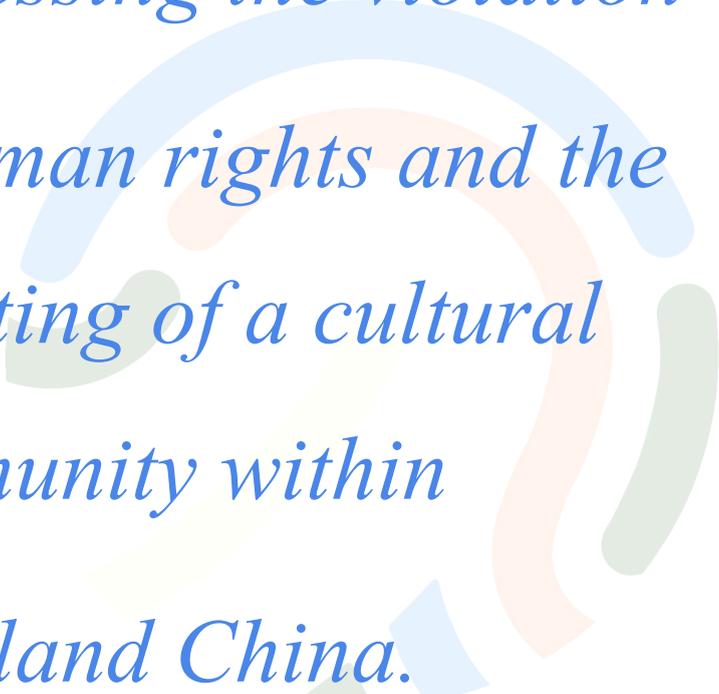


Security Council

*Addressing the violation
of human rights and the
targeting of a cultural
community within
Mainland China.*



PASMUN 2023

Strength in diversity

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Security Council was established as one of the 6 main organs created during the birth of the UN after WW2. The council had its first meeting in Westminster, London on 17 January 1946. The organ has its current headquarters in New York but has held meetings across the world ranging from Panama, Ethiopia to Switzerland during its life span as a council (UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL [UNSC], n.d.). The Security Council consists of 5 permanent members, the G5 (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States), and 10 nonpermanent members divided into 5 for Afro-Asia, 1 for Eastern Europe, 2 for Latin America and Western Europe (General Assembly of the United Nations [GA], n.d.).

The Security Council was created with the goal of “maintaining international peace and security” while fomenting the UN’s principles (United Nations [UN], n.d.). Some of the council mayor's duties include, but are not limited to, mediation of conflicts, restriction of armaments, dispatching diplomatic emissaries, peacekeeping forces, and military observers (UN, n.d; UNSC, n.d.). The council is one of the few organs within the UN that can override other organs' actions in case of an emergency and has a clause stating that any member state is forced to adopt any decisions or documents passed in the council (UNSC, n.d.).

During the last decades, many ethnic groups within mainland China have been violated due to their cultural differences. This type of violence is defined as hostile behaviors that arise when these ethnic groups feel threatened. The conflict is frequently over political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial issues rather than ethnic differences. Ethnic conflicts are often accompanied by grave violations of human rights, such as genocide and crimes against humanity, as well as economic decline, state collapse, environmental issues, and refugee flows. Ethnic violence causes a great deal of human suffering (Reuter, T, n.d).

China is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world with 56 recognized ethnic groups scattered across the country. Of these 56 groups, 91.6% of people recognized as an ethnic minority are a part of the Han ethnic group (EMBASSY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, 2013). This diversity however hasn’t stopped a policy of sinicization (to modify by Chinese influence) from the central Chinese government. The two provinces that have suffered

the most in mainland China from this policy are the two westernmost provinces Tibet and Xinjiang. These two provinces are home to the Tibetans and Uyghurs.

Uyghurs are a primarily Muslim ethnic group that speaks a Turkic language. Today, it is estimated that 12 million Uyghurs are located in the northwestern part of China, in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Uyghurs make up less than 1% of China's population, but they used to be the majority in Xinjiang, which China has ruled since 1949. China has encouraged Han Chinese to come to Xinjiang as the province has expanded economically. Tensions between the Han majority and the Uyghur minority have risen as a result of this migration. Since 2000, Uyghurs have opposed unequal treatment by the majority, resulting in various riots. The Chinese government has responded in recent years with sweeping persecution against the larger Uyghur population, claiming that the violence was caused by separatist-fueled terrorist groups. (Facing History and ourselves, 2022).

Tibet is home to around 4.6 million Tibetans, most of them Buddhist and farmers who have created their own culture throughout the years (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, 2016). Furthermore, from 1911 until its annexation by the Chinese government in 1959, Tibet functioned as an independent state outside the influence of China. All of this, combined with the geography of the region separating it from China's political core by mountains and desert, makes the Tibetan people one of the most culturally diverse people within China. Consequently, calls for independence have been seen on multiple occasions due to said cultural differences.

II. HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

To sinicize is defined as “to modify by Chinese influence” most often used in cases where people are integrated into the dominant Chinese culture of the time (Merriam-Webster, n.d; Katzenstein, Hau, 2012). This process has shifted over time with the dominant Chinese culture deciding the lengths at which they will go to achieve their conversion and the aspects that are considered Chinese. Everything from bans on cultural and religious symbols, exclusion as barbarians or savages within society, to forceful re-education has been tried within China. This process, although effective in areas like the Yangtze valley/region, has shown difficulties integrating people within

hard-to-reach environments like mountains and deserts. Furthermore, regions like Xinjiang and Tibet with strong cultural and religious identities, in comparison to the shifting assertions of what is to be Chinese, have become y susceptible to nationalistic sentiments and ideas, anger towards the dominant power and culture of China, and (when combined with historical and political events that amplify the sentiment of being separated from the political core of China) calls for independence as a response to attempts of sinicization (Katzenstein, Hau, 2012).

Tibet as a state is thought to have come into existence around the 600s a.d. The Tibetan state has almost always been Buddhist in nature adopting the religion in the 700s. The Tibetans also experienced a golden age between the years 1315 and 1543 which would be the years that would mark the Tibetan culture after the removal of Mongol influence in the region. Skipping forward Tibet was annexed by the Chinese Empire until the Qing fell and China became fractured into multiple warring states. From 1914 to 1950, Tibet enjoyed a level of independence harboring back the state of Tibet during its golden years with the caveat that its existence relied on it being a good buffer between the Chinese and British in India. During this time, the national identity of Tibet was once again reinforced and, with the failures of Qing and Manchu sinicization, the region would end up isolated from the political center of China even after its annexation, which would lead to the Maoist policies that would govern the region (Van Schaik, 2011).

Xinjiang, or Tibet Autonomous Region, is China's largest political unit in the region. It is a territory of rocky mountains and desert basins that have been home to nomadic tribes since ancient times. With the fall of the Han dynasty in the 3rd century CE, China quickly fell under the power of local chiefs, and the regions of Tibet and Xinjiang followed suit. This continued until China unified in the 7th century. It then was conquered by Genghis Khan in the 13th century after being ruled by Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Arabs. It was renamed Xinjiang province in 1884, during Chinese administration in the Manchu era. In 1949, it fell under the Chinese communist administration. In 1955, it was re-established as an autonomous region. However, since 1959, Tibet has been ruled by the Chinese government.

China's unification into a single political entity is fascinating, during the back half of the 1940s, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) began directing a better military

due to a myriad of factors, some being the charisma of Mao, the populist nature of the revolution and the CCP having a much more competent and less corrupt leadership in place. All these factors along with a few others meant that the CCP was able to recover from the long march and become as dominant of a political power in the region as the Republic of China by the time Japanese troops began to exit Chinese soil and the tense alliance between the CCP and Republic of China broke almost immediately thereafter. After victories in and around Nanjing and Xi'an between the years of 1948 and 1949, the People's Republic of China was established with its capital in Beijing. For its part, the Republic of China fled to Taiwan where they remain to this day. In the following years, a focus on implementing Marxist ideas began, and with the help of the military and propaganda programs, China began to stabilize under the rule of Mao Zedong (Elman, et al., 2022). In the case of Tibet and Xinjiang, the two regions were a part of annexations branded as liberations by the CCP after their win in the civil war (Arpi, 2017).

Tibet was annexed after an invasion by Chinese troops in October of 1950 which led to the rapid occupation of cities in the westernmost part of the country, before a peace settlement was formed on May 23, 1951, in which the Dalai Lama was allowed to control internal affairs. The full annexation would come in 1959 when a Tibetan rebellion against the Chinese government was defeated and the government led by the Dalai Lama was abolished and the region was fully incorporated into China (University of Central Arkansas, n.d.). Xinjiang wasn't much different, with a joint Soviet and Chinese invasion quickly moving against the nationalists in the region. This invasion, however, would end up being less of a steamroll as the terrain of Xinjiang didn't allow for any real military incursion towards the political strongholds of the nationalists which allowed Xinjiang to gain an autonomous region status that it still holds today (Arpi, 2017).

The Maoist doctrine was a combination of Marxist-Leninist and particular ideas brought about during the formative phases of a weak and disjointed China. This doctrine was responsible for programs like the great leap forward and the cultural revolution which were astounding failures when it came to progress, however, their impact was felt in their ability to stabilize and reinforce Mao's grasp on China. Maoist doctrine unsurprisingly clashed with any disobedience and any perceived notion of not being Chinese (under the definition held by the CCP at the time) which especially didn't

help the situation in Tibet but was not limited to the region with similar occurrences in China's ethnically diverse regions. This clash of cultures eventually led to the closure of monasteries, the imposing of Chinese laws and customs, and the use of military force to quell dissent (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia, 2018).

In 1949, Communist China invaded the peaceful Buddhist country of Tibet, which had minimal contact with the outside world. This country, which served as a rich cultural repository for Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhist teachings, was destroyed. "Since then, more than 1.2 million of the 6 million Tibetans have been killed, more than 6,000 monasteries have been destroyed, and thousands of Tibetans have been imprisoned". (UMMAS, n.d).

The current Dalai Lama, the country's political and spiritual leader, was only 24 years old when it all came to an end in 1959. Years of turbulence followed the Chinese communist invasion in 1950, which culminated in the fall of the Tibetan government and the self-imposed exile of the Dalai Lama and 100,000 Tibetans in 1959. More than a million Tibetans have been massacred since then. Tibetans have become a minority in their own country as a result of China's policy of relocating Chinese to Tibet. The official language of the region is now Chinese and only 1 out of 20 monks are still allowed to practice under official supervision. (UMMAS, n.d). For the first time in recorded history, famines have broken out, natural resources have been depleted, and wildlife has become extinct. Tibetan culture is on the verge of extinction.

Peaceful protests, speeches, and publications by Tibetan nuns, monks, and laypeople have resulted in thousands of arrests and deaths. These political detainees are tortured and detained in deplorable conditions, with little chance of receiving justice. In 2009, The 14th Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of Tibet spoke about the situation: "These 50 years have brought untold suffering and destruction to the land and people of Tibet. Today, religion, culture, language, and identity are on the verge of extinction; in short, the Tibetan people are considered criminals who deserve to be sentenced to death. However, the fact that the issue of Tibet is alive and that the international community is taking more and more interest in it is an achievement. I have no doubt that the justice of the cause of Tibet will prevail, if we continue to walk the path of truth and non-violence".

On the other hand, there is Xinjian. During the Han era, Xinjiang was formally included in the Chinese dominion. Later dynasties in the Central Plains, kept closer or less stringent touch with the Western Regions, while the central rulers exercised more strict or less strict administration. All of these dynasties, however, considered the western territories to be part of Chinese territory and had control over Xinjiang. Many ethnic groups collaborated to develop their large areas and construct a diverse Chinese nation during the long process of forming the country into a cohesive multi-ethnic republic. The whole Chinese nation, including ethnic groups in Xinjiang, contributed to the unity of multi-ethnic China. (Mfa, 2019).

In response to the 1911 Revolution, Xinjiang was made a province of the Republic of China in 1912. In 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded, and Xinjiang was peacefully emancipated. In 1955, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was established. To fight Turkish persecution and enslavement, the Ouigour people banded together with several Tiele tribes to establish the Ouigour tribal alliance. Kutlug Bilge Khagan, who united the Ouigour tribes, was given a title by the Tang court in 744. "In 788, the then Ouigour ruler wrote to the Tang emperor, requesting to have their name changed to 'Uighur'" (Mfa, 2019).

Following the collapse of the Uyghur Khanate by the Kyrgyz in 840, some Uyghurs migrated north to live with the Han, while the others separated into three subgroups. One of the subgroups moved to the Turpan Basin, where they established the Gaochang Uyghur Kingdom. Another group moved to the Hexi Corridor, where they mixed with other ethnic groups to form the Yugurs. The third subgroup traveled to the western Pamirs, settling in areas ranging from Central Asia to Kashgar (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d).

Since the contemporary era, people have referred to all peoples speaking the Turkic language family as "the Turks", based on the flimsy idea that the Turkic-speaking tribe merged with the ancestors of the Turkic people after migrating west. The definitions of a language family and an ethnic group are fundamentally different. The Uyghurs are an ethnic group speaking Turkic languages in China, each with its history and culture. These people should not be called "Turks".

Nowadays, it seems to be that Chinese authorities see Uyghurs as potential separatists or terrorists for no stated reason. "Xinjian looks like somewhere that is in the

middle of a civil war. There are checkpoints everywhere, armed police, military, and many cameras. Living in Xinjiang means being searched every day, numerous times a day” (The Guardian, 2020). It is difficult for Uyghurs to report themselves to their families and friends since they are being trailed by state security personnel who will intimidate them and anyone they try to communicate with.

III. CURRENT SITUATION

During the last two decades, multiple human rights abuses have been reported within the region of Tibet, with the Chinese government cracking down on any dissenters and doubling down on their efforts to control the region. First, after the 2008 protests, multiple crackdowns have occurred with an increased amount of surveillance and security measures (Human Rights Watch, 2013). This increase has come in the form of what has been called the “Grid”. The “Grid” is a series of police posts that are integrated into Tibetan cities creating a network of surveillance areas where the Chinese government can gather information on people, especially those deemed part of special groups who are considered to be the main destabilizing force in the region (Keane, 2013; Thomas, 2015).

Secondly, the so-called Red Armband Patrols have increased their numbers and presence in Tibet. This group, formed out of volunteers, is responsible for stopping sudden incidents and conducting doorstep interviews (home raids) on suspected people, these raids increasing in frequency after the self-immolations in recent years (Tsering, 2022; Keane, 2013). The group works in conjunction with the police force set up by China to keep order in the region with very little regard for the human rights of its people.

Third, concerning religion, multiple attacks have been levied against the Dalai Lama. First in regards to the current Dalai Lama’s reputation, and secondly the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama after the current death. Around the issue of the Dalai Lama’s reputation, the Dalai Lama is one of the main supporters of a more independent Tibet, adopting the midway approach to negotiations where it is proposed that Tibet become a truly autonomous region within China. This view has resulted in multiple attacks from Chinese officials and the state media, claiming that the Dalai Lama is

interested in power, not peace, and has an agenda to undermine China with his demands of the creation of an independent state in the region known as greater Tibet. This is flared up even more with how the Dalai Lama is seen as a threat to the sovereignty of China with the amount of recognition he gets (FlorCruz, 2010). Additionally, the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is a sensitive issue since the successor by title is the head of the Buddhist religion and the spiritual leader of Tibet. Both China and the Dalai Lama have set up successors with the very real possibility of there being two active Dalai Lama in the world, one chosen by China and the other by the people entrusted by the current Dalai Lama, which has flared up tension between the two groups (Ellis-Petersen, 2021).

Consequently, Tibetans are often treated as second-hand citizens with many rights being taken away. One of the most known examples includes the fact that Tibet is home to one of the biggest quantities of malnourished children in the world (Chelala, 2001). Furthermore, the Chinese education system established within Tibet is completely taught in Chinese, along with most government processes being also done in Chinese, which has marginalized native Tibetan speakers from either learning or participating in society. Finally, due to the importance of religion within the region, the Chinese government has allowed itself to always supervise places of worship with the authority to close, change and modify these sacred places (Freetibet.org, n.d.).

Furthermore, concerning the region of Xinjiang, the Chinese government has used a huge surveillance system, intense policing, mass arrests, and forced labor schemes to target Uyghurs. According to the researchers, more than 1 million Uyghurs have been incarcerated in a system of prison camps in the region. China's government wants the world to see that these camps are vocational training centers, which are not obligatory, and that the detainees in them are not detainees but students who learn employable skills and Chinese. However, it is known from people who have been inside the camps that they are the facto prison, and people have to go in there with no choice presented. They are separated from their families and forced to sing patriotic songs or listen to lectures about the party. There have also been cases of torture, such as people being tied to a chair for hours, people being electrocuted, reports of forced medication, and forced sterilization (The Guardian, 2020).

Hundreds of Uyghur people were killed and many more imprisoned following a major outbreak of violence in the capital, Ürümqi, in 2009. The tragic attacks on passengers at Kunming and Yunnan railway stations in 2013 and 2014 were also defining moments. Uyghur militants have been implicated in bombings in Ürümqi and a suicide attack in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Since then, the Chinese government has imposed a heavy security crackdown and a system of mass surveillance, which has intensified sharply since 2017. Currently, more than a million Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities have been imprisoned without trial in concentration camps, considered by the government "reeducation centers", according to some reports (Facing history and ourselves, 2022).

Uyghurs made up about 80% of Xinjiang's population in the early years, but large-scale government-sponsored migration has made the number of Han in the province almost equal to that of Uyghurs. Ethnic conflicts have increased, often as a result of competition for limited resources and a sense that the ruling Communist Party favors the Han. This has led to the population growth of Uyghur falling by 84% between 2015 and 2018. After this evidence emerged, The United States, Canada, and several other governments accused the Chinese government of crimes against humanity and genocide against the Uyghurs. (Facing history and ourselves, 2022).

IV. UN ACTIONS

The impact of the human rights violence made by the Chinese government against the Uyghurs and Tibet has become a problem that requires immediate attention. The United Nations Human Rights office has completed its assessment of the situation in China's Xinjiang region. "The Uyghurs tribunal has brought to light more information that is deeply disturbing in relation to the treatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang," the UN said (Nebehay, S, 2021). The UN has been able to construct some calls to action and petitions for the Chinese government to follow, with the aid of the Security Council.

"We call on China to respect human rights, particularly the rights of people belonging to religious and ethnic minorities, especially in Xinjiang and Tibet" (China news, 2019), SAID THE German Ambassador Christoph Heusgen on behalf of 39

countries at the UN committee that deals with the human rights issues. The UN also states that China should ‘stop the practice of keeping people who have not been properly charged, prosecuted, or found guilty in extralegal detention institutions’, as well as release those who are already there (Vidal, M, 2018). It also demands that allegations of ethnic or religious discrimination be investigated, that travel restriction that disproportionately affect Uyghurs be lifted, and that the whereabouts of students, refugees, and asylum seekers who have returned to China at the State's request in the last five years be made public. (Vidal, M, 2018).

Heusgen, an ambassador who was the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations between 2017 and 2021, was joined by British envoy Jonathan Allen, who said that China must grant U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet's long-standing request to visit Xinjiang to see the situation of the Uyghurs. The South China Morning Post cited sources saying that the approval for a visit after the conclusion of the Beijing Winter Games, which run from February 4 to 20, was granted on the condition the trip should be “friendly” and not framed as an investigation. (Aljazeera, 2022).

The most relevant action was made by Amnesty International, which was an open letter to UN member states that the international community must publicly denounce the gross human rights crimes occurring in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and pave the path for justice and accountability. The appeal comes after the organization received 323,832 signatures from 184 countries and territories in a petition demanding that the Chinese authorities release the hundreds of thousands of Muslim minority men and women who have been arbitrarily detained and subjected to mass internment, torture, and persecution in Xinjiang. (Amnistia Internacional, 2021).

Furthermore, several members of the General Assembly spoke vehemently throughout the debates, criticizing the Communist government's aggression against Tibet as a breach of Tibet's independence. While two of the resolutions mentioned the idea of self-determination, all three avoided discussing Tibet's international legal status, and instead focused on human rights issues. Several members of the General Assembly spoke vehemently throughout the debates, criticizing the Communist government's aggression as a breach of Tibet's independence (UN news, 2012).

V. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

In the face of continuous abuses by the Chinese government against minorities in its country, with a focus on the cases of Tibet and Xinjiang, the UN finds it urgent to find viable solutions to the issue. The solutions are divided into confrontational and passive solutions depending on how much they infringe on the Chinese government's stance and/or how forceful the solutions are towards the Chinese government.

01. Passive solutions include:

- a. The use of humanitarian aid directed at the oppressed minorities of China through the UN and NGOs to eliminate the gap between the dominant Chinese culture and the oppressed minority.
- b. The prevention of escalations within the regions in question through dialog with leaders within the Tibetan and Uyghur communities:
 - i. It is important to highlight that stopping any instance of aggression between China and the oppressed ethnic groups is important as (if decided necessary by Beijing) China's military is fully capable of completely exterminating the culture of any of the ethnic groups.
- c. The establishment of an international system to monitor and report on China's deteriorating human rights situation to the international community along with the state of the ethnic groups in question.

02. Confrontational solutions include:

- a. The replacement of the Chinese government's police force with an UN-created task force in areas of high tension using China's membership in organizations like the World Bank.
- b. The creation of programs within the areas in which the majority culture is a minority to promote the minorities' culture and sense of identity with the first efforts being directed at Tibet and Xinjiang.

- c. The creation of a set of guidelines in accordance with the “midway” approach to the Tibetan question where it details the treatment, guarantees, and obligations China has when dealing with a minority group.
 - i. If these guidelines are breached, the incremental removal of China from the global market would ensue with all members of the UN high commission for Human rights and all UN members in agreement with the solution steadily eliminating trade with China and suspending its membership in any agreement concerning two or more nations in which China benefits.

VI. RELEVANT COUNTRIES

1. People's Republic of China

The country in question, China has had a track record across its history of incorporating minorities with less than humane methods. This process of sinicization is vital to the success of the Chinese government in power as China is a notoriously diverse region with a high concentration of ethnic groups. Currently, China has come under scrutiny for these practices and the Chinese government has adopted a three-prong defense. First denying and censoring the issue, as with most things that happen in China the government has full control over what gets out and they use it to the fullest to support a narrative of denying any problems and proposing a state-sponsored view of the issue. Secondly, its economic capacity allows it to dissuade a lot of countries from taking action against it, especially now with its belt and road initiative China is in the position of buying political favors or indebting countries to the point of servitude. Finally, if all else fails they implement a strategy of ostracizing countries for intervening in China labeling them as foreigners that are infringing on the sovereignty of China.

2. The Republic of India

India is the current home of the Dalai Lama and one of the main economic and political opponents of China. The state of India has been a consistent thorn in China's side with border clashes the most notable of which is Kashmir along with its strong relationship with the members of NATO like the UK and US. However, its proximity means that the Indian government has to be extremely careful of condemning China directly as even with all of the hiccups in its relations China remains the second-biggest trading partner of the country with \$65.21 billion in imports while Indian exports to China stand at 21.18 billion and until a decline in trade in 2021 its biggest trading partner was China (Press Trust of India 2022; Press Trust of India 2022).

3. United States of America

The self-proclaimed leader of the free world has stayed in line with its title and been the main critic of the Chinese treatment of minorities with its many complaints especially focusing on allegations of genocide in the region of Xinjiang. The US has also urged the UN to action with minimal success. However, these complaints have also failed due to how the US hands are tied (Pike, 2022). The US has a major reliance on Chinese goods with the worth of the imports from China being worth \$452 billion in 2020 (Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.).

4. Russian Federation

Out of all the nations that have taken a stance on the issue of Tibet and its relation to the rest of China, Russia has changed its opinion the most number of times. From the Cold War onwards Russian opinion on Tibet has changed from fully in favor of it as a part of China, completely against it being a part, mild acceptance, to now back in favor of it remaining as a part of China completely. The Russian position on the matter seems to be completely determined by how favorable its relation is to the Chinese government and how much they can gain

from Chinese favor. As of now the multiple sino-russian treaties that have linked the countries economies and a mutual interest in opposing the west is dictating its foreign policy (Jigmey, 2014).

5. United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has always held a keen interest in the region of Tibet as far back as the 1850s with their establishment of spheres of influence in Tibet. However in modern times after decolonization the UKs foreign influence shifted in favor of the position held by the Chinese government. This doesn't mean they aren't keenly aware of the situation in Tibet and Xinjiang, on the contrary, the UK government has expressed its wishes that the Chinese government changed its ways and started accepting and tolerating the religion, people and culture of the regions in question (China Country of Concern, 2015).

6. Brazil

7. France

8. Ghana

9. Ireland

10. Mexico

11. Norway

12. United Arab Emirates

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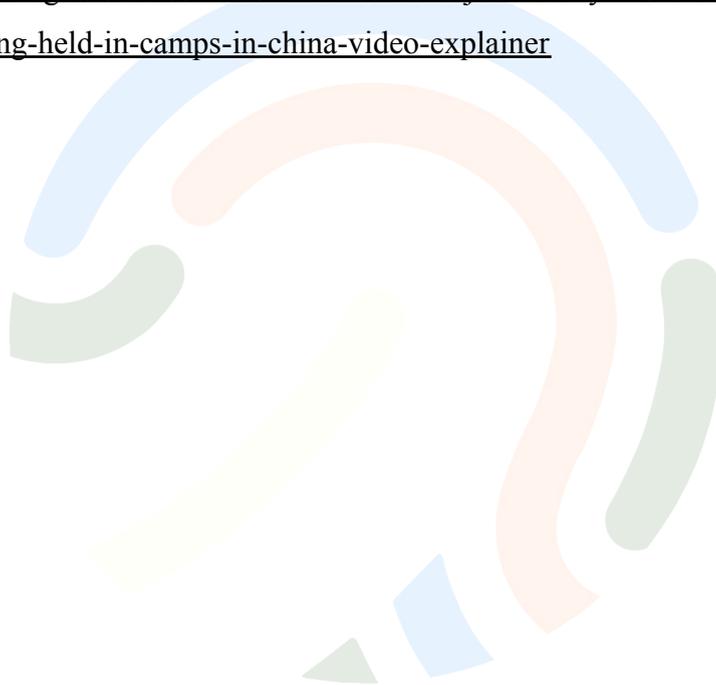
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