

URGENT ACTION

GRAVE FEARS FOR MISSING UIGHUR PHD STUDENT

Guligeina Tashimaimaiti has not been heard from since 26 December 2017, when she returned from Malaysia to her hometown in Yili, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Her family fear that she has been detained at a re-education camp and is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Guligeina Tashimaimaiti, a PhD student at the University of Technology, Malaysia, was last seen by her friend Sammy (name changed to protect identity) at Malaysia's Senai International Airport on 26 December 2017. They had both agreed that Guligeina Tashimaimaiti would change her photo on WeChat, a popular Chinese social media platform, every week as a sign that she was safe.

Guligeina Tashimaimaiti changed her profile photo one week after her return home to Yili, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR). However, the profile photo remained the same for a couple of weeks, until one day her background photo suddenly changed to a dark, black and white, gloomy photo of something that looked like a prison cell.

Given the ongoing and unprecedented crackdown in the XUAR against Uighurs and other ethnic minorities, both Sammy and Guligeina Tashimaimaiti's older sister Gulzire fear that she might have been detained in a re-education camp. Despite being warned by friends and family not to return to the region, Guligeina Tashimaimaiti was worried about her parents, whom she had not been able to contact since her last visit to Yili in February 2017.

Guligeina Tashimaimaiti was due to start her PhD studies in February 2018. After not hearing from her in several months, Gulzire and Sammy decided to approach the university in Malaysia and the media to raise the profile of the case.

1) TAKE ACTION

Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:

- Release Guligeina Tashimaimaiti and drop any charges against her unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that she has committed an internationally recognized offence and is granted a fair trial in line with international standards;
- Ensure that Guligeina Tashimaimaiti has regular, unrestricted access to a lawyer of her choice and her family and is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment;
- Ensure that everybody in the XUAR is able to communicate with family members and others, including with family members living in other countries, without interference unless justified in line with international human rights law.

Contact these two officials by 2 August, 2018:

Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region
Chen Quanguo
479 Zhongshan Lu
Wulumuqi Shi, Xinjiang
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Secretary

Ambassador Cui Tiankai
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
3505 International Place NW,
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: 202 495 2266 | Fax: 202 495 2138
Email: chinaembpress_us@mfa.gov.cn
(If you receive an error message, please try calling instead!)
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

[Click here](#) to let us know if you took action on this case! *This is Urgent Action 122.18*

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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Under the leadership of the XUAR Communist Party Secretary Chen Quanguo, numerous detention facilities have been set up within the region. Referred to as “counter extremism centres”, “political study centres” or “education and transformation centres”, these are facilities in which people are arbitrarily detained for unspecified periods and forced to study Chinese laws and policies. People are often sent to these detention facilities if they are known religious practitioners, have relations with “foreign contacts” or have themselves been caught up in social stability campaigns or have relatives who were involved in the same.

Media reports and information obtained by Amnesty International indicate that people in the XUAR are at great risk of arbitrary detention if they communicate with their relatives who live overseas. Authorities have detained people who receive phone calls from outside of China. Authorities have also tried to ensure that nobody uses encrypted messaging apps, forcing people to rely instead on domestic apps that have no encryption or other privacy safeguards.

While Uighurs and other predominately Muslim ethnic minorities in the XUAR have long suffered violations of their rights to freedom of religion and association and other human rights, over the past year or more authorities there have begun targeting them more comprehensively in an unprecedented crackdown. Techniques of repression include the widespread use of arbitrary detention, technological surveillance, heavily armed street patrols, security checkpoints and an array of intrusive policies violating human rights.

There have been numerous reports that Chinese authorities in the XUAR have effectively sidestepped the procedural protections afforded to criminal defendants under Chinese law, many Uighur detainees have been denied legal counsel.

In addition to information gathered by Amnesty International, media reports from Radio Free Asia, BuzzFeed, the *Globe and Mail*, the Associated Press and others indicate that authorities throughout the region began detaining Uighurs en masse in the spring of 2017, either sending them to administrative detention facilities or sentencing them to long prison terms. This crackdown has been applied not only to Uighurs, but also to other predominantly Muslim ethnicities, such as Kazakhs, and Kyrgyz.

Name: Guligeina Tashimaimaiti

Gender m/f: f

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