

Uyghur Tribunal – Fact Witness statement

UTFW2-001 – Guzhanuer Rouzi

Female, 36

I was born on the 20th of May 1984. I am a Chinese Uyghur, born in Urumqi in East Turkestan. I was a Mathematics primary school teacher and I taught in Mandarin Chinese. I have not seen my husband in five years. I do not know whether he is alive. I currently live in Germany with my two young children.

Indoctrination/assimilation

1. I started teaching in 2009. Every Wednesday afternoon, the teachers would have four hours of compulsory political education. All of the teaching staff would go. If you did not go, it would be considered anti-Chinese Communist Party (CCP) thus you would not receive your salary or annual bonus. The political classes started a while before I started working. However, ever since I was in junior high school (1998), I have had to participate political thought classes. In 2008, I taught in kindergarten (as a trainee teacher) for 6-7 months. Then, in 2009, I became a government employee and an official teacher. I do not want to specify exactly which school but it was in Urumqi.
2. The political course was primarily focused on CCP news, emphasising Han CCP 'heroes' and role models. The instructors would criticise, insult and talk about punishing people who did not comply with the CCP. They would teach us about the activities and philosophy of Xi Jinping, always admiring him. They also taught us about Marxist, Deng Xiaoping and Mao thought. They were encouraged to insult Western countries. They would repeat whatever the government said. We were not allowed to like any foreign countries but if you did, they considered you to have mental issues. In Xinjiang, most people do not know what human rights or freedoms are. You are likely to be punished if you talk about such topics.

3. It was all a form of brainwashing which focused on loving the CCP. The content of the classes was sent from Beijing to Xinjiang and would be changed every week. The entire school curriculum came centrally from Beijing, no initiative could begin within Xinjiang. Although primary school students did not have explicit political education, their schooling was quite political. The topics of freedom and rights were forbidden.
4. When the teachers went to political education, the primary school students would monitor themselves. The teachers were not allowed to supervise or teach the students during this time. The students would fight and play because they were so young.
5. Female students were not allowed to wear headscarves to school and teachers would call the parents if they did. If any of them did, the teachers would have to call government officials who would detain the parents. There were a lot of instances of Han teachers beating Uyghur students. The children were very miserable. The school hours were 8am-12pm and 2pm-6pm. From 12pm-2pm, they had lunch break during which many would go home. Because of the oppression they faced, many could not go home as their parents worked and so, students would go to a square to buy one naan bread which is all they had for lunch.
6. The school had flag-raising every Monday, regardless of the weather. There was regular patriotic education.
7. Every Monday afternoon, the students would have a two-hour class meetings. The teachers would ask the students questions about their family life, including whether there was any religious activity (e.g. reading the Quran, wearing headscarves or encouragement for daughters to wear a headscarf). The teachers would tell the students when certain activities were prohibited and that they, and their parents, could be punished for carrying them out. They would receive Communist Party indoctrination from a young age. They were told religion is a disease, that you would get ill if you believe it, and that religion is anti-Communist.

8. In 2016, I left teaching because I had children and the police frequently detained my husband. This was disruptive to our family life. My husband told me to leave. My husband did not come as he did not have a passport. We first went to Turkey then Germany.

Measures to restrict births

9. In 2015, I needed to collect a certificate of approval before delivering each child. When I was pregnant with my third child, the government told me this was prohibited as a result of the two-child policy. The government told me that I had to have an abortion. I was told I would not be able to work again if I did not have one. I was in my first trimester. I went to the Urumqi Public Hospital, but they did not have anaesthesia, so my husband and I went to Xibei Hospital where we had to pay almost 10,000RMB. The medical inspection was at 10:33 AM. I had an Aspiration Suction Abortion. My abortion was on the 19th of July 2015 at 12:54pm. Part of the reason for the high cost was that I needed an IV drip for 7 days but I only had one for 2 hours (which was included in the cost) so I had to buy some for the remaining days of treatment. I was then forced to choose between having an IUD or a sterilization. I chose to have an IUD inserted. This had to be paid out of pocket. I had to go to a different center to have that inserted.
10. Because we were government employees, the nurse thought we had a lot of money so I had an extra scan of my reproductive organs. Because I had issues with my reproductive organs, they suggested I have an expensive surgery. They wanted to perform a surgery to cut my tubes but I refused so the solution was an IUD insertion. The abortion and IUD insertion were done at the same time.
11. My husband and children were with me that day. Two workers from the Community Office were sent to accompany them. If I did not accompany them, they would have been punished and the family could have been separated. We did not dare.
12. At the hospital, there were many Uyghur women waiting for abortions. I do not know how many there were because the hospital had 3 floors. There were only two Han

women. The hospital specialized in abortions. Some came with their husbands or boyfriends but many came on their own. Many women came with government employees from the Community Office. There were many people waiting outside the hospital.

13. I still have the IUD and, as a result, I experience a lot of physical pain even when I am not menstruating. My pelvis hurts a lot when I stand for too long. For example, I cannot mop the floor for more than half an hour. Sometimes it hurts so much that I cannot sleep and I have to take painkillers. In early 2020, my IUD caused me to have an infection and it was poking into my uterus. I get a lot of backpain and I often cannot stand up straight. I was prescribed antibiotics. I had an appointment to have the IUD removed but it was postponed because of the pandemic. I have an appointment to have it removed in May.

14. Before the IUD, I had regular periods. Now, they are extremely short (less than 3 days), irregular and painful. I barely have them at all. I am worried that I may become infertile. The abortion and IUD had an immense physical and mental impact on me. After arriving in Germany, I went to see a mental health professional and I was prescribed anti-depressants. I was told I had serious depression. The impact was far greater than I imagined. I experience a lot of pain below the waist. Even when I walk, I do not feel normal. I experience a lot of numbness.

15. I still have the certificate of the abortion and IUD procedure.

16. Uyghur women have been sterilized since the late 90s. I am the oldest child from my mother's first marriage. When my mother remarried, she had three more daughters. In 1996 or 1997, I cannot quite remember, the government officials said she had to be sterilized. They took her to a hospital. Because my grandfather worked for the government, he pleaded with them and she was allowed an IUD instead. In February 2009, my mother had a surgery because she had a tumor in her uterus caused by the IUD being left in for too long. Even after the tumor was removed, they still kept the IUD in. The surgery to remove the tumor was done badly. My mother experienced a

lot of pain afterwards and was told her organs might become cancerous because of the botched surgery. In July 2011, when she was only 47, my mother's reproductive organs were all removed. I am also worried that, because I have had the IUD for so long, I may experience similar problems.

17. On the 22nd of March 2013, my husband's friend's wife was pregnant. They were from Aksu. It was her fourth pregnancy and she was hiding from the authorities in relatives' homes. The wife called saying she had a stomach-ache. The friends did not have a car. My husband and I took the couple to Aksu District Maternal and Child Health Hospital. The midwife gave a medical check and said the wife was already 40 weeks pregnant and overdue. The midwife scolded the couple for coming so late in the pregnancy. The midwife said the child had to come out via C-section but the wife disagreed and wanted a natural birth. She was not allowed because of her health and the child would not survive a natural birth.

18. The C-section would have cost nearly 10,000RMB and required 5000RMB upfront. The couple could not afford it and the midwife told them that if they could not pay, they could use a traditional village doctor - it was cheaper. But the midwife warned that the child and mother could die as a result. I paid the costs so the woman was able to be admitted to hospital. I heard that the couple had to pay a penalty of 18,000RMB for having too many children. I have not heard any news from them.

19. One of my students didn't come to school for three days so I called the child's father. The father came to school and explained that his wife was nine months pregnant but that the government found out, so they forced her to have an abortion. The woman and child both died. The father cried and this was why the child did not come to school.

Forced labour

20. Annually, from 24 February until mid-March, teachers had to do manual labour for at least three days. The schools would close and the school would drive employees to the desert or somewhere else that is deserted. Everyone has to participate, including the Han peoples.

21. It's called 义务劳动节 (duty to volunteer festival). It began in the 90s. We also had to do this when we were in junior high school. We were taken to fields and forced to take worms out of the ground. We had a quota to catch 50 and if we did not, we were not allowed to go home. In the last few years, a few people I spoke to on WeChat mentioned that they too were forced to participate.
22. Our work involved digging holes (50-60 cm deep) and then planting Poplar trees. Someone would come with a ruler to inspect the holes.
23. The state said it was the people's duty and if they did not go, they would have their salaries and benefits taken away.
24. I believe this campaign began in 2000 and was only for government employees but now includes people from all sectors, as long as they are based in Xinjiang.
25. Hot water and bread are provided or people bring their own food. We ate in the land that they had dug. The people and clothing would be covered in dirt.
26. If a person could not complete their job within three days, they had to drive themselves to the site and continue working until the work is done. Sometimes the women would pay laborers to do this work for them, because they were too tired.
27. The government set the 'tree planting festival' during this time and argued that these efforts were necessary to improve the environment. I think the environment was better when I was younger.
28. There is another type of forced labour festival called *Leifung*. From the 15th of March, for 5 days, everyone was told to do good voluntary things e.g. bring bowls and clothes for those around them to clean or cleaning the side of the road. If they did not comply,

the school would threaten the parents and students that they (the students) would not get their graduation certificates.

29. I have not communicated with my parents in five years. All of my family have removed me on social media. I do not know whether my husband is alive or whether he has remarried. I believe that my family have not reached out to me because the Communist Party has threatened them.

30. I feel suicidal and feel as if there is no point in my continuing to live. I am only hopeful because of my two children. The pressure comes from my family being broken up by the Communist Party. I feel as if I have lost my family, my husband and my father. This has placed a large burden on me. My hair is much whiter than before and I suffer from insomnia. I feel as if I have aged.

I have read and understood this witness statement and I confirm that I agree with its contents. I understand that this statement will be published on the Uyghur Tribunal website and will be available to the general public online.

Signature:

Date: