

Witness Statement

1. My name is Rushan Abbas. I was born on June 14, 1967 in Ürümqi. I started my activism work while I was a student, organizing and leading the pro-democracy demonstrations at Xinjiang University in 1985 and 1988 which preceded the Tiananmen Square protests.
2. I studied Biology at Xinjiang University from 1984 until 1988. After graduating from the university in 1988 with the second highest score in the entire biology department of Xinjiang University, I was left jobless as the government's retaliation for my activism as a student. I left my homeland at the urging of my father because of my involvement in student activism and fears of repercussions from the Chinese Communist Party officials. I came to the United States in 1989 as a visiting scholar at Washington State University then accepted there for my master's degree. After coming to the United States in 1989, I studied plant pathology at Washington State University. I currently live in Herndon, Virginia, USA. I have always been a vocal human rights activist for the Uyghur people. In 1993 I co-founded the Uyghur Overseas Student and Scholars Association and also served as the Vice President of the Uyghur American Association for two terms. When I did that, my father Abbas Borhan, an Uyghur scholar, academic writer and a public figure, who was only 59 years old at the time, lost his professional job as the president of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Science and Technology Council. He was forced to retire as retaliation for my activism in the United States. In 1998, I started working as the first Uyghur reporter for Radio Free Asia Uyghur service.
3. I currently work as the Executive Director of the NGO, Campaign For Uyghurs, based in Washington, DC, which I founded in order to advocate for the human rights and democratic freedoms of Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples who are being oppressed by the Chinese regime, and to highlight the voices of Uyghur women and youth. I believe my own family's suffering to be as a result of retaliation by the Chinese government for my advocacy work.
4. I am testifying for my sister, Dr. Gulshan Abbas, a retired medical doctor who disappeared on September 10, 2018, and for the entire family of my husband, Mr. Abdulhakim Idris. He is serving as the General Inspector of the World Uyghur Congress and has also been diligently advocating for Uyghur human rights for decades. He studied at Al-Azhar University in Egypt, and co-founded the World Uyghur Youth Congress as well as helping to found the World Uyghur Congress.

5. My father-in-law and mother-in-law, Abdulkarim Zikrulla Idris and Habibehan Idris, are 69 and 71, and they are a farmer and a housewife, respectively. My three younger sisters-in-law, Turannisahan Idris (aged 47), Buayshehan Idris (aged 42) and Buhedichehan Idris (aged 32) are all housewives raising kids at home. Their so-called "excessive religious activities" by the CCP were wearing a headscarf and regularly praying at home. Their three husbands are also law-abiding ordinary people living ordinary lives, and were also taken to the camps. My brother-in-law Abdurehim Idris (aged 44 yrs) was sentenced to 21 years in jail for fasting during Ramadan and for obeying the traditional dietary restrictions of Islam. His wife Amina is also missing. The last time my husband spoke to his family was on April 25th, 2017. When my husband called his mother that day, she told him not to call them anymore. My husband knew there were Chinese people living inside of his parents' house at that time and that is the last communication he ever had with his entire family. When he tried to call again after several weeks, the house phone and their mobile phones were all disconnected.
6. More than a hundred days after that last phone call to his mother, on August 2017, a distant relative from an inner city in China, sent my husband a message and informed him about his brother Abdurehim's sentencing and that all of his sisters had been thrown into the concentration camps and the fate of my in-laws was unknown. At the end of the message, my husband was informed that the door to his parents' house was locked and sealed. When he asked about his nieces and nephews, he was told that no one knew where they were but they had ascertained that none of them were home.
7. He and I have not been able to find out the whereabouts of my in-laws, or anyone in the family, since then. We have no idea where my husband's 14 nieces and nephews are today. They range in age between 5 to 22 years old. The thought of children separated from their parents is heartbreaking for us. A total of 24 people are missing from my husband's family. The family all lived together in a large house in Aguyt neighborhood, Kollek town, Laskuy Bazar in Hotan city, Xinjiang, China. The last time my husband heard any sort of news about his family was in the summer of 2017. Then he learned that his family home was locked up and there was a large lock on the front gate of their house. My husband Abdulkarim Idris has been trying to use any possible ways he could think of to find out his family's whereabouts since the summer of 2017, without success.
8. On September 5th 2018, I took part in a panel at the Hudson Institute in Washington D.C. where I spoke about the conditions of the camps, and the atrocities Uyghur people are facing, while also outlining the fate of my in-laws. Six days later, my sister, Dr. Gulshan Abbas, born on June 12, 1962, and my aunt, Mayinur Abliz, born in 1955, disappeared. I learned that my aunt, a housewife in Artush, about 1400 kms away from Urumqi, had disappeared exactly the same day

as my sister after speaking with relatives in the region. My sister's detailed information is below:

• Name: Gulshan Abbas (XXX XXX and 古丽先.阿巴斯 on her Citizen ID and passport) Chinese ID#: 650103196206122322, Chinese Passport#: E23022399; The U.S Visa #: J7214050 9 (valid until 11/2024)

• Work: Xinjiang Oil field company Ming Yuan Worker's Hospital, 789 North You Hao Road, Wulumuqi (Urumchi), Xinjiang, China

• Home: 318 Sheng Li Road, unit 302, Wulumuqi (Urumchi), Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China

9. Neither my sister or my aunt is famous; nor are they educators, writers or scholars. Neither has traveled abroad to any Muslim country, and they both speak Mandarin Chinese fluently. Neither of them needs any sort of job training. I say this because Uyghurs are often targeted when they travel abroad or if they cannot speak Mandarin (which is seen by the Chinese central government as a sign of being ignorant, backwards, or as a form of nationalist rebellion).
10. I also can testify two Uyghurs who are the victims of this genocide. One was my high school classmate's brother, Qeyser Qeyum, the editor-in-chief of a literary magazine in Urumchi. The conditions are so intolerably bad that 55-year-old Qeyser Qeyum, in August 2017, committed suicide by jumping from an eighth-floor window out of fear of being detained.
11. The other is my friend from my university, Waris Ababekri who was 53 years old when he was detained in Urumchi and taken to one of the concentration camps in January 2019. He was then released in early November of 2019 and died on November 24, 2019, two weeks after being released.
12. Several months after my sister's abduction, my aunt was released but there is still absolutely no information on my sister's whereabouts. I learned from Radio Free Asia on June 2, 2020, that she was confirmed to be detained after they called the hospital where she used to work. By speaking with an employee there they confirmed it. There was still no word from the Chinese authorities, and no answer to our requests to speak to her.
13. We received information through a third party on December 25, 2020 that she was given a harsh prison sentence on false charges. December 30, we held a press conference with the U.S. Congressional Executive Committee on China (CECC) to address this news. Following the press conference, on December 31, 2020, the

Chinese Foreign Ministry held a press conference where they confirmed her sentencing, stating that she was involved with terrorist activities. This was in direct contradiction to the piece published in Chinese State-run media outlet Global Times, in which they accused me in December 2019 of making up my sister. Now we hear that she was sentenced in March of 2019, well before Chinese State media published this libel. The Chinese Foreign Ministry has continued to accuse my organization of being connected with separatism and to smear me. I still have not seen any proof of life or concrete information regarding her condition, her wrongful sentencing, or extrajudicial detainment.

14. My sister is a retired medical doctor, non-political, warmhearted, loving, caring and kind mother. She devoted her life helping people and saving lives. My sister suffers from multiple health ailments, including osteoporosis that often leads to immobilization and she has undergone multiple surgeries on both of her eyes.
15. Her medical conditions require constant monitoring and medical attention. She retired early because of those health complaints. My sister visited her family in the U.S. multiple times over the past ten years with the last time being in 2016. During her visits, we took her to the doctor to address these health issues. The charges against her are baseless and preposterous. She has been punished for her family members' Uyghur human rights advocacy in the United States, spoke out against the Chinese government's unfair treatment of Uyghurs and other minorities in the region, and she was being treated merely as China's scapegoat. The fact that she was secretly detained, arrested and sentenced proves she has suffered great injustice. The atrocities committed against the Uyghur people are well-documented, widespread, and horrific. The cruel treatment of my sister is a direct retaliatory action.
16. The burden of her detainment pains me every moment of every day. Her children and grandchildren must face every day without her, without any news of her. One of her daughters even moved from her home in Florida to Virginia in order to be closer to Washington D.C. to do her best to advocate for her release, all to no avail. She and her sister have also suffered health complaints as a result of the distress of their mother's extrajudicial detainment.
17. My husband is also living with the daily agony of such enormous loss. I am wracked with guilt and torment on a daily basis as this ordeal stretches on. Our pain is magnified millions of times over in the heartbreak felt by every Uyghur around the globe every minute of the day.

I have read and understood this witness statement and I confirm that I agree with its contents.