

# **The Fight Against Terrorism and Extremism and Human Rights Protection in Xinjiang**

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## Foreword

Terrorism is the common enemy of humanity, and the target of joint action by the international community. Terrorist forces, by means of violence, sabotage and intimidation, pose a serious threat to world peace and security by scorning human rights, slaughtering innocent people, endangering public security, and creating fear and panic in society. The infiltration and spread of extremism is a hotbed for violence and terror, constituting a direct threat to human rights. The Chinese government stands firmly against all forms of terrorism and extremism, and is relentless in striking hard, in accordance with the law, at any conduct advocating terrorism and extremism and any action that involves organizing, planning and carrying out terrorist activities, or infringing upon citizens' human rights.

For some time China's Xinjiang, under the combined influence of separatists, religious extremists and terrorists, has seen frequent incidents of terrorist attacks, which have been detrimental to the life and property of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang and have trampled on people's dignity. In the face of these real threats, Xinjiang has taken resolute action to fight terrorism and extremism in accordance with the law, effectively curbing the frequent occurrences of terrorist activities and ensuring, to the maximum extent, the rights to life and development of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang.

A country under the rule of law, China respects and protects human rights in accordance with the principles of its Constitution. China's fight against terrorism and extremism is an important part of the same battle being waged by the international community; it is in keeping with the purposes and principles of the United Nations to combat terrorism and safeguard basic human rights.

# **I. Xinjiang Has Long Been an Inseparable Part of Chinese Territory**

Xinjiang is situated in northwest China and the hinterland of the Eurasian Continent, covering an area of 1.66 million sq km. It borders eight countries: Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. Since ancient times, Xinjiang has been home to various ethnic groups, and different cultures and religions coexist. It has also been an important channel for communication between civilizations of the East and the West, and was an important section of the famed Silk Road which linked ancient China with the rest of the world. In the long historical process, these ethnic groups have communicated and merged with each other, while living, studying, working and developing together in harmony.

Xinjiang has long been an inseparable part of Chinese territory. The vast areas both north and south of the Tianshan Mountains, called the Western Regions in ancient times, were in close contact with the Central Plains as early as the pre-Qin period (c. 2100-221 BC). With the establishment of the unified feudal dynasties Qin (221-206 BC) and Han (206 BC-AD 220), multi-ethnic unification has been the norm in China's historical development, and therefore Xinjiang has always been part of a unitary multi-ethnic China. In 60 BC, government of the Western Han Dynasty established the Western Regions Frontier Command in Xinjiang, officially making Xinjiang a part of Chinese territory.

In 123, during the Eastern Han Dynasty, the Western Regions Frontier Command was replaced by the Western Regions Garrison Command, which continued exercising administration over the Western Regions. The Kingdom of Wei (220-265) of the Three Kingdoms Period adopted the Han system, stationing a garrison commander to rule the Western Regions. The Western Jin Dynasty (265-316) stationed a garrison commander and a governor to exercise military and political administration over the Western Regions. The Sui Dynasty (581-618) ended the long-term division of the Central Plains, and expanded the areas in the Western Regions that adopted the system of prefectures and counties. In the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the central government strengthened its rule over the Western Regions by establishing the Grand Anxi Frontier Command and the Grand Beiting Frontier Command to administer the Western Regions. The ruling clan of the Kingdom of Yutian asserted it was related by

blood to the Tang Dynasty and changed its surname to Li, the surname of the Tang ruling house. In the Song Dynasty (960-1279), local regimes of the Western Regions paid tribute to the central authorities. The king of one of the regimes, the Gaochang Uygur Kingdom, honored the imperial Song court as “Uncle” and called himself “Nephew in the Western Regions”; while the Karahan Kingdom sent envoys many times to pay tribute to the Song court. In the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368), the central government strengthened administration over the Western Regions by establishing the Beiting Command and the Pacification Commissioner’s Office to manage military and political affairs. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the central authorities set up the Hami Garrison Command to manage local affairs. In the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the imperial court quelled a rebellion launched by the Junggar regime, defining the northwestern border of China. It then adopted more systematic policies for governing Xinjiang. In 1762, the Qing government established the post of Ili General and adopted a mechanism combining military and political administration; in 1884, it established a province in Xinjiang.

In 1949, the People’s Republic of China was founded, and Xinjiang was liberated peacefully. In 1955, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was established. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, Xinjiang has witnessed fundamental social and economic change, and it is in its best period of prosperity and development. Although there were some kingdoms and khanates in Xinjiang in the past, they were all local regimes within the territory of China and constituted part of the country; they were never independent countries. It is indisputable that Xinjiang is an inseparable part of Chinese territory.

Xinjiang has been a multi-ethnic region since ancient times. Down the ages, many ethnic groups have lived here, frequently migrating and communicating with each other. The earliest explorers of Xinjiang included the Sai, Rouzhi, Wusun, Qiang, Qiuci, Yanqi, Yutian, Shule, Shache, Loulan and Cheshi in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 BC). Following them were peoples entering Xinjiang in large numbers in different periods: the Xiongnu (Hun), Han, and Qiang in the Qin and Han dynasties; the Xianbei, Rouran, Gaoche, Yeda, and Tuyuhun in the period of the Wei, Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties (220-589); the Turk, Tubo, and Ouigour peoples in the period of the Sui and Tang dynasties (581-907); the Khitans in the period of the Song, Liao, and Jin dynasties (916-1279); the Mongolian, Jurchen, Dangxiang (Tangut), Kazak, Kirgiz, Manchu, Xibe, Daur, Hui, Uzbek, and Tatar peoples in the period of the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties (1279-1911). By the end of the 19th century, 13 ethnic groups – the Uygur, Han, Kazak, Mongolian, Hui, Kirgiz, Manchu, Xibe, Tajik, Daur, Uzbek, Tatar, and Russian – had settled in

Xinjiang, with the Uygurs having the largest population. The multi-ethnic region constitutes an integral part of the Chinese nation.

The Uygur ethnic group came into being in the long process of migration and ethnic integration; they are not descendants of the Turks. The main ancestors of the Uygurs were the Ouigour people living on the Mongolian Plateau during the Sui and Tang dynasties. We find that many different names were used to refer to the Ouigour people in historical records. Historically, to resist oppression and slavery by the Turks, the Ouigour people united with some of the Tiele tribes to form the Ouigour tribal alliance. In 744, the Tang court conferred a title of nobility on Kutlug Bilge Kaghan, who united the Ouigour tribes. In 788, the then Ouigour ruler wrote to the Tang emperor, requesting to have their name changed to “Huihu” (Uygur). After the Uygur Khanate suffered a major defeat in war in 840, some of them moved inland to live with the Han people, the rest of the surviving Uygurs were divided into three sub-groups. One of the sub-groups moved to the Turpan Basin and the modern Jimsar region, where they founded the Gaochang Uygur Kingdom. Another moved to the Hexi Corridor, where they merged with local ethnic groups to become what was later known as the Yugu people. The third sub-group moved to the west of Pamir, scattered in areas from Central Asia to Kashgar, and joined the Karluk and Yagma peoples in founding the Karahan Kingdom. There they merged with the Han people in the Turpan Basin and the Yanqi, Qiuci, Yutian, Shule, and other peoples in the Tarim Basin to form the main body of the modern Uygur group. In the Yuan Dynasty, ancestors of the modern Uygur people were called the “畏兀儿” people in the Chinese language. In the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the various ethnic groups in Xinjiang further merged; Mongolians, especially those of the Chagatai Khanate, were fused with the Uygurs, adding fresh blood to the Uygur group. In 1934, Xinjiang issued a government order, stipulating that “维吾尔” would be the standard Chinese name for Uygurs, which for the first time expressed the accurate meaning of “Uygur”: to maintain unity among the people.

Xinjiang ethnic cultures are an inseparable part of Chinese civilization. As early as the pre-Qin period, Xinjiang was in close contact with the Central Plains. Archaeological studies demonstrate that painted pottery-ware unearthed in Xinjiang shows the influence of the Yangshao Culture in the middle reaches of the Yellow River, while many articles made from Xinjiang’s Hetian jade were unearthed from the Shang Dynasty (c.1600-c.1100 BC) Tomb of Fu Hao in Anyang, Henan in central China. After the Western Han (206 BC-AD 25) united Xinjiang, Chinese language became one of the official languages used in government documents of that region. Agricultural production techniques, the system of etiquette, books, and music and

dances of the Central Plains spread widely in Xinjiang. Pipa (the four-stringed Chinese lute), the Qiang flute, and other musical instruments were introduced to the Central Plains from or via Xinjiang and exerted a great influence on local music. The treasure house of Chinese culture boasts elements of the Uygur Muqam, the Kazak Aytes art, the Kirgiz epic *Manas*, the Mongolian epic *Jangar*, and many other cultural gems of various ethnic groups. It is undeniable that Xinjiang was influenced by Islamic culture, but this did not halt the flow of local cultures into the Chinese civilization, nor did it alter the fact that they were part of Chinese culture. Having a stronger sense of identity with Chinese culture is essential to the prosperity and development of ethnic cultures in Xinjiang. Only by regarding Chinese culture as an emotional support and spiritual home, can we promote the prosperity and development of ethnic cultures in Xinjiang.

Xinjiang has long been a multi-religious region. In primitive society, Xinjiang residents followed primitive religion from which Shamanism evolved. Before the fourth century BC primitive religion was practiced in Xinjiang. Later, a succession of religions popular in the East and the West were introduced into Xinjiang via the Silk Road, the first of which was Zoroastrianism.

Around the first century BC Buddhism was introduced into Xinjiang and gradually became the major religion, coexisting with many other religions, and Yutian, Shule, Qiuci, Gaochang, and other renowned Buddhist centers were formed. From the fourth to the 10th century, Buddhism reached its peak, while in the same period Zoroastrianism proliferated throughout Xinjiang, particularly in the Turpan area. Around the fifth century, Taoism was introduced into Xinjiang, becoming prevalent mainly in Turpan and Hami. It spread to most parts of Xinjiang and experienced a revival during the Qing Dynasty. In the sixth century, Manichaeism and Nestorianism were introduced into Xinjiang. From the 10th to the 14th century, Nestorianism flourished as the Uygur and some other peoples converted to it in many parts of Xinjiang.

In the late ninth and early 10th century, Islam was introduced into southern Xinjiang, changing the religious profile of Xinjiang again. After the Karahan Khanate accepted Islam, in the mid-10th century it launched a religious war against the Buddhist Kingdom of Yutian, and the war lasted for more than 40 years. In the early 11th century, the Karahan Khanate conquered Yutian and imposed Islam in that region. Thereafter, Islam dominated southern Xinjiang while Buddhism dominated northern Xinjiang. In the mid-14th century, the rulers of the Eastern Chagatai Khanate spread Islam to the northern edge of the Tarim Basin, the Turpan Basin and Hami by war and compulsion. By the early 16th century many religions coexisted in Xinjiang,

with Islam predominant. Beginning in the 18th century, Protestantism, Catholicism, and the Eastern Orthodox Church were introduced into Xinjiang. Islam has ever since been the principal religion in Xinjiang, coexisting with a number of other religions.

The history of Xinjiang shows that the coexistence of multiple religions with one or two predominant has always been a basic characteristic of the religious structure of Xinjiang, and blending and coexistence of different religions has been the norm there. Islam is neither an indigenous belief of the Uygurs and other ethnic groups, nor the sole one of the Uygur people. Today in Xinjiang, a fairly large number of people do not believe in religion or believe in religions other than Islam.

## **II. The Origin of Terrorism and Extremism in Xinjiang**

Separatism is the hotbed in which terrorism and extremism take root in Xinjiang. For a long time terrorist and extremist forces have been beating the drum for separatist activities by distorting, fabricating and falsifying the history of Xinjiang, exaggerating the cultural differences between ethnic groups, instigating isolation and hatred, and advocating religious extremism.

At the turn of the 20th century, separatists and religious extremists in and outside China, inheriting the so-called theories of “Pan-Turkism” and “Pan-Islamism” created by former colonialists, spread the word that Uygurs were the only “masters” of Xinjiang, that the ethnic cultures of Xinjiang were not Chinese culture, and that Islam was the only religion practiced by ethnic groups of Xinjiang. They incited all ethnic groups speaking Turki and believing in Islam to join in creating the theocratic state of so-called “East Turkistan”. They denied the history of China jointly built by all its ethnic groups, and clamored for “opposition to all ethnic groups other than Turks” and for the “annihilation of pagans”.

From the early 20th century to the late 1940s, the “East Turkistan” forces, in an attempt to split and control Xinjiang and establish their state, promoted and spread the ideas of “Pan-Turkism”, “Pan-Islamism”, and violence and terrorism. They organized and planned a series of separatist activities. In 1915 separatist Maswud returned to Ili, opened a school and publicly preached separatism to the students. On November 12, 1933, Mohammad Imin founded the so-called “East Turkistan Islamic Republic”, but the farce ended in less than three months because of strong opposition from the people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang. On November 12, 1944, separatists led by Elihan



Torae founded the so-called “Republic of East Turkistan”, which soon collapsed a year later. Afterwards, a series of separatist organizations and individuals continued their subversive and separatist activities under the banner of “East Turkistan” in a vain attempt to establish their own state.

Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang have, under the leadership of the CPC, worked together to build a better Xinjiang; they have maintained social stability, achieved economic growth, and improved lives for the people. The “East Turkistan” forces, however, have not resigned themselves to defeat. With the support of international anti-China forces, the “East Turkistan” forces have resorted to all means, fair or foul, to organize, plan and carry out acts of separatism and sabotage. In the early 1950s the separatists instigated many riots in Xinjiang, calling on Uygurs to “unite under the moon-and-star banner to create a republic of Islam”. In the 1960s there were the riots in Ili and Tacheng on the China-Russia border, the riot of the “East Turkistan People’s Revolutionary Party”, and the armed rebellion of the Gang of Ahongnof in southern Xinjiang. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, religious extremism made further inroads into Xinjiang. It soon blended with terrorism to stir up social unrest in the region, seriously undermining local stability and security.

Since the 1990s, especially after the September 11 attacks in the US, the “East Turkistan” forces inside and outside China have stepped up their collaboration as terrorism and extremism spread around the globe, trying desperately to establish “East Turkistan” through “Jihad” (holy war). In the name of ethnicity and religion, they deceitfully used people’s ethnic identity and religious belief to instigate religious fanaticism, spread religious extremism, and incite the common people to join in violent and terrorist activities. They brainwashed people with the “Jihad”, abetting them to “die for their belief in order to enter heaven”. Some of the most susceptible followers, no longer possessed of any self-control, became extremists and terrorists who heartlessly slaughtered innocent people.

Religious extremism under the banner of Islam runs counter to Islamic doctrines. It is not Islam. For a long time separatists have tied extremism to religion, to religious believers, and to society as a whole. They tell people not to obey anyone but Allah and incite them to resist government management. They abuse those who do not follow the path of extremism as pagans, traitors and scum, urging their followers to verbally assault, reject, and isolate non-believers, Party members and officials, and patriotic religious individuals. They deny and reject all forms of secular culture, preaching a life without TV, radio and newspaper, forbidding people to weep at funerals or laugh at weddings, imposing bans on singing and dancing, and forcing women to wear

heavily-veiled black long gowns. They over-generalize the “Halal” concept, stamping food, medicine, cosmetics, clothing, etc. with the Halal symbol. They turn a blind eye to the diverse and splendid cultures of Xinjiang created by all its ethnic groups, trying to sever the ties between the Chinese culture and the ethnic cultures of Xinjiang. All this indicates their denial of modern civilization, rejection of human progress, and gross violation of the human rights of their fellow citizens.

### **III. Violent Terrorism and Religious Extremism Are Grave Abuses of Human Rights**

Terrorist and extremist forces in Xinjiang, driven by the goal of separatism, engaged in wildly sabotaging activities. This badly undermines local stability and brings enormous suffering to all ethnic groups in the region. Incomplete statistics show that from 1990 to the end of 2016, separatist, terrorist and extremist forces launched thousands of terrorist attacks in Xinjiang, killing large numbers of innocent people and hundreds of police officers, and causing immeasurable damage to property.

Killing ordinary people. On February 5, 1992, while the whole of China was celebrating the Spring Festival, a terrorist group planted bombs on a No. 52 and a No. 30 bus in Urumqi, blowing up the 2 buses, killing 3 people and injuring 23 others. On February 25, 1997, “East Turkistan” terrorists caused explosions on a No. 2, a No. 10 and a No. 44 bus in Urumqi, destroying the 3 buses, killing 9 and causing serious injury to 68. On July 30, 2011, two terrorists hijacked a truck at the junction of a food street in Kashgar City, stabbed the driver to death, drove the truck into the crowd, and then attacked the public with their knives. In this incident, 8 were killed and 27 injured. The next day, knife-wielding terrorists randomly attacked pedestrians on Xiangxie Street, Renmin West Road, killing 6 and injuring 15. On February 28, 2012, nine knife-wielding terrorists attacked civilians on Xingfu Road, Yecheng County, Kashgar Prefecture, resulting in 15 deaths and 20 injuries. On March 1, 2014, eight knife-wielding Xinjiang terrorists attacked passengers at the Kunming Railway Station Square and the ticket lobby, leaving 31 dead and 141 injured. On April 30, 2014, two terrorists hid in the crowd at the exit of Urumqi Railway Station. One attacked people with his knife and the other detonated a device inside his suitcase, killing 3 and injuring 79. On May 22, 2014, five terrorists drove two SUVs through the fence of the morning fair of North Park Road of Saybagh District, Urumqi, into the crowd, and then detonated a bomb, claiming the life of 39 and leaving 94 injured. On September 18, 2015, terrorists attacked a coal mine in Baicheng County, Aksu Prefecture, causing 16 deaths and 18 injuries.

Assassinating religious leaders. On August 24, 1993, two terrorists stabbed Senior Mullah Abulizi, imam of the Great Mosque in Yecheng County, Kashgar

Prefecture, leaving him seriously wounded. On March 22, 1996, two masked terrorists broke into the house of Akemusidike Aji, vice president of the Islamic Association of Xinhe County, Aksu Prefecture, and assistant imam of a mosque, and shot him dead. On May 12, 1996, Aronghan Aji, vice president of the China Islamic Association and president of Xinjiang Islamic Association, and hatip of Id Kah Mosque in Kashgar was stabbed 21 times by four terrorists on his way to a mosque and seriously wounded. On November 6, 1997, a terrorist group, under the command of the “East Turkistan” organization stationed abroad, shot and killed Senior Mullah Younusi Sidike, member of the China Islamic Association, president of Aksu Islamic Association and imam of the Great Mosque of Baicheng County, on his way to the mosque for worship. On January 27, 1998, this same group shot and killed Abulizi Aji, imam of the Great Mosque of Baicheng County on his way to the mosque for worship. On July 30, 2014, the 74-year-old Senior Mullah Juma Tayier, vice president of Xinjiang Islamic Association and imam of the Id Kah Mosque, was brutally killed by three terrorists on his way home after morning Fajr prayer.

Endangering public security. On May 23, 1998, the East Turkistan Liberation Organization dispatched trained terrorists from abroad into Xinjiang who placed more than 40 incendiary devices with self-ignition equipment in crowded places such as shopping malls, wholesale markets and hotels in Urumqi, resulting in 15 arson cases. On March 7, 2008, terrorists carried a disguised explosive device that could cause catastrophic crash onto Flight CZ6901 from Urumqi to Beijing, intending to blow up the plane. On June 29, 2012, six terrorists attempted to hijack Flight GS7554 from Hotan to Urumqi following the example of the September 11 attacks. On October 28, 2013, three Xinjiang terrorists drove a jeep carrying 31 barrels of gasoline, 20 ignitors, 5 knives, and several iron bars onto the sidewalk on the east of Tiananmen Square in central Beijing and accelerated it towards tourists and policemen on duty, until it crashed into the barrier of the Golden Water Bridge. They then ignited the gasoline to set the jeep on fire, resulting in deaths of 2 people including 1 foreigner and injuries to over 40.

Attacking government organs. On August 27, 1996, six terrorists drove to the seat of Jianggelesi Township government, Yecheng County, Kashgar Prefecture, cut the telephone line, and killed a deputy township head and a policeman on duty. They then kidnapped three security men and a plumber, drove them to the desert ten kilometers away, and killed them. On October 24, 1999, a group of terrorists armed with guns, knives, and explosive devices attacked a police station in Saili Township, Zepu County, Kashgar Prefecture. They threw incendiary bottles and explosive devices at the station, shot dead a public security guard and a criminal suspect in

custody, injured a policeman and a public security guard, and burned 10 rooms, 1 jeep and 3 motorcycles in the police station. On August 4, 2008, terrorists drove a stolen dump truck into the back of a queue of armed frontier police at drill on Seman Road, Kashgar City, and threw homemade grenades, leaving 16 dead and 16 injured. On April 23, 2013, when terrorists were found making explosives at their home in Selibuya Town, Bachu County, Kashgar Prefecture by three visiting community workers, they killed them on the spot and then attacked local government staff and police coming to their rescue, resulting in 15 deaths and 2 severely injured. On June 26, 2013, terrorists launched attacks at the police station, patrol squadron, seat of local government and construction sites of Lukeqin Township, Shanshan County, Turpan Prefecture, resulting in 24 deaths and 25 injuries. On July 28, 2014, terrorists with knives and axes attacked the government building and police station of Ailixihu Town, Shache County, Kashgar Prefecture. Some then moved on to Huangdi Town where they attacked civilians and smashed and burned passing vehicles, causing 37 deaths and 13 injuries and destroying 31 vehicles. On September 21, 2014, the police station and farmer's market of Yangxia Town, the police station of Tierekebazha Town, and a store at the Luntai county seat, Bayingol Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture were hit by bomb blasts which claimed the life of 10, caused injuries to 54 and damaged 79 vehicles. On December 28, 2016, four terrorists drove into the courtyard of Moyu County government, Hotan Prefecture, detonated a homemade explosive device, and attacked government staff, leaving 2 dead and 3 injured.

Planning riots. On April 5, 1990, incited by the East Turkistan Islamic Party (also known as Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, East Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah, East Turkistan Islamic Hezbollah), a group of terrorists with submachine guns, pistols, explosive devices and grenades, mustered over 200 people to attack the government building of Baren Township, Akto County, Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture, kidnapping 10 people, killing 6 armed police officers, and blowing up 2 vehicles. From February 5 to 8, 1997, this organization again perpetrated the Yining Incident. In the riots 7 people were killed and 198 injured, including civilians, public security officers and armed police officers, 64 of whom were severely wounded; more than 30 vehicles were damaged and 2 houses were burned down. On July 5, 2009, the "East Turkistan" forces inside and outside China engineered a riot in Urumqi which shocked the whole world. Thousands of terrorists attacked civilians, government organs, public security and police officers, residential houses, stores and public transportation facilities, causing 197 deaths and injuries to over 1,700, smashing and burning down 331 stores and 1,325 vehicles, and damaging many public facilities.

The violent crimes committed by terrorists are bloody and heinous. These inhuman, anti-social and barbaric acts have brought enormous suffering to all ethnic groups in Xinjiang.

## **IV. Striking at Terrorism and Extremism in Accordance with the Law**

It is important to stick to the principles of rule of law and a law-based approach in combatting terrorism and extremism in Xinjiang. The situation is severe and complex; members of all ethnic groups are insistent in their demands that violent and terrorist crimes be punished, and that their lives and property should be protected. Therefore, in accordance with the law, the local government strikes at all sorts of violent and terrorist activities that violate human rights, endanger public security, undermine ethnic unity, and split the country.

Counterterrorism and de-radicalization in Xinjiang has always been conducted in accordance with the law. Currently, China's anti-terrorism law system is composed of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, the Criminal Procedure Law of the People's Republic of China, the National Security Law of the People's Republic of China, the Counterterrorism Law of the People's Republic of China, the Regulations on Religious Affairs, and the Opinions on Certain Issues Concerning the Application of Law in Handling Criminal Cases Involving Terrorism and Extremism jointly issued by the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security, and the Ministry of Justice.

In view of local reality and in accordance with the Legislation Law of the People's Republic of China and the Law of the People's Republic of China on Regional Ethnic Autonomy, Xinjiang has accelerated the enactment of local regulations, including the Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Religious Affairs, the Measures of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Implementing the Counterterrorism Law of the People's Republic of China, and the Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on De-radicalization. These laws and regulations are powerful legal instruments to contain and combat terrorism and extremism. In line with the above-mentioned laws and regulations, the local government upholds the principles of protecting lawful activities, curbing illegal actions, containing extremism, resisting infiltration, and preventing and punishing crimes. The local government fully respects and safeguards civil rights including freedom of religious belief. It protects lawful religious activities, fulfills the

reasonable religious demands of believers, protects the legitimate rights and interests of citizens and organizations, strikes severely at all forms of terrorism, and forbids violations of the law and crimes such as spreading extremism, inciting ethnic hatred, and dividing the country by means of religion. Since 2014, Xinjiang has destroyed 1,588 violent and terrorist gangs, arrested 12,995 terrorists, seized 2,052 explosive devices, punished 30,645 people for 4,858 illegal religious activities, and confiscated 345,229 copies of illegal religious materials.

With facts as the basis and the law as the criterion, judicial organs in Xinjiang adopt a policy that strikes the right balance between compassion and severity. Ringleaders, core members, and major offenders who are held accountable for organizing, planning and implementing violent, terrorist and religious extremist crimes are severely punished in accordance with the law; repeat offenders – those who have previously received administrative and criminal punishment or have been exempt from criminal punishment after committing violent, terrorist and religious extremist crimes are found committing the same crimes again – are severely punished in accordance with the law; minor offenders who have pled guilty are sentenced leniently in accordance with the law; juvenile offenders, deluded offenders and coerced offenders are sentenced leniently in accordance with the law; offenders who have voluntarily surrendered themselves or who have helped in cracking the cases are sentenced leniently or have their prison terms reduced in accordance with the law. Punishment is used effectively to reform the offenders and prevent crimes. While they make sure real criminals are punished, judicial organs in Xinjiang protect the defendants' right to defense and the right to use their own language in litigation to guarantee procedural justice and protect basic civil rights.

Law-based de-radicalization has been launched in Xinjiang to deal with illegal religious activities, illegal religious publicity materials, and illegal spread of religions through the internet, which has effectively curbed the breeding and spread of religious extremism. Religious extremism's interference in administration, judicial affairs, education, marriage and medical services has been eradicated; school enrollment rate has increased significantly and continues to rise; the public has become more aware of the dangers of religious extremism. At the same time, lawful religious activities have been protected more effectively through the promulgation and amendment of local regulations concerning religious affairs, including the Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Religious Affairs. These local regulations specify the rights and interests of religious groups, religious staff, and venues for religious activities, and draw a clear line between lawful and illegal religious activities, providing legal guarantees for people of all ethnic groups to engage in lawful religious activities. In



recent years, in particular, mosques in Xinjiang have been equipped with running water, electricity, natural gas, radio and television facilities and libraries. Roads leading to mosques have been paved to make access easier. Bathing equipment and flushing toilets have been installed in Juma mosques. Other facilities newly installed or added to mosques include medical services, LED screens, computers, electric fans or air conditioners, fire-fighting equipment, drinking water facilities, shoe coverings or automatic dispenser of shoe coverings, and lockers. All this has greatly improved the conditions of venues for religious activities and better satisfy the reasonable religious demands of believers.

Our law-based de-radicalization effort and the fight against terrorism are a just cause that has met the expectations for safety of people from all ethnic groups in Xinjiang. Through such effort, we have maintained social harmony and stability.

## **V. Giving Top Priority to a Preventive Counterterrorism Approach**

Terrorism and extremism jeopardize human rights and sustainable development as they propagate intolerance between different religions, cultures and societies, challenge human justice and dignity, and do great harm to peace and security. Fighting terrorism and extremism is a common issue and arduous task faced by the entire world. For years, many countries and regions have been actively exploring concrete approaches and measures for combating and preventing terrorism and extremism that accord with their own conditions.

Based on experience learned from the international community, China has been active in implementing the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly concerning the United Nations Global Counterterrorism Strategy (60/288), and has been working hard to wipe out the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and to prevent and combat terrorism. Based on its own conditions, Xinjiang has been making intensive counterterrorism and de-radicalization efforts. Upholding the principle of fighting and preventing terrorism at the same time, the autonomous region has been taking aggressive action against violent terrorist crimes, and at the same time, addressing the problem at its source. It has been making every effort to protect the fundamental human rights of citizens from violation by terrorism and extremism. Specific measures include improving public wellbeing, promoting knowledge of the law through education, and offering education and aid through vocational education and training centers in accordance with the law.

Making great efforts to ensure and improve public wellbeing. Public wellbeing is vital to people's happiness and to social harmony and stability. In the past, some areas in Xinjiang suffered from terrorism, and religious extremism infiltrated people's work and daily life, causing great damage and posing a threat to social stability, economic development, and security. In recent years, following a people-centered approach to development, Xinjiang has focused on ensuring and improving people's standard of living and implementing projects that benefit the public in employment, education, medical care, social security, and other fields. These include:

- implementing the plan of transfer employment for 100,000 laborers in southern Xinjiang in three years (2018-2020) and having realized the transfer employment of 75,000 people from families suffering extreme poverty;
- adding a total of 1.4008 million new urban jobs and transferring 8.305 million surplus rural laborers for employment in Xinjiang from 2016 to 2018 through developing labor-intensive industries, organized transfer for employment, and creating jobs through business startups;
- popularizing nine-year compulsory education and providing free three-year preschool education in urban and rural areas in southern Xinjiang;
- offering free universal health check-up; ensuring full coverage of serious illness insurance, and ensuring full coverage of centralized treatment of 15 serious illnesses and contracted services for chronic illnesses for the poverty-stricken rural population;
- improving the social security system, and ensuring that the standard of subsistence allowance for impoverished urban and rural residents is raised continuously.

As people's standard of living improves, the public will provide greater support to the government's counterterrorism, de-radicalization and stability-maintaining effort.

Popularizing understanding of the law and strengthening the sense of the rule of law. Rural residents in Xinjiang have a relatively weak sense of the rule of law, lack understanding of the law, and are vulnerable to instigation and intimidation by terrorist and extremist forces, resulting in criminal behavior. Attaching great importance to popularizing understanding of the law, Xinjiang has issued a series of legal documents, including Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Promoting Publicity and Education on the Law, Opinions on Developing Bases for Youth Education and Practice on the Rule of Law in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and Opinions on Implementing the Guideline on Adopting a Responsibility System for State Organs with the Principle that Law-Enforcing Departments Are Responsible for Publicizing the Law.

Focusing on the overall goal of long-term social stability, Xinjiang has carried out various forms of publicity activities on the rule of law, including "Year of Community-level Promotion of Rule of Law", "Month of Publicizing the Constitution and Other Laws", "Day of Universal Education on State Security", "Promotion of Rule of Law in Communities", "Teaching Rule of Law under the National Flag", and

“Strengthening Public Legal Awareness at Bazaars”, so as to help people of various ethnic groups to distinguish between legal and illegal conducts and improve citizens’ abilities to consciously resist the infiltration of religious extremism. These activities are designed to influence the general public, including young people, with a goal of promoting the concept of rule of law, cultivating a belief in rule of law, and advancing the practice of rule of law. They focus on raising people’s awareness about the rule of law and development of institution. They use traditional media and internet as platforms and are supported by the establishment and improvement of a community-level public service network for promoting the rule of law.

Actively providing help and aid through education. Education and training centers have been established with the goal of educating and rehabilitating people guilty of minor crimes or law-breaking and eradicating the influence of terrorism and extremism, in order to prevent them from falling victim to terrorism and extremism, and to nip terrorist activities in the bud.

At present, the trainees at the centers fall into three categories:

1. People who were incited, coerced or induced into participating in terrorist or extremist activities, or people who participated in terrorist or extremist activities in circumstances that were not serious enough to constitute a crime;

2. People who were incited, coerced or induced into participating in terrorist or extremist activities, or people who participated in terrorist or extremist activities that posed a real danger but did not cause actual harm, whose subjective culpability was not deep, who made confessions of their crimes and were contrite about their past actions and thus can be exempted from punishment in accordance with the law, and who have demonstrated the willingness to receive training;

3. People who were convicted and received prison sentence for terrorist or extremist crimes and after serving their sentences, have been assessed as still posing potential threats to society, and who have been ordered by people’s courts to receive education at the centers in accordance with the law.

In accordance with Articles 29 and 30 of the Counterterrorism Law of the People’s Republic of China, people in the first and third categories will be placed at the centers to receive support and education. With regard to people in the second category, a small number of them should be punished severely, while the majority should be rehabilitated in accordance with the policy of striking a balance between punishment and compassion. Confession, repentance, and willingness to receive training are preconditions for leniency, and these people will receive education to help

reform their ways after they have been exempted from penalty in accordance with the law.

Education and training centers are institutions established in accordance with the law. They have clear goals and methods of training, criteria for program completion, and methods of assessment, which are stated in the agreements they signed with trainees. When trainees meet the standards of assessment, they will be presented with completion certificates. The centers' curricula consist of standard spoken and written Chinese language, law, vocational skills, and courses on the eradication of extremism. They are staffed by quality teachers and senior vocational trainers. They formulate teaching plans, compile and print teaching materials, and develop teaching systems in a unified manner. They offer tailored and even individualized education to different types of trainees. Teaching and studying at the centers have been standardized. A step-by-step approach has been adopted in the process of study and training, which begins with learning standard spoken and written Chinese language, then moves on to studying the law, and concludes with learning vocational skills.

In view of the fact that some trainees have been influenced by religious extremism, have not received good education, are weak in the use of standard spoken and written Chinese language, slow in acquiring modern knowledge, and have poor communication skills, the centers fully ensure citizens' constitutional right to learn and use standard Chinese language and provide conditions for them to learn. Through education and training, the trainees have improved their competence in the use of standard Chinese language and broadened their channels to acquire modern knowledge and information. They have realized that only by mastering standard Chinese language can they better adapt to contemporary society.

In view of the fact that the trainees have a weak awareness of rule of law, the centers regard an understanding of the law as a key link in helping the trainees to increase their sense of state, citizenship, and rule of law. They have invited judges, public procurators, and lawyers to give lectures on laws and regulations such as the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, General Provisions of the Civil Law of the People's Republic of China, Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China, Education Law of the People's Republic of China, Counterterrorism Law of the People's Republic of China, Public Security Administration Punishment Law of the People's Republic of China, and Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on De-radicalization. Many trainees were influenced by religious extremism and their conducts closely followed the "religious law" and "domestic discipline" concocted by terrorists and extremists. They defied the law of the state, and even interfered with and sabotaged the

implementation of state law. Through study, the trainees have realized that as citizens they have an obligation to abide by the Constitution and laws of the state and they should conduct themselves in accordance with the rights and obligations endowed to them by the Constitution and laws.

In view of the fact that some trainees lack vocational skills and have difficulties finding employment, the centers regard learning vocational skills as an important way to enhance trainees' ability to find work. Based on local demand and employment conditions, they set up training programs in the making of garments, footwear and hats, food processing, assembly of electronic products, typesetting and printing, cosmetology and hairdressing, e-business, and other courses. To those who have the will to learn multiple skills and meet the relevant qualifications, they provide such training as to ensure that the trainees can master one or two vocational skills upon completing their study at the centers. The centers attach importance to the integration of study and practice, and have elevated trainees' practical abilities. Through training, trainees have gained rudimentary vocational skills, and some of them have completed their study at the centers and found jobs.

In view of the fact that trainees have been influenced by religious extremism to various degrees, the centers integrate de-radicalization into the whole process of education and training. Through progressive study of laws and regulations, policies on ethnic and religious affairs, and religious knowledge, and through unveiling the hazards of terrorism and extremism, trainees have realized that religious extremism is totally against religious doctrines and constitutes the ideological base of ethnic separatism and violent terrorism. They gain a thorough understanding of the very nature and perils of terrorism and extremism, and free themselves from the influence and control of ideological terrorism and extremism.

The centers adopt a boarding school management system, and are staffed with instructors, doctors and personnel for logistic services and management to provide trainees with a normal study and life routine. Trainees can have home visits on a regular basis and can ask for leave to attend to private affairs. The centers are equipped with indoor and outdoor sports and cultural facilities and regularly hold such activities. The centers fully respect and protect the customs and habits of trainees of different ethnic groups, care for their mental health, offer psychological counseling services, and help them solve real-life problems. In accordance with the law, the centers adopt a policy of separating education and religion. Trainees may not organize and participate in religious activities at the centers.

Thanks to these preventive measures, Xinjiang has witnessed a marked change in the social environment in recent years. A healthy atmosphere is spreading, while evil influences are declining. The citizens' legal awareness has been notably enhanced. The trend in society is now to pursue knowledge of modern science and technology and a cultured way of life. Citizens now consciously resist religious extremism. The ethnic groups of Xinjiang now enjoy closer relations through communication, exchange and blending. People have a much stronger sense of fulfillment, happiness and security.

## **VI. Finding Experience for Counterterrorism and De-radicalization**

Counterterrorism and de-radicalization effort in Xinjiang is based on the reality in Xinjiang and the rest of the country, while drawing on the experience of other countries. The government prioritizes safeguarding the fundamental interests of all ethnic groups. Starting by addressing deep-seated problems, China has worked to explore effective and law-based approaches to counterterrorism and de-radicalization to protect people of all ethnic groups from the scourge of terrorism and extremism, and identified successful experiences and effective measures.

– Combating terrorism in accordance with the law and protecting human rights. Safety is a prerequisite for human rights protection, and human rights cannot be guaranteed if we fail to strike at terrorism. Fighting terrorist activities and protecting lives and property are fundamental to protecting human rights.

Terrorist activities were once frequent in Xinjiang, destroying local peace, order, unity, and progress, and showing callous disdain for the people's right to life, health, development and other basic human rights. In the face of terrorist atrocities, the local government has launched preventive and punitive countermeasures in accordance with the law and perseveres with deterrence against terrorist forces, maximizing its efforts to protect basic human rights from terrorism and extremism. No violent or terrorist activities have occurred in Xinjiang for more than two years; the number of criminal cases and public security cases has fallen significantly; the infiltration of extremism has been curbed, and peace and harmony has returned to society. In 2018, tourism in Xinjiang grew rapidly: Tourists from inside and outside China numbered over 150 million, a year-on-year increase of 40 percent; foreign tourists totaled 2.4032 million, a year-on-year increase of 10.78 percent; tourist spending totaled RMB252.2 billion, a year-on-year growth of 41.6 percent.

At the same time, Xinjiang has paid special attention to human rights protection in its counterterrorism effort, preventing any violation of human rights caused by counterterrorist measures. To this end, the local government has enhanced legislation on counterterrorism, so as to keep its counterterrorism activities within the law and punish acts of terrorism in accordance with the law. It has made every effort to ensure



that its counterterrorist measures do not infringe the basic rights, interests and freedoms of local ethnic groups as endowed by the law, and that normal social order is maintained.

– Counterterrorism does not target any specific region, ethnic group or religion. It is stipulated in the Counterterrorism Law of the People’s Republic of China that “In counterterrorism work, citizens’ freedom in religious belief and ethnic customs shall be respected, and any discrimination based on regions, ethnic groups, religions and other grounds shall be prohibited.”

Xinjiang is inhabited by multiple ethnic groups composed of believers in multiple religions. In the course of counterterrorism and de-radicalization, the local government forbids any organization or individual from using religion to split the country, spread religious extremism, incite ethnic hatred, undermine ethnic unity, disturb social order, harm citizens’ physical or mental health, hinder the implementation of the country’s administrative, judicial, educational and cultural systems, or harm national security, national interests, public interests and civil rights and interests. It prevents ill-intentioned people from using religion or religious activities to create disorder or commit crimes.

The local government also abides by the policies and stipulations in the Constitution, other state laws and administrative regulations concerning freedom of religious belief. In the course of counterterrorism and de-radicalization, the people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang have their freedom of religious belief fully protected. Citizens are entitled to choose to be religious believers or non-believers, and no organization or individual may force citizens to believe in a religion or not, nor discriminate against believers or non-believers.

Xinjiang attaches equal importance to services and management in addressing religious affairs. The local government has worked to enhance the training of religious staff, expand channels for them to acquire religious knowledge, and improve the conditions of venues for religious activities, so that the religious sentiments, beliefs and needs of believers are fully respected.

– Balancing compassion and severity and taking measures for prevention, education and rehabilitation. Xinjiang follows the criminal justice policy of balancing compassion and severity, and taking the approach of reforming the offenders through education. A few leaders and core members of violent and terrorist gangs who have committed heinous crimes or are inveterate offenders will be severely punished in accordance with the law so as to protect citizens’ basic human rights from the scourge

of terrorism and extremism. Offenders who have committed minor crimes under the influence of religious extremism will be educated, rehabilitated and protected through vocational training, through the learning of standard Chinese language and labor skills, and acquiring knowledge of the law; these people are large in number. The approach to the second group of people is rehabilitation rather than punishment, care instead of rejection. Through such education, they will improve their ability to distinguish right from wrong, to resist infiltration, and to correct themselves. They will rid themselves of terrorist influence, the extremist mindset, and outmoded cultural practices. They will increase their employability, expand their employment channels, and become more confident in life. This approach clearly demonstrates the humanitarian stance of the Chinese government.

– Maintaining stability and improving the standards of living. Happiness is the most important human right. Safeguarding and improving people’s lives contributes to public wellbeing and social harmony and stability.

Some areas in Xinjiang were severely disturbed by terrorism and the infiltration of religious extremism. For this reason, some people cannot speak, read or write in standard Chinese, have a weak understanding of rule of law, and have difficulty finding employment through a lack of employable skills. As a result, such people are more inclined to be incited or coerced into criminality by terrorist and extremist forces.

Social stability and better lives promote all-round human development. The people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang are leading a new life. They pursue a cultured way of life, and consciously resist religious extremism. More than ever before, ethnic groups in Xinjiang are united and live in harmony, and popular support for counterterrorism, maintenance of stability and de-radicalization is increasing. The people of Xinjiang are full of hope for a better future.

## **VII. International Counterterrorism**

### **Exchanges and Cooperation**

The global spread of terrorism and extremism over the years has inflicted agony on humanity. Some of the most notorious terrorist attacks include: the September 11 attacks in 2001 that killed 2,996 people in the US; the Bali bombings on October 12, 2002 that killed 202 people in Indonesia; the Madrid train bombings on March 11, 2004 that killed 190 and injured over 1,500 people in Spain; the Beslan school siege on September 1, 2004 that killed 335 people, including 186 minors, and injured 958 people in Russia; the London bombings on July 7, 2005 that killed 52 and injured over 700 people in the UK; the Mumbai attacks on November 26, 2008 that killed 195 and injured close to 300 people in India; the shooting on July 22, 2011 that killed 77 people in Oslo, Norway; the Westgate shopping mall attack on September 21, 2013 that killed 72 and injured 168 people in Nairobi, Kenya; the Paris attacks on November 13, 2015 that killed 132 and injured more than 300 people in France; the Brussels bombings on March 22, 2016 that killed 35 and injured over 300 persons in Belgium; the Berlin truck attack on December 19, 2016 that killed 12 and injured 49 people in Germany; the Istanbul nightclub shooting on January 1, 2017 that killed 39 and injured 69 people in Turkey; the Sinai mosque attack on November 24, 2017 that killed 235 and injured 109 people in Egypt. According to incomplete statistics, in 2018 there were 1,127 terrorist attacks globally, causing 13,000 deaths.

Throughout the world terrorism and extremism gravely threaten peace and development, and endanger the life and property of individuals. Striking aggressively at terrorism and furthering the de-radicalization effort is the common responsibility of the international community and essential to the protection of human rights.

China opposes all forms of terrorism and extremism, and opposes double standards on fighting terrorism. It opposes linking terrorism and extremism with specific countries, ethnic groups or religions. It advocates comprehensive measures to address both the symptoms and the root causes, with the dual purposes of striking at terrorist activities and eliminating poverty, so that there will be no room for terrorism to breed. It supports more pragmatic international cooperation in the fight against terrorism on the basis of mutual respect and consultation on an equal footing.

As a responsible member of the international community, China supports the United Nations in playing a leading and coordinating role in international cooperation against terrorism. China upholds the UN Charter and other principles and norms of international law. It has supported a series of resolutions on combating terrorism adopted by the UN Security Council, and contributed to the full implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy. China has joined most of the international counterterrorism conventions, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages.

Under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), China and countries involved have signed the following documents: the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, Cooperation Between SCO Member States on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, SCO Convention on Combating Terrorism, SCO Convention on Combating Extremism, SCO Cooperation Programme on Fighting Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for 2019-2021, and SCO Plan of Action for Cooperation with Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Fighting Terrorism, Drug Trafficking and Organized Crimes.

China has carried out a number of fruitful counterterrorism exchanges and cooperation with relevant countries through such bilateral and multilateral mechanisms as joint anti-terrorism exercises, joint border defense operations, and suppression of illegal cyberspace activities by terrorist, separatist and extremist forces, as well as security cooperation, intelligence exchange, and judicial cooperation during major international events. It has played an important role in maintaining international and regional security and stability.

Xinjiang is a key battlefield in the fight against terrorism in China. In recent years, under the care and support of the central government, Xinjiang has established cooperation mechanisms with neighboring countries on fighting terrorism in border areas and between law-enforcement departments. Pragmatic exchanges and cooperation have been carried out in intelligence, joint border control, the investigation and capture of suspected terrorists, cutting off funds for terrorism, suppression of cyberspace terrorism and transnational crimes, judicial assistance, and cross-border oil and gas pipeline security. Drawing experience from global efforts, Xinjiang has contributed to the international fight on terrorism through effective counterterrorism and de-radicalization campaigns based on its regional realities.



## **Conclusion**

There is no doubt that Xinjiang's fight against terrorism and extremism is an important component of the global struggle, and has made an important contribution to the latter. While preventing and combating terrorism and extremism in accordance with the law, Xinjiang has maintained social stability and promoted social progress in the region, meeting the people's aspirations for a safe and stable environment to live and work in, and ensuring the basic rights of all ethnic groups to the greatest extent.

In today's world, faced with the severe challenges of terrorism and extremism, no country can shy away from them. Only by strengthening our community of shared future, abandoning double standards, enhancing political mutual trust, reaching strategic consensus, and promoting exchanges and cooperation, can we effectively curb and combat terrorism and extremism in the interests of world peace and stability.

Under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping at the core, with the strong support of the people across the country, and through the joint effort of all the ethnic groups of Xinjiang, China has made significant progress in its counterterrorism and de-radicalization efforts in Xinjiang. However, the three forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism are not gone; their influence can still be felt. And the "East Turkistan" forces are in search of opportunities to create trouble. We still face a severe and complex situation in combating terrorism and extremism in Xinjiang. Focusing on social stability and lasting peace, Xinjiang will continue to fight terrorism in accordance with the law, ensure human rights, develop the economy, improve people's lives, and build a united, harmonious, prosperous, and culturally advanced socialist society where people live and work in peace and contentment.