

SOCHUM STUDY GUIDE



SOCHUM
The Genocide of the Uyghurs within Central Asia

Letter from the Secretary General

Meritorious Participants,

It is with immense pride and excitement that I welcome you all to the very first session of CBKMUN'26. As the Secretary-General of this event, it is both an honor and a profound responsibility to lead this journey that we are beginning together.

CBKMUN'26 marks not only the start of a conference, but the beginning of a tradition. Every established institution once took its first courageous step, and today, we are taking ours. This conference has been built on dedication, long nights of preparation, passionate debates, and a shared belief that young minds have the power to shape tomorrow's world.

Our academic and organizational teams have worked tirelessly to ensure that this first edition of CBKMUN reflects excellence, inclusivity, and intellectual depth. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Academic Team, Organization Team, and every volunteer who contributed to transforming this vision into reality. Without their commitment and resilience, this conference would not have been possible.

Model United Nations is more than formal speeches and draft resolutions. It is a platform where future diplomats, policymakers, and global leaders learn the values of dialogue, compromise, and cooperation. In a world increasingly defined by polarization and uncertainty, diplomacy remains our most powerful tool. At CBKMUN'26, we aim to create an environment where diverse perspectives are respected, critical thinking is encouraged, and meaningful solutions are pursued.

As this is our very first conference, you are not only participants—you are pioneers. The debates you engage in, the friendships you form, and the standards you set will define the spirit and legacy of CBKMUN for years to come. You are shaping the identity of this conference.

I encourage each of you to step beyond your comfort zone, speak with confidence, listen with empathy, and challenge ideas with respect. Let this conference be a place where ambition meets responsibility and where collaboration triumphs over division.

On behalf of the entire Secretariat, I welcome you once again to CBKMUN'26. May this be the first of many remarkable chapters in our story.

Kind Regards

İsmail Sevgen

Letter from Head of Academy

Honorable Secretary General, Fellow Academy and Dear Delegates;

I am Rana Gülerler and wishing you an informative yet exciting three days at our first ever holding of ÇBK MUN. To briefly introduce myself, I am both the Head of Academy and Chair of the UNEP committee. Being a part of this project is an honor to me. Both me and my fellow Academy members, though our backgrounds may be distant, we came together with our shared endeavours and created each Agenda Item.

To vaguely talk about our Agendas; in our Junior committees, delegates will fight for women's and children's rights in conflicted areas. In our UNEP committee, they will discuss the unethical usage of Artificial Intelligence and how it is badly affecting our environment. In our SOCHUM committee, they will acknowledge the current events the Uyghurs are facing within Central Asia. In our ECOSOC committee, delegates will argue about tariffs within international trade, and in our UNHRC committee they will advocate for the protection of journalists and the right to information.

I hereby encourage each delegate of their respective committee to meticulously prepare and act vigilant in our debates in order to secure a flawless ambiance of debate. Your endeavours and hard work will forever be acknowledged diligently.

As the Head of Academy, I once again wish you an experience at our conference which will bring you productivity, valuable experiences, and lasting memories. You can always find me within the premises if you would like to discuss something.

Best Regards,
Rana D. Gülerler

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3. Introduction to SOCHUM

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. Established in 1945, the committee's work is deeply rooted in the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). All 193 member states are included in SOCHUM but non-member states and other organizations recognized by the UN as permanent observers can attend and participate in sessions, yet they do not possess voting rights.



SOCHUM aims to create peaceful solutions to social, humanitarian, and cultural problems around the world. It studies human rights issues, listens to experts, and works with other UN agencies to create resolutions that influence practices in member states. The committee discusses questions relating to proper treatment of refugees, protecting children, advancement of women, indigenous issues and the right to self-determination. SOCHUM also deals with issues concerning special groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, crime victims, and those affected by drugs. SOCHUM also initiates studies which encourage recommendations for the promotion of international cooperation and fundamental freedoms for all through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination.

The resolutions passed by SOCHUM are submitted to the UN General Assembly. Even though the non-binding resolutions arising in SOCHUM only reflect what the world thinks about a problem, it can create serious political and moral pressure on member states. When many countries agree on a resolution, it sends a strong message to the international committee.

SOCHUM does not directly manage the UN budget, however it plays a vital role in prioritizing humanitarian funding. When the committee passes a resolution which requires action, it signals the Fifth Committee (which is responsible for budgetary matters) that financial resources must be allocated to these areas.

It should be acknowledged that the resolutions in SOCHUM are not laws. They are non-binding recommendations which means the committee can not force a country to change its laws, impose sanctions or authorize military intervention against any country. In contrast to SOCHUM, the Security Council (UNSC) holds the authority to issue legally binding resolutions.

4. Introduction to Agenda Item

The Uyghurs are an ethnic group native to Xinjiang with Turkic origins. They are distinct from the Han Chinese, China's dominant ethnic group. According to the 2020 National

Census, The Uyghurs (11.62 million) are the largest Muslim ethnic group in China, slightly outnumbering the Hui (11.38 million). While the Uyghur population is almost entirely concentrated in Xinjiang, making their cultural and political identity inseparable from the region itself, the Hui are scattered across different provinces like Ningxia and Gansu. and Sunni Islam is an important part of Uyghur identity. Uyghur is spoken by approximately 10 million people and is also shared by other minority groups in the region.



Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region is the homeland of the Turkic-speaking Uyghurs in East Asia. Since China took control of the region, the world has witnessed this minority being victimized by serious human rights violations and inhumane treatment.

5. Background of the Issue

The genocide of the Uyghurs must be understood within the region's long history of systematic persecution, state-led repression and marginalization. In this context, persecution is not a temporary humanitarian interruption and cannot be approached as a temporary humanitarian interruption. Over time, persecution has become an immutable part of the region, shaping its political priorities, economic conditions, and social relations.

In the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Uyghurs have been suffering severe racism for decades, forcibly placed in camps and subjected to persecution. While the persecution in the region continues, political solutions have repeatedly failed and show no end in sight.

This issue cannot be resolved by a particular policy reform alone. Instead, factors such as governance practices in the region and international human rights considerations must be assessed. Solutions must be developed to prevent ethnic and religious discrimination in the region.

5.1 Historical Background

In 1949, after the Chinese Communist Party won the Chinese Civil War, Xinjiang was brought fully under the control of the newly established People's Republic of China (PRC). Although Xinjiang was granted the status of an autonomous region in 1955, actual political autonomy was never fully implemented.

In the 1950s, the Han population, the biggest ethnic group in China, accounted for approximately 6-7% of the total Xinjiang population; by the 1990s, this percentage had risen to around 35-40%. Migration of the Han population to Xinjiang was encouraged by the

Government of China; however, this migration was not entirely a natural demographic shift; rather, it was largely due to state-sponsored resettlement policies.

Central to this strategy was the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), also known as the Bingtuan. Founded in 1954, this paramilitary economic organization implements the government's demographic policies on the ground. The XPCC functions not only as an economic organization but also as a significant political authority. Although the Regional Administration appears “autonomous”, strategic decisions are always made by the Central Government in Beijing. The organization facilitated Han migration by establishing self-contained agricultural and industrial hubs, reclaiming vacant lands, and building infrastructure. Thousands of discharged soldiers from the Chinese Civil War and settlers from eastern provinces were relocated to the region for two main reasons.

Primarily, the relocation served strategic and national security interests. The Beijing government aimed to increase the presence of the loyal population in Xinjiang to fortify the borders with the Soviet Union and to integrate the region more closely into the PRC's central authority. Furthermore, the state offered economic incentives such as guaranteed employment, housing support and higher salaries. Xinjiang was presented as a land of opportunity, especially for the unemployed and impoverished in China's eastern provinces.

At the time, critical economic investments were made in the region, such as oil and natural gas extraction, infrastructure projects, urbanization and industrialization. However, the Han population was the primary beneficiary of these development projects. This situation has intensified perceptions of economic inequality and cultural pressure. Between the 1990s and the 2010s, numerous violent incidents and attacks were recorded. The Chinese government described these events as acts of separatism, extremism and terrorism.

Following 2014, the policy framework governing Xinjiang was restructured under Xi Jinping's guidance. Reports indicate that since 2017, over one million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities have been subjected to extensive detention in facilities referred to as “vocational education and training centers” by Chinese Officials. The published reports have referred to various measures, such as restrictions on religious practice and birth control policies. Many governments and institutions, including the U.S. State Department, have labelled these actions as genocide or crimes against humanity. The Chinese government has rejected these characterizations and stated that the policies are intended to combat extremism, promote economic prosperity and preserve social stability.

5.2 Key Events and Policy Developments

Certain periods have marked key turning points in the governance approach toward the Uyghur population in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In the early 21st century, regional development policies were primarily shaped around economic integration and infrastructure expansion. However, concerns about ethnic inequality and security increasingly came to the forefront of policy debates.

The Ürümqi riots in 2009 marked a significant shift in regional governance. After the social riots, officials reportedly expanded public security measures and monitoring mechanisms. Official statements increasingly linked regional stability to efforts to combat extremism.

After 2014, initiatives such as the “Strike Hard Campaign Against Violent Terrorism” contributed to the growing integration of counterterrorism discourse into governance frameworks in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. During this period, security-focused administrative policies were reportedly strengthened, and maintaining social stability became a fundamental policy goal. Since approximately 2017, international reports have voiced concerns about facilities described by Chinese officials as “vocational education and training centers”. These developments have sparked a global discussion about the protection of minority rights, the justification of security policy, and humanitarian conditions.

Chronological Timetable: Key Events and Policy Developments in Xinjiang

Period	Key Event	Policy Development
Early 2000s	Regional development policies	Emphasis on economic integration and stability governance
2009	Riots in Ürümqi	Strengthening of public security and surveillance measures
2014	Expanded counter-terrorism focus	Security-oriented administrative strategies intensified
2017 onward	Reports on vocational training facilities	International debate on detention practices and minority rights
2018–Present	Increased global attention	Ongoing diplomatic and legal discussions

5.2.1 Establishment of Vocational Education and Training Centers

Facilities referred to as vocational education and training centers by the People's Republic of China were established in Xinjiang in 2017 by the administration of CCP (Chinese Communist Party) general secretary Xi Jinping.

Some international sources consider these facilities and related policies among the most controversial aspects of China's governance approach towards the Uyghur population. Several international reports have alleged that practices described as large-scale detention may be implemented in these facilities, where daily activities are monitored and freedom of movement may be restricted. Numerous human rights abuses and instances of inhumane treatment have been reported, including arbitrary arrests, forced labour, torture, sexual violence, mass surveillance and family separation. Additionally, concerns have been raised regarding potential limitations on cultural practices, religious activities, and the use of minority languages among Uyghur populations associated with these facilities.

Some sources have also indicated that programs implemented in these facilities may include ideological education, vocational skills training, and behavioral regulation measures. While Chinese officials characterize these centers as part of counter-extremism and social integration strategies, international organizations have expressed concerns regarding transparency, legal oversight, and the voluntary nature of participation in these programs.

While China claimed to begin winding down these camps in 2019, Amnesty International reported that detainees have been transferred to the formal prison system.

5.3 Current Situation on the Ground

The situation with the population of the Uyghur ethnic group in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region is still a subject of international debate regarding issues of security management, the observance of human rights, and their interpretation. Reports from various international organizations still focus on issues related to the social, cultural, and administrative situation of the Uyghur population and other ethnic minorities in this particular region.

Issues related to access to culture, religious practices, freedom of movement and expression have been emphasized in numerous international reports regarding this particular situation. However, officials from the government of the People's Republic of China still state that their current policies are directed toward fighting extremism, offering vocational training, and maintaining stability in this particular region.

6. Major Actors and Stakeholders

The Uyghur situation in Xinjiang is shaped by the interactions between state institutions, communities, governments and various social actors. The approaches of these actors are often not independent of each other; security policies, diplomatic attitudes and assessments of international norms intersect and determine the overall direction of the process. This structure affects how the issue is addressed at both the national and international levels.

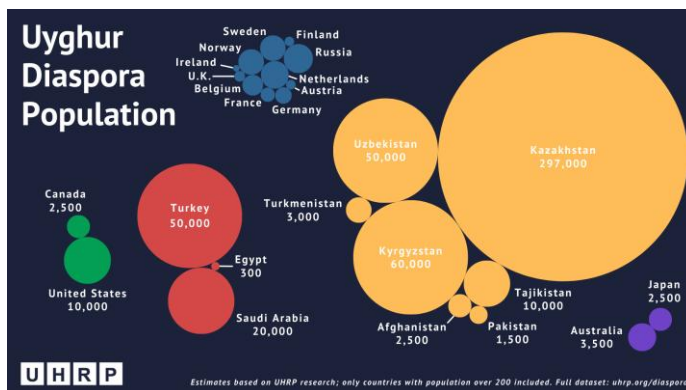
There is a clear approach difference at the center of the issue. Chinese officials claim that the policies implemented are for countering terrorism and ensuring social stability, while international actors question the impact of these policies on minority rights and fundamental freedoms. These different assessments make the issue controversial and diplomatically sensitive in the international arena.

6.1 Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC)

The Government of the People’s Republic of China plays a crucial and possibly the biggest role in the Uyghur Situation within Xinjiang. As the central governing authority, it bears primary responsibility for developing and enforcing the legal and administrative system that is applied in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

The Chinese government claims that they have not violated any human rights in Xinjiang. The government accuses the West of misrepresenting the situation for geostrategic purposes. The officials claim that the policies they have put in place in Xinjiang are all geared towards ensuring public safety and stability. The government officials claim that the camps, referred to as “vocational education and training centers,” were established for vocational purposes.

6.2 Uyghur Communities and Diaspora Populations



Uyghur communities and diaspora populations are significant stakeholders regarding the situation in Xinjiang. Alongside the millions of Uyghurs living in Xinjiang, the global diaspora of over 500,000 Uyghurs stretches across at least 38 countries. Kazakhstan is home to 297,000 Uyghurs, while Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan each host 50,000 members. Turkey is home to at least 50,000 members, representing one

of the most politically active diaspora hubs. Communities further away are much smaller: 15,000 people live in 18 European countries, 10,000 live in the United States, 2,500 live in Canada, and at least 3,000 live in Australia.

Families within Xinjiang are reportedly separated, as Uyghur diaspora members claim that more than half of their family members are being held in facilities referred to as “political education camps”, pre-detention centers, or prisons. Many Uyghurs who claim to have escaped after being held in these camps have described harsh conditions, including harassment, torture, forced sterilization, and sexual violence, including rape. According to research by the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), detainees are forced to pledge allegiance to the CCP and renounce Islam and other cultural practices.

At the same time, diaspora parents face a dual burden: the survival of the Uyghur language and culture as their children integrate into host societies, and the constant risk of transnational repression.

Uyghurs who live abroad have expressed concerns that strengthening diplomatic relations between their host countries and China could lead to increased monitoring, arrests or deportation (refoulement). For example in 2021, when relations between China and Turkey were improving, it was reported that Uyghurs were being threatened with arrest and deportation due to protests.

Overall, the ongoing situation continues to shape the lives of Uyghurs both within Xinjiang and across the diaspora, raising serious concerns about human rights, cultural survival, and the preservation of community ties.

6.3 Central Asian States and Regional Actors

Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan) approach the issue from the perspective of both deep cultural ties and vital economic dependencies. For these countries, the Xinjiang issue is a delicate balancing act between domestic politics and foreign diplomacy.

As China is the largest trading partner and the source of foreign investment for these nations, the massive infrastructure projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) link these countries' energy lines and transportation networks to the Chinese economy. This significant dependency often limits these states from openly criticizing China's policies. Furthermore, regional security policies are largely shaped around the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), where China and Central Asia states share common commitment to combating the "three evil forces" of separatism, extremism, and terrorism. This situation leads these nations to consider China's security measures as legitimate domestic actions rather than international human rights concerns.

Despite governmental silence, a serious discomfort exists in the societies of these countries. Especially in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, thousands of citizens have relatives reported to be in Xinjiang's facilities. Public demands for the protection of their ethnic kin have led to anti-China protests, putting governments in a difficult position. The situation of individuals escaping Xinjiang and seeking refuge in Central Asia remains as one of the most sensitive areas testing these states' diplomatic relations with China.

In conclusion, these states generally avoid signing statements which criticize China on international platforms and tend to characterize the issue as China's "internal matter" to maintain their strategic partnerships with China while simultaneously managing the ethnic and religious sensitivities of their own populations.

6.4 International Organizations and Human Rights Actors

International organizations, as well as human rights groups, have played a highly influential role in shaping the global discourse surrounding the situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. These groups, through investigations, reporting, as well as issuing statements, have a considerable impact on the manner in which the situation is perceived in the context of global law as well as human rights.

At the United Nations, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has played a highly influential role in the global discourse surrounding the situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Their assessment, which was released in 2022, concluded that the activities in the region could be considered crimes against humanity, which has sparked a highly contentious debate at the global level.

The United Nations Human Rights Council also plays a big role in this situation. The Council is polarized into two main blocs. Western states typically issue joint letters of condemnation to China; while many Global South nations sign counter-statements supporting China's sovereignty and its counter-terrorism efforts.

Other international human rights groups, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have played a highly influential role in the global discourse surrounding the situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, as well as the manner in which the global response to the situation has been shaped. Although these groups do not have the authority to impose sanctions, the manner in which the situation has been documented has a considerable impact on the global discourse surrounding the situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

7. Legal and Normative Framework

For the Committee, legal and normative frameworks are not purely theoretical concepts, but fundamental reference points that shape how the situation assessed as Uyghur genocide is interpreted at the international level. These rules determine the balance between state sovereignty, security concerns, and the protection of fundamental human rights of the individual.

It is crucial that the framework is understood by the delegates attending the conference. Discussions to be held in the context of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region must be based on legal and human rights standards. International legal rules do not predetermine the outcome of the issue; however, they establish the criteria by which the policy can be evaluated.

The norms and principles developed within the United Nations system form the fundamental reference points for assessing the legitimacy of the policies discussed in Xinjiang. Failure to comply with these standards is considered not merely a political reaction, but a responsibility arising within the framework of existing legal and normative obligations.

7.1 International Human Rights Law

International human rights law forms the basis of SOCHUM's mandate and activities. At its core, this law is a set of international norms based on the protection of individuals' fundamental rights and freedoms and defining the obligations of states to guarantee these rights.

Within this framework, governments' domestic policy practices can be evaluated in terms of international human rights standards. These evaluations are essential in the context of protection of minority communities like Uyghurs. Freedom of religion and conscience, the protection of cultural identity, the avoidance of violations of the right to liberty, and the guarantee of fundamental freedoms are among the key issues addressed by international human rights law in this matter.

The implementation of these laws varies depending on the legal systems of states. While some states directly integrate human rights norms into their national legal systems, other states interpret these standards within wider policy frameworks. In the context of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, discussions often focus on how state security and counterterrorism can be balanced with the protection of minority rights and international human rights obligations.

7.2 Minority Rights and Cultural Protection

At the center of the situation in Xinjiang lies the risk to the preservation of the cultural, religious and linguistic identities of Uyghur and other Turkic-speaking Muslim minorities. While the international community characterizes these policies as "cultural assimilation", the government of China states that these measures are necessary for "social cohesion" and "modernization".

Restrictions on the use of the Uyghur language in the region's education system are frequently highlighted in international reports. The significant shift to Standard Chinese (Mandarin) in schools is feared to weaken the presence of the Uyghur language in the public sphere. Furthermore, the placement of children whose parents are in camps or prisons in state-controlled boarding schools is criticized for the risk of alienating them from their native language and cultural roots.

Islam is an inseparable part of the Uyghur identity; however, the association of religious practices with "extremism" has caused serious controversy. Reports claim that several mosques have been demolished or their architectural structures, such as minarets and domes, have been altered to conform to traditional Chinese architecture. Actions such as fasting during Ramadan, growing a beard, or choosing religious names are reportedly seen as "signs of radicalization", and are considered restrictions on religious freedom.

Uyghur music, literature and traditional festivals represent Xinjiang's rich history. Although the Chinese government claims to support Uyghur dance and art for tourism purposes, critics argue that this has been transformed into a "hollowed-out" culture, used only for performance and display rather than remaining a living identity.

Moreover, the arrest of Uyghur academics, poets and artists is seen as a factor hindering the transmission of cultural memory.

7.3 Counterterrorism and State Sovereignty

Counterterrorism and state sovereignty policies are at the center in the context of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The Chinese government claims that it implements security policies in the region to protect national unity, combat separatism, and prevent terror threats. “Strike Hard Campaign Against Violent Terrorism”, launched in May 2014, is presented as a concrete example of this approach. Chinese officials describe the campaign as part of broader counterterrorism and “stability maintenance” efforts in the region. Under the campaign, security controls were increased, surveillance mechanisms were strengthened, and administrative measures to combat extremism were intensified.

The Anti-Terrorism Law of the People's Republic of China, which came into force after this process, has further systematized the legal framework for countering terrorism. The law grants preventive powers to state institutions and comprehensively defines the concepts of terrorism and extremism. In addition, international discussions focus on the extent of these policies and whether their implementation aligns with human rights standards.

Another essential factor of the debate concerning Xinjiang is state sovereignty. According to the principles of international law, states have the sovereign right to conduct their internal affairs and establish security and administrative policies within their own territories. This sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state are recognized in the United Nations Charter as the sovereign equality of all states in maintaining law and order and security within their own territories.

In accordance with the principle of state sovereignty, Chinese officials have claimed that their policies and practices in Xinjiang are part of exercising their sovereign rights and fulfilling their commitment to maintain law and order and security within their own territory.

7.4 Crimes Against Humanity and International Law

The discussion on international law in the context of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang also involves considerations related to crimes against humanity. Crimes against humanity are certain crimes committed as part of a large-scale attack against civilians, including acts such as unlawful detention, persecution, and severe violations of fundamental rights.

International reports have suggested that certain practices in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region constitute crimes against humanity. In 2022, the assessment of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), it stated that “the extent of arbitrary and discriminatory detention of members of Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim groups, pursuant to law and policy, in context of restrictions and deprivation more

generally of fundamental rights enjoyed individually and collectively, may constitute international crimes, in particular crimes against humanity.”

The Government of the People’s Republic of China maintains that counterterrorism and stability policies do not constitute human rights violations and rejects allegations that activities in the region should be legally classified as crimes against humanity. Chinese officials claim that these policies do not constitute human rights violations and are considered as state functions in response to security threats in the region.

8. Questions to be Addressed

1. At what point do counterterrorism measures risk violating fundamental human rights and freedoms?
2. Can large-scale re-education or vocational training programs be justified if allegations of coercion exist?
3. How should the international community distinguish between counterterrorism measures and policies that may demonstrate genocidal intent?
4. How does state-sponsored migration affect the "autonomy" status of a region under international law?
5. To what extent can economic development justify demographic engineering in a minority-dominant area?
6. How do the PRC’s "Vocational Training Centers" compare with international human rights standards on freedom of religion?
7. Can state-mandated vocational training be considered a legitimate tool for social stability?
8. What is the role of international observers in verifying the voluntary nature of such facilities?
9. How can transparent access to the region be ensured for international observers?
10. How can counterterrorism policies be implemented without leading to human rights violations?

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