

PUBLIC

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**UA 158/09**      **Fear of Torture and other Ill-Treatment**  
**CHINA**        **Yusufjan (Yuesefujiang) (m), aged 27**  
                    **Memetjan (Maimaitijiang) (m), aged 24**

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Yusufjan and Memetjan, both ethnic Uighurs and students at Xinjiang University, were detained on 10 May in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in northwest China. There is no information on their current legal status or whereabouts and there are fears that the men may be subjected to torture or other ill-treatment.

According to China Aid Association, a US-based Christian NGO, on 10 May Yusufjan, Memetjan, and five other students were holding a meeting at Xinjiang University to discuss religious issues. Their meeting was broken up by two officers from the local internal security police force, accompanied by more than ten plain-clothed men, who led all seven away in handcuffs for interrogation.

According to China Aid Association, the five other students were held for 15 days and each fined 5,000 yuan (approximately 730 USD) for "holding an illegal gathering". This charge and the students punishment does not comply with Chinese law which suggests that their detention was arbitrary and that corruption or discrimination may have played a part.

China Aid Association have stated that the authorities have threatened Yusufjan and Memetjan with severer punishment than that received by the five students who were released.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Uighurs are a mainly Muslim ethnic minority who are concentrated primarily in the XUAR. Since the 1980s, the Uighurs have been the target of systematic and extensive human rights violations. This includes arbitrary detention and imprisonment, incommunicado detention, and serious restrictions on religious freedom as well as cultural and social rights. Chinese government policies, including those that limit use of the Uighur language, severe restrictions on freedom of religion, and a sustained influx of Han Chinese migrants into the region, are destroying customs and, together with employment discrimination, fuelling discontent and ethnic tensions. Chinese government has mounted an aggressive campaign that has led to the arrest and arbitrary detention of thousands of Uighurs on charges of "terrorism, separatism and religious extremism" for peacefully exercising their human rights. On 14 August 2008, Wang Lequan, Communist Party Secretary of the XUAR, announced a "life and death" struggle against Uighur "separatism".

Local authorities maintain tight control over religious practice, including prohibiting all government employees and children under the age of 18, from worshipping at mosques.

Torture and other ill-treatment are endemic in all forms of detention, despite China having ratified the UN Convention against Torture in 1988.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Mandarin or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to release Yusufjan and Memetjan immediately and unconditionally;

- calling on the authorities to provide information on their whereabouts, and the reasons and legal basis for their detention;
- urging the authorities to guarantee that they are not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment while in custody;
- urging the authorities to ensure they are given access to a lawyer of their choice, their families and any medical treatment that they may require;
- calling on the authorities to respect and protect the right of Uighurs to enjoy their own culture, to practise their religion, and to use their own language.
- calling on the authorities to make a clear distinction between activities that involve the peaceful exercise of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and those that would be internationally recognized as criminal acts.

**APPEALS TO:**

**Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China**

WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli  
The State Council General Office  
2 Fuyoujie  
Xichengqu  
Beijingshi 100017  
People's Republic of China  
**Fax: +86 10 65961109 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Chairman of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional People's Government**

Nur BEKRI Zhuxi  
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Renmin Zhengfu  
2 Zhongshanlu  
Wulumuqishi 830041  
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu  
People's Republic of China  
**Email: master@xinjiang.gov.cn**  
**Salutation: Dear Chairman**

**Director of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional Department of Public Security**

LIU Yaohua Tingzhang  
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Gong'anting  
58 Huanghelu  
Wulumuqishi 830001  
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu  
People's Republic of China  
**Salutation: Dear Director**

**COPIES TO:**

Diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 July.