

## **Uyghur Tribunal – Fact Witness statement**

### **UTFW2-020 – Rayhangul Abliz**

1. My name is Rayhangul Abliz and I am an Australian Uyghur who currently lives in Melbourne. I came to Australia in February 2010 and I have lived here for 11 years. The testimony I am submitting is about my parents. My father's name is Abliz Tohti, he is 71 years old and he is from Artush, Arghu. My dad was a long-term businessman. However, due to his old age and deteriorating health, he decided to quit and rest at home. My mother's name is AYGUL HEYIT, she is 68 years old and she is a housewife.
2. In 2016, both my parents went to Egypt for travel. Whilst they were in Egypt, they went to the Saudi Consulate to try and apply for a visa to go there but, because their visa was denied, they went back home after their holiday.
3. After they came back from Egypt, the Chinese police did not give them any rest. Almost every day they would come to my parents' home and interrogate them about their holiday in Egypt. A couple of times a week, my parents were required to go to their local council and forced to write a sworn statement as well as statements praising Xi Jinping. They were also oppressed in other ways such as being forced to deny their religion. At the time, it was very difficult for me to communicate with my parents.
4. In 2017, when the crackdown on the Uyghurs began, both my parents were detained in concentration camps (May 2017). During their detainment, they got really scared and due to their serious health conditions, they suffered from hypertension and were then released on probation on house arrest. My parents were so scared that they cut off all contact with me and refused to pick up my phone calls when I called them. As a result, it was extremely difficult for me to get any proper information regarding their wellbeing.
5. In April 2018, I heard that my parents were (again) detained in concentration camps. At that point in time, I lost all contact with my parents, relatives and friends. So, because I had no contact with them anymore, I thought that my parents were still in

a concentration camp. Regardless of what I did, I was unable to contact them and get any sort of information about their whereabouts and their wellbeing.

6. Therefore, at the beginning of 2021, I reached out to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's "China Policy" Office to ask them for help in getting information for me about my parents. After their correspondence with the Chinese Embassy, they contacted me (in May) and said that since April 2018, both my parents had been sentenced to 14 years in prison for "supporting terrorist activities".
7. My father was a normal man just trying to live his life in peace at home since he was unable to work as a businessman anymore due to his worsening health conditions. As for my mother, she was a simple lady who dedicated her whole life to looking after her kids and her home. To sentence my 71-year-old father and 68-year-old mother to 14 years in prison was no different to sentencing them both to life in prison.
8. Forget "supporting terrorist activities", my parents don't even know the meaning of the word 'terrorist'.
9. The Chinese government is targeting innocent, simple and kind-hearted Uyghurs and oppressing them. The genocide against Uyghurs is burgeoning and worsening every day. It's not just my parents who have been detained, there are millions of Uyghurs who are suffering and being tortured in these concentration camps and prisons that were solely made to destroy our people.
10. Until now, the world has been silent on this issue. Despite hearing about it and seeing the evidence, they act like they haven't seen or heard anything. It is the 21<sup>st</sup> century and a genocide is happening right in front of everyone, yet the world is refusing to open its eyes. What I am asking and hoping for, from the United Nations, the European Union and all the democratic nations of the world, is to help the Uyghurs by putting an end to the Uyghur genocide. I also urge the people of the world to stand on the side of truth and justice. Thank you.

**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:**