

# WMA RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST UIGHUR PEOPLE IN CHINA

*Adopted by the 71<sup>st</sup> WMA General Assembly (online), Cordoba, Spain, October 2020*

## PREAMBLE

It is incumbent upon health professionals to consider the health and human rights of people globally and denounce instances where these rights are being abused. The treatment of the Uighur people in the Xinjiang region of China is one such case.

Documented reports of physical and sexual abuse of Uighur people in China reveal unequivocal human rights violations. Reports note numerous violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The transgressions include, but are not limited to:

- Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 9: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.
- Article 25 (i): Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.[1]

Human rights organisations and sovereign states are increasingly drawing attention to the situation in Xinjiang, with over 20 United Nations ambassadors taking the rare step of issuing a [joint letter](#) to the UN Human Rights Council in 2019 expressing concerns about the treatment of the Uighurs in China and demanding that international independent observers be allowed into the region.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of information and reports of systematic and repeated human rights violations against Uighur people in China, and its impact on the health of the Uighur people and health care supplies throughout the world, the WMA calls on its constituent members, physicians and the international health community to:

1. formally condemn the treatment of the Uighurs in China's Xinjiang region and call upon physicians to uphold the guidelines set out in the [WMA Declaration of Tokyo](#) and the [WMA Resolution on the Responsibility of Physicians in the Documentation and Denunciation of Acts of Torture or Cruel or Inhuman or Degrading Treatment](#);
2. support the requests made in the July 2019 letter to the UN Human Rights Council High Commissioner calling for international independent observers to be allowed into the Xinjiang region of China.
3. Reaffirm its [Statement on Forced and Coerced Sterilisation](#), asserting that no person, regardless of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, medical condition or disability, should be subjected to forced or coerced permanent sterilisation, and call on its members medical associations to advocate against forced and coerced sterilisation in their own countries and globally; and
4. Reiterate support of its [Declaration on Fair Trade in Medical Products and Devices](#) and urge its medical association members to promote fair and ethical trade in the health sector, and insist that the goods they use are not produced at the expense of the health of workers in the global community. To do this, physicians should;
  - raise awareness of the issue of ethical trade and promote the development of fair and ethically produced medical goods amongst colleagues and those working within health systems.
  - play a leadership role in integrating considerations of labour standards into purchasing decisions within

healthcare organisations.[1] <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>