

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 8, 2024

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield  
Permanent Representative of the United  
States to the United Nations  
U.S. Mission to the United Nations  
799 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Secretary Blinken and Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield,

We write concerning the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the People's Republic of China held by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in January in Geneva, Switzerland – particularly as it relates to the People's Republic of China's wrongful detainment of, and ongoing human rights abuses against, the Uyghur population and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang.

We were grateful to see the United States prioritize the release of “all arbitrarily detained individuals, including in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong” in its Official Statement at the UPR of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Further, we applaud the United States for concluding this Statement by condemning the PRC for “the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang; human rights abuses in Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and across China; erosion of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong; and transnational repression to silence individuals abroad.”

The PRC's blatant disregard for, and exploitation of, the human rights of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in China is abhorrent. As a country that values human rights, it is our collective responsibility to ensure the PRC is not only held accountable for its human rights atrocities, but also eradicates repressive policies and ceases these abusive actions altogether. It is imperative that the United States uses its platform as a global leader at the UNHRC and work with our allies to compel the PRC to fully accept and adopt the vital recommendations in the UPR.

As noted in the Official Statement of the United States at the UNHRC, the PRC's human rights abuses are far reaching – spanning globally by way of transnational repression. Today, U.S. citizens whose family members are arbitrarily and wrongfully detained in Xinjiang and other parts of China are suffering from PRC-operated harassment and intimidation tactics. The PRC employs this strategy of transnational repression against U.S. citizens in order to silence calls for release of their loved ones and to deter public opposition to the PRC's communist regime.

As the process moves forward for the UPR of the PRC, we strongly urge your Department, in its role representing the United States at the UNHRC, to continue to vigorously advocate for those arbitrarily detained in China and ensure their swift and safe release. Specifically, we request that you publicly call for the release of wrongfully detained Uyghurs whose family members are U.S. citizens, including –

1. **Dr. Gulshan Abbas** – a retired medical doctor and Uyghur, who was wrongfully detained in Xinjiang on September 11, 2018, and unjustly sentenced to 20 years in prison in retaliation for her sister’s advocacy for Uyghur human rights issues. Dr. Abbas has more than two dozen U.S. citizen relatives currently living in the United States, including her two daughters.
2. **Kamile Wayit** – a university student and Uyghur, who was wrongfully detained on December 12, 2022, after returning to Xinjiang while on break from studying in other parts of China. Ms. Wayit’s brother is a Uyghur-American and staunch Uyghur human rights advocate currently living in the United States.
3. **Qurban Mamut** – a Uyghur and former editor-in-chief of a Uyghur-language magazine, who was wrongfully detained in Xinjiang in 2017 upon his return from visiting family in the United States. Mr. Mamut was a prominent advocate for Uyghur culture and social issues. Mr. Mamut’s son and daughter-in-law are U.S. citizens.
4. **Ahmetjan Jume** – a Uyghur academic director and literary translator, who was wrongfully detained on May 18, 2017, and unjustly sentenced to 14 years in prison in retaliation for his brother’s work as a journalist for Radio Free Asia. Mr. Jume’s brother is a U.S. citizen.

As Members of the United States Congress, we are committed to ensuring the safety of our constituents and all Americans. No American citizen should be victimized by the repressive practices of the People’s Republic of China. We thank you for representing the values of the United States at the United Nations Human Rights Council, support your continued efforts to end the PRC’s ongoing human rights abuses, and we urge you to continue public pressure on the PRC to release wrongfully detained Uyghurs – especially the individuals highlighted above.

Sincerely,



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Michael Waltz  
Member of Congress



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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Michael T. McCaul  
Chairman  
House Foreign Affairs  
Committee



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



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Young Kim  
Member of Congress



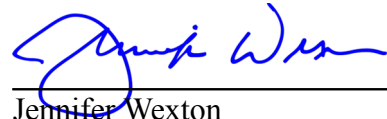
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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



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Jennifer Wexton  
Member of Congress



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C. Scott Franklin  
Member of Congress



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Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



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Carlos A. Gimenez  
Member of Congress



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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Austin Scott  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



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Neal P. Dunn, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



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Brian K. Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



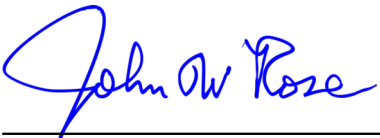
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Kelly Armstrong  
Member of Congress



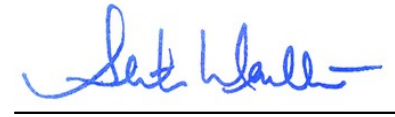
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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



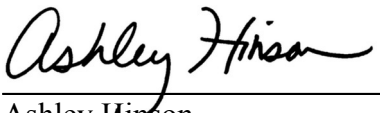
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John Rose  
Member of Congress



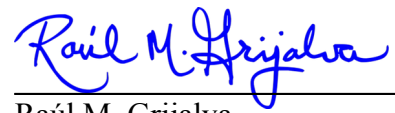
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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



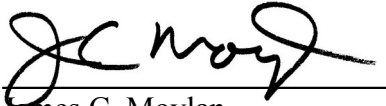
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Ashley Hinson  
Member of Congress



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Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



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James C. Moylan  
Member of Congress



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Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



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Dan Crenshaw  
Member of Congress



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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



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Jenniffer González-Colón  
Member of Congress



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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



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Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress



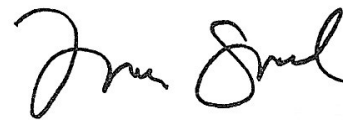
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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



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Aumua Amata Coleman  
Radewagen  
Member of Congress



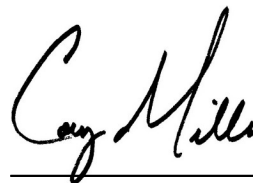
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Michelle Steel  
Member of Congress



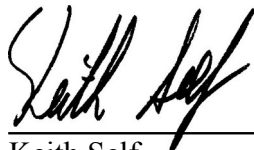
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Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



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Cory Mills  
Member of Congress



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Keith Self  
Member of Congress



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Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



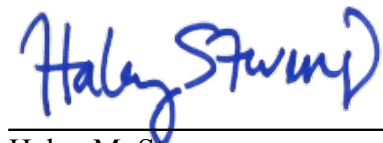
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Anthony D'Esposito  
Member of Congress



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Michael Guest  
Member of Congress



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Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



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Zach Nunn  
Member of Congress



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Randy Feenstra  
Member of Congress