

Uyghur Tribunal – Fact Witness statement

UTFW2-019 – Meryem Sultan

1. My name is Meryem Sultan and I live in Turkey. I am studying for my Master's degree at Ankara University and I also work. I moved to Turkey in 2010. As a result, my mother was taken to a concentration camp.
2. In 2018, I heard that my mother was actually arrested in September 2017. The reporters from Radio Free Asia clarified the news. Shortly after I heard my mother was in the camp, I gave testimonies in English and Turkish. I also tried very hard to look for my family and I am still using different methods to do so e.g. contacting embassies, building relationships with them personally and pressurising them to help me out.
3. My mother is Aysel Sultan and she is 55 years old this year. In 2004, she retired (citing sickness as the reason) from Unsu County (Aqsu City) Number1 Middle School. She didn't do anything against Chinese law – she was a law-abiding person. She had three surgeries because of her ill health. She couldn't do anything - she needed rest and care at home. Despite this, she was taken to a camp or she was under house arrest (I am not sure which) but it is obvious she is still in police custody.
4. To this date, I have only been allowed to see her thrice - about once a year and whenever the police wanted. The last time, at the beginning of 2021, the police showed me a video in which my mother was forced to speak against me. Since then, I have not seen nor heard from her. Before I left my country, she was forced to have two abortions and my aunt had to do the same. After forcefully aborting her child, my aunt suffered from cancer and she passed away later.
5. I am not only making testimony is because I couldn't see or contact my family. I am also making this testimony because, from the ages of 12-18, I was forced to work in a cotton field near Tarim Laogai (Transfer Through Labour) Detention Centre for a month annually for six years in total, with prisoners and farmers. I was born and raised in downtown Unsu County (Aqsu City). We had to attend a mandatory labour program

from our school. We were sent there as a whole school and stayed at farmers' homes. We were forced to pick cotton for a month every year, some 200km away from where we stayed. This is my testimony.

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: