



Oral Statement by the International Bar Association

57th Session of the Human Rights Council

General Debate - Item 2

10 September 2024

Two Years of Silence on the Situation in Xinjiang

The IBA's Human Rights Institute (the IBAHRI) is highly concerned that two years after the report of the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, identifying gross human rights violations in Xinjiang, the Human Rights Council did not allow any time to discuss the findings and identify adequate responses.

The report found that the Chinese government has committed abuses that may amount to crimes against humanity targeting Uyghurs and other Turkic communities in the Xinjiang region. The report contained first-hand accounts of victims/survivors of mass arbitrary detention, torture, persecution, forced labour, and other serious human rights violations. The report made several important recommendations, including those pertaining to justice and accountability. In October 2022, the Human Rights Council rejected a motion for a debate, with 19 against, 17 in favour, and 11 abstentions. We are highly concerned that, two years later, the report continues to be buried, ignoring the calls for help from victims/survivors.

The situation must be addressed and a resolution tabled as a matter of urgency, through a victims/survivor-centric approach. This means ensuring that their voices are heard - in relation to their treatment, but also in relation to the recommendations going forward.

The IBAHRI calls upon the High Commissioner and this Council to:

- Without any further delay, decide to have an in-depth discussion, session, or intersessional debate on the findings of the report and responses needed;
- Continue the ongoing monitoring of, and public reporting on, the human rights situation in Xinjiang;
- Ensure that the voices of victims/survivors are heard and they are fully involved in all decisions that concern them.

Thank you.

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