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One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
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May 12, 2022

The Honorable Michelle Bachelet
High Commissioner
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Dear High Commissioner Bachelet,

I write with grave concern that your planned trip to the People's Republic of China (PRC) this month, to include travel to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang), will be used by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to manipulate the United Nations and promulgate lies about their atrocities against the Uyghurs and other minorities. I am convinced that CCP leadership will undermine the purpose of your visit to investigate and observe the state of human rights in the PRC.

I strongly urge you to continue investigating the horrible crimes carried out against the Uyghurs and other minority groups in Xinjiang, but I warn you that the CCP will allow no independent, credible inspection. It has been reported that your office and the PRC have reached an agreement to facilitate this visit and that members of an Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) delegation have already arrived in the country. The terms of this new agreement must include full transparency and meaningful access to Xinjiang and its local residents; lacking such assurances will lead to a very problematic situation. At minimum, the agreement should include freedom of movement for the OHCHR delegation, freedom of inquiry, confidential and unsupervised contact with local populations through UN translators, freedom to record video and gather evidence, and complete access to PRC government documents. If these terms are not met, I am convinced that any travel cannot be considered a valid investigation and, worse, will be used only for CCP propaganda.

The ongoing genocide against Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang has been confirmed by this and the last United States Administrations. As Chair of the China Task Force, I spearheaded

the release of a [report](#) that highlighted these abuses, including the fact that more than one million Uyghurs and other religious and ethnic minorities in the PRC are being held against their will in concentration camps. In December 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives spoke with one voice when it passed a landmark resolution condemning the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity being committed against Uyghurs and other minority groups in the PRC. Other elected bodies in Canada, the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and the Netherlands have similarly condemned the CCP's abuses.

At the United Nations, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield has publicly [described](#) how “the rights of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang are being abused and violated to the extreme.” A coalition of 43 countries in October 2021 [issued](#) a powerful joint statement expressing concern about the credible reports of widespread and systemic human rights violations being carried out in Xinjiang. As the foremost human rights official at the United Nations, you have a unique and powerful opportunity to speak out against these abuses and bring the truth to light. I urge you in the strongest terms to take advantage of this platform to speak for those who are being silenced in Xinjiang.

To this end, I also urge you to release your office's long-awaited report on human rights abuses in Xinjiang. In September 2021, you [stated](#) that your office was “finalising its assessment of the available information on allegations of serious human rights violations in that region, with a view to making it public.” First announced in 2018, it is time for this investigation's findings to be made available to the world. Failing to release this report will send dangerous signals that the United Nations does not intend to hold the PRC accountable for well-documented human rights abuses, and it will raise serious doubts about the investigation's independence from political pressure.

Your travel would send a powerful signal, as the first visit of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the PRC in decades. However, any visit that includes less than full, unfettered, and independent investigative access will be used by the CCP to facilitate the very type of atrocities that your office was created to condemn and will diminish the credibility of your office.

Please join the growing chorus of voices in condemning the horrible abuses being committed in Xinjiang and demanding accountability from the CCP. It is far past time for the world to hear the truth from your organization.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL

cc:

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield