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RESEARCH REPORT | Center for American Values

# THE U.S. IS FUNDING CHINA'S GENOCIDE

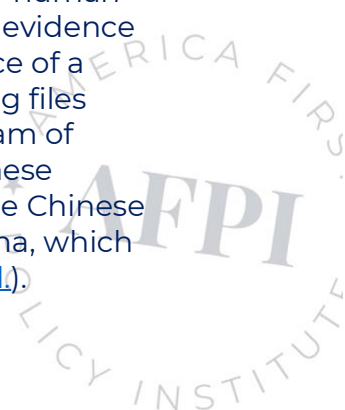
*Mark Zelden & Kristen Zicarelli*

## TOPLINE POINTS

- ★ In April 2022, President Joe Biden's White House budget committed \$56 million in taxpayer dollars toward the United Nations Population Fund, an international family planning agency that partners with the Chinese government.
- ★ The Chinese Communist Party's family planning policy undermines American values and fails to adhere to an acceptable standard of human dignity upheld by the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights and America's founding documents.
- ★ There is overwhelming evidence that the CCP is committing genocide in Xinjiang, perpetrated through forced sterilizations and abortions, and other methods of oppressive population control.
- ★ The Biden Administration should cease all funding to the UNFPA on the grounds that they are partnering with the CCP and are complicit in their grave human rights abuses.
- ★ Great nations do not commit human rights violations against their own people. The CCP's genocide against the Uyghurs bars them from reaching higher potential endowed by their rich cultural heritage.

## Overview

This October, the United Nations Human Rights Council sparked global outrage as it voted not to discuss accusations of abuses against the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang region of China. China claimed a "victory" as the motion for debate on their human rights record was voted down by fellow member states, despite mounting evidence of state-sanctioned brutality ([Aljazeera, 2022](#)). The vote also came in the face of a particularly profound leak earlier this year, when thousands of incriminating files were leaked from Xinjiang police sources within China and verified by a team of experts at the Victims of Communist Memorial Foundation ([CNN, 2022](#)). These extensive images and documents revealed undeniable evidence linking the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with genocide against the Uyghur minority in China, which is already widely acknowledged around the world ([Xinjiang Police Files, n.d.](#))



In 2017, the Trump Administration took concrete action against the CCP's genocide and crimes against humanity. For four years, it withheld millions of dollars of funding to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), an international family planning agency that partners with the Chinese government and has ties to China's inhumane, coercive family planning policies ([UNAIDS, 2021](#))([UNFPA China, n.d.](#)). Last year, however, the Biden Administration immediately restored \$32.5 million taxpayer dollars to the UNFPA. In 2022, the White House budget toward the UNFPA has increased to \$56 million—even in the face of these reports and others that overwhelmingly corroborate evidence of state-sanctioned brutality ([The White House, 2022](#)).

### **Background: The Genocide Against the Muslim Uyghurs**

The Uyghur population is an ethnically Turkic Muslim group of around 12 million living in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region of Northwest China. At least one million are estimated to be detained within the country, and the recently leaked police files suggest that in 2017 and 2018, 12% of the adult population of Xinjiang was held in a camp or prison ([BBC, 2022](#)). Established in 2017, the CCP calls these camps “vocational education and training centers” supposedly intended to control political extremism and terrorism ([China Daily, 2019](#)). Nevertheless, the rest of the world knows better, as the evidence reveals that these camps are actually the sites of organ harvesting and ethnic cleansing to extinguish the Uyghur population ([Aljazeera, 2021](#)).

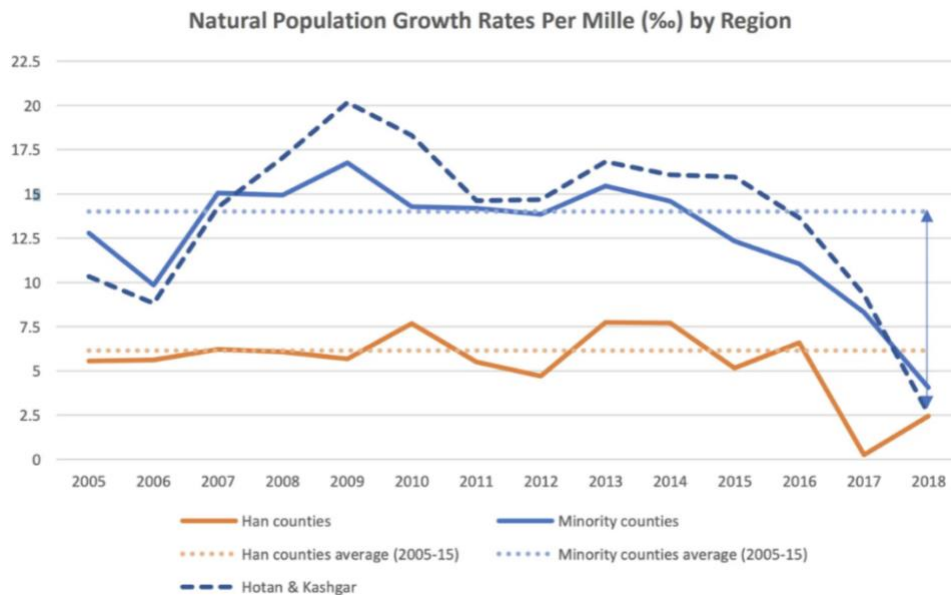
The 2021 U.S. State Department Human Rights Report for China states that “genocide and crimes against humanity occurred against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang” ([U.S. DoS, 2022](#)). Backed by reports from the region, the State Department findings confirm that forced sterilizations, coerced abortions, and various other human rights violations are part of the CCP's family planning policy against the Uyghurs. They stand in stark contrast to the family planning policy for the ethnic Han Chinese, which encourages a three-child policy and other measures to increase their present .034% population growth rate. It states that “authorities have liberalized population control measures for members of the Han majority since 2016, [yet] birth control policies directed toward Uyghurs became more stringent” ([State Department, 2022](#)). The report also admits that China's population control policies are different for ethnic Han Chinese versus the Uyghurs and that abuse is carried out by government and security officials with impunity.

Testimonies from former prisoners in Uyghur internment camps and on-site reports reveal how coercive practices against women are part of a wider family planning policy unique to the Xinjiang region, where the Uyghurs are being held. A third child is not permitted in that region, women are told that if they get pregnant, they will be forced to have an abortion, and sterilization procedures are carried out on women without their consent ([Japan Forward, 2021](#)). A former (now exiled) gynecologist carried out sterilizations in Xinjiang and said, “I understood the meaning of the



surgery, but I later learned that it was a policy for the Uyghur,” she said, “and I too was sterilized” ([Japan Forward, 2021](#)). From 2017-19, official Chinese statistics showed a 48.7% decline in birth rates in ethnic minority areas of Xinjiang. A report using data from the Xinjiang Statistical Yearbooks indicated that for the same period of time, population growth in the Uyghur areas of Kashgar and Hotan fell by 84% (see Figure 1).

Figure 1



Source: “Sterilizations, IUDs, and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP’s Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang” by Adrian Zenz

In 2019, a bombshell report by China scholar Adrian Zenz detailed the abuses of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang and the long-term population effects of the CCP’s policies toward them. Zenz reported that by 2019, Xinjiang authorities “planned to subject at least 80% of women of childbearing age in the rural southern four minority prefectures to intrusive birth prevention surgeries, referring to intrauterine devices (IUDs) or sterilizations” ([BBC, 2021](#)). The policies are projected to reduce the Uyghur population by several million while simultaneously increasing the Han population share in these regions from 8.4% to around 25% by 2040 ([BBC, 2021](#)).

From 2014-2018, the number of inserted IUDs in women in Xinjiang reportedly rose from 200,000 to 330,000, a 65% increase ([Vox, 2021](#)). Meanwhile, data from China’s official Annual Health and Hygiene Statistical Yearbooks indicate that rates of IUD implantation elsewhere in China have dropped. The CCP maintains that family planning and abortion are voluntary for Uyghurs, yet the statistics indicate that in four years, 60% more women were sterilized in Xinjiang than in other regions of China. Additional documentation from 2019 reveals that sterilization is a government-funded campaign, not an opening up of access to voluntary sexual and reproductive services to women in the region. Coinciding with involuntary



sterilization, the CCP has been accused of ongoing forced organ harvesting of the Uyghur population, with mounting evidence of the brutal practices occurring in Xinjiang specifically ([Ng; Zhang, 2022](#)).

Last year, a New Lines Institute report found the People's Republic of China responsible for violations of every single act prohibited by the U.N. Genocide Convention ([New Lines Institute, 2021](#)). It lays out documented violations of each category, including killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction, forcibly transferring children to another group, and imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group. This is just one report among many that raise credible evidence against the Chinese government's denial of genocide. The recent leak of Xinjiang police files includes a speech made by Chinese Minister of Public Safety Zhao Kezhi, which links the internment policies toward the Uyghurs directly with the demands of President Xi Jinping ([Xinjiang Police Fields, 2022](#)).

China's history of oppressing cultural minorities is illustrated by its occupation in Tibet. The Chinese occupation of Tibet is violent, degrading, and widely recognized as a human rights violation ([HRW, 2020](#)). Reports in 2020 indicated that the CCP coerced Tibetans into military-style training and labor camps that both resembled the "re-education camps" for the Uyghurs and Nazi Germany's concentration camps ([BBC, 2020](#)).

Despite strong evidence that these measures of oppression are institutionalized government practices (rather than isolated incidents), the Biden Administration has pledged millions of taxpayer dollars in support of the UNFPA, an unconscionable action that drastically departs from the purpose of U.S. foreign aid and enables the Chinese government's crimes against humanity.

### **How Uyghur Genocide Is Enabled by the UNFPA**

In the face of a serious ongoing genocide, there is a concerning lack of tangible international outrage. Though the U.N. has issued reports finding China responsible for widespread human rights abuses in Xinjiang and member states have formally condemned China for their atrocities, these rebukes are mostly symbolic ([France UN, 2021](#)). Until world leaders are brave enough to take decisive measures through the U.N. and other multilateral bodies for their complicity in these abuses, we cannot be surprised that genocide continues. In 2017, President Donald Trump withdrew funding from the UNFPA on the grounds that it "partnered with Chinese government agencies responsible for these coercive policies," transferring those funds to USAID's family planning and reproductive health support ([BBC, 2017](#)). Citing verified reports of "coercive abortion" and "involuntary sterilization" against the Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in China, the Trump Administration took actionable steps against these outrageous abuses, even in the face of harsh criticism ([BBC, 2021](#)). Defunding UNFPA was also backed by the Kemp-Kasten amendment, a rule that states U.S. funds must not be given to "any organization or program which,



as determined by the president of the United States, supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization.” This law was specifically designed to restrict funding to the UNFPA and has been used to withhold funding from them in nineteen of the past forty fiscal years ([UNFPA, 2017](#)).

In response to the Trump Administration’s cessation of funding, the UNFPA stated that it “does not perform, promote or fund abortion” and that it “accord(s) the highest priority to universal access to voluntary family planning” ([UNFPA, 2019](#)). Since then, it has maintained this stance. However, its partnerships in China suggest otherwise.

The UNFPA’s Country Program Report for China, which lays out \$21 million in funding for a four-year initiative, states that operations are jointly managed with the government of China ([UNFPA, 2021](#)). The implementation and evaluation of U.N. programs are controlled by the actors within the Chinese state, effectively limiting the U.N.’s capacity for oversight and control of their operations.

If the extent of this control was up for doubt, the UNFPA’s program report on China is telling. The report contains no mention of the CCP’s discrepancies in family planning, nor does it include any mention of helping Uyghur victims. In its acknowledgment that “gender-based violence and discrimination persist” in China, it refers to salary inequality between men and women, domestic violence, and gender-biased sex selection ([UNFPA, 2021](#)). The paper misses no opportunity to praise the country’s progress in tackling gender equality and poverty and improving access to sexual and reproductive health services. It is unconscionable that a U.N. body would not only ignore genocide in this manner but also blithely institute multimillion-dollar programs that are overseen by a genocidal government. The UNFPA also serves the CCP with free and positive public relations on their website, which links to articles from state-run sites such as Xinhuanet that run headlines like “China makes remarkable progress in gender equality, women empowerment: official” ([UNFPA China News, 2021](#)). The entire UNFPA China website does not contain a single mention of the term “Uyghur” or “Xinjiang.”

The UNFPA’s denial of involvement with China’s coercive family planning policies is not new. Their projects in Korla City (the second largest city in Xinjiang) came under scrutiny back in 2003, when a series of new restrictive birth control measures were implemented on the provincial and local levels. Radio Free Asia interviewed birth control officers about their abortion policies in Korla City, which demonstrated the baselessness of UNFPA’s claims ([Statistical Bureau of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, 2020](#)). In the interviews, a Korla City birth control officer stated that when authorities discover an illegal pregnancy (their policy forbids more than three children), “pregnant women will be forcibly brought to the hospital by birth control officers.” These officials “wait for her until the operation is done because they want to make sure the baby was killed or not” ([Population Research Institute, 2003](#)). They explained that abortion and birth control must be carried out forcefully in order to control the population.



Despite overwhelming evidence of state-sponsored ethnic cleansing through family planning policies, the UNFPA appears entirely uninterested in uncovering or preventing abuse in the region. Under the broad human rights mission of the U.N., it is in a unique position to act on behalf of Uyghur families. The organization claims to abide by a “human-rights-centric approach,” yet they have not sought any investigation into China’s well-documented crimes against Uyghur families, especially women ([UNFPA, 2010](#)).

The UNFPA’s complacency speaks to the alarming extent of CCP influence on the U.N., which has only eroded their diplomatic capital and trivialized their declared commitment to human rights. Giving millions of dollars to the UNFPA, which enables the CCP’s coercive abortion and sterilization, the Biden Administration hypocritically will not hesitate to remind Americans how much they prioritize tolerance and inclusion.

### The Way Forward: Aligning Action with Values

The America First approach recognizes the U.S. as the leader of the free world and prioritizes accountability to our citizens, meaning taxpayer funding should only be granted to institutions that align with our values. Our foreign policy must always be backed by impactful actions and credible demands. As a voice for freedom in a world where so many people are oppressed, our Nation cannot expect others to follow our lead if America continues to be a party to the UNFPA’s hypocrisy. The following policy proposals directly confront the CCP’s genocide and halt assistance to their repressive family planning capabilities:

1. **Cease** all funding to the UNFPA on the grounds that they are partnering with the CCP and complicit in their grave human rights abuses.

Cutting off funding to the UNFPA is a necessary and powerful means of disrupting the typical Washington approach of “all talk, no action,” especially when it comes to foreign policy. When another sovereign Nation unapologetically commits genocide, the interdependence of the world becomes an asset. Using our funding to influence the situation is a nonaggressive yet direct way of confronting the U.N.’s complacency in crimes against humanity and an attempt to incentivize good behavior when talks have been exhausted. These funds should be transferred to USAID’s family planning, and reproductive health initiatives, much like the Trump Administration did in 2017.

2. **Revisit** existing sanctions on foreign individuals and entities involved in abuses in Xinjiang and end U.S. taxpayer funding of any multilateral body that has evidenced ties with CCP family planning.

We should hold the benefactors of American aid and funding to equally high standards of accountability to ensure we only support institutions that are in line with our values. In the spirit of this principle, our foreign support must be reviewed critically and often to ensure we are staying up to date with the ways



new parties are pulled into the China threat. We should be proactive in demanding transparency in aid donations and reactive in that when new evidence arises (as has happened consistently throughout the past few decades), we are ensuring our funding is not problematic.

3. **Request** that the UNFPA end its partnership with the CCP and demand a higher standard of accountability in documenting the recipients of their funding and the exact circumstances of use for any future U.S. support.

The U.S. must demand accountability as a prerequisite to our participation in international organizations. The UNFPA's work with the CCP is marked by an alarming *lack* of accountability and transparency amidst alleged crimes against humanity. Verbal condemnation alone holds no one accountable for the crimes against the Uyghurs. The UNFPA's stated mission is to "deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled" ([UNFPA, n.d.](#)). Our funding must be conditional on the UNFPA and all other benefactors that they hold to this mission and remain good stewards of their donor funds.

4. **Encourage** our allies to end all funding toward the UNFPA.

The U.S. should boldly encourage our allies to denounce the genocide both in words and in action. We should lead by example, compelling those who share our vision for a peaceful, safer world to reject egregious human rights abuses that UNFPA is enabling in China. There is consensus among most of our allies that China is committing crimes against millions of Uyghurs, yet they also continue to fund the UNFPA without acknowledging the partnership with the CCP and how they are enabling the ongoing genocide ([Aljazeera, 2020](#)). UNFPA China is allocated at least \$1.6 M of what is known as "core resource" funding, which comes from the U.S. and many of our allies. These are countries that share our values—Germany, France, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Canada that together give billions of dollars to UNFPA as "core contributors" ([UNFPA, n.d.](#)).

Sadly, the Biden Administration's grave error in funding the UNFPA is part of a wider endemic of appeasement to China. The U.N. suffers from China's outside influence, pressuring U.N. officials and member nations to ignore their crimes and help them further their expansionist and abusive policy goals ([Ibrahim, 2022](#)). China's ongoing membership of the U.N. Human Rights Council is a perfect embodiment of this hypocrisy, as was the U.N. High Commissioner on Human Rights Michelle Bachelet's visit there this June, where she did not raise a single concern about the ongoing genocide. Instead, she repeated the false talking points of the CCP itself ([Abbas, 2022](#)). Across the world and in the U.N., human rights "advocates" succumb to Beijing's pressure, ignore evidence of their crimes, or simply condemn these reports and then continue to treat China as a trusted ally. As evidence of repression continues to mount against the CCP, it is obvious how unconcerned the regime is about recourse from the international community.



While the world remains largely silent, the CCP has brutally criminalized the Uyghur identity, trying to eradicate them from society in one of the worst crimes against humanity of the 21st century. If history tells us anything about the powers of evil, it is that appeasement does not work and that the greatest threat to world peace is a regime that merely sees men as an end to its own power. Together with our allies, we must confront the UNFPA's hypocrisy as a sign to the CCP that their state-sanctioned brutality will not be tolerated.

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### Author Biographies

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