

URGENT ACTION

PROMINENT KAZAKH WRITER HELD IN SECRET DETENTION

Zhengis Reskhan (杰恩斯·热斯汉), a prominent Kazakh writer from China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, has been detained since March 19, 2026, following months of repeated police interrogations. Since he was taken away, his family has received no official notification of his detention, legal status, or the reasons for his detention, and has had no contact with him. According to his son, the authorities have verbally accused him of "promoting extremist thought" and "holding extremist thoughts" but have provided no formal charges or legal documents. His family, both in China and abroad, has also reportedly been subjected to surveillance and intimidation. Unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that Zhengis Reskhan has committed an internationally recognized criminal offense, he should be immediately released.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 71.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Minister Wang Xiaohong
Ministry of Public Security
14 Dongchangan Avenue
Dongcheng District, Beijing, 100741
People's Republic of China

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Embassy of China in the United States
Ambassador Xie Fang
3505 International Place, NW,
Washington DC 20008
Email: chinaembpress_us@mfa.gov.cn

Dear Minister Wang,

I am concerned about the detention of **Zhengis Reskhan (杰恩斯·热斯汉)**, a prominent Kazakh writer from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Uyghur region). I find it distressing that, since taking him into custody on March 19, 2026, the authorities have reportedly verbally alleged that he "promoted extremist thought" and "held extremist thoughts", yet no formal charges have been communicated or legal basis for his detention disclosed.

The authorities' failure to officially disclose Zhengis Reskhan's legal status or place of detention raises serious concerns that he is being held in secret and prolonged incommunicado detention, placing him at heightened risk of torture and other ill-treatment. I am also alarmed by reports that his family members in China and abroad have been subjected to surveillance and intimidation for seeking information about his case.

I urge you to release Zhengis Reskhan immediately and unconditionally unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognized criminal offense. Pending his release, ensure that he has prompt and regular access to a lawyer of his own choosing, his family, and any medical care he may require, and that he is protected from torture and other ill treatment. Finally, I urge you to end all intimidation, surveillance and reprisals against Zhengis Reskhan's family members, wherever they may reside, for seeking information about his case or peacefully exercising their human rights.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Zhengis Reskhan (杰恩斯·热斯汉), born on June 18, 1968, is a prominent ethnic Kazakh writer from Barkol Kazakh Autonomous County in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. One of the most ethnically diverse regions in China, an estimated half of the region's population belongs to predominantly Muslim ethnic groups, including Uyghurs and Kazakhs.

A member of the China Writers Association and the Xinjiang Writers Association, Zhengis Reskhan previously served as Chair of the Hami Regional Writers Association. He has published 13 literary works, primarily children's literature and humour, several of which have been officially translated from Kazakh into Chinese.

Beginning on December 28, 2025, Zhengis Reskhan was repeatedly summoned by police for questioning and detained for periods ranging from one day to one week before being released. On March 19, 2026, he was taken away again. Since then, according to his son, the family has received no official notification of his detention or legal status and no legal documentation whatsoever. The family has received unofficial information indicating that he is being held in Hami Prison in the Uyghur Region, but the authorities have never officially confirmed his place of detention. The authorities' continued failure to officially acknowledge his place of detention or legal status raises serious concerns that his detention may amount to an enforced disappearance under international human rights law. According to his son, relatives remaining in China have been subjected to surveillance and intimidation since Zhengis Reskhan's detention.

Amnesty International has documented widespread and systematic human rights violations against Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In its 2021 report [*Like We Were Enemies in a War*](#), Amnesty International concluded that the Chinese authorities have subjected an estimated one million people to arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, political indoctrination, and persecution on the basis of ethnicity and religion.

On August 31, 2022, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [concluded](#) that serious human rights violations had been committed in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in the context of the government's counter-terrorism and "de-extremification" policies, and that these violations may constitute crimes against humanity.

On July 1, 2026, China's [Ethnic Unity Law](#) entered into force. The law requires state institutions to promote "ethnic unity" and a shared Chinese national identity and further institutionalizes long-standing assimilation policies. The law provides an additional legal framework for restricting the cultural, linguistic and religious rights of ethnic minorities, including Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and Tibetans. Its broad and vaguely defined provisions may facilitate further restrictions on the peaceful exercise of human rights by members of non-Han ethnic communities both at home and abroad.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Chinese, English, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: November 30, 2026

NAME AND PRONOUN: Zhengis Reskhan / 杰恩斯·热斯汉 (he/him)