



Forum:	Security Council
Issue:	The situation of Uighurs in China
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The United Nations Security Council

The United Nations Security Council was founded in 1945 and officially came into existence in 1946 under the UN Charter holding its first session on 17 January. The Security Council has now taken permanent residence at the UN headquarters in New York. It is also often considered the most important organ of the UN since its resolutions are binding for all members of the UN. Additionally, the SC is the only committee that can enforce economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, travel bans, severance of diplomatic relations, blockades and even collective military action.¹

The Security Council has four main purposes which are:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations.²

The non-permanent members of the Security Council are elected by the General Assembly for a two-year term. Each year the GA elects five non-permanent members but countries can't be reelected immediately. All delegates should be aware that it is a great honor to be a part of the Security Council and that it also brings a lot of responsibility.

¹ <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/what-security-council>

² ibid



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It is also important to know that the procedure in the Security Council differs from the one in the other committees.

There is no lobbying process, as the resolutions are ad-hoc resolutions, which consist only of Operative Clauses made through amendments. After the amendments have been debated on separately, there is time in favor and against the whole resolution. In order to prevent a P5 nation to vote against a resolution, one of the permanent members can make a motion to hold a P5 caucus. If that motion is seconded by the other four P5 nations and granted by the President of the Security Council, the President stops the debate and holds a short meeting with the P5 nations where they can discuss their voting behavior in order to find a compromise. With their veto power, the P5 nations can choose whether they make use of their power (vote with/ without privilege). This has to be approved by the Secretaries General. Please note that in the Security Council 9 votes in favor are needed to pass an amendment or a resolution as a whole.³

Useful Links for further research on the Security Council:

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

<https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>

https://www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/2012-2013/Part%20V/2012-2013_Part%20V.pdf

<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/functions-and-powers>

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/role-of-security-council>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Security-Council>

Represented Countries in the SC at MUNoH 2021:

- China (P5)
- Estonia
- France (P5)
- India
- Ireland
- Kenya
- Mexico
- Niger
- Norway
- Russian Federation (P5)
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Tunisia
- United Kingdom (P5)
- United States (P5)
- Vietnam

³ Adopted from the Delegates Booklet 2021



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Description of the issue:

Basic information:

- The Uighur⁴ are a Turkish people dominant in Mongolia and eastern Turkestan from the 8th to 12th centuries A.D., who are now living mainly in western China, more precisely the region of Xinjiang.⁵
- The number of Uighurs in China is approximately 12 million and they are mostly Muslim. They have an own language which is similar to Turkish and they feel close to Central Asian nations in terms of culture and ethnicity.
- The Uighurs are accusing the Chinese government and specific senior officials of mass detention, torture and genocide. The charge has been brought before the International Criminal Court by two Uighur organizations. However, China is denying any mistreatment of the Uighur minority.
- Nevertheless, the call for justice and information from the international community has increased over the last years and despite the efforts of the Chinese government to keep everything inside the walls of such camps or high political discussions many Uighurs have raised their voices.

Thus, the global community exerts further pressure on the United Nations and especially the UNSC in order to take action. However, China's veto right in the SC is a major obstacle for achieving a common statement or to even pass a resolution.

⁴ Uighur [wee-goor]

⁵ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/uighur>

Background information:

History:

In the early 20th century, the Uighurs population attempted to become independent but in 1949 the region where many Uighurs were settled was put under control of the newly established Communist government in China. In the 1950s the region Xinjiang was established which is located in the north-west of the country and is the biggest region in China as visible on this map that shows the Uighur population in Xinjiang. Kashgar and Aksu both are big cities in Xinjiang and the home of many Uighurs.



Like other regions in China, e.g. Tibet, its status is autonomous, meaning it has a regional government and thus some self-governance but in practice it still is controlled and restricted by the Chinese central government. The region mostly consists of desert and the main resources produced there are cotton, actually about a fifth of the world's cotton is produced there, but also oil and natural gas. Beijing considers Xinjiang as an important trade link to Central Asia and Europe based on its proximity to both.

Since 1950 large numbers of the ethnic Chinese population (Han) began moving to Xinjiang and especially after 1990, in the late 20th century, the Han made up two-fifths of Xinjiang's total population. When the tensions between the two groups grew due to economic and ethnic disparities the region was particularly affected by protests and other disturbances. In July 2009 the situation escalated into a particularly violent incident in Ürümqi which resulted in the death of 200 people, mostly Han, and more than 1,700 people were injured. Following that outbreak the violence in the region increased, causing numerous attacks from assailants holding knives and suicide bombers. The harsh response of the Chinese government included shootings, arrests and long jail sentences



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for Uighurs suspected of being regime critics and separatists. That ended in 2017 as the government of China initiated a thorough crackdown on Uighurs in Xinjiang. Under the guise of the need of greater security in the region the government put up cameras as well as checkpoints and supported constant police patrols in areas where the Uighurs were dominant. The most controversial action of the Chinese however was to indefinitely detain up to one million Uighurs in so called political training centers. Many human rights organizations think that the Chinese government carried it too far with that step and even the United Nations called upon China in August 2018 to end the detention. All those requests were neither fulfilled nor does it seem like they were received. The Chinese government only denied the existence of such camps.

Current situation:

Currently, China does not deny the presence of such camps but they say they are for education, especially vocational training and to fight extremism and there was never any abuse, forced labor or discrimination. However, there is proof, in form of people who have experienced those camps, that the small films about the inside of the camps that the Chinese government produced for the public are not showing the reality.

With deep concern the international community however notices that because the world depends on Xinjiang for its cotton supply and in general on good trade relations with China it is much more difficult to interfere in China's internal affairs.

Nevertheless, some international fashion companies which were under pressure of human rights organizations took steps towards combating forced labor of Uighurs and stopped the import of cotton from the region Xinjiang.

How to prepare as a delegate:

All delegates should write a position paper for each topic. As already stated, we will create a resolution together thus you do not need to prepare a draft resolution. However, you should think of possible solutions for the issues at hand that represent the position of your country and prepare at least two Operative Clauses for each topic in advance.

For your preparation it is also important to take a look at the position of other countries in the SC since that will help you later in the debates. For the topic concerning the Uighurs in China you should have in mind that China is a P5 nation meaning it has a veto right. In order for the SC to pass



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a resolution you should try to find compromises with China since no resolution will be passed otherwise. Of course, the same stands for the other P5 nations.

Please also note that the deadline for handing in your position papers is the 16.08.2021. You can send them via email to me (svenja.vahl@gym-meiendorf.de).

And now have fun preparing for the conference in September. I am very much looking forward to seeing you all.

Best wishes

Svenja Vahl

Secretary General/President of the Security Council

UN documents:

https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/supporting_resources/190305_joint_statement_xinjiang_hrc.pdf

Useful links:

(Please just copy and paste if the link is not working)

For research on your country:

<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>

For general research:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/china-myanmar-face-ughurs-rohingya-are-fighting-back-after-years-ncna1240259>

<https://www.un.org/>

The Uighur point of view:

<https://www.uyghurmovement.com/>

The Chinese point of view:

english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/201908/17/content_WS5d57573cc6d0c6695ff7ed6c.html

http://english.www.gov.cn/news/photos/201908/26/content_WS5d6339abc6d0c6695ff7f497.html

In general, try to use reliable sources such as but not limited to well researched newspaper articles or official NGO or government websites.