e17c1941a514f78d764c [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. For a complete list see Zenz. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. China Cables: https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/ [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. https://shahit.biz/eng/#home [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. https://shahit.biz/eng/#stats [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. CITE EXAMPLES OF REFERENCES TOGOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVIN TO FULFIL QUOTAS: [https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/09/china-big-data-program-targets-xinjiangs-muslims#](https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/09/china-big-data-program-targets-xinjiangs-muslims); https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/08/world/asia/china-uighur-muslim-detention-camp.html [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(f)(‘torture”) and 7(1)(k)(“other inhumane acts”) [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. The Karakax list contains information on individuals’ behaviours and beliefs in light of their family and social contexts. Some may be considered “guilty by association” based on the number of the family members who are under some form of internment and on the “religious inheritance circle” (宗教传承圈), or how a person obtained religious knowledge in the family.

     add in quotas: That regions were given quots of people to arrest - Reoberts argues that this critier can vary buy region, to get ot the quota… given definition so broad, officials have significant leeway… [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. H1 (guard), D1, Z1, N1, M1, R1 (on phone) [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. CITE EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THEIR BEHAVIOUR WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR FAMILY MEBERS BEING DETAINED (maybe also cite examples from journalists abroad): [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Find [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. kyrgyz [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. 14 [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Insert examples of people being interrogated before being sent to camp: Vi (Egypt), K2 (Kazkhstan) [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Insert examples of multiple interrogations: [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Insert examples of people sent directly to camps without being interrogated: [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Insert examples of extortion during interrogations: (maybe add a quote) [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Insert examples repeated interrogations about the same topics: [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Insert examples of torture or mistreatment in interrogations in pre-camp detention: [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Insert examples [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Insert examples [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. D1, m1 (elderly), w1 (old),01, n2 (felamle – interview before), Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Z1 this was all the time (actually maybe not) [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. W1 [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. V1 (NOTE: this person has been interviewed before. Although not about his whole story. He also gave us his phone, which may have spyware on it. We are analyzing it now.) [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. F1 – NOTE: check if this is a detention center or a police station [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Hrw report; e2 (not allowed to sleep); Shahit Databse reports 6 accounts of torture and ill-treatment in police stations; including several mention of tiger chairs being used: [**Entry 7075: Baqytali Nur**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=7075), [**Entry 453: Erbaqyt Otarbai**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=453), [**Entry 12952: Merdan Ghappar**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=12952), [**Entry 277: Tursynbek Qabi**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=277), [**Entry 3623: Omer Bekri**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=3623), [**Entry 4616: Abduweli Ayup**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=4616); Shahit Database reports: 8 accounts of beatings and sleep deprivation in prisons and being tied to chains and electrocuted with batons; [**Entry 10553: Abduhebir Rejep**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=10553). [**Entry 5279: Kong Yuanfeng**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=5279), [**Entry 4616: Abduweli Ayup**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=4616), [**Entry 5419: Qaster Musahan**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=5419), [**Entry 2110: Mihrigul Tursun**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=2110), [**Entry 1725: Orynbek Koksebek**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=1725), [**Entry 3623: Omer Bekri**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=3623), [**Entry 453: Erbaqyt Otarbai**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=453)**;** Also, 2 account of torture in interrogations report being strapped into tiger chairs and kept in a tiny cell, and being hit with electric batons: [**Entry 277: Tursynbek Qabi**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=277)**,,** [**Entry 5282: Memettursun Omer**](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=5282) [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS: [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. X2 (NOTE: check if she was interviewed, supposed to be here: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/alison_killing/china-ex-prisoners-horrors-xinjiang-camps-uighurs>); She was involved for two months, before they stopped doing them at her hospital. She said the tests the hospital did: blood, x-ray lungs, ultrasound for liver and kidney, blood pressure. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. BIOMETRIC DATA COLLECTION: f2, w1 [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. X2;: [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. OTHER SURVIVOR ACCOUNTS: check <https://shahit.biz/eng/#evidence>; JOURNALIST AND ORGANIZATION ACCOUNTS OF BIOEMTRIC DATA COLLECTION HRW report: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/12/13/china-minority-region-collects-dna-millions>; DNA collection: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/21/business/china-xinjiang-uighur-dna-thermo-fisher.html [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Some also went from police stations to detention centers, somefromdetention centerstocamps., [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. HOODED AND SHACKLED: O1, Q1, q2 (check), F2 (wasn’t herself, witnessed large nubers of others), k2 (witnesses B2 (check) [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Psedoym 40x [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. LARGE NUMBERS TRANSFERRD TOGETHER: 60 [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. 60 [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. REQUIRED TO SPEAK CHINESE: E2, f2 [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. PUNISHMENTS FOR NOT SPEAKING CHINESE: [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. The telegram [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. SEARCHed and CONFISCATED: 40, a2, i2, q1, f1 [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Female hair cuts: E2, n1, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/alison\_killing/china-ex-prisoners-horrors-xinjiang-camps-uighurs [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Heads shaved: K2, F1 (after arriving in camp) [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. 16 (3stoey bunkbeds) [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. K2, A2 [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. SHOULDER TO SHOULDER ON ONE BED: 66, z, prison [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. FLOOR: 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. TVs: [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Flags: [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Barred or blacked out windows: 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Loudspeaker: [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. CCTV: [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. LIhgts OFF [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Lights ON; 66, 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. RULES HANGING ON WALL: 61; 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. DORRS WITH TWO HOLES: X2; Shahit: Adalgazy Zhakai [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. X2 [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. DOOR CHAINED TO WALL: E2, f2, w1, q1, u1 [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. F1, y2 [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Article 10 of the ICCPR [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. 8 HRC General Comment 29, §13(a); [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Article 17(2)(c) of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance; Article 17(1) of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. CESCR General Comment 14, §§34, 4, 11, 43 and 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. See CPT 3rd General Report, CPT/Inf (93) 12, §53. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/100000/act400012003en.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Weerawansa v Sri Lanka, HRC, UN Doc. CCPR/C/95/D/1406/2005 (2009) §§2.5 and 7.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Article 17(2)(d) of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance, Rule 26 of the Bangkok Rules, Principle 19 of the Body of Principles [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Manual section 4.3 [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. K2 – check for Chinese characters; E2 (has Chinese characters), Some people explained the three categories are corresponding to the type of discipline that the detainees in the category were subjected to – ‘school’, ‘military’, and ‘prison’); some shahit accounts indicate classification was later (see: Tabysqan Magrupqan, (Others explained as Normal, strict, and strike hard (m2); cite the telegram; Insert somewhere that some claimed dvided after verdicts; this classification system is consistent with leaked documents: <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm>; The China Cables telegram mentions three VTIC management areas: “regular” (普管区), strict (严管区) and “forceful” or “very strict” (强管区); karakax list There appear to be three levels: “common management” (普管区), “strict management” (严管区), and “strong management” (强管区) journalists accounts: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/alison_killing/china-ex-prisoners-horrors-xinjiang-camps-uighurs>; [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. EXAMPLESOFPEOPLEWHO SAY DETAINEESFROM OTHER CLASSIFICATION; [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. UNIFORMCOLOURS: Z1 (had this color,said blue in second interview); e2 (has Chinese characters); T1 (said orange, not yellow), T1 [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm> [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. SAID THAT RELLIGIOIN\_RELATED CRIMES MORELIKELY TO GET YOU CLASSIFIED AS STRIXT: [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. EXAMPLESOF PEOPLE WHO ARE INSTRICTERCATEGORIES: m2, n1, B2 (taught in camp); 5-6 oman wore red, they were caught praying or taught others how to pray (their hair was cut and given 3 year sentences); b2 (red for serious criminals) [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Check this to see how many people actually said this. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. K2 [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. NOTE: she only saw their cell once. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. E2 (check); also see Shahit: kong [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. E1 - He originally wore a blue vest, then was given a yellow vest, because “he was accused of a crime; 19 {Uyghur] said she was in strict [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. In fact, reporting from leaked government documents indicates being in the least strict – i.e. ‘normal management’ category is a necessary condition for being released: <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/> [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. EXAMPLESOF AMORERELAXEDENVIRONEMTN IN EARLY 2017: D1 [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. D1 [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. icij [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Wi, F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. W1 [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. EXAMPLES OF BEING WOKENUP: P1 [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. EAMPLES OF POST WAKE UP HYGENE RITUAL: [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. CRAWLING UNDER CHAIN: U1 [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. RAELY ALLOWED TO SHOWER: Q1, 01 [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. SHOWERS IN CELL: [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. 65 [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. PERMISSION TO USE TOILET: P1, Z1, w1, i2 [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. BUCKETS: [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. ON CAMERAWHEN USING TOIET: [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. E2 (quickly) [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. L1 [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. LIMITED TOILET USE: [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. VERY LITTLE TIME TO EAT: M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. INSUFFICIENT FOOD AND WATER: [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Y8 [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. FLAG RAISING IN CAMP: [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. I2, I1 [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. M2, z1 [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Examples [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. NEVER ALLOWED OUT: W1, b2 (female), f2 (female), Z1, F2 (never in first facility, yes in second facility, which was a party school) [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. K2 (escorted people outside); 66 (did military exercise every day) [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. NEVER DURING FIRST FEW MONTHS: [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. 01, i1 [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. E2 [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. H2 (guard) [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. M2 (larger point here is that he could never move) [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Bucket disposal only time to o outsde: [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. 65 [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. COLD:U1 (heating didn’t work) [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. LITTLE OR NO NATURAL LIGHT IN CELL: [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. NIGHT DUTY: M2- five minutes [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. B2 (see if testimony is included) [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. M2, f2, w1; for more on night duty [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. examples [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. W1 [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. A4 [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Lights on: e2 (interviewed); f2 – said off at 9pm. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. W1 [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. EXAPLES OF INJECTIONS AND BLOOD DRAWN: [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. TOLD IT WAS FLU SHOTS [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. BELIEF THAT SHOTS STERILIZE THEM: …. BELIEF THAT SHOTS EFFECT THEIR MEMORY: [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. SUSPICIOUS FREQUENCY OF INJECTIONS: A2 (female) , see the telegram [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. EVERYO COUPLE WEEKS 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. F2, O1 [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-51097159>; https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/29/china-sterilising-ethnic-minority-women-in-xinjiang-report-says [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. 16 (memory, eyesight) [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Asia News, 2019. Rape, abuse and sterilisation in Xinjiang’s ‘boarding schools’ for Uyghurs. [online] Available at: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Rape,-abuse-and-sterilisation-in-Xinjiangs-boarding-schools-for-Uyghurs-48429.html> [Accessed 30 January 2021] [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. D2 [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. See, for example: Hogberg, D., 2020. Uighur women in China bear mental scars of forced sterilizations. *Washington Examiner*, [online] Available at: https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/uighur-women-in-china-bear-mental-scars-of-forced-sterilizations [Accessed 30 January 2021]. See also: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/gdpr-consent/?next_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2fopinions%2f2019%2f10%2f21%2fchinas-attacks-uighur-women-are-crimes-against-humanity%2f>; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/gdpr-consent/?next_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2fworld%2f2019%2f11%2f17%2fshe-survived-chinese-internment-camp-made-it-virginia-will-us-let-her-stay%2f%3farc404%3dtrue&arc404=true> [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. The Associated Press, 2020. China cuts Uighur births with IUDs, abortion, sterilization. [online] Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/269b3de1af34e17c1941a514f78d764c> [Accessed 30 January 2021] [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. *ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Zenz, A., 2020. The Karakax List: Dissecting the Anatomy of Beijing’s Internment Drive in Xinjiang. *Journal of Political Risk*, [online] 8(2). Available at: <https://www.jpolrisk.com/karakax/?__cf_chl_jschl_tk__=1bf107f177c74e6a374534a5b67f318bd3c20654-1593419000-0-AarOWg7fOY15RU81T9S4iyxxdRuWk_gcXH3o3btoqCg12v3VFqb4dsrbQakV_ifhZbEBMSoBxSdiESh1_vWLp_4swN7WQYjrY53t29JrQcYBK2v0UHgy8Fzo8FkYvXmvSTnwZfKOEcoG--U27mBxY4DS73KHW6aW-NisulkwRGWLBlE6ZRzIrOz-08BGdJrdFtYbj8doa6FZq1DT8c-Ls2V6En8CqQhzKz2YjOWzhz3hFwlS7hhxCnAG9_CrPFoqz5VfIBpaKYCfv14nc0a2P7qTkbdOvqIYz8KuASXqWD7q> [Accessed 30 January 2021] [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. See, for example: <https://believermag.com/weather-reports-voices-from-xinjiang/> and <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-a-million-people-are-jailed-at-china-s-gulags-i-escaped-here-s-what-goes-on-inside-1.7994216> [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Stavrou, D., 2019. A Million People Are Jailed at China's Gulags. I Managed to Escape. Here's What Really Goes on Inside. *Haaretz*, [online] Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-a-million-people-are-jailed-at-china-s-gulags-i-escaped-here-s-what-goes-on-inside-1.7994216> [Accessed 30 January 2021]. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. <https://www.rights-practice.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=475641a4-18f3-481f-9286-96f830c0a5ce> [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. C1, 15, Y1 [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. S1 [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Y1 – interviewed already - https://shahit.biz/eng/#view [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. S1 [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. 10, 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Forced to neel or sit straight. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. N1 (hemorrhoids) [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Examples [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. examples [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. A1, L1, q1, T1, U1, c2 (“sat on cement for 20 days”); T1 (sat on bed and did nothing for first ten days); 12 (literally did nothing for 3 months); note: check that none of this was in the detetion center, D2 [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. U1 [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. XM [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Example of similar testimonies formjournalists na dother orgs. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Erkin azat a letter from a prison fuard in the newly buildt concentration camp in dazanchining, medium 18 may 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. F2 also said this during breaks [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Look straight ahead [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Classes in cell [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. PAITINED LINES ON GROUND: M1 (yellow lines), e2 (tursunay), P1 (stay inside two lines), m2 [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Cite [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. F1 [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. B3 [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. GUARDS IN CLASS: D1, w1, 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Z1 [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. H2 (guard) – said bullet proof, f1, b2, 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. a3 – said the net was electic; u1 said wires, q1 – metal net [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. F2, a3, Q1, u1 (not comfortable because can’t move them far apart), b2, 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. F1 [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. W1 [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. P1 [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. See Robert featr an loathing in xinjiang; stavrou a million people jaled at china’s gulags [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. Examples of speaking other languages being forbidden [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. This is consistent with leaked government documents: <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/> [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. M2, F1 [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. O1, N1 (rumour taken to punishment room and made to stand if you canpt pass exam), This is consistent with leaked government documents: <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/> [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/6558510/China-Cables-Telegram-English.pdf>, para 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. exampels [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. W1 – older person [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. find [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. D1 [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. P1 [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. INSERT SOME EXAMPLES FROM SHAHIT [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Gov docs [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. I2, a2, w1, f2, d1 [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. M2: “There was a TV set on the wall. We had to sit and watch TV for hours. There was the 19th communist party session. We had to watch video about that session. 4 hours in the morning. 2 hours after. It was about the same session, about Xi Jinping’s visit to different countries. And we watched how prosperous china had become.” [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. 32 [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. N1 [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. INSERT EXAMPLES FROM ShAHIT [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. ISERT EXAMPLES OF DAILYINTEROGATIONS: .. also, Robert 216; insert saraugul and bekali [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. M1 – scanned his card and found out where he stayed, U1 [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. W1 [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Examples of interrogations without ill treatment [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. O1 [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. L1 [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Examples + see shahit letter for an example of this. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Reported here: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/898563.shtml>; also UHRP has a translated version of the list [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. D2 [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. 40 [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Other people mentioned this – y2; https://archive.fo/XLxqi [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(f)(‘torture”) and 7(1)(k)(“other inhumane acts”) [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. 6 See Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, G.A. res. 45/111, annex, 45 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 49A) at 200, U.N. Doc. A/45/49 (1990); Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, G.A. res. 43/173, annex, 43 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 49) at 298, U.N. Doc. A/43/49 (1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Amnesty International, *Combating torture and other ill-treatment: a manual for action* (Index: POL 30/4036/2016), pp. 54-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. CAT, ratified by china [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. CAT [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. 9 CAT Concluding Observations: USA, UN Doc.CAT/C/USA/CO/2 (2006) §24 [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. See UN Special Rapporteur on torture, UN Doc. A/56/156 (2001) §39(f); CPT Standards, 12th General Report, CPT/Inf (2002) 15 §38 [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. UN Mechanisms Joint Report on detainees at Guantánamo Bay, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2006/120 (2006) §60. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. 2 UN Mechanisms Joint Study on secret detention, UN Doc. A/HRC/13/42 (2010), §§27-28, 292(f) [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Asencios Lindo et al v Peru (11.182), [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, adopted Aug. 30, 1955, by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, U.N. Doc. A/CONF/611, annex I, E.S.C. res. 663C, 24 U.N. ESCOR Supp. (No. 1) at 11, U.N. Doc. E/3048 (1957), amended E.S.C. res. 2076, 62 U.N. ESCOR Supp. (No. 1) at 35, U.N. Doc. E/5988 (1977), art. 33; UN Committee against Torture, Observations on the UN Standard Minimum Rules, arts, 36 and 37 (“The use of restraints should be avoided or applied as a measure of last resort, when all other alternatives for control have failed and for the shortest possible time, with a view to minimizing their use in all establishments and, ultimately, abandoning them… Immobilization should only be used as a last resort to prevent the risk of harm to the individual or others”); https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/100000/act400012003en.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Rule 33 of the Standard Minimum Rules [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. Principle 5 of the Principles of Medical Ethics, Rules 33-34 of the Standard Minimum Rules [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. Actions aimed at humiliating individuals or causing **psychological suffering** may constitute torture or inhuman treatment, and also violate the right to human dignity.  [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. Cite legal artices [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. https://international-review.icrc.org/sites/default/files/irrc-867-5.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. cecke [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. Survivors subjected to torture or other ill treatment in detention ininterrogations or punishment: [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. Survivors who witneesdd toruture in interrogations: [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. BEATINGS: … STRESS POISTIONS/tiger chain…. Sleep deprivation…. Hung from a wall: U1; extreme cold: …. Solitary confiment [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ASA1727302015ENGLISH.PDF; <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/china0515_web.pdf>; UN Committee against Torture, Concluding Observations and Recommendations to China, A/48/44(SUPP) paras. 387-429, January 1, 1993; UN Committee against Torture, Concluding Observations and Recommendations to China, A/51/44(SUPP) paras. 138-150, January 1, 1996; UN Committee against Torture, Concluding Observations and Recommendations to China, CAT A/55/44 (2000) paras. 123-130, January 1, 2000; UN Committee against Torture, Concluding Observations and Recommendations to China, CAT/C/CHN/CO/4, December 12, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. GUOBAO examples [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. Multiple chairs: P1; 65 [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Tiger chair: U1, P1, e1, o1, z1, M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. G1 – for trying to defend a cellmate. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. P1 [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. X1 – interviewed , but didn’t want wher name to be used - https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/alison\_killing/china-ex-prisoners-horrors-xinjiang-camps-uighurs [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. NPR has reported on Kairat Samarkan’s first-hand accounts of torture and ill-treatment, including detainees being forced to wear “iron clothes”, being put in outstretched positions for long periods of time, and living in cramped spaces with others in the camps. He is also mentioned in the Shahit database, Reuters report, and Associated News press report, all mentioned below.

     <https://www.npr.org/2018/11/13/666287509/ex-detainee-describes-torture-in-chinas-xinjiang-re-education-camp?t=1614247394971> [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. Share America This journal article website is managed by the [Bureau of Global Public Affairs](https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-public-diplomacy-and-public-affairs/bureau-of-global-public-affairs/) within the [U.S. Department of State](http://www.state.gov/). [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. reported on Mihrigul Tursun’s account of torture, including sleep deprivation, electric shocks, and being strapped in a chair <https://share.america.gov/tale-of-torture-in-chinese-internment-camp-for-uyghurs/>, VIDEO INTERVIEW: https://share.america.gov/uyghur-survivor-story/ [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. Aljazeera also interviewed Mihrigul Tursun <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/27/academics-condemn-china-over-xinjiang-camps-urge-sanctions> [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. as did the Shahit database.<https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=2110> [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. Aljazeera mentions the effects of the torture causing her psychological trauma in the form of suicidal thoughts. her testimony: <https://www.cecc.gov/sites/chinacommission.house.gov/files/documents/REVISED_Mihrigul%20Tursun%20Testimony%20for%20CECC%20Hearing%2011-28-18_0.pdf>; Also, Amat; <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2019/2/1/exposed-chinas-surveillance-of-muslim-uighurs> [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Reuters reports eight first-hand accounts of torture, including being shackled to chairs for days during interrogations, being deprived of sleep, and living in prison-like conditions.https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/muslims-camps-china/ [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Kairat Samarkan comments on suicidal thoughts as an effect of the torture. He is also reported in the Shahit database.<https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=1540> [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. Associated Press News has reported one first-hand account of torture in the camps. Bekali mentions being forced to stand at a wall, solitary confinement, and food deprivation.<https://apnews.com/article/6e151296fb194f85ba69a8babd972e4b>; and intervewied by: <https://www.varsity.co.uk/interviews/19990> [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. The Shahit database reports include fourfirst-hand accounts of torture and ill-treatment: [Abduhebir Rejep](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=10553) was chained from the hands to the feet from morning to day for days on end and beaten with wire bats and sticks. He was beaten until his ribs broke and oozed; [Ergali Ermek](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=124) reported sleep deprivation, and “so many people died from the beatings and torture. The Chinese would dispose of the body immediately and write that the person had died of some illness or other.”; [Abduweli Ayup](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=4616) was interrogated in a detention centre; he was strapped to a tiger chair, hands and shoulders beaten.; [Erbaqyt Otarbai](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=453) mentions being put in fetters and having his face covered with a hood. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. ALSO cite: straou: “inside the cmpae where chine ties to brawhas mullim”, meaixler I begged to to kill me , mauk, untold stories from chines gulag state. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. I2 [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. D1, f1, p1, q1, x2, e2, f2, a3, q1 Of man coming back to room with swollen feet and legs saying he was beaten; P1 - Of hui cell mates beaten badly on ‘bottom’ he told us he was hit with stick, k2, z1 [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. D1 [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Z1 [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. 64 [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Q1 – check if taken away because he looked. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. 61 [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Insert summary of second hand accounts of torture. Shahit Database reports 1 second-hand account of torture. [Merdan Ghappar](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=12952) witnessed people with black cloth bags over the head; handcuffs; shackles; and a steel chain between the handcuffs and the shackles and said people were beaten until “their skin opened and they couldn't sit down.”; also https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/2910/2020/en/ [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. A1, U1, Vi (interviewed before), r1(in 2016 – when in prison for short period), t1 (no report of abuse), z1, r1 (Might be aprison), U1 (with a rifle butt to head when he arrived in the priso guards beat hima lot); n1 (hitwhen made anextraphone call) [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. X1 (female), B2 (female) once, not beaten) [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. C2(says it was 230 – 450 watt… now wsyaing happended tohim afewtimes infirst facility) [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. H1, i1, y2 (rubber stick( [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. N1 [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. H2 (guard) [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. C2 (checktomake surenot a prison) [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. Check quote [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Cite numerous example from here: file:///C:/Users/User/Desktop/xjvictims\_primary%20(2).pdf; Mihrigul tursun – account ofo electro-shock : meixler “I begged them to kill me”; *LEGAL STUFF FROM HRW:* Police officers regularly use restraints—known as the “tiger chair”—to immobilize suspects during interrogations. Former detainees told Human Rights Watch that they were strapped in this metal chair for hours and even days, deprived of sleep, and immobilized until their legs and buttocks were swollen; The Shahit Databse reports 3 first-hand accounts of beatings: [Gulzira Auelhan](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=1723) suffered five or six beatings in the head and mentions the head is always targeted.

     [Qaster Musahan](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=5419) said they would be beatings in the camps everyday with electric batons and then your face would be covered with plastic and a wet cloth. [Zharqynbek Otan](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=65) as well [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Shackled most of the time [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. V1 (all day) [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Examples of restraints from other organizations [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. C2 [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. F3 (akikat) [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. C2 [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. C2 – if we want to cinlude this I will try to follow-up. Unclear if he truly did not remember or if he was withholding the name. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. The Shahit Databse reports 1 second-hand account of killings in the camps. [Tabysqan Magrupqan](https://shahit.biz/eng/viewentry.php?entryno=2947) reports that an imam in Besterek [Township], had died during interrogation And 1 account of suicide: <https://shahit.biz/eng/#lists>; Radio Free Asia (RFA) reports 4 accounts of killings in custody: Death sentences (2 accounts) <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/philanthropist-11212018131511.html>; <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/sentence-09282018145150.html>; Suicide: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/suicide-02052018165305.html>; <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/suicide-09282018171559.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Cite ferris rotman aboritoin iud and secutal humiliation [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. See, for example: <https://time.com/5738401/xinjiang-uighur-muslim-camps-china-cables/>, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/abuse-10302019142433.html> and <https://focustaiwan.tw/cross-strait/201911030007> [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. See: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\_pacific/abortions-iuds-and- sexual-humiliation-muslim-women-who-fled-china-for-kazakhstan-recount-ordeals/2019/10/04/551c2658-cfd2-11e9- a620-0a91656d7db6\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/abortions-iuds-and-%20sexual-humiliation-muslim-women-who-fled-china-for-kazakhstan-recount-ordeals/2019/10/04/551c2658-cfd2-11e9-%20a620-0a91656d7db6_story.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. BuzzFeed, 2020. She Escaped One Of China’s Brutal Internment Camps For Muslims. Now She Could Be Sent Back. [online] Available at: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/meghara/china-uighur-xinjiang-kazakhstan> [Accessed 30 January 2021] [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. Ingram, R., 2020. Confessions of a Xinjiang Camp Teacher. *The Diplomat*, [online] Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2020/08/confessions-of-a-xinjiang-camp-teacher/> [Accessed 30 January 2021] [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. Byler, D., 2019. Spirit Breaking: Capitalism and Terror in Northwest China. The Art of Life in Chinese Central Asia, [online] Available at: <https://livingotherwise.com/2019/07/22/adam-hunerven-capitalism-and-terror-in-northwest-china/> [Accessed 30 January 2021]. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Stavrou, D., 2019. A Million People Are Jailed at China's Gulags. I Managed to Escape. Here's What Really Goes on Inside. *Haaretz*, [online] Available at: <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-a-million-people-are-jailed-at-china-s-gulags-i-escaped-here-s-what-goes-on-inside-1.7994216> [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/09/china-claims-detained-uighurs-have-been-freed>; <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-10/16/c_137535720.htm>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/30/world/asia/china-xinjiang.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. Find [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. See: https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/18/detainees-are-trickling-out-of-xinjiangs-camps/ [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. See: https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/04/961387-concentrationcamps-china-xinjiang-internment-kazakh-muslim/ [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/09/world/asia/china-xinjiang-muslim-detention.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/31/most-people-detained-in-xinjiang-camps-have-been-released-china-claims>; Find court docs (Shahit), and testimonies [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. https://livingotherwise.com/2019/10/05/from-camps-to-prisons-xinjiangs-next-great-human-rights-catastrophe-by-gene-a-bunin/ [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/09/world/asia/china-xinjiang-muslim-detention.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/24/china-baseless-imprisonments-surge-xinjiang> [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. <https://xjdp.aspi.org.au/explainers/exploring-xinjiangs-detention-facilities/> [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. <http://archive.vn/GpZdb> [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. <https://xjdp.aspi.org.au/explainers/exploring-xinjiangs-detention-facilities/> [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. Amnesty Fair Trial Manual: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/POL30/002/2014/en/ [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. Find [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/6558510/China-Cables-Telegram-English.pdf, para 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/6558510/China-Cables-Telegram-English.pdf>, para 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/11/16/world/asia/china-xinjiang-documents.html [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. B2 (maybe expand this wuote, but this woman has a lot); pseudonym 26; 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. J2 [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. 26 [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. I2 [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. 39 [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. This believe is supported by the fact the reason why a detainee is arrested appears to affect how they are classified in the camp and, in turn, how likely they are to be released ; 39, [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. 40; Maybe add in bit about ‘scores’ here; This is consistent with leaked government documents: <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/>; [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. Pseudonym 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. examples [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Q1 + add examples [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. examples [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. F1 – 42; D1 – 4 hours one day, 10 hours next day [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. 01, M1, see <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/alison_killing/china-ex-prisoners-horrors-xinjiang-camps-uighurs> for 28 survivors who didn’t sign, m2, l1, [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. I2 – check if its’ actually the confession, the gratitude and THREE letter related to not speaking out, which is what 37 seems to say. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. examples [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. F1 [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. I1 [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. <https://shahit.biz/eng/#view> (Amnesty too), [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. Z1 (female) [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. J2 [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Insert articles; also, Q1 – reallese tih 200 , insert testimony. I2 – nov 2018 discharged all kazakhs. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Find [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. Insert articles on prison transfers. … also on transfer to prisons in other parts of china: Shhret hoshur inajna authorie secretat transferre to jail thoughorugh china. RFA 2 oct 2018, holly Robertson bd cnews, china report beigin mass transfer, Roberts 223 [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. https://livingotherwise.com/2019/10/05/from-camps-to-prisons-xinjiangs-next-great-human-rights-catastrophe-by-gene-a-bunin/ [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. INSERT examples of testimonies that were subsequently forgiven: [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. Q1 - Not given a verdict, but classmates taken to courtroom and sentence read aloud [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. P1 – check this. – iman for 20 years; m2 - Wovman in class sentences to 20 years, her husband prayed [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. E2 (intervewied) - check [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Later in the interview he seems to indicate I might have been more than a month [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. T1 [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. E1 [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. E2 (intervewied) [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. https://www.dw.com/en/china-convicts-uighurs-in-sham-trials-at-xinjiang-camps/a-53699982 [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Also cell mates snetences rescinded - 2 people in his clell came back and said crimes – one guy had 8 years for prayer image on phone… 7 year for Kyrgyz flad… but those under 8 years all law relaed…d [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. D1 [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Karakax list [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. <https://believermag.com/weather-reports-voices-from-xinjiang/> [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/898563.shtml [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. https://www.dw.com/en/china-convicts-uighurs-in-sham-trials-at-xinjiang-camps/a-53699982 [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. <https://www.dw.com/en/china-convicts-uighurs-in-sham-trials-at-xinjiang-camps/a-53699982>; cite amnesty examples. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. Vi (interviewed [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. P1 [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. <https://shahit.biz/eng/>; https://livingotherwise.com/2019/10/05/from-camps-to-prisons-xinjiangs-next-great-human-rights-catastrophe-by-gene-a-bunin/ [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-re-education-muslims-ramadan-xinjiang-eat-pork-alcohol-communist-xi-jinping-a8357966.html [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. Telegram [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/6558510/China-Cables-Telegram-English.pdf>, para 19 and 20 [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. E1 (making government uniforms), o1, q1, n1 (maybe) [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. N1 (in village admin twice – check if also a factory account) , T1 (for four months), C1, Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Q1 – 2 shahit admin testimonies. [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. A1 [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. check [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. E1 – check this. (he was allowed out on weekends) [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. X10 [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. O1 [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. I2, z; breadmaking factor (61 – five people sent) [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>; Insert examples of other reporting: margot/shahit; and aspi report on inner china; >300 incidences on Shahit – will add examples!; ‘China’s ‘tainted’ cotton.’ Sudworth, John. BBC. Dec 2020. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/nz0g306v8c/china-tainted-cotton>; Articles with sat imagery of factories in camps: ‘‘Their goal is to destroy everyone’: Uighur camp detainees allege systematic rape.’ Matthew Hill et al. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-55794071>; ‘China’s Detention Camps for Muslims Turn to Forced Labour.’ NYT. Dec 16 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/16/world/asia/xinjiang-china-forced-labor-camps-uighurs.html; <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>;

     ‘China’s Detention Camps for Muslims Turn to Forced Labour.’ NYT. Dec 16 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/16/world/asia/xinjiang-china-forced-labor-camps-uighurs.html;

     examples of other reporting: margot/shahit

     <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>; [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. Zenze beyond the camps; Zenz, Adrian. ‘Beyond the Camps: Beijing’s Long-Term Scheme of Coercive Labor, Poverty Alleviation and Social Control in Xinjiang.’ Journal of Political Risk Vol.7, No.12, Dec 10 2019. <https://www.jpolrisk.com/beyond-the-camps-beijings-long-term-scheme-of-coercive-labor-poverty-alleviation-and-social-control-in-xinjiang/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Shahit testimonies -85 surveyed re: factories (can insert factory type breakdown) [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. 9 shahit guard testimonies. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. 25 shahit teacher testimonies; 9 of these are from the Qaraqash List https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP\_QaraqashDocument.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. Roberts - 219-222; There have also been some reports that people can avoid camps by voluntarily signing up for labour, see Roberts 222; ‘Inside China’s Push to Turn Muslim Minorities Into an Army of workers.’ NYT. Dec 30, 2019, updated July 1, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/30/world/asia/china-xinjiang-muslims-labor.html [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. C1 [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. I1, f2, B2 (family ostracized), c2, c1, D1 – also reference that reported by families abroad, a2 [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. F2 [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/> [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. MADE TO ATTEND CLASS: M1 (more stuff about xi jingping), f2 (mayb e day classes, 3x week) , p1, q1 (and family memebrs too), u1, d1, a2, b2 (3x/week); M2 – articulate it as a spectrum from being out with restrictionsw to being in, woman who taught in camps; n1 [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. A3; 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. J2 – check quote [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. Q1 [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. ATTEND FLAG RAISING: P1, Di, d2, Q1 (6-67 times) [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. PUBLICLY CONFESS: M1 (psoke 4 times), d2,o1 [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. T1 [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. M2 [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. C1 [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. SRVIVORS WITH GOVERNMENT MINDERS: G1, J2 (worked for gov), E2, f2, x2,b2, b2, 15, q2 [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. A2 [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. Cite [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. N2, B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. One major feature of the ongoing Strike Hard Campaign is the deployment of “fanghuiju” (䇯ᜐ㚊)15 teams in Xinjiang. Between 2014 and 2017, Xinjiang authorities sent 200,000 cadres from government agencies, state-owned enterprises, and public institutions to be stationed in villages, regularly visit and surveil people, and subject them to political propaganda, a scheme that has been extended indefinitely.16 In October 2016, authorities initiated a related effort, called the “Becoming Family” (㔃ሩ䇔Ӣ) campaign. Since December 2017, this “Becoming Family” campaign has been expanded as a compulsory homestay programme where more than a million cadres spend at least five days every two months in the homes of Xinjiang residents primarily in the countryside.17 16 “200,000 Communist Party members Dispatched to Stay in Grassroots Villages in Xinjiang to Visit the People, Benefit the People, and Get Together the Hearts of the People (ᯠ⮶ 20 зᵪޣᒢ䜘лสቲտзᶁˈ䇯≁ᛵǃᜐ≁⭏ǃ㚊≁ᗳ),” People Online (Ӫ≁㖁, http://xj.people.com.cn/GB/188750/361873/ (accessed August 14, 2018). 17 “China: Visiting Officials Occupy Homes in Muslim Region,” Human Rights Watch news release, May 13, 2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/13/china-visiting-officials-occupy-homes-muslim-region. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. O2, 43 [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. I2 [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. D1 [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. Q1, Y2, B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. M1 [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. RESTRICTIONS LIFTED AFTER SIX MONTHS: I2, A2, X1. K1, p1 [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. F1 [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. P1; q2 – check both [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/07/13/one-passport-two-systems/chinas-restrictions-foreign-travel-tibetans-and-others [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/01/world/asia/passports-confiscated-xinjiang-china-uighur.html>; https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/22/china-passports-arbitrarily-recalled-xinjiang [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. cite [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. Insert cases here, H1 (kyrgz, early on) [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. O1 [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. S1 [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. A3 [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Q2 [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. S2 [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. H1 [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. R1 [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. B2 [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. For an overview of the objective elements of Crimes against humanity see cassesse’s international criminal law [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. 53 For a description of customary international law on crimes against humanity, see Report of the International Law Commission: Sixty seventh session (4 May-5 June and 6 July-7 August 2015), Chapter 7: Crimes against Humanity, UN Doc. A/70/10, p. 54 (“The characterization of crimes against humanity as ‘crimes under international law’ indicates that they exist as crimes whether or not the conduct has been criminalized under national law.”). [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. Rome Statute, Article 7(2)(a) [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. See Prosecutor v. Akayesu, ICTR Trial Chamber, 2 September 1998, para. 579; Kordic and Cerkez, ICTY Trial Chamber, 26 February 2001, para. 179; Kayishema and Ruzindana, ICTR Trial Chamber, 21 May 1999, para. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al., ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 22 February 2001, para. 429. See also Prosecutor v. Blaškic, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 3 March 2000, para. 203; and Prosecutor v. Akayesu, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 580. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Prosecutor v. Kunarac et al., ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 22 February 2001, para. 429. See also Prosecutor v. Tadic, ICTY Trial Chamber, Opinion and Judgment, 7 May 1997, para. 648. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. Rome Statute, Article 7(1). See also Prosecutor v. Kupreskic et al., ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 14 January 2000, para. 556 (“[T]he requisite mens rea for crimes against humanity appears to be comprised by (1) the intent to commit the underlying offence, combined with (2) knowledge of the broader context in which that offence occurs.”). See also Prosecutor v. Tadic, ICTY Appeals Chamber, para. 271; Prosecutor v. Kayishema et al., ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 21 May 1999, paras 133-34 [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. See cassess international criminal law [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Rome Statute, Articles 7(1)(a), 7(1)(d), 7(1)(e), 7(1)(f), 7(1)(g), 7(1)(h), 7(1)(i), 7(1)(j), and 7(1)(k), respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. Amnesty International, Universal Jurisdiction: The duty of states to enact and enforce legislation (Index: IOR 53/008/2001), 1 September 2001, Chapter 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. See, for example, UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Articles 5-9. As of March 2021, 170 states are party to this Convention, including China. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)