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UN backs US propaganda of Chinese abuses against Uyghurs

The US and Western media have seized on a UN report published last week on human rights in China's Xinjiang region to again denounce Beijing for its treatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim groups. The accusations of China's abuse of Uyghurs are a prominent feature in the propaganda constantly broadcast by the US and its allies as they ramp up their provocations and preparations for war against China.



A protester holds an anti-China placard during a protest in Istanbul, Thursday, March 25, against against the visit of China's FM Wang Yi to Turkey. (AP Photo/Emrah Gurel) [AP Photo]

The report produced by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is a threadbare document that relies on the same paucity of evidence as Western propaganda—Chinese government documents, public and leaked, satellite images of alleged detention centres in Xinjiang, the biased reports and studies of anti-China academics and journalists and “eyewitness” accounts of individuals, unnamed in the case of this report, often connected to CIA-funded Uyghur exile organisations.

UN Human Rights Chief Michelle Bachelet, whose term of office ran out last week, conducted a six-day mission to China in May that included a visit to Xinjiang where she raised concerns over the broad use of counter-terrorism measures against the Muslim population of the region.

Despite the lack of evidence, the report concluded that “interlocking patterns of severe and undue restrictions on a wide range of human rights” are evident in Xinjiang. It claimed there has been “the large-scale arbitrary deprivation of liberty of members of Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim communities” and credible allegations of “torture or ill-treatment” and of “individual incidents of sexual and gender-based violence.” It alleged broader discrimination against Uyghurs and other Muslim groups, including “the coercive and discriminatory enforcement of family planning and birth control policies” and “indications” of forced labour.

What is striking about the UN report is the lack of any substantive evidence and what it omits, rather than what it cautiously concludes. It puts no figure on the number of Uyghurs allegedly held in prisons, vocational education facilities and detention centres, whereas Western politicians and media commonly declare as fact their unsubstantiated claims that a million or even two million are being imprisoned.

Moreover, the report acknowledged that “the available information at this stage does not allow OHCHR to draw firm conclusions regarding the exact extent of such abuses.” Nevertheless, it concluded that “the highly securitised and discriminatory nature” of the detention facilities, “provide fertile ground for such violations to take place on a broad scale.” In reality, this statement rests on the biased accounts of individual exiles.

The most significant absence is the lack of any claim of the “genocide” of China’s Uyghur population which is central to Washington’s propaganda as it prepares for war against

China. This blatant lie, which rests on a gross distortion of China's One Child policies, is recycled as fact by Uyghur exile organisations and has been taken up by the Biden administration as a key element of its list of accusations against China.

Not content that the report declared that China's actions "may constitute... crimes against humanity," the failure of the UN report to include any reference to "genocide"—for which there is no basis in evidence—has been criticised by various Uyghur advocates and organisations. Rahima Mahmut, UK director at the CIA-funded World Uyghur Congress, declared that she was disappointed that UN had not "called this what it is: genocide."

Nevertheless, these same advocates recognise the importance of the UN report for adding weight to the farrago of lies and distortions on which their organisations rely. The well-heeled American Uyghur spokeswoman, Rushan Abbas, who is very well connected in Washington, told the *New York Times*: "It is imperative that nations take this report and make concrete steps toward stopping these crimes against humanity and holding China accountable for them."

China has predictably denounced the UN report. Liu Yuyin, spokesperson for the Chinese mission to the UN in Geneva, branded the "so-called 'assessment' on Xinjiang" as a "farce," declaring it to be "completely a politicised document that disregards facts, and reveals explicitly the attempt of some Western countries and anti-China forces to use human rights as a political tool."

An annex to the report by the Chinese mission in Geneva stated it was based on "disinformation and lies fabricated by anti-China forces and out of presumption of guilt." It went on to declare that "all ethnic groups in Xinjiang" were living a "happy life" because of the government's measures to "fight terrorism and extremism."

The flat denials of any abuse of the democratic rights are no more credible than the sweeping and unsubstantiated allegations made by the US and its allies against China. The Chinese regime relies heavily on repressive measures to stamp out any sign of opposition—above all from the working class.

In Xinjiang, the Chinese Communist Party has confronted a rising tide of opposition which its policies have generated. Its measures are justified as a response to terrorist acts

carried out by militant Uyghur separatists who have their roots in the CIA funded and armed “jihad” in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Beijing, which backed Washington’s “secret war,” experienced its own “blowback” in the form of the rise of Uyghur extremism in Xinjiang, and is carrying out its own crackdown on “terrorism” and “extremism”.

The US, however, has cynically seized on the alleged abuses of Uyghurs for its own predatory purposes. It is no defender of “human rights” in Xinjiang, nor for that matter in Tibet or Hong Kong, and certainly not of the Chinese working class. Once again Washington and its allies are raising the phony banner of human rights as the justification for the preparations for war, while ignoring the gross abuse of democratic rights of its strategic partners and allies such as the Saudi monarchy.

The very fact that the OHCHR has chosen to focus on alleged human rights abuses in China, while turning a blind eye to the crimes of the US speaks volumes about the role of the United Nations as a tool of imperialism. No such UN investigation has been carried out into the criminal US-led invasion and occupation of Afghanistan or Iraq, despite a mountain of evidence of war crimes, torture, arbitrary killings and wanton destruction.

The UN is a “den of thieves,” to use Lenin’s phrase regarding its predecessor, the League of Nations—a clearing house for the intrigues, provocations and conflicts of the major imperialist powers where they can haggle over the spoils.

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