



# Human Rights Risks in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

## PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR INVESTORS



**INVESTOR ALLIANCE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**  
AN INITIATIVE OF ICCR

## About the Investor Alliance for Human Rights

The [Investor Alliance for Human Rights](#) (Alliance) is a collective action platform for responsible investment that is grounded in respect for people's fundamental rights. It is a membership-based, non-profit initiative focusing on the investor responsibility to respect human rights, corporate engagements that drive responsible business conduct, and standard-setting activities that push for robust business and human rights policies. The Alliance is an initiative of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR). The Alliance's membership is currently comprised of over 170 institutional investors, including asset management firms, trade union funds, public pension funds, foundations, endowments, faith-based organizations, and family funds. Members currently represent a total of over US\$5 trillion in assets under management and 19 countries. Along with civil society allies, our team equips the investment community with expertise and opportunities to invest responsibly so as to avoid risk to both investments and the individuals and communities affected by them.

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*"Business leaders and investors need to ask this question honestly: what is their place in history if they continue to profit by cooperating with a government carrying out a campaign of genocidal repression? They can't say they didn't know."*

OMER KANAT, UHRP EXEC DIRECTOR



# BACKGROUND



A human rights crisis has been ongoing in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China, known to local people as East Turkistan (Uyghur Region). Since 2017, the Chinese government has placed an estimated 1.8 million predominantly Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples, including Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and Hui, in detention camps, prisons, and factories.

This mass detention goes hand in hand with other systems of repression, in which business enterprises are involved, including:

- **Wide-spread forced labor**, whereby Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples have been made to work in business enterprises in the Uyghur Region and other parts of China;
- **Mass surveillance of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples** through the use of technology supplied to local authorities by domestic and international companies for the purposes of tracking and documenting the movement and activities of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples without their knowledge or consent; and
- **Elimination of the expression of Turkic cultural and Muslim religious practices** through efforts to “sinicize” ethnic minority populations, for example through religious restrictions and political indoctrination at the workplace.



**Ethnic minorities are surveilled**

**Personal information gathered is used to restrict their movement**

**Minorities are extrajudicially detained in numerous instances**

**Detained Uyghurs and other Muslim-majority peoples are prohibited from exercising their right to freedom of religion**

## BACKGROUND



LOCAL MARKET, KASHGAR,  
UYGHUR REGION

The violation of one human right is often connected to the violation of other human rights under the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#). For example, the sweeping surveillance of ethnic minorities is a violation of their right to privacy (UDHR Article 12). The personal information gathered is used to restrict the movement of minorities (a violation of UDHR Article 13) and in numerous instances extrajudicially detain them (a violation of UDHR Article 9). Detained Uyghurs and other Muslim-majority peoples are prohibited from exercising their right to freedom of religion (a violation of UDHR Article 18). Despite efforts by authorities to justify these systems of repression variably as, contingent on the context, counterterrorism or poverty alleviation measures, their real purpose appears to be to eradicate the cultural and religious practices of predominantly Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples. **Please refer to Annex A to this Guidance, which provides a list of human rights under the UDHR that are being violated by government authorities, at times with the involvement of business enterprises.**

Given this body of evidence, the Uyghur Region must be considered a high-risk environment. And yet, it continues to be deeply connected to global supply chains. More than 80% of China's [cotton](#) is produced in the Uyghur Region, representing around 22% of the global market in 2018-19, much of which is made into yarn used in textile and apparel produced in the Uyghur Region, China, and other factories around the world. As a result of China's economic and foreign policies, including the [Belt and Road Initiative](#), the Uyghur Region has seen an influx of foreign and local investments and economic activities. Global companies have operations, investments, partnerships, and other business relationships in the Uyghur Region, as well as in other parts of China and across the world that are connected to the violations in the Uyghur Region. These activities cut across a wide array of sectors; among them, agriculture, apparel and textile, automotive, information and communication technologies, and oil, gas, and mining.



## BACKGROUND

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Companies with business activities or business relationships in or connected with the Uyghur Region are at significant risk of causing, contributing, or being directly linked (see Section I. below for more detail) to actual or potential negative human rights impacts. Examples include employing forced labor in their factories and fields, providing government authorities with surveillance technology, or buying products or services from Chinese companies directly complicit in human rights violations in the Uyghur Region.



### ESSENTIALS 101:

#### United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UN Guiding Principles) is the authoritative international standard on the responsibilities of business enterprises, including investors, to respect human rights wherever they operate, in particular in conflict-affected and high-risk areas. Among other things, companies must undertake human rights due diligence, on their own operations, value chains, and business relationships, to assess and address risks to rights-holders and ensure that they do not benefit from or exacerbate negative human rights impacts, that they respect human rights to the greatest extent possible given the circumstances, and that they demonstrate their efforts in this regard. Not doing so increases the risk of companies' complicity in gross human rights violations committed by other actors with whom they have business relationships, such as Chinese companies and other non-state actors, as well as government officials and security forces. These risks include, for example, lawsuits and legal risks associated with gross human rights abuses, such as forced and prison labor; material risks stemming from the seizure of goods and ending business relationships; and reputational risks from negative media coverage, the filing of OECD National Contact Point complaints, and being subject to third party investigations. This in turn increases risks for investors who have holdings in those companies.

Lack of attention to such circumstances can pose material risks to investors when they are directly linked through their holdings in these companies to human rights abuses. In July 2020, U.S. Department of State, issued a business advisory cautioning businesses (and investors) about the reputational, legal, and economic risks of supply chain links to entities that engage in human rights abuses in the Uyghur Region.

Beyond avoiding risks, investors can take positive steps to end these abuses. **In high-risk environments, investors must undertake enhanced human rights due diligence in line with the UN Guiding Principles.** By screening holdings and monitoring them on an ongoing basis, investors may be among the first to be aware of human rights concerns. Investors are well positioned to engage with portfolio companies to help them understand and mitigate risks and to inform peers and clients. They can use their collective influence to facilitate coordinated action and to place pressure on governments to respond to human rights threats. In many cases, direct engagement by investors, says Domini Impact Investments LLC, "may be preferable to selling their shares, and can result in significant positive impacts".

## BACKGROUND



A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL SCANS THE QR CODE ON THE WALL OF A HOME IN THE UYGHUR REGION, WHICH GIVES HIM INSTANT ACCESS TO THE RESIDENTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION. SOURCE: XINJIANG STATE RADIO

The current COVID-19 crisis offers opportunities for businesses and investors to be part of [shaping a new social contract](#) not only to address the immediate economic hardship faced in particular by workers around the world, but also to build more sustainable and equitable business models in the future. Unfortunately, in the Uyghur Region and other parts of China, ethnic and religious minorities and those promoting human rights are at [greater risk of contracting COVID-19](#). Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples in the Uyghur Region have been forced to continue to work despite lockdowns and the Chinese government has been moving them to factories in parts of China with high infection rates. The close quarters of internment camps pose heightened risks for the rapid spread of disease among those detained. The Chinese government has detained and disappeared Chinese human rights defenders, doctors, lawyers, and journalists who have sought to highlight these risks and monitor government responses to COVID-19. In addition, the Chinese government, in violation of privacy rights, is using the pandemic as grounds to [ramp up surveillance](#) to track and restrict people's movement.

This Guidance informs investors of the salient risks to people associated with the business activities of their portfolio companies in or connected with the Uyghur Region. It provides practical guidance to investors on how to engage with its portfolio companies, as well as other stakeholders, to identify, prevent and mitigate those risks, as they may arise at different stages of the business process or the product lifecycle.

### This Guidance is divided into three sections.

- I. **Human Rights Due Diligence:** This section discusses the challenges of applying commonly used methods of human rights due diligence to business activities in or connected with the Uyghur Region. It highlights key UN Guiding Principles concepts that enable investors to conduct enhanced human rights due diligence of their holdings as appropriate for conflict-affected and high-risk environments. Enhanced human rights due diligence entails heightening standard human rights practices to account for the increased risk that business enterprises may become involved in or exacerbate ongoing grave human rights violations through their activities. Enhancing due diligence practices includes having a clear understanding of the human rights context, accurately identifying human rights risks, developing more effective measures to address negative human rights impacts, and ensuring that measures taken are not themselves unintentionally causing harm.
- II. **Assessing Exposure and Engaging with Portfolio Companies:** During investment decision-making processes and throughout the investment lifecycle, investors must examine their portfolios for salient human rights risks whether associated with industry sectors or specific companies, particular geographies and political contexts, technology and innovation, or new business models. This section addresses investors' risks of holding shares in companies involved with adverse human rights impacts in the Uyghur Region and discusses responsible divestment where companies are unwilling or unable to prevent or mitigate such adverse human right impacts. It offers guidance questions for investors to ask their portfolio companies.
- III. **The Power of Collective Action:** An important element of responsible investment stewardship is applying leverage – with portfolio companies as addressed above, but also in collaboration with other investors, civil society stakeholders, international organizations, and policymakers – to stop, prevent, and mitigate risks associated with investments. This section provides examples of different types of collective leverage investors can exercise.



# I. HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE



All companies and investors need to conduct human rights due diligence to identify and address risks related to having business activities and relationships in high risk environments. In the Uyghur Region, Chinese and local authorities are themselves the perpetrators of the majority of human rights violations and actively seek to deny and cover-up information. Thus, media, civil society, and researchers are prevented from gathering data about conditions in the Uyghur Region.

For example, forced labor both in and from the Uyghur Region is perpetrated by the Chinese government in direct contravention to ILO Convention 105. Any efforts to uncover forced labor and other abuses through standard social auditing and certification practices conducted by or on behalf of global corporations are unlikely to reveal an adequate picture of the human rights situation. In fact, there are examples of companies that were certified as compliant with labor standards despite evidence of continued use of forced labor. Among other things, auditors have been denied access to facilities and, when they are allowed to conduct inspections and interviews, report a workplace culture of fear of retaliation for speaking up other than to provide management-approved responses. Conducting worker interviews is likely to endanger workers or their families, and auditors may not be able to discuss their findings without fear of reprisal.

## I. HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE

Opportunities to work with suppliers to address abuses are limited. While some Chinese companies are directly complicit in the use of the forced labor of Uyghur and Turkic and Muslim-majority workers particularly in their operations in the Uyghur Region, other Chinese companies in other provinces forming part of global corporate supply chains may face a situation in which the Chinese government mandates and controls recruitment of workers from the Uyghur Region, effectively limiting suppliers' ability to freely employ workers or put worker protections in place. These suppliers' mandated participation in the system of forced labor is often subsidized by the Chinese government through various programs.

***In these circumstances, where standard approaches to identifying forced labor are inadequate, it is nearly impossible to state definitively that forced labor is not present in supply chains with links to the Uyghur Region. Researcher Adrian Zenz, known for his studies on re-education camps in the Uyghur Region concludes that "the only viable solution is to consider the entire region to be thoroughly tainted with different forms of coercive labor."***

These challenges notwithstanding, companies and investors must undertake a process of *enhanced human rights due diligence* to assess and address the risks of actual and potential negative human rights impacts in such a high-risk environment. If they cannot eliminate the possibility that their business activities and relationships cause, contribute, or are directly linked to forced labor or other egregious human rights abuses, and they are unable to cease, prevent, or mitigate these harms, then they must decide on an appropriate course of action including divestment. A number of key concepts in the UN Guiding Principles are important to consider when deciding the appropriate action to take.



### ESSENTIALS 101: Human Rights Due Diligence

#### Saliency and severity:

Identifying salient human rights issues is the first stage in any human rights due diligence process. According to the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework, a "company's salient human rights issues are those human rights that stand out because they are at risk of the most severe negative impact through the company's activities or business relationships." Severity is defined using three indicators: *scale, scope, and remediability*. Severe human rights impacts must be prioritized for risk management.

**Forced labor, in this case imposed by the state, is an example of a severe human rights impact. Although exact numbers are not known, its scope is substantial, affecting hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples throughout the Uyghur Region and other parts of China.**

#### Causing, contributing, and directly linked:

As described in the UN Guiding Principles, there are three ways in which a business enterprise, including an investor, may be involved with adverse human rights impacts:

*continued on next page*

## I. HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE

- **Causing** an adverse human rights impact through its own actions or omissions. **For example an apparel company utilizing forced labor from the Uyghur Region to produce clothing, it is directly causing a human rights harm;**
- **Contributing** to an adverse human rights impact through its own activities, either alongside other entities or through external entities, such as clients or customers. **For example, a food and beverage company sourcing tomatoes from a supplier that harvests its tomatoes using forced labor from the Uyghur Region, it is contributing to the abuse; or**
- Being **directly linked** to an adverse human rights impact through its operations, products, or services via a business relationship. **For example technology companies, whose surveillance equipment is sold to Chinese authorities through third party vendors, are directly linked to human rights harms when the data gathered is used to track, restrict the movement of, or detain Uyghurs.**

Where a business causes or contributes to adverse impacts, it should cease or prevent the actions that are causing or contributing to the harm. In cases of direct linkage, the company should use its leverage to mitigate the risk of the impact continuing or reoccurring to the greatest extent possible.

### Leverage:

In most instances, institutional investors will be directly linked to harms through their investments in companies involved with negative human rights impacts in or connected to the Uyghur Region. As explained in a [FAQ](#) from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), even if an investor has not caused or contributed to a harm, once made aware of a harm linked to a business relationship, the investor must use its leverage to seek to prevent or mitigate it.

Leverage exists where an investor has the ability to affect change in the behavior of a company that causes or contributes to a harm. Depending on factors such as corporate ownership structures and governance rules, the operating context, and the nature of the harm, investors can seek to exercise and increase their influence over portfolio companies, alone or in collaboration with other investors and stakeholders. Some practical examples are provided in Section III. below. However, if investors find a portfolio company will not or cannot stop, prevent, or mitigate a human rights harm, they must consider the implications for maintaining the investment relationship. Refer to Section II. below for more information on responsible divestment.



## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

### Investment decision making:

It is critical that prior to making any investment, asset owners and managers conduct human rights due diligence on each potential investee company to identify whether they are connected with adverse human rights impacts on ethnic minority populations in the Uyghur Region and other parts of China. Investors should assess whether companies have appropriate processes for managing human rights risks in conflict-affected and high-risk operating environments like the Uyghur Region, including a human rights policy commitment, enhanced human rights due diligence and disclosure processes, and a grievance mechanism. For a fuller discussion on investment decision making, please refer to our [Investor Toolkit for Human Rights](#).



Many investors rely on ESG data providers and ESG scores to select their portfolio holdings and ensure a positive ESG contribution. Investors need to request information from these data providers regarding the extent to which human rights risks, in particular these risks in the Uyghur Region, have been factored into their data analysis and scoring. Investors should also look to other sources of information from civil society and independent research reports to supplement their investment decision-making. **Annex B to this Guidance offers various information sources related to the Uyghur Region, to identify exposure to high-risk sectors, geographies, and companies.**

### Responsible investment stewardship:

Once invested, an institutional investor should embed respect for human rights throughout the stewardship stage of the investment lifecycle. Asset owners and managers should regularly review their portfolios to identify whether they hold companies across the different sectors connected with adverse human rights impacts on Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples in the Uyghur Region and China.



## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

### Engaging portfolio companies:

There are numerous ways in which companies can be implicated in human rights abuses against Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples. Companies, whether operating in the Uyghur Region or China, or in other parts of the world, need to map their value chains to identify those connections linked through complex supply chains and other business relationships, and assess associated risks. See the scenarios in the box below for different business activities and relationships which could result in companies causing, contributing, or being directly linked to these human rights abuses.

### Shareholder dialogue:

The most immediate form of leverage an investor has is to dialogue with portfolio companies. The questions on pages 14-17 can guide investors in evaluating portfolio companies' efforts to conduct human rights due diligence and to address and manage actual or potential human rights risks in their operations and value chains, connected to the Uyghur Region.



### CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIOS:

- A company operating in the Uyghur Region, **e.g. an auto manufacturer with production facilities in the Uyghur Region**, or a company that has a supplier operating in the Uyghur Region, **e.g. a food and beverage company that sources tomatoes and tomato-based products from agricultural producers in the Uyghur Region**.
- A company that sources from suppliers that use inputs sourced from the Uyghur Region, **e.g. a supplier in Guangzhou, China or Bangladesh that sources cotton, yarn, or fabric from the Uyghur Region for apparel products**.
- A company that supplies hardware or software components to companies in China for their own product development, **e.g. a global manufacturer that cooperates with a Chinese company on manufacturing technology that the Chinese company then utilizes to create a police surveillance app used in the Uyghur Region**.
- A company that supplies customers in the Uyghur Region, **e.g. a company that sells scientific equipment to police-affiliated scientists, which is used to collect DNA-samples from ethnic minorities without their consent**.
- A company with suppliers located outside of the Uyghur Region that are using coerced laborers re-located from the Uyghur Region, **e.g. manufacturing facilities in eastern Chinese provinces that employ coerced labor through state-sponsored labor transfer schemes**.
- A company that buys from suppliers that have been linked to human rights abuses connected with the Uyghur Region, **e.g. a global company that buys surveillance products from a Chinese company that has supplied products and/or technology used for surveillance in the Uyghur Region or a global company that buys apparel products from a Chinese company that has accepted government subsidies to employ workers from internment camps in its the Uyghur Region factories**.



### GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

#### Identify and Assess

- Did the company conduct human rights impact assessments to identify and assess real and potential human rights risks?
- Did the company assess the human rights situation in the Uyghur Region, in particular to understand the causes or issues related to human rights risks, and whether conducting business activities and/or having business relationships with suppliers, sub-suppliers, and customers in the Uyghur Region would contribute to or exacerbate adverse human rights impacts in the region?
- Did the company map the relevant parties involved in the human rights violations in the Uyghur Region and identify if the company, its suppliers and sub-suppliers, or its customers have any business relationships with those parties? Were state and non-state value chain partners, especially those with documented rights-violating behavior, thoroughly vetted?
- Were vulnerable communities in the Uyghur Region identified and consulted, in particular ethnic and religious minorities, women, and children, so as to understand how these communities would be impacted by the company's business activities and relationships?
- Did the company consult with any human rights experts or obtain any local or international expert advice, including from civil society organizations representing vulnerable communities, about the human rights risks in the Uyghur Region?
- Did the company review if any government subsidies or incentives were or continue to be received by the company, its suppliers or sub-suppliers? And if so, if these subsidies or incentives caused or contribute to human rights impacts?

#### Governance

- Has the company adopted a public-facing policy commitment to respect human rights? If yes, has the commitment been approved at the most senior levels of the company? Has the company required its suppliers and other business partners to adopt and adhere to this policy commitment?
- Were the identified salient risks discussed with the company's senior management and board of directors? If so, how did this affect decision-making related to business activities in the Uyghur Region?
- Who in the company (at the corporate level, China national level, and the Uyghur Region level) has the overall and day-to-day responsibility of addressing these negative impacts?

#### Integrate

- Based on information available from UN human rights bodies, international human rights organizations, experts, and credible media sources, what additional measures is the company taking – or ensuring that its suppliers and/or customers are taking – to stop, prevent, or mitigate identified harmful impacts?



## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

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- Does the company embed its commitment to respect human rights throughout the product lifecycle, from design to manufacture, sale, end use, and disposal of the product?
- Have all relevant staff (corporate, national, and local) been trained to understand the human rights risks specific to the Uyghur Region and to identify potential and actual human rights harms arising from the company's business activities or relationships?
- What steps is the company taking to use or increase its leverage with local business relationships and authorities or through collaboration with industry peers or other stakeholders, to address human rights harms?
- What criteria are used to determine whether to end a business relationship? Has the company considered ending the business relationship? If not, why not?

### Monitor

- What efforts are made to monitor and assess the effectiveness of measures to cease, prevent, or mitigate the identified human rights impacts? How often does this happen?
- What indicators are used to measure and monitor progress? How do these guide improvements?
- Can the company (or its third-party auditors) conduct credible auditing in the Uyghur Region? What are the challenges; can, or how are, they being addressed?
- Has the company, solicited or otherwise, obtained input on the evolving situation in the Uyghur Region from external sources like independent Uyghur human rights groups (inside and outside of China), civil society organizations, human rights experts, and international human rights bodies like the UN?
- Is the effectiveness of measures and progress made regularly discussed with senior management and the board?

### Communicate

- Does the company publicly disclose information to investors, other stakeholders, and affected persons and communities about its efforts to address human rights impacts and the actual results of such actions?
- What form does this disclosure take and are efforts made to ensure it is accessible to intended audiences?
- How are decisions around maintaining or terminating business relationships communicated to affected suppliers, customers and other relevant stakeholders?

## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

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### Remedy

- Is the company providing or contributing to the provision of remedy to affected persons and communities? Have the affected persons and communities been involved in the decision on the form that the remedy takes? If not, why not and what alternative courses of action are being pursued?

**Researchers and multi-stakeholder labor rights organizations have pointed out that it is questionable whether remediation is possible in this context. Local government authorities are likely to oppose remediation efforts, such as releasing workers, since they run counter to government detention policies, and any compensation provided is likely to be confiscated with workers and their families facing retaliation. Given the lack of an independent and impartial judiciary, recourse to judicial mechanisms for remedy are highly improbable.**



### DEEP DIVE: Issue-Specific Questions on Forced Labor

- Does the company's human rights policy commitment prohibit forced labor and violations of workers' rights, including at a minimum the fundamental rights set out in the ILO's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, in its own operations and throughout its supply chains and other business relationships? How is compliance with the policy monitored?
- Has the company or its suppliers developed or applied any red flag indicators (see case study below) to identify the presence of different forms of coerced labor in their operations, business relationships, or supply chains?
- Does the company or its suppliers and sub-suppliers employ any workers, including local Uyghurs or other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples, in their business operations obtained or facilitated through government or government-linked businesses or labor recruiters?
- If so, do any of the contracts for workers include language mentioning employing ethnic minority "graduates" or ex-detainees or involvement in "reskilling"?
- Has/Is the company (or its suppliers and sub-suppliers) received/receiving incentives or subsidies from local or Chinese authorities for items such as "training supplements", "vocational training", or "Xinjiang aid"?
- Has the company (or its suppliers and sub-suppliers) participated in the government's poverty alleviation and/or pairing programs connected with the Uyghur Region?

## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES



### **CASE STUDY:** **Red flag indicators of forced labor**

The Center for Strategic and International Studies provides in its report [Connecting the Dots](#) a number of useful red flag indicators that may indicate the presence of different types of coerced labor. For example, location can be a hint: Is a production facility in an industrial park linked to government “re-education” efforts or near a detention facility? Companies receiving incentives or subsidies related to training is another tip-off, as is participation in “poverty alleviation” or pairing programs with companies in eastern China. The hiring of workers through government recruiters is also a good indicator of the presence of forced labor. If the information gathered is inconclusive, the [Fair Labor Association](#) recommends that “companies should presume that raw materials, semi-finished, or finished goods from Xinjiang are likely to be produced with forced labor.”



### **DEEP DIVE:** **Issue-Specific Questions on Privacy, Freedom of Expression and/or Movement**

- Does the company have a policy that requires freedom of expression, including religious expression and belief, be respected in its own operations, that of its subsidiaries or franchises, and throughout its supply chains? How is compliance with such a policy monitored?
- Does the company have any policies or processes in place to determine if customers’ use of its technology products and services, contribute to human violations for example, to support systems of surveillance, censorship, and detention of minority populations?
- If so, how are those policies enforced, for example through contract vehicles, dialogue with customers, monitoring of customers, ending of business relationships?
- Does the company have any policies about sourcing or buying technology goods and services from companies that may be providing goods and services to government authorities and security forces involved in human rights violations?



## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

### Shareholder resolutions

In the event that a company will not participate in dialogue or dialogue has proven to be ineffective, depending on the local securities regulations, an investor can file a shareholder resolution that goes to a vote at a company's annual general meeting. This is a powerful form of leverage as proxy resolutions are a matter of public record and will therefore get the attention of management, the board of directors, other shareholders, stakeholders, and members of the press. Resolutions can request human rights due diligence measures to address business and human rights risks, such as developing a human rights policy commitment, undertaking human rights risk assessments, and creating a grievance mechanism. In cases of egregious human rights abuses, investors can pressure their companies to end business relationships. The Socially Responsible Investment Coalition filed a resolution with [Skechers U.S.A](#) for its 2020 annual general meeting, asking for the adoption of a human rights policy, calling out forced labor risks in the Uyghur Region.



#### **CASE STUDY:** **No business with genocide**

A number of investors have filed shareholder resolutions requesting portfolio companies to do “no business with governments complicit in genocide”. These resolutions are in part a response to the UN fact finding mission which urged the international community to sever ties with Myanmar's military and the vast web of companies it controls and relies on, as foreign business activity poses a high risk of contributing to, or being linked to, violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. In 2019, Azzad Asset Management submitted a resolution calling on [Chevron](#) to report on its business with governments complicit in genocide or crimes against humanity. It withdrew the resolution after Chevron agreed to undertake certain steps including social investment reviews in Myanmar's Rakhine State, donating to humanitarian organizations for Rohingya refugees, and helping develop practices for companies operating amid risks of crimes against humanity. In 2020, Friends Fiduciary filed a resolution with [Western Union](#) requesting the Board to publish a report evaluating the feasibility of adopting a policy of not doing business with governments or military forces that are complicit in genocide, crimes against humanity, or mass atrocities. Western Union decided to cut its ties with the military-owned [Myawaddy Bank](#).

### Responsible divestment

If engagement with companies fails to result in the necessary prevention and mitigation of human rights harms and leaves the investor unable to manage its own exposure to risk, the investor needs to initiate steps to end the investment relationship. The OECD elaborates on this point stating that, while divestment should in most cases be a last resort or reserved only for the most severe adverse impacts, divestment from a company may be an appropriate response after failed attempts at preventing or mitigating the harm, where prevention or mitigation is unfeasible, or because the severity of the adverse impact warrants it.

## II. ASSESSING EXPOSURE AND ENGAGING PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Decisions on whether to divest should draw on outside expertise to include that of affected peoples and communities where possible. If an investor decides that divestment is the only feasible option, then it needs to end the business relationship in a responsible manner, including explaining to portfolio companies the grounds for divestment and publicly sharing with relevant stakeholders the reasons for divestment. Conversely, decisions not to terminate a business relationship must be publicly explained, and the investor should continue to monitor the risks associated with the investment and regularly revisit its decision.



### CASE STUDY: Responsible Divestment

Storebrand Asset Management was one of many Norwegian financial institutions that divested shares in pipeline companies in the Dakota Access pipeline project. Storebrand divested \$34.8 million worth of shares, after months of efforts to influence the pipeline route with no success, including engaging individually as well as collectively with a group of international investors with the pipeline companies. Storebrand also organized a letter signed by 100 investors expressing their concerns to the pipeline's creditors. It was only after all these efforts failed, that the investor decided to sell its shares.



UYGHUR PROTEST IN  
URUMCHI, 2009



### III. THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

Institutional investors, individually, collectively, and in collaboration with other stakeholders, should work together to amplify their leverage to encourage companies to take action to address human rights harms connected to their business activities, relationships, and supply chains.

Due to the systemic nature of the human rights violations in the Uyghur Region and the perpetration of abuses by Chinese authorities, collaborative action targeting actors beyond suppliers or local business is likely the most effective way to achieve more impactful outcomes. Investors, companies, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders must maximize collective leverage to influence governments, international institutions, suppliers and sub-suppliers, and global multi-stakeholder initiatives to take action and prevent these harms.





### III. THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION



#### CASE STUDY: Cotton Pledges


The Cotton Campaign, a global coalition of NGOs, apparel brands and retailers, investors, industry associations, and trade unions, seeks to end forced labor in Uzbekistan's and Turkmenistan's cotton sectors. Since 2007, more than 300 signatories to the Uzbekistan Cotton Pledge, hosted by the Responsible Sourcing Network (As You Sow), have committed to not use Uzbek cotton. Although it took several years, investors played a pivotal role in coalescing the economic leverage of brands and participating in dialogue to pressure the Uzbek government to end forced child labor. The Cotton Campaign is now involved in constructive dialogue with the government to codify commitments to protect human rights defenders, put a stop to forced adult labor, and abolish state requirements to achieve cotton targets.



#### Civil society organizations (CSOs)

RECOMMENDED ACTION:	EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON PEOPLE:
Consult, support, and collaborate with CSOs representing affected individuals and communities.	→ Express support for the efforts of CSOs, such as the <u>Uyghur Human Rights Project's call</u> for the Pension Fund of Norway to divest from two Chinese technology companies which provide surveillance equipment and services in the Uyghur Region.
Support campaigns, pledges, and calls to action.	→ Express support for calls to action, such as <u>Freedom United's petition</u> to the Chinese Government to free Uyghurs from forced labor.  → Endorse the Coalition to End Forced Labor in the Uyghur Region's <u>call to the textile and apparel sector</u> made public on July 23, 2020.

### III. THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

 <b>Multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) and industry associations</b>	
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON PEOPLE:
<b>Collaborate with MSIs to pressure companies to take actions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Support the efforts of MSIs to encourage review of member companies' suppliers, such as the <a href="#">Fair Labor Association's instructions</a> to its apparel brand affiliates to review their direct and indirect sourcing relationships in the Uyghur Region and identify alternative sourcing opportunities. The FLA pledged to work with governments, civil society, unions, and multilateral organizations to achieve an end to the violations in the Uyghur Region.</li> <li>→ Be aware of the status of assurance frameworks. For example, the <a href="#">Better Cotton Initiative</a> announced that it was suspending its licensing activities in the Uyghur Region because the operating environment prevents credible assurance and licensing.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborate with MSIs in sharing data and developing methodologies and standards to assess risk through human rights due diligence.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ For example, collaborate with the Responsible Sourcing Network (RSN), which is seeking support for the modification of its YESS (Yarn Ethically &amp; Sustainably Sourced) Standard to eliminate the Uyghur Region cotton yarn from entering textile mills globally. <a href="#">RSN</a> released YESS in 2019 to encourage a due diligence approach and verification to ensure sub-suppliers are not using cotton harvested with forced labor.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborate with industry associations in outreach to governments.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Support calls for collaborative action such as apparel brands' and retailers' recent call through <a href="#">industry associations</a> for state-to-state engagement and partnerships across government, industry, labor advocates, CSOs, and other stakeholders to develop and deploy a collective approach to finding constructive solutions for the human rights crisis in the Uyghur Region to protect the rights of workers and the integrity of global supply chains. This collaborative action, however, is not a replacement for individual companies and investors executing their human rights due diligence in the Uyghur Region and beyond.</li> </ul>

### III. THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

**Participate in joint investor statements to companies to take action to address human rights crises.**

→ Organize and sign joint investor statements. For example, the 2013 [investor statement signed by more than 200 institutional investors from 12 countries](#) calling on brands and retailers to join the [Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety \(Accord\)](#). The Accord, made up of brands and trade unions, is a binding agreement to address the human rights crisis facing apparel workers following the [Rana Plaza building collapse](#).



## Governments

### RECOMMENDED ACTION:

**Petition government agencies to sanction companies and officials participating in human rights abuses.**

### EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON PEOPLE:

- Petition U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to issue Withhold Release Orders (WROs) for companies known to use forced labor, as has been done against an [apparel manufacturer](#) and a [hair products manufacturer](#) operating in the Uyghur Region. A recent [guide](#) provides details on how to petition the government to block a product from entry at a U.S. port.
- Request that the Bureau of Industry and Security, U.S. Department of Commerce (BIS), place Chinese business or governmental entities engaged in, or profiting from, forced labor on the list of entities barred from purchasing American products, as was done when [28 organizations](#), including a number of technology companies, were blacklisted in October 2019 and an additional [nine entities](#) were added in May 2020.
- Support the [submission made by Global Legal Action Network](#) to the UK's revenue and customs authority that the UK's Foreign Prison-Made Goods Act 1897 prohibit the importation of Chinese cotton products produced with forced labor.
- Support the efforts of [Human Rights First](#) to prepare case submissions to the U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) under the 2016 Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which allows the sanctioning of human rights abusers and corrupt foreign officials by blocking their property and interests in the U.S.

### III. THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

	<p>→ and prohibiting transactions with them. In July 2020, <a href="#">OFAC sanctioned</a> one Chinese government entity and four current or former government officials in connection with serious rights abuses against ethnic minorities in the Uyghur Region.</p>
<p><b>Support legislation that seeks to address the human rights situation in the Uyghur Region.</b></p>	<p>Support legislative efforts such as:</p> <p>→ The <a href="#">Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act</a>, which was introduced in March 2020 and seeks to prevent goods made with forced labor from entering the U.S. market through a certification process for importers.</p> <p>→ The <a href="#">Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act</a> signed into U.S. law in June 2020 that imposes sanctions against Chinese officials found responsible for oppressing its Uyghur minority.</p>
<p><b>Engage with government officials and business associations to raise human rights issues ahead of bilateral and multilateral dialogues with China.</b></p>	<p>→ Use bilateral (e.g. EU-China Summit, Swiss-China Human Rights Dialogue) and multilateral (e.g. G20, OECD) events as an opportunity to engage with their governments and represented industry associations to raise awareness on human rights issues and press China to end abuses in the Uyghur Region.</p>
<p><b>Participate in joint investor letters calling on governments to take action to address human rights crises.</b></p>	<p>→ For example, in February 2019 the <a href="#">Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)</a> coordinated an action of 130 investors who signed a <a href="#">letter to Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh</a> and the Bangladesh Ministers of Commerce and Labour, urging the government to support the continued operation of the <a href="#">Accord on Fire and Building Safety</a> in Bangladesh, independently and without restriction, to protect garment workers from unsafe factory conditions.</p>




### III. THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE ACTION



## International organizations

RECOMMENDED ACTION:	EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON PEOPLE:
Engage with the UN, including the UN Business and Human Rights Working Group and other Special Procedures, on businesses' need to respect human rights.	→ For example, publicly support the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression's call for robust human rights safeguards to regulate the <a href="#">sale of private surveillance technology</a> and the use of such technology by governments and private actors.
Support international organizations' available mechanisms to address human rights violations.	→ File a petition to the ILO from a national union or the International Trade Union Confederation, based on Article 24 (ILO Constitution) which would require a government to "pursue, as a major goal, an active policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment"
Use public and private means to encourage governments' efforts at the UN Human Rights Council to call for independent, unfettered access by UN experts.	→ Seek access for the <a href="#">High Commissioner for Human Rights</a> to the Uyghur Region and follow-up reporting that can provide objective, expert analysis of the situation. The Fact-Finding Mission on <a href="#">Myanmar</a> (later the Independent International Investigation on Myanmar), which resulted in a report containing recommendations to companies and annexes listing military-owned and foreign and domestic businesses contributing to or benefiting from the Myanmar military, can serve as a model.
Use the margins of international fora (e.g. Forum on Business and Human Rights, OECD Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct) to host multi-stakeholder discussions on the issue.	→ For example, an investor representative participated on a panel addressing corporate efforts to tackle forced labor by eliminating worker-paid recruitment fees in supply chains. The panel was organized by the Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment Governments at the <a href="#">2016 UN Forum on Business and Human Rights</a> . The International Trade Union Confederation, two companies, an NGO labor rights group, human rights NGOs, migrant worker groups, and multi-stakeholder initiatives participated in this dialogue.



**"In a broader context of repression including mass internment of Uyghur and other Turkic peoples, invasive mass surveillance, wide-spread forced labour and forced sterilisation on Uyghur and other Turkic women, international brands must be wary of their presence in the region, at risk of complying with a regime that's committing genocide. This goes beyond the apparel industry; the technology, food and beverage and the auto-manufacturer industries all have their share of corporate responsibility."**

**ZUMRETAY ARKIN, WORLD UYGHUR CONGRESS**

## CONCLUSION

The Chinese government's involvement in human rights violations, evidence of wide-spread forced labor, lack of transparency, and the inability to implement credible audits make the Uyghur Region a high-risk investment, production, sourcing, and business environment. Standard efforts, such as traditional social auditing, to identify and address human rights risks will not suffice.

Ongoing, enhanced human rights due diligence must be undertaken to determine whether a business relationship directly links an investor through its portfolio companies to severe human rights impacts. Investors will need to determine whether identified potential or actual harms can be ceased, prevented, or mitigated. Otherwise, steps need to be taken to end business relationships responsibly, limiting any additional human rights harms to the greatest extent possible.

In addition to ongoing engagement with companies, the complexity of the situation in the Uyghur Region points to the benefits of innovative, collaborative approaches to tackling human rights risks. No one investor or company can affect significant change on its own. Efforts to work collectively and creatively with other investors, companies, industry associations, policy makers, governments, international organizations, CSOs, human rights defenders, Uyghur human rights groups, and academics to continue to press the Chinese government to end its oppressive and abusive policies could represent a path forward based on the cumulative leverage of all stakeholders.

# ANNEX A: SALIENT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN THE UYGHUR REGION

Human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible, interrelated, and interdependent. They apply to everyone, everywhere, and cannot be taken away. Of particular relevance for the situation in the Uyghur Region, the fulfilment of one right often depends upon the fulfilment of others – or, stated somewhat differently, the violation of one right is often connected to the violation of others. When identifying salient human rights issues, investors and companies should bear this interconnected nature of rights in mind as they assess the full range of human rights that could be negatively impacted by their activities or through their business relationships.

This Annex provides a detailed list of human rights set out in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR) that are currently being violated by Chinese government authorities, at times with the involvement of business enterprises. Although not comprehensive, it does demonstrate the wide-range and interconnected nature of human rights abuses experienced by Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples.

## **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Article 2:**

***Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status & UDHR Article 7: All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law***

A 2018 report on China by the [UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) describes the systematic discrimination against and oppression of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples in the Uyghur Region, including their mass detention under the pretext of countering terrorism and religious extremism, the criminalization of peaceful civic and religious expression, and the marginalization of the Uyghur language.

Gender-based discrimination and sexual violence against Uyghur and other Turkic and Muslim-majority women have been reported by women released from re-education camps. [Media reports](#) have revealed the use of forced abortions and sterilization, as well as forced inter-marriage with Han Chinese men.

## **UDHR Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.**

According to [Human Rights Watch](#), after launching in 2014 its “Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism” the government drastically increased the number of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples held in pretrial detention centers, prisons, and political re-education camps. Those detained have been denied due process rights, and various sources have reported deaths in the camps due to abuse and poor conditions.

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<p><b>UDHR Article 5: <i>No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.</i></b></p>	<p>An <a href="#">Amnesty International</a> report contains first-hand accounts of the harsh treatment of detainees in political re-education centers. Those that resist or fail to show adequate progress in their “re-education” face punishments ranging from “verbal abuse to food deprivation, solitary confinement, beatings and use of restraints and stress positions.”</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 9: <i>No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.</i></b></p>	<p>The political re-education centers have no legal basis in Chinese or international law and people are detained for any number of reasons without due process. These centers amount to “<a href="#">extrajudicial internment</a>”.</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 12: <i>No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation</i></b>  <b>&amp; Article 13: <i>Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within borders of each State.</i></b></p>	<p>As part of its “Strike Hard Campaign Against Violent Terrorism”, the Chinese government developed the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) which enables sweeping surveillance of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples by collecting massive amounts of personal information and tracking their activities. In addition, people have been forced to provide biometric data and DNA samples. The data has been used for predictive policing to identify those deemed a potential threat and to target individuals for investigation and detention or others forms of restrictions on movement. Outside the country, Uyghurs and Turkic Muslim groups in the diaspora report being subject to surveillance and harassment.</p> <p>Chinese authorities assign cadres and government workers to spend time with ethnic minority families as part of the “homestay” program. These individuals are expected to provide education on Communist Party doctrine and report suspicious “extremist” behaviors, such as the possession of the Quran or unwillingness to drink alcohol. In some instances, the information gathered has been used to send the hosts to internment camps.</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 16: <i>The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.</i></b></p>	<p>Muslim ethnic minority children are being separated from their families. According to <a href="#">Human Rights Watch</a>, children of detainees and exiles are being housed in state-run child welfare institutions and boarding schools without parental consent or access. Women forced to work full-time in rural <a href="#">satellite factories</a> must put their children in childcare facilities. In both cases, children are in state-controlled settings, where their basic rights are being denied, including to their language and cultural heritage.</p>



## ANNEX A: SALIENT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN THE UYGHUR REGION

<p><b>UDHR: Article 18: <i>Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.</i></b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Congressional-Executive Commission on China</a> reports that Chinese officials use the need to “sinicize” religion and counter extremism to justify measures to repress Islamic religious faith and Muslim cultural identity, such as restricting religious ceremonies, destroying religious books, and forcing Muslims to take actions in violation of their beliefs, such as drinking alcohol, eating pork, and failing to observe Ramadan. Mosques have been destroyed and attendance has been restricted and deterred. Authorities have used the exercise of Islamic religious beliefs as grounds for internment.</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 19: <i>Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.</i></b></p>	<p><a href="#">Human Rights Watch</a> reports that Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples have been sent to internment camps for using encrypted communication tools such as WhatsApp, sharing information about Islam, and communicating with family, friends and rights groups outside of China. Police check whether people use certain software provided by foreign companies to communicate with those abroad, such as virtual private networks and WhatsApp.</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 20: <i>Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.</i></b></p>	<p>Ethnic minorities’ right to freedom of association is being threatened by mass data collection and the system of surveillance enabled by the <a href="#">Integrated Joint Operations Platform</a> (IJOP). One data point fed into the IJOP are people’s relationship networks. The IJOP flags for authorities’ people who have associated with individuals deemed politically threatening. The comprehensive tracking of people’s movements and relationships deters association.</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 23: <i>Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.</i></b></p>	<p>Forced labor is a widespread practice in the Uyghur Region actively encouraged by Chinese authorities. According to research by Adrian Zenz, <a href="#">laborers</a> experience various degrees of restriction of freedom of movement and infringement on rights to liberty and security. First, Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples, so-called “rural surplus laborers,” are mandated to work in satellite factories in rural areas. Authorities claim the factories alleviate rural poverty. Second, detained and recently released subjects of “re-education” are forced to work. The Chinese government provides subsidies to companies, in particular those from</p>

## ANNEX A: SALIENT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN THE UYGHUR REGION

	<p>the Eastern coast, willing to open factories and “train” and employ detainees. Finally, Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples in the traditional prison system must also work. Since laborers subject to various degrees of coercion often work side-by-side, including at times with trainees from legitimate vocational schools, “differentiating forced internment camp labor from other forms of coercive labor is becoming an impossible task”.</p> <p>The forced labor of Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples is not limited to the Uyghur Region. A recent <a href="#">report</a> describes how a government sponsored and subsidized labor transfer program has resulted in an estimated 80,000 workers, including recently released detainees, being placed in factories across nine provinces. The workers live in segregated dormitories, undergo mandated Mandarin and ideological training, are surveilled and have limited freedom of movement, and may not practice their religion. Refusal to work can result in renewed detention. The use of coerced Uyghur labor throughout China complicates corporate efforts to detect forced labor in supply chains.</p>
<p><b>UDHR Article 27: <i>Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.</i></b></p>	<p>Chinese officials are seeking to undermine the Turkic Muslim culture of the Muslim-majority peoples in the Uyghur Region. For example, leading <a href="#">Turkic intellectuals and cultural figures</a>, including Uyghur, Kazakh, and Kyrgyz scholars, musicians, writers, and journalists, are being detained in internment camps and other facilities. <a href="#">Mosques and Islamic shrines</a> are being destroyed. Schools in the Uyghur Region, although allegedly offering “bilingual” education, discourage or outright <a href="#">ban the use of Uyghur</a> and seek to mainstream the use of Mandarin. Adults are also coerced to study Mandarin in night schools and internment camps.</p>

# ANNEX B: RESOURCES

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## Information on salient human rights issues in the Uyghur Region:

- [Amnesty International's China reports](#)
- [Congressional-Executive Commission on China's the Uyghur Region report \(2019\)](#)
- [Congressional Research Service's report on the Uyghur Region \(Mar 2020\)](#)
- [China Uncovered](#), Frontline episode on the Uyghur Region (2020)
- The U.S. Department of State together with the U.S. Departments of Treasury, Commerce, and Homeland Security's [joint business advisory](#) on reputational, legal, and economic risks of supply chain links to entities that engage in human rights abuses in the Uyghur Region (July 2020)
- The U.S. [State Department's](#) yearly human rights country reports
- [UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) report describing the systematic discrimination against Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples in the Uyghur Region (Aug 2018)
- UN Human Rights Council's third [Universal Periodic Review](#) of China (Dec 2018)
- UN rapporteurs and working groups' [legal analysis of China's Counter-terrorism Law](#) (Nov 2019)
- [Uyghur Human Rights Project](#), home to an extensive annotated bibliography of news reports, academic works, and other resources that are regularly updated
- Zenz, Adrian, Central Asian Survey, '[Thoroughly reforming them towards a healthy heart attitude](#)': China's political re-education campaign in Xinjiang (2018)
- Zenz, Adrian, Journal of Political Risk, [Break their Roots: Evidence for China's Parent Child Separation Campaign in Xinjiang](#) (2019)
- Zenz, Adrian, Foreign Policy article, [Xinjiang's New Slavery](#) (Dec 2019)

### Information exposing specific companies for alleged involvement in human rights abuses in the Uyghur Region:

#### Apparel

- Center for Strategic and International Studies' (CSIS) [report](#) contains annexes of factories in eastern China that have paired with factories in the Uyghur Region and offered material support to government efforts to “re-educate” Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim-majority peoples through work (Oct 2019)
- Labor rights organizations like the [Worker Rights Consortium](#) and [Fair Labor Association](#) have investigated apparel companies in the Uyghur Region

#### Technology

- Australian Strategic Policy Institute's (ASPI) [report Mapping China's Tech Giants](#) highlights areas where the expansion of Chinese technology companies is leading to political and geostrategic dilemmas (April 2020)
- The Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce amended the [Entity List](#) in [October 2019](#) and [May 2020](#), adding 37 blacklisted Chinese organizations implicated in abuses in the Uyghur Region including through the provision of video surveillance, artificial intelligence, and voice recognition and data capabilities.
- Human Rights Watch's [report](#) on China's Algorithm of Repression (May 2019)
- Investigative and research report by Top10VPN on [US technology companies](#) providing services to blacklisted surveillance tech companies (May 2020)
- The Hill [report](#) on US technology companies ties to mass surveillance in China (Nov 2019)

#### Multiple sectors

- Australian Strategic Policy Institute's (ASPI) [report Uyghurs For Sale](#) includes tables identifying 83 foreign and Chinese companies directly or indirectly benefiting from the use of the coerced labor of Uyghur workers outside of the Uyghur Region through the labor transfer program (Mar 2020)
- ChinaFile's lists of [Fortune 500 companies](#) (Oct 2018) and [European companies](#) (Sept 2019) with a presence in the Uyghur Region
- The [Congressional-Executive Commission on China's](#) report list products associated with forced labor in the Uyghur Region and names 20 companies suspected of directly employing or sourcing from suppliers using forced labor (Mar 2020)
- US Customs and Border Protection issues Withhold Release Orders ([WRO](#)) for products suspected of being made with forced labor