

## Uyghur Tribunal – Fact Witness statements

### UTFW2-022 – Adil Alim

#### Male, 36

1. I am Adil Alim, I was born in the Tianshan District, Urumqi City on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1985. I currently live in the United States. I was arrested by Chinese police in 2009 when I planned and participated in a peaceful demonstration organized by student groups from the Xinjiang University. The background of the demonstration was due to the ‘Toy Factory Incident’ which took place in ShaoGuang City, GuangDong province, where a group of Uyghur factory workers were killed by their Han colleagues. The aim of the demonstration was to demand the Chinese authorities to investigate on the ShaoGuang incident and restore justice.
2. Prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> of July demonstration, from the 28<sup>th</sup> of June to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, our team tried (several times) to apply for Parade Permission from the local authorities in East Turkestan. We demanded the government issue an open statement regarding the tragedy in ShaoGuang. Local and central governments were informed about the demonstration in advance. However, they never responded to our request.
3. I attended the Law School at Xinjiang University in 2009. In summer 2009, some videos of ShaoGuang incident were shared on internet. After watching several online videos of the mass-killings, students from our faculty reached out to other universities to co-host a peaceful demonstration so as to express our dissatisfaction of the Chinese government’s inaction towards the crime in ShaoGuang.
4. The organizers of the demonstration were divided into several groups. Group A was responsible for contacting Urumqi City Government to apply for a permission for peaceful demonstration. In response, students were ignored by the City Administration and no permits were issued. Group B was responsible for contacting the international media and look for journalists at Global International Hotel in Urumqi (环球国际大酒店). However, the guards did not allow anyone to enter or leave the

hotel. Therefore, we decided to promote the idea of the demonstration through social media and other channels, aiming to notify the international society about our action. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, a QQ group released some information about the 5<sup>th</sup> of July demonstration on several major Uyghur websites. Group C was responsible for the logistics. This included the purchase of promotional banners for which they went to the Nanmen Underground Bazaar. Nevertheless, they could not purchase anything because the Urumqi Public Security Bureau had issued a document stating that “no shops are allowed to make banners for anyone that could be detrimental to the government”. Consequently, we made the posters on our own. As the publicity of the demonstration burgeoned on the internet, many Uyghurs from other parts of East Turkistan came to Urumqi to join the demonstration.

5. The demonstration started on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July at about 4:30pm Urumqi time. The plan was to march towards the People’s Square in Urumqi from three different directions (Northern Road 北门, Yan-an Road 延安路 and Southern Road 大西门). According to the plan, we were to meet the other teams at People’s Square which we had chosen because the head office of the Uyghur Autonomous Region Government was located there.
6. I was walking together with the Yan-an Road group. When we reached Nanmen Square at around 5pm, we were stopped by a group of policemen who were lined up in 3 rows. The first and second rows had five cameras with them. We got stuck there and we could not move forward. We had some posters in our hands, along with the PRC flag to express that we were demonstrating peacefully and did not have any violent tendencies. We sat quietly on the street. Meanwhile, I took out my phone to contact the other demonstration groups to inform them about our situation. However, the signal was extremely unstable. I had to send the same message 10 times to get it delivered and the calls only reached after several tries. At that moment, some policemen (dressed in black or plainclothes) entered our group. At about 5:10pm, they took out their iron sticks and started to beat people. They rushed purposefully towards students who were holding posters and taking pictures. I was not lucky enough to

avoid their punches. The back of my head was hit and it began to bleed immediately. The situation was very chaotic. Some students began to run to the roadside, people on the street witnessed the situation and then the demonstration turned violent.

7. Despite my head being injured and bleeding, I tried to stop the conflict from escalating by running into the crowd while holding my head with my hands. At that moment, I was called by a few policemen to get into a huge car marked "police". To be honest, I was naive at the time - I thought I was safe because I had not committed any crimes. As I was studying Law, I believed the power of the constitution would ensure justice. I never expected that this minibus would take me to hell and lead to my most horrible, unforgettable memories.
8. The bus was full of people. Many people were in handcuffs, we were asked sit down and hold our heads. We arrived at a special-police training base located next to a Muslim cemetery in Da-wan District. The policemen registered our names on the bus and they took our ID cards, belts, wallets, mobile phones, watches, shoes, my glasses, as well as other items. Afterwards, they asked us to move to the sports field of the training base and lie down on the ground.
9. The daytime is quite long in Urumqi and I could not perceive the time because my watch was taken by a policeman. When it started to get dark, I heard an explosion and then, I heard someone talking on an interphone saying: "from this moment on, they are all terrorists. Just treat them like terrorists." After that, I heard the sound of machine gun shots from the interphone. We were still lying on the ground and then, after an order to do so, the policemen began beating us violently with plastic sticks. After a while, we were taken to another bus whilst wearing black headgear on our head and then we were handcuffed in the bus. The policemen forced us to lower our heads to avoid being seen by the public on the streets, those who looked up were beaten again.
10. We arrived at the Liu-dao-wan Detention Centre. Upon our arrival, I heard people screaming, crying, and shouting - it was scary. At that moment, I heard someone

speaking on an interphone again, he said that the Liu-dao-wan Detention Centre was full and that we should be transferred to the Tian-Shan District Detention Centre.

11. We arrived the Tian-Shan District Detention Centre where they counted us one by one and took us inside. I saw 4 rows of armed police who had spiked clubs on their hands. They took off our handcuffs and began beating us. The spiked clubs had a lot of thorns on it so, when they beat me, the thorns pierced into my skin. There was a young child among us, his handcuffs got into his arm bone and could not be removed - his hands were bleeding. A prison-doctor came to check him and said that, for him to survive, his hands would have to be amputated. Then, a prison guard came and amputated the child's hand with a chainsaw without any clinical anaesthesia.
12. The prison guards took us into a big hall and asked us to line up and get undressed. There were males and females in the crew. We were all naked. We were asked to stand there quietly and those who even slightly moved were beaten to death. After a while, the prison guards separated the males and females. They gave us some clothes to wear - I got stinky, used underwear. After that, they took me to another room. As soon as I entered the room, about 20 people began to beat me. My whole body was beaten and turned black. I kept bleeding from my head, elbows, thighs and knees. After a while, they flushed cold water on me to prevent visceral injuries. For several days, they sprinkled water on the cement floor and forced us to sit there with our hands wrapped around our heads. Once we put our hands down, a group of people came over to beat us. We were beaten every day when the news broadcasting program starts, also before we go to sleep.
13. On the 15<sup>th</sup> day, I was transferred to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps' Detention Centre. We were only given 1 meal a day and had to sing the Communist song before the meal, otherwise we wouldn't be given food. We had to memorise some slogans about Chinese ethnic policy and a set of prison regulation rules. More importantly, we were harshly beaten by prison guards every morning and night.

14. I stayed at the Corps Detention Centre for a about a week. I was then transferred to Xi-shan Re-education Centre. It was a basement and there was absolutely no sunlight. 20 of us lived in a small cell. We were given three different buckets each - one filled with water and the other two were buckets for faeces and urine. We were frequently tortured during the interrogations. In order to make us look like terrorists, we were not given any haircuts. We also were not allowed to shower for several months. For the first time in my life, I got lice on my body. The prison guards took pictures of us which were later sent to the United Nations as evidence of Uyghur terrorism. We were only given a steamed white bread with soup (which tasted like hot water) every day. I lost 20kg of bodyweight by the time I was released.
15. Those are my experiences from 5<sup>th</sup> of July which I find extremely horrible to think about. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, I was acquitted with a verdict of "not guilty". Since then, I have been repeatedly harassed by the community, Sub-District Offices, Public Security Agency and other related units. I had to report my whereabouts every week and submit a monthly thought report. I had to ask for the different authorities' permission when travelling out of Urumqi City. Although I was released with a "not guilty" verdict, it was impossible for me to find a job in East Turkestan (XUAR). It was necessary to submit a proof of innocence and background check report for all employers. However, I was never able to get the documents - the officers usually looked at me with cold-eyes and talked to me using dirty language. Those experiences brought an immeasurable psychological shadow to my life.
16. As a result, I decided to leave East Turkestan. I moved to Yiwu City, Zhejiang Province and worked on international trade and finance. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2013, I formed Urumqi's largest charity, named "Learn love and be loved" 《懂爱爱心组织》. In February 2014, an earthquake hit Hoten City in southern East Turkestan. At that time, I carried out a donation representing my charity. Unluckily, I was targeted by the local authorities again. I was taken to a detention centre (Nr.6 National Security Bureau in Urumqi) once a month where the officers rapidly asked questions about the source of charity funds, list of charity members and my personal finances. Despite our team completing the necessary procedures and legal documents, the local authorities still

tried to break up our organization because they do not like the idea of Uyghurs being united and engaging in various social activities.

17. Up until July 2014, the “Learn love and be loved” charity had gathered over 2.4 million members. About 87% of the members were Uyghurs, the rest included other ethnic groups like Han, Kazakh, Hui, Kirgiz, etc. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2014, I left China for Los Angeles (USA).

**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:**