

No to China Olympics amid Uighur genocide

Written by Ho Chao-tung 何朝東

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On Oct. 6, the UN Committee on Human Rights released a statement on the concentration camps in China's Xinjiang region in which at least 1 million Uighurs and other ethnic minorities are incarcerated. On the same day, Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) was telling delegates at a Chinese Communist Party (CCP) meeting that "happiness among the people in Xinjiang is on the rise."

It was a stark reminder of the CCP's longstanding practice of trampling on human rights and deceiving the world.

In October last year, the Taiwan East Turkestan Association and the Taiwan Friends of Tibet held an event titled "A prison without walls: Uighurs today" to raise awareness among Taiwanese of the increasingly severe oppression that is being inflicted upon Uighurs in Xinjiang.

The CCP's *modus operandi* in the region includes violent suppression of freedoms through forced "re-education" and the monitoring of every aspect of residents' lives.

The international community is increasingly paying attention to these acts. The greatest pushback so far has come from Washington. In July, the US government announced visa bans and an asset freeze on three Chinese officials: Xinjiang CCP Secretary Chen Quanguo (陳全國), widely viewed as the architect of Beijing's concentration camp policy; Xinjiang CCP Deputy Secretary Zhu Hailun (朱海倫); and Xinjiang Public Security Bureau Director Wang Mingshan (王明山). The three are, to date, the highest-level Chinese officials subjected to US sanctions.

Since then, the US has placed additional sanctions on several dozen Chinese companies and organizations that are connected to human rights violations against Uighurs and further expanded sanctions against CCP officials in Xinjiang.

Unfortunately, since the sanctions were put in place, rather than improving, the situation in Xinjiang has gone from bad to worse. In addition to the notorious "re-education camps," investigations by international media have also revealed birth control measures.

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Birthrates in the regions of Hotan and Kashgar, mostly inhabited by Uighurs, fell by more than 60 percent between 2015 and 2018, Chinese government statistics show.

Beijing has spent vast sums to ensure that Xinjiang's population — which not long ago grew faster than any of China's provincial-level administrative regions — is now growing the slowest, and this has been achieved within the space of just a few years.

There is now a consensus within the international community that Uighurs are the victims of a genocide committed by CCP authorities.

Although the international community is paying attention to human rights violations in Xinjiang, and a number of actions have been taken, due to the rapid acceleration of Beijing's oppression campaign, and the destruction of the Uighurs' religion and culture, time is running out and there is not a moment to lose.

Last month, more than 160 human rights groups wrote a joint letter to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), calling on it to reverse its decision to award China the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics in light of the human rights abuses.

We call on all those who are concerned about the religious freedom and human rights of all ethnic groups within China's borders to continue to pressure the IOC to cancel the 2022 Games in Beijing. If the IOC does not do so, there will inevitably be a mass boycott of the Games and the IOC will join the WHO as the second global organization to be covered in shame.

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Translated by Edward Jones

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