

# **Joint statement on the human rights situation in Xinjiang at 47th Session of UN Human Rights Council**

**Delivered by Leslie E. Norton, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in Geneva**

**June 22, 2021 - Geneva, Switzerland**

Madame High Commissioner, I have the honour of delivering this cross-regional joint statement on behalf of more than countries.

We are gravely concerned about the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Credible reports indicate that over a million people have been arbitrarily detained in Xinjiang and that there is widespread surveillance disproportionately targeting Uyghurs and members of other minorities and restrictions on fundamental freedoms and Uyghur culture. There are also reports of torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based violence, and forced separation of children from their parents by authorities.

We also share the concerns expressed by UN Special Procedures in their March 29 statement on alleged detention, forced labour and transfers of Uyghurs and members of other Muslim minorities and in a letter published by UN experts describing collective repression of religious and ethnic minorities.

We urge China to allow immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for independent observers, including the High Commissioner, and to urgently implement the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination's 8 recommendations related to Xinjiang, including by ending the arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and members of other Muslim minorities.

Finally, we continue to be deeply concerned about the deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong under the National Security Law and about the human rights situation in Tibet. We call on Chinese authorities to abide by their human rights obligations.

Thank you.