

CHINA

30 RELATIVES OF UIGHUR ACTIVIST ARBITRARILY DETAINED

Chinese authorities have detained up to 30 relatives of Uighur human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer, who currently lives in the United States. Among the detained are Kadeer's sisters, brothers, sons, grandchildren and extended relatives. It is unclear when they were taken away. They are presumed to be arbitrarily detained at an "education centre". All are at high risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Over the course of the past few months, up to 30 relatives of Uighur human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer are believed to have been arbitrarily detained. Among those detained is her son **Ablikim Abudureyim** (pictured below © UHRP) who previously served 12 years in prison, where he was repeatedly tortured. He was sentenced at the time in retaliation for his mother's human rights advocacy and was adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. Also detained are Kahar Abdureyim (m), Kadeer's eldest son



Ayugul (f), Kahar's wife
Aydidar (f) Kahar's daughter
Zulpikar (m), Kahar's son
Dildar (f), Kahar's daughter
Alim Abduyerim(m), Kadeer's youngest son
Xelchem (f), Kadeer's sister
Atikem (f) and her son-in-law
Imam (m), Xelchem's son
Ahmetjan (m), Kadeer's brother
Gheni (m), Kadeer's brother

All the family members are presumed to be currently held at one of the many detention facilities that have recently been established across the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Referred to as "counter extremism centres", "political study centres", or "education and transformation centres", these facilities are known to arbitrarily detain Uighurs and other Muslim minorities for 6-12 months or more. Forced to study Chinese laws and policies, many of those detained are targeted because they may have been found praying, owning religious books, have travelled abroad, or have family members living abroad.

Rebiya Kadeer was a prominent Uighur businesswoman and is a former prisoner of conscience herself. Formerly a member of the Chinese Communist Party's Political Consultative Congress, she was detained in 1999, and sentenced to eight years for "stealing state secrets". Rebiya Kadeer is one of the best known Uighur human rights advocates, and is a leader of the World Uyghur Congress.

Please send a letter without delay. (Postage is \$2.50.)

* Insist that the authorities release Rebiya Kadeer's family members unconditionally and immediately unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that they have committed an internationally recognized offence and are granted a fair trial in line with international standards.

* Seek assurances that that members of Rebiya Kadeer's family have regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of their choice, and are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Here is the contact information you need:

Party Secretary of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region

Chen Quanguo Shuji
479 Zhongshanlu
Urumqi, Xinjiang
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Secretary

Minister of Justice

Zhang Jun Buzhang
Chaoyangmen nan dajie 6 hao
Beijing Shi, 100020
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Director

Please send a copy to

His Excellency Shaye Lu
Ambassador for the People's Republic of China
515 St. Patrick Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5H3
Fax: (613) 789-1911

Premier

Li Keqiang Zongli
Guowuyuan Bangongting
2 Fuyoujie, Xichengqu
Beijing Shi 100017
People's Republic of China
Fax: 011 86 10 6596 1109

Additional information

Uighurs are a mainly Muslim ethnic minority who are concentrated primarily in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in China. Since the 1980s, the Uighurs have been the target of systematic and extensive human rights violations. This includes arbitrary detention and imprisonment, incommunicado detention, and restrictions on religious freedom as well as cultural and social rights. Local authorities maintain tight control over religious practice, including prohibiting all government employees and children under the age of 18 from worshipping at mosques. Chinese government policies limit the use of the Uighur language, impose severe restrictions on freedom of religion and encourage sustained influx of Han migrants into the region.

In March 2017, the XUAR enacted the “De-extremification Regulation” that identifies and prohibits a wide range of behaviours labelled “extremist”, such as “spreading extremist thought”, denigrating or refusing to watch public radio and TV programmes, wearing burkas, having an “abnormal” beard, resisting national policies, and publishing, downloading, storing, or reading articles, publications, or audio-visual materials containing “extremist content”. The regulation also set up a “responsibility system” for government cadres for “anti-extremism” work, and established annual reviews of their performance.



Rebiya Kadeer speaks at a rally in Toronto in 2008. © AI

Rebiya Kadeer's family have been targeted by the authorities ever since she was first detained as a prisoner of conscience in 1999. This intensified after she was released on medical parole on 17 March 2005, and left China for the USA. Rebiya Kadeer claims to have been warned that if she engaged with members of the Uighur ethnic community or spoke publicly about "sensitive issues", her "businesses and children would be finished". On 1 June 2006, Alim and Ablikim Abdiryim were beaten by police in front of their children and in front of their sister, Rushangul, who was then handed a mobile phone and told to call Rebiya Kadeer in the USA and tell her what was happening. On 27 November 2006, the day after Rebiya Kadeer was elected president of the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), a court sentenced two of her sons, Alim

Abdiriyim and Kahar Abdiriyim, to fines amounting to millions of US dollars, and Alim to seven years' imprisonment on charges of tax evasion. In addition, at the beginning of April, the Chinese authorities reportedly began a process to assess and liquidate the Kadeer family businesses.

Ablikim Abdiryim, son of Rebiya Kadeer, was detained in June of 2006, and sentenced in April 2007 in an unfair trial in which he did not have legal representation of his choice. He was repeatedly tortured while in prison, and was released in May 2015.