

# Yale MACMILLAN CENTER

## *Genocide Studies Program*

PRESS RELEASE

August 15, 2024

### **Publication of a new report: “Uyghur Race as the Enemy: China’s Legalized Authoritarian Repression and Mass Imprisonment”**

The Yale Genocide Studies Program has published a report authored by Rayhan Asat, human rights lawyer and international scholar at Harvard Law School (formerly a Yale World Fellow), and Min Kim, Yale College Class of 2024, analyzing the atrocity crimes unfolding in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In the report, published in the Genocide Studies Program’s Working Paper Series, Asat and Kim examine China’s legalized authoritarian regime through an international law framework to expose China’s attempts at bureaucratically covering up its crimes against humanity and genocide of the Uyghur people.

Using official data released by the Xinjiang High People's Procuratorate, the Chinese government, documentation by civil society and courageous family members of victims, the report finds that China’s ongoing mass imprisonment of the Uyghurs will cost the ethnic group a conservative estimate of 4.4 million cumulative years of life, stripping them of any chance at a thriving cultural existence.

David Simon, Director of Yale Genocide Studies Program, commented:

*The systematic persecution of China’s Uyghur population is hardly a secret, but we are always learning more about the depths and extent of it. This report shows the extent to which a policy of mass incarceration has been used not only to silence opponents of the regime but also to threaten the very existence of the Uyghur identity. Asat and Kim demonstrate yet another reason it is entirely appropriate to ask whether the crimes committed against the Uyghurs might constitute genocide, and why policy responses that take that into account are justified.*

Rayan Asat, a coauthor of the report, commented:

*While the Chinese government violates both Chinese and international laws, it weaponizes authoritarian lawfare to perpetrate violence against the citizenry, especially those marginalized. Thus, China’s legalized authoritarianism enables the State to freely use its legal machinery to punish its enemy. The enemy line is often defined as activists, journalists, or critics of the regime, but it can be redefined as the regime continues to choose new targets as enemies to its survival. The citizens can never know where the line lies, as one day farmers who object to the state expropriating their property can become enemies. We hope this report not only contributes to the ongoing documentation of crimes against humanity and genocide but serves a wake-up call to the countries in the global south which for nearly a decade has*

*remained bystanders in the face of China's economic influence.*

Media outlets are invited to read the report [here \(pdf\)](#) and are encouraged to report on the findings of the report. The Genocide Studies Program also brings this crucial documentation to the attention of the UN Office of High Commissioner Volker Türk, UN member states and all relevant stakeholders.