

UN Human Rights Council 50: Joint Statement on the Human Rights Situation in China

Statement on behalf of the following countries: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Eswatini, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

“Madam High Commissioner,

We continue to be gravely concerned about the human rights situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Numerous extensively researched and credible reports indicate that over a million people have been arbitrarily detained. Furthermore there are reports of ongoing widespread surveillance, discrimination against Uyghurs and other persons belonging to minorities as well as of severe restrictions on Uyghur culture and the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to freedom of religion or belief. We are also concerned about reports of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based violence, forced labour, and forced separation of children from their parents by authorities.

We repeat our call on China to urgently address these concerns and implement the CERD’s eight recommendations relating to Xinjiang from August 2018, as well as the concerns raised by numerous Special Procedures since that time, including to end the arbitrary detention of Muslim Uyghurs and persons belonging to other minorities.

We also continue to be gravely concerned about the deterioration of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in Tibet.

We urge China to ensure full respect for the rule of law, to comply with obligations under national and international law with regard to the protection of human rights and to ratify the ICCPR. In addition, we urge the Chinese government to provide meaningful and unfettered access for independent observers to Xinjiang, including Special Procedures. In view of the severity of the situation in Xinjiang, we call on all countries to respect the principle of non-refoulement.

Finally, we acknowledge your recent visit to China, including Xinjiang, which provided an opportunity for dialogue with the Chinese authorities on various human rights related concerns, and your statement of 28 May. We are

interested in more detailed observations, including on the restrictions the Chinese authorities imposed on the visit as well as on your access to members of civil society and to places of your choice.

Madame High Commissioner, recalling your announcement at HRC48 that your Office would release a report on human rights in Xinjiang, we look forward to its prompt release. Could you provide the Council with further information on the timeline?

Thank you.”