



Musée Holocauste Montréal
Montreal Holocaust Museum

**The Montreal Holocaust Museum's Statement about the Genocide
Against Uyghur and Other Turkic Muslim Minorities in China**

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

The Montreal Holocaust Museum stands in solidarity with the Uyghur and other Turkic Muslim minorities who have been subjected to mass human rights violations perpetrated by the Government of the People's Republic of China. We also welcome the non-binding motion passed by the Canadian parliament on February 22, 2021 acknowledging that these mass atrocities constitute an act of genocide.

Reports from various credible sources – notably survivors, human rights organizations, activists, journalists, legal experts and scholars – have demonstrated that, under the guise of combating religious extremism, the Government of China has committed the gravest and most odious crimes against its own people.

Since 2017, the government-led persecution of minorities has included mass detention in “re-education” camps of nearly two million men, women and children, who live in deplorable conditions. This constitutes the “largest mass detention of a minority community since the Holocaust.” ([Statement by the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development](#)) In these camps, documented instances of torture, notably in the form of psychological, physical, and sexual abuses, have occurred with total impunity. There have been disconcerting reports of measures intended to prevent birth, such as the subjection of women and girls to forced sterilization, abortions, and rape. People in camps are constantly monitored and undergo an ideological indoctrination program in which they are forced to renounce their religion, language, and culture.

Members of Uyghur and other Turkic Muslim minorities are also subjected to forced labour. Between 2017 and 2019, an estimated 80,000 among them were forcibly transported by train from the Xinjiang region directly to factories all over China, where they are constrained to work under harsh conditions, continuously monitored, and living in segregated dormitories. Many of these collaborating factories feed supply chains of well-known multinational companies active in technology, clothing, and automotive sectors. ([Australian Strategic Policy Institute](#))

As our Museum welcomes the non-binding motion passed by the Canadian parliament recognizing these human rights violations as genocide, we urge the international community to act so that gestures like these do not remain merely symbolic. This motion, along with the report published in October 2020 by the parliamentary Subcommittee on International Human Rights Situation of Uyghurs and Other Turkic Muslim Minorities, signals that, from a Canadian perspective, there is undisputable evidence that the inhumane treatment of Muslim minorities by the Government of China constitutes a serious violation of the international criminal law.



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We would like to remind the Government of Canada of its commitment to act collectively and in accordance with the United Nations' Charter to prevent and stop instances of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. The Responsibility to Protect, a global commitment made by the international community and unanimously adopted in 2005 at the United Nations World Summit, specifically calls on states to be prepared to take action “decisively and in a timely manner” in instances where one state fails or is unwilling to protect its own population.

At the Montreal Holocaust Museum, we teach visitors of all ages about our individual responsibility to intervene when confronted with injustice, discrimination, and hatred. Rooted in the painful lessons of the Holocaust, we know that there are grave consequences when nations, leaders, and citizens fail to speak up for persecuted minorities.

With our mission in mind, we invite the Government of Canada to make human rights in China a top priority in its policy and diplomatic efforts. Furthermore, we strongly support efforts to move the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics in order to deny the Government of China any platform to whitewash its international image and further spread its denialist propaganda.

We urge Canadians to write to their political representatives, attend and organize informative events, share accurate information, and support local Uyghur communities.

The history of the Holocaust teaches us that each stage of genocide is preventable. It is imperative that the international community act quickly to intervene and learn the important lessons of the past.

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