

Thank you Mr/Madame Chair,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Farkhat Ibragimov. I am a former OHCHR Minority fellow. I belong to the Uyghur ethnic minority in Kyrgyzstan. I am going to contribute to **Item 4. Open dialogue: urgent situations of minorities.**

Minorities around the world are often the victims of armed conflicts and internal strife. The situation of refugees and internally displaced persons from minority backgrounds, in particular women and children, is of special concern. Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are also often victims of multiple discrimination.

This is specifically relevant, when gross human rights violations are committed by permanent members of the UN Security Council. Thus, the Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples in the Uyghur region are facing arbitrary detention, ill-treatment and systematic ethnic and religious discrimination on an industrial scale. Furthermore, there are numerous cases of disappearances and relatives of those, who have disappeared, are not aware of their whereabouts, receiving no information from the authorities.

In this context, I would like to speak about the silence of most Muslim-majority countries when it comes to the human rights situation in the Uyghur region. In particular, a failure of the recent proposal presented by the **United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, Australia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland**, sought for the UN Human Rights Council to hold a **formal debate on the human rights situation in Uyghur region (Xinjiang)** at its 52nd session, in March 2023. This failure was - inter alia - due to the fact that **Indonesia**, the world's largest Muslim country, and other Members of the **Organization of Islamic Cooperation** like **Qatar, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, UAE, Sudan and Pakistan** opposed this proposal. **Somalia** was the only Muslim-majority country in the HRC to support the above-mentioned proposal. I would like to heartily thank Somalia for that.

I would like to take this opportunity to cordially thank the democratic countries for continuous raising this issue. I also thank fifty countries that urged China on 1 November 2022 to **fully implement all recommendations in a UN report** accusing the country of **possible “crimes against humanity” against Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim ethnic groups**, including taking prompt steps to release all those “arbitrarily deprived of their liberty”.

Now, I would like to remind to the above-mentioned Muslim-majority countries, who voted against the proposal that the Prophet Mohammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: “The believers, in their mutual

love, compassion, and sympathy are like a single body; if one of its organs suffers, the whole body will respond to it with sleeplessness and fever.”

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said:

“Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then let him change it with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart - and that is the weakest of faith.”

Your brothers and sisters in the Uyghur region are suffering right now, so please if you cannot change their situation, please at least do not create obstacles to other countries who can.

To conclude, I would recommend the following:

- 1) Urge China to immediately release all those arbitrarily detained in the “re-education” camps and clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing family members and arrange safe contacts and reunions.
- 2) Thank all the nations of good will for support they offer to the Uyghur and other mostly Turkic peoples in the Uyghur region and ask them to raise this issue again within the UN General Assembly, HRC and/or other UN/international fora.
- 3) Urge Muslim-majority countries as well as international Islamic organizations to remember about their Muslim solidarity and offer their helping hand to their brothers and sisters in China. And, if they cannot do so, to abstain from future voting in favour of the Uyghur and other Turkic people in the Chinese camps.

I thank you, Mr/Madame Chair!