

CHINA/EU: Uyghurs in China: Position of EU High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini

Parliamentary question (09.10.2018)

Under President Xi Jinping, Muslims in China are seeing their freedoms shrink dramatically. Experts and activists say that as he consolidates power, Xi is waging the most severe systematic suppression of religious minorities in the country since religious freedom was written into the Chinese constitution in 1982.

In the most extreme example, an estimated 1 million Uighurs and other members of Muslim minority groups in the country's North West have been arbitrarily detained in indoctrination camps, where they are forced to denounce Islam and profess loyalty to the Communist Party.

Is the VP/HR aware of the situation?

Will the VP/HR raise this issue with the Chinese counterparts in their next discussions?

Can an update be provided on any action currently being taken to raise this issue through diplomatic channels?

Source: <https://bit.ly/2P54B1e>

Answer of VP/HR Mogherini (26.11.2018)

1. The EU is extremely concerned about the situation in Xinjiang, especially regarding the expansion of political re-education camps. The deterioration of the human rights situation in China, especially related to freedom of religion and belief, and the rights of persons belonging to minorities is a major concern.

2. The EU has raised its concerns regarding freedom of religion and belief, the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and the situation in Xinjiang on several occasions

at the bilateral level. During the 36th round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue held in Beijing on 9-10 July 2018, the repression against Uighurs and the situation in Xinjiang were discussed. I also addressed these issues at the European Parliament in two speeches delivered respectively on 11 September 2018 and 4 October 2018. The latter was focusing exclusively on the situation in Xinjiang and was delivered on my behalf by Commissioner Bienkowska. Most recently, the HR/VP Spokesperson delivered a statement on 26 October 2018 referring to the gravity of the situation and calling on China to implement the recommendations enclosed in the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

3. The EU and Member States are also conveying their concerns to the Chinese government at the multilateral level. In June and September 2018, the EU delivered two statements at the UN Human Rights Council under the Item 4 raising EU's concerns regarding the deterioration of the human rights situation in China and referring to Xinjiang. A number of Member states have addressed recommendations to China during the Universal Periodic Review of China which took place on 6 November 2018.

4. More generally, the EU attaches great importance to the respect of freedom of religion or belief and expression, as well as the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, and will continue to raise this issue as appropriate.

Source: <https://bit.ly/2BBVXnP>

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