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The cases of unjustly imprisoned Uyghurs in China, notably Ilham Tohti and Gulshan Abbas

European Parliament resolution of 10 October 2024 on the cases of unjustly imprisoned Uyghurs in China, notably Ilham Tohti and Gulshan Abbas (2024/2857(RSP))

(C/2025/207)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to Articles 4 and 36 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC),

— having regard to Rules 150(5) and 136(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas in 2014 Ilham Tohti was convicted of politically motivated charges of 'separatism' and sentenced to life imprisonment; whereas he worked to foster dialogue between Uyghurs and Han Chinese; whereas he was awarded the 2019 Sakharov Prize;

B. whereas Gulshan Abbas is serving a 20-year sentence on fallacious terrorism-related charges relating to activities of her sister, a defender of the human rights of persecuted Uyghurs in the PRC;

C. whereas this reflects the PRC authorities' systemic repression of Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR); whereas Uyghurs are arbitrarily detained in internment camps and forced to renounce their ethnic identity and religious beliefs;

D. whereas the defence of human rights, democracy and the rule of law should be at the centre of EU-PRC relations;

1. Strongly condemns the PRC's violations of the human rights of Uyghurs and people in Tibet, Hong Kong, Macau and mainland China;

2. Urges the PRC to immediately and unconditionally release Ilham Tohti and Gulshan Abbas, as well as those arbitrarily detained in China and those mentioned by the EU during the 57th session of the UN Human Rights Council, guarantee their access to medical care and lawyers, provide information on their whereabouts and ensure family visiting rights; calls for the EU and the Member States to apply pressure in this respect at every high-level contact;

3. Calls for the EU and the Member States to adopt additional sanctions against high-ranking officials and entities involved in human rights violations in the PRC;

4. Demands that the PRC authorities halt their repression and targeting of Uyghurs with abusive policies, including intense surveillance, forced labour, sterilisation, birth prevention measures and the destruction of Uyghur identity, which amount to crimes against humanity and a serious risk of genocide; calls for the closure of all internment camps;

5. Strongly condemns the PRC for not implementing the recommendations of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); calls on the PRC to allow the OHCHR independent access to XUAR and invites the OHCHR to issue a comprehensive situational update and an action plan for holding the PRC accountable;

6. Regrets the PRC's lack of commitment to the Human Rights Dialogue and the absence of results;

7. Calls on Member States and the international community to suspend extradition treaties with the PRC and Hong Kong, respect the non-refoulement principle and implement the OHCHR report;

8. Urges Member States to address the transnational repression of Chinese dissidents and Uyghurs on their territory and prosecute individuals responsible;

9. Welcomes the EU's forced labour regulation and insists on its full implementation; calls on businesses operating in the PRC, particularly in XUAR, to comply with their HR due diligence obligations;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the PRC authorities, the VP/HR, the Commission, the Member States and the United Nations.