

Human Rights Council 39th session

ITEM 4 - GENERAL DEBATE, SEPTEMBER 2018

Speaker: Salma El Hosseiny

Thank you.

The government of China is engaged in an all-out assault on the human rights of its own citizens, in particular Muslim minority Uyghurs and Kazakhs. It patently denies this, despite mounting evidence.

Last week, the Chinese delegation reprimanded the new High Commissioner for referencing concerns in this regard.

Yet the CERD Committee found sufficient reason to believe that nearly one million Turkic Muslim individuals are being held in internment camps, subject to political indoctrination, without any legal basis. Family and friends abroad are often threatened into silence.

The Chinese delegation declared that arbitrary detention or torture of ethnic minority individuals and communities does not exist.

Yet in the weeks before this session, in addition to the CERD report, two Special Procedures and the Committee against Torture provided information to the contrary.

The Chinese delegation states that too little attention is paid to its success in the area of economic, social and cultural rights. But recent Communications show that ESC violations are endemic throughout China, sometimes as a direct result of government policy.

Finally, China continues to threaten that scrutiny of its record here at the Council constitutes 'interference in judicial sovereignty'. Yet its willingness to manipulate the judicial process and to attack those working to safeguard fundamental freedoms makes a mockery of claims to 'rule of law'.

We call on China to ensure right to counsel of choice, cease secret trials, and urgently release all who are deprived of liberty for their human rights work, including lawyer Yu Wensheng.