



New Zealand Jewish Council

★ Rūnanga Hūrai o Āotearoa מועצת יהודי ניו זילנד



The Federation of

Islamic Associations

of New Zealand (Inc.)

اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية

23 July 2020

The Rt. Hon. Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister

The Hon. Winston Peters
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dear Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

We, on behalf of the Muslim and Jewish communities of Aotearoa New Zealand, wish to express our deep concern and anguish over the persecution of the Uighur population in the Xinjiang region of China.

Recently, there has been mounting and indisputable evidence of human rights atrocities being inflicted on the Uighur people by the government of the People's Republic of China. This includes forced sterilisation of women, removal of children, torture, and repressive surveillance. Chinese citizens are being loaded into trains and transported to concentration camps, where they suffer abhorrent treatment, for no other reason than that their Muslim faith and their culture is considered undesirable by the regime. While there have been many grave human rights violations since the end of World War II, we have witnessed nothing of the nature, magnitude and sophistication of what the Uighur people are now suffering. We cannot say "we did not know", because we do.

When we speak of the Holocaust and other genocides, we say "never again". For these words to be more than a hollow slogan, indifference is not an option. We must not make excuses and we must take meaningful action. The time has come for all people of conscience to raise their voices. We appreciate the Prime Minister doing so in her speech of 20 July to the Chinese business community. However, we also ask that the Government shows the moral leadership that New Zealand is known for, including after the Mosque attacks of last year, and urgently join with the United Kingdom and other allies in taking a stand, whether that be through sanctions or some other form. And we must call this persecution what it is; Genocide.

We remember the Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel who said: "Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion or political views, that place must – at that moment – become the center of the universe".

Yours sincerely

Stephen Goodman
President
New Zealand Jewish Council

Mustafa Farouk
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