

Witness Statement

Asiye Abdulahad

1. My name is Asiye Abdulahad, I was born on 3rd December 1973 in Urumqi. I now live in the Netherlands and I have lived there for 11 years. On 23rd June 2019, I received a digital file containing sensitive information about hundreds of people detained for various reasons like having relatives abroad, their religious habits or their relationships. I was not the first person to receive this file. A source inside gave this material to someone else, who I will not name, outside of China. This person tried to give the file to others who did not respond, so they then sent it to me. I think one of the reasons they sent it to me was because I can speak Chinese.
2. When I had a look at the file, I could tell they were genuine because they were signed by officials, and it was on official paper. I thought that the most stupefying thing in this file was the number of people who were sent away. In a matter of weeks, thousands were taken for reasons as trivial as greeting each other with the common Muslim greeting. I then immediately thought that I needed to find a way to expose this, to bring these files to light. On the very same day, I published one page from the file online, on Twitter, which showed a signature from a known official, Zhu Hailun (Deputy Party Secretary of the XUAR). My purpose was to get a reaction, to see what would happen. There were two notable reactions, from researchers Adrian Zenz and Rian Thum. They were interested and they asked me to take it down. I sent some of the material files to both. Adrian Zenz thought these documents were too important and sensitive to disclose and that further enquiry was necessary. Rian Thum introduced me to a New York Times journalist, named Dake Kang, a Chinese man from Hong-Kong, and I sent the rest of the files to the New York Times. The journalist from the New York Times saw the material and thought that it was too sensitive and that it was beyond their capability to publish this alone. Following this, Adrian Zenz had a conversation with the New York Times and they decided to contact more mainstream media, including the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, for them to publish the story of the China Cables.
3. Throughout the month of July 2019, I started receiving contact requests, comments and questions on my Facebook. Some were allegedly coming from famous activists, like Shorhet Hoshur. They were telling me to share the information I had. I was suspicious because they made so many spelling and grammar mistakes. I know these people and I did not believe they would make

such simple mistakes, hence my doubts about their true identity. I did not share it with them.

4. In September 2019, my ex-husband Jasur Abibula, who also resides in the Netherlands, came to visit me and the kids. He told me that one of his friends back home in China who worked in the State Security Bureau, and who had asked him to go to Dubai for a meeting. He asked my advice on whether he should go to this meeting or not. I then started thinking of the actual activists from the United States and contacted them to ask if they had ever tried to approach me on Facebook. They answered that they had never contacted me. I understood that all of this was a play of the Chinese authorities to try to threaten me because of the documents I possess. I told the whole story to my ex-husband, who at the time did not know. He was shocked. He initially agreed not to go but by the time he went home, his friend had again urgently requested that he come to Dubai and even proposed to cover the expense, so Jasur went to Dubai on 9th September 2019. He stayed there for one week. A group of Chinese state security agents, including his friend, would come see him. He said they were staying in a luxurious hotel. One day, they took him to the desert and there they threatened him. They suggested that if he were to die here, his body would not be found for decades. They also reminded him that he has small children, and that if he agreed to help them, he could see his children more often. They could make his life easier and he could become rich. They gave him a USB key and said it contained a message to me from my mother-in-law. He came back in the evening on 14th September and he seemed terrified. He immediately closed all the windows and curtains. After careful consideration, we decided to report this to the police, and we gave them the USB key. By this time, the media in Holland wanted to speak with us. A famous journalist posted our story in a headline and we became public figures. We also became a hot topic on social media. We did not mean to, but now we have had to get involved. Jasur's trip to Dubai ended up making the news. Since we have kids, and we want to ensure their security we had no choice but to appear on social media.
5. When the media started publicising the affair, the person who had given me the China Cables files announced that there was more: China Cables is one half of a bigger file and the Karakax list is the other half of this file. After this, the intimidation messages started coming from everywhere. One in particular came from the Chinese Global Times. An editor from this media texted me and she said that if I ever received threats they would come from my friends, my community, not from the Chinese state, and that I should be careful. We also received many threats and comments. Recently, we even received a threat from a Uyghur from Holland, which we found very strange. We called the police again and reported it. We try to remain vigilant. Since all of this started, I do watch over my shoulder when I am outside in the street with my children. My

ex-husband is afraid too. The police installed a security system in our house, and they will be alarmed if something happens.

6. Recently, I have started investigating myself. I have made a report that compiles all the documents issued by the Chinese government in the last 70 years relating to policies on Uyghur and the campaign against Uyghurs. All of this is official, they are "Red documents". They contain crucial information. They go back to 1949. Most importantly, they include documents about the camps. My report provides a lot of information on the logistics and the general functioning of the camps (number of detainees, details on the detainees themselves, the names of officials, etc.). It is a 206 pages report which is currently in the process of being translated into English.

The interviewer (Martin Davenas) asked the witness whether she understood the contents of the statement and whether she agreed with its contents. The witness confirmed that she agreed with the contents of this statement on 24th February 2021 at 21:55 GMT.