

**United Nations Human Rights Council, 47th Session (21 June to 29 July 2021)  
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Advisor on Prevention of Genocide  
Speaker: Humanists UK Representative, Richy Thompson<sup>1</sup>**

This intervention is made jointly by Humanists UK and René Cassin. We continue to express our deep concern over the persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State and Muslims in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

There is overwhelming evidence of widespread and systematic persecution enacted by the Chinese Government, which is inexorably damaging the human rights of millions of members of predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang.<sup>2</sup> Journalists, scholars, and other investigators have gathered further evidence of crimes against humanity including enslavement; deportation; rape; sexual slavery; enforced prostitution; forced pregnancy; enforced sterilisation, and other comparable acts of sexual violence,<sup>3</sup> as well as the separation of children from their families.<sup>4</sup> Much of the evidence available today is also based on personal testimonies.

We ask the Special Advisor what actions she is taking to determine whether these acts fulfil the legal definition of genocide, under the 1948 Genocide Convention.

We note recent reports that Rohingya refugees may have been unaware that personal data held by the UN Refugee Agency would be passed onto authorities in Myanmar, giving rise to fears of involuntary repatriation.<sup>5</sup> We also note the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice on 23 January 2020, whereby Myanmar is to take all measures within its power to prevent genocide in its territory, to not commit acts of genocide, and to preserve evidence relating to these allegations.<sup>6</sup>

In what way will the Special Advisor work with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and the UNHCR to protect the Rohingya from involuntary repatriation, and ensure Myanmar fulfils the order by the International Court of Justice?

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<sup>1</sup> Humanists UK is the operating name of the British Humanist Association.

<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International, "Like We Were Enemies In A War" China's Mass Internment, Torture And Persecution Of Muslims In Xinjiang' 2021. <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ASA1741372021ENGLISH.PDF>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Adrian Zenz, 'Break Their Roots: Evidence for China's Parent-Child Separation Campaign in Xinjiang' *Journal of Political Risk*, Vol. 7, No. 7, July 2019. <https://www.jpolrisk.com/break-their-roots-evidence-for-chinas-parent-child-separation-campaign-in-xinjiang/>

<sup>5</sup> Kate Hodel, 'UN put Rohingya "at risk" by sharing data without consent, says rights group' *The Guardian*, 15 June 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jun/15/un-put-rohingya-at-risk-by-sharing-data-without-consent-says-rights-group>

<sup>6</sup> International Court of Justice, *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia v Myanmar) (Request for the Indication of Provisional Measures: Order)* 23 January 2020. <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/178>