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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

GROSS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

IN THE XINJIANG UIGHUR AUTONOMOUS

REGION

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CORRECTION TO PHOTO CAPTIONS, PAGE 29, "*STUDENTS ARRESTED IN JANUARY 1995 IN KASHGAR*", each caption should read "sentenced in mid-1995" not "sentenced in June 1996".

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“We say China is a country vast in territory, rich in resources and large in population; as a matter of fact, it is the Han nationality whose population

is large and the minority nationalities whose territory is vast and whose resources are rich ...” [Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. V, Beijing, Foreign Language Press, 1977, pp.295-296.]

The Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) represents almost 17% of the territory of the Republic of China (PRC) and has common borders with Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The region or parts of it have in the past been referred to by various names, including Uighuristan and Eastern Turkestan. It was given the Chinese name “Xinjiang” – which literally means “new frontier” or “new dominion” – in the late 19th century when it was incorporated into the Chinese Empire.

The indigenous peoples of the XUAR are Turkic people who are predominantly Muslim. They include Uighurs, Kazaks, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Tatars and other groups officially classified as “national minorities” of the PRC, including the Huis who are ethnic Chinese Muslims. The Uighurs are the largest indigenous group. According to official statistics, in 1997 the region had over 17 million inhabitants, divided approximately into 47% Uighurs, over 42% ethnic Chinese (over 38% Han and 4% Hui), about 7% Kazaks, and the rest divided between other ethnic groups. These figures however are believed to be below the real number of both Han Chinese and “national minorities” in the region.

PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Gross Violations of Human Rights in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” [Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1].

“All nationalities in the People’s Republic of China are equal. The states protects the lawful rights and interests of all national minorities and safeguards and promotes relations of equality, unity and mutual assistance among all nationalities.” [Constitution of the PRC, 1982, Article 4].

INTRODUCTION

Gross violations of human rights are being perpetrated in the Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, in the west of China, with little about it being known to the international community. The main victims of these violations are the Uighurs, the majority ethnic group among the predominantly Muslim local population.

Thousands of people have been arbitrarily detained in the region over the past few years and arbitrary arrests continue. Thousands of political prisoners, arrested at various times during the 1990s, are reported to remain imprisoned, some having been sentenced to long prison terms after unfair trials, others still detained without charge or trial after months or years in jail.

Many of those detained are reported to have been tortured, some with particularly cruel methods which, to Amnesty International’s knowledge, are not being used elsewhere in the People’s Republic of China. Political prisoners held in prisons or labour camps are reported to be frequently subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. Some have reportedly died of ill-treatment or neglect in detention.

Scores of Uighurs, many of them political prisoners, have been sentenced to death and executed in the past two years. Others, including women, are alleged to have been killed by the security forces in circumstances which appear to constitute extra-judicial executions.

These gross violations of human rights are occurring amidst growing ethnic unrest fuelled by unemployment, discrimination and curbs on fundamental freedoms. Over the past ten years the local ethnic population has witnessed a steady erosion of its social, economic and cultural rights. Economic development in the region has largely bypassed the local ethnic population and they have faced increased restrictions. This trend has exacerbated long-standing ethnic tensions between Uighurs and Han Chinese in the region, and contributed to the escalation of violence.

A growing number of violent incidents have been reported in the region. They include violent clashes between small groups of Uighurs and the security forces, as well as attacks against government officials and bombings by underground opposition groups.

The government has blamed the unrest and violence on a “small number” of “separatists”, “terrorists” and “religious extremists” who are accused of having links with “foreign hostile forces” whose aim is to “split the motherland”. The government’s response has been harsh repression. Since 1996, the government has launched an extensive campaign against “ethnic separatists”, imposing new restrictions on religious and cultural rights and resorting increasingly to executions, show trials and arbitrary detention to silence real and suspected opponents.

The official reports about “separatists and terrorists” obscure a more complex reality in which many people who are not involved in violence have become the victims of human rights violations. Over the years, attempts by Uighurs to air their views or grievances and peacefully exercise their most fundamental human rights have been met with repression. The denial of legitimate channels for expressing grievances and discontent has led to outbursts of violence, including by people who are not involved in political opposition activities.

Amnesty International recognises that it is the duty of the state to take the measures necessary to maintain law and order, but even in situations of internal strife, this must be exercised within the limits set by international human rights law. International law makes clear that certain fundamental rights – in particular the right to life and the right not to be subjected to torture - must be upheld by governments at all times and in all circumstances.

These fundamental rights are laid down in international human rights instruments which China has signed or ratified. They include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which China signed in 1998, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture), which China ratified in 1988, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which China ratified in 1982, The Convention on the Right of the Child, which China ratified in 1992, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which China ratified in 1980.

Without taking any position on their political cause or the status of conflict in which armed opposition groups may be engaged, Amnesty International also opposes human rights abuses by such groups, particularly the killing of defenceless people and torture, which are prohibited in international humanitarian law, more particularly in Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. Such prohibition applies equally to government forces. Killings by members of armed opposition groups can never provide justification for government forces to deliberately kill defenceless people or torture prisoners in police custody.

This report attempts to describe the patterns of human rights violations in the region in recent years. It does not pretend to be comprehensive. In view of the strict control exercised by the Chinese authorities over information about these issues, the intimidation to which victims of human rights violations and their relatives are subjected, and the lack of access to the region by independent human rights monitors, it is difficult to crosscheck many reports of human rights violations and detailed information is available only about some areas and incidents. This report focuses mainly on patterns of human rights violations which Amnesty International has been able to document with various sources. In some instances it cites allegations made by single sources where the allegations refer to individual prisoners and particularly serious human rights violations, such as torture.

The information in the report is based on a wide variety of sources, including former prisoners, relatives and friends of prisoners, official Chinese documents and statements, reports in the local and national media, scholarly research and publications from academics and experts on the region, reports from Uighurs and foreign nationals of various professions, and reports in the international media.

This report documents the cases of nearly 200 political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, known or believed to be currently imprisoned (see Appendix 3). It also documents 210 death sentences recorded in the region since January 1997, including 190 executions. The vast majority of those sentenced to death and executed were Uighurs.

BACKGROUND

The Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) is one of the five autonomous regions of the PRC, where the officially recognised 'national minorities' are granted some formal representation in the organs of regional government. The autonomy conferred to these regions by the PRC Constitution and Law on Regional Autonomy has remained largely symbolic. In the XUAR as in the rest of the PRC, all major policy decisions are taken by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and almost all senior posts in the regional and local CCP committees are held by ethnic Chinese (or *Han*). The region is rich in natural resources and has been an important target for population resettlement from inland China since 1949.¹

¹ See Lillian Craig Harris, "Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China's Policy in the Islamic World", in *The China Quarterly*, No.133, March 1993, pp.111-129, and Nicholas Becquelin, "Trouble on the Marches", in *China Perspectives* No.10, March/April 1997, pp.19-28.

With the massive influx of Han Chinese in the XUAR since 1949, the indigenous population has felt increasingly marginalised in what they regard as their ancestral land. Aspirations towards independence have their roots in both the distant past and recent history. During the 1930s and 1940s, two independent Republics of Eastern Turkestan were formed successively in Kashgar (1933) and Ili (1944) as attempts to resist Chinese rule.² Both republics were short-lived, but they have continued to inspire nationalist opposition since 1949, particularly among the Uighurs. Over the years, various opposition groups militating for Eastern Turkestan's independence were formed clandestinely in the XUAR - some reportedly supported by exiled nationalist groups established among the Uighur diaspora in various countries. Some of these groups have resorted to violence, including attacks on government officials and offices, and the planting and detonation of bombs. The emergence of independent Central Asian states with the breakup of the Soviet Union, together with the rise of Islamic movements and protracted conflicts in other neighbouring countries appear to have heightened the Chinese authorities' fears of organised political opposition in the XUAR, leading to a reversal of the relatively liberal policies implemented during the 1980s.

Since the late 1980s, government policies and other factors have generated growing ethnic discontent in the XUAR. The continuing influx of Han Chinese migrants, discrimination and unequal economic opportunities, curbs on religious and cultural rights, the enforcement of the government's birth control policy, official corruption, and the perception that the authorities are not seriously tackling growing crime are among the factors which have fuelled unrest.

Population balance

² See Linda Benson, "The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949", M.E. Sharpe, New York, 1990; and Dru C. Gladney, "Internal colonialism and the Uyghur nationality: Chinese nationalism and its subaltern subject", in CEMOTI (Cahiers d'Etudes sur la Méditerranée Orientale et le monde Turco-Iranien), No.25, janvier-juin 1998, pp.47-61.

In 1949, the local Turkic population, in majority Uighur, accounted for at least 93% of the region's population, while ethnic Chinese in the region amounted to about 6 or 7% of the population. By 1997, according to official statistics, the population of the XUAR was over 17 millions, divided into 47% Uighurs, 42% ethnic Chinese (38% Han and 4% Hui), 7% Kazaks and the rest divided between other groups. The official statistics, however, are widely believed to be unreliable. According to some foreign experts, the number of ethnic Chinese in the region was already equal to that of other ethnic groups by the late 1970s. Since then, many Han Chinese have continued to migrate to the region, while many old Chinese settlers have left the XUAR to return to their native provinces in inland China.³

Since the late 1980s, many young Uighurs have also left the XUAR to seek employment in the Chinese provinces and some have gone abroad.

³ The old Han settlers, many of whom have now left the region or died, were familiar with local customs and some knew local languages. In contrast, many of the newcomers are uneducated young farmers who have no such knowledge. In addition to the magnitude of the Han migration and the economic implications for local people, this too contributes to ethnic tensions.

There is evidence that the influx of Han migrant workers has considerably increased in the XUAR in recent years.⁴ Since 1997 in particular, various official sources have indicated that the number of Han migrants every year is in the hundreds of thousands, with an unknown proportion coming temporarily for seasonal work. For example, in a 1997 report on cotton-producing in Yarkant (*Shache*) in the Tarim basin, the official Xinhua News Agency said:

“A phenomenon similar to that of the building sites of Beijing or south China’s booming areas, where waves of migrant workers come looking for jobs, is taking place in northwest China’s Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, where an increasing number of migrant farmers are looking for work – but in the cotton fields. Hundreds of thousands of surplus labour from inland rural areas [Chinese provinces] are coming to Xinjiang during the region’s cotton harvest time. Some of the cotton pickers come in the fall and go back in early spring, while others stay as caretakers in cotton fields.”⁵

The role of the “Bingtuan”

⁴ An article in the *South China Morning Post* of 16 February 1997, basing itself on official population statistics for the years 1994 and 1995, estimated that the influx of Han in the XUAR for this two-year period was at least 250,000. According to the article, the statistics showed that during the same period the ethnic minority population had declined by nearly 130,000.

⁵ Xinhua news agency, Urumqi, 19 May 1997. Yarkant (*Shache*) is China’s largest cotton-producing county. Cotton production has been made a priority in the XUAR in recent years.

During the first three decades of the PRC, the resettlement of Han Chinese in the region was facilitated by what is now called the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (commonly known as the *Bingtuan*), an institution which was established in the early 1950s. The *Bingtuan*, described by many scholars as an institution which served to colonize Xinjiang, is both an administrative organ with a somewhat military structure and a large development corporation.⁶ It is established along the border and in pockets of territory roughly across the centre of the XUAR, separating the north where most Kazaks live from the mainly Uighur south. The *Bingtuan* has jurisdiction over several million hectares of land and the vast majority of its population is ethnic Chinese. It is now a unique institution in the PRC and enjoys a special status⁷. It is administered independently from the XUAR regional government and has its own police force, courts, agricultural and industrial enterprises, as well as its own large network of labour camps and prisons⁸. Over the years it has expanded, appropriating land when necessary⁹, including in the south which is considered the heartland of Uighur culture and traditions and where most Uighurs live.

The *Bingtuan* always had the dual function of developing the region's economy and protecting it against any external and internal threats. It is considered an important force in guaranteeing the "stability" of the XUAR and over the years its armed police units have taken part in quelling ethnic unrest. In May 1997, for example, the XUAR Communist Party leader, Wang Lequan, praised the role the *Bingtuan*'s armed police units were playing in this respect: "In recent years, the corps' armed police units have been playing an important role in safeguarding Xinjiang's political stability and unity."¹⁰ After ethnic unrest broke out in February 1997 in the city of Gulja (*Yining*), in Ili Prefecture in the west of the XUAR, the prison facilities of the *Bingtuan*'s 4th Division, located in Ili, were used to detain protesters and other people arrested in Gulja. They have continued to be used to detain suspected government opponents.

Discrimination

⁶ See "New Ghosts Old Ghosts – Prisons and Labor Reform Camps in China", by James D. Seymour and Richard Anderson, M.E. Sharpe, 1998, p.45. Chapter 3 of the book includes detailed information about the *Bingtuan* and its network of labour camps and prisons, as well as the separate penal establishments under the Department of Justice of the XUAR regional government.

⁷ During the 1990s, the *Bingtuan* has been placed directly under the authority of the central government in Beijing and has been granted privileges giving it the same status as the XUAR regional government (see *South China Morning Post*, 17 April 1997, and *Ming Pao*, 28 August 1998).

⁸ See "New Ghosts Old Ghosts", *op.cit.*, pp.45-70.

⁹ *ibid.*, p.53. According to the authors, there are plans to nearly triple the *Bingtuan*'s farmland by 2001, which would have to be largely at the expense of traditional animal husbandry, and therefore of the Uighurs and Kazaks. The authors conclude that this can only happen in the context of political repression (p.125).

¹⁰ Report by Chinese regional TV from Xinjiang, 14 May 1997, BBC Monitoring, 15 May 1997.

Despite the economic development in the XUAR since the 1980s, unemployment is high among Uighurs. Many Uighurs complain that racial abuse and discrimination against ethnic minorities is common, and that they have no equal opportunity in education, health care and employment. Unlike their Chinese counterparts, for example, many Uighur schools and hospitals are poorly equipped, and some Uighur village schools are reported to be so poor and totally deprived of equipment that the pupils have to sit and write on the earthen floor. Many hospitals reportedly have discriminatory practices, giving preferential treatment to Han Chinese patients and top jobs to Chinese doctors at the expense of their Uighur counterparts.

Since the 1980s, the opportunities afforded by the economic development have benefited mainly Han Chinese. In the agricultural sector, many Uighur farmers have become impoverished due to new policies, the multiplication of taxes, and corrupt or discriminatory practices. In some areas, Uighur farmers have to sell their crops to state agencies at lower prices than those of the free market, whereas Chinese farmers are reportedly allowed to trade on the market. Some Uighur farmers have had to sell their land and joined the ranks of the unemployed and vagrants.¹¹ In industry, the vast majority of workers employed in the new oil fields and other enterprises in the north, which are key to the region's development, are Han Chinese.¹² In the south, according to some sources, many enterprises which have been privatized have come under Chinese management and increasingly hired Han Chinese workers instead of Uighurs. This has reportedly extended to some factories producing local carpets and silk which were the traditional craft of Uighurs¹³. With the economic and social changes during the past two decades, crime has substantially risen in the region, as in the rest of the PRC. In some areas, drug addiction and prostitution have become widespread among the unemployed.

Religion

With the "open door" policy launched in the late 1970s and the subsequent economic reforms, there was a religious revival in the XUAR as in the rest of the PRC. The authorities allowed the reopening of mosques and the use of funds contributed from some Islamic countries to build new mosques, found Koranic schools and import religious materials. Many Muslims were allowed again to travel to Islamic countries, and contacts with Muslims abroad were encouraged¹⁴. This liberalisation however stopped during the late 1980s. The government

¹¹ According to official sources, one million people in the region (one in 17 of the population) live below the poverty line. See "Xinjiang Uighurs bitter at invasion of Chinese immigrants", Agence France Presse report from Urumqi, 13 May 1997, citing officials from the Xinjiang Economic Commission.

¹² See "Trouble on the Marches", op.cit., p.22, and Agence France Presse report of 13 May 1997 cited above.

¹³ This is reported to be the case with carpet and silk factories in Kashgar and Khotan.

¹⁴ See Lillian Craig Harris, op.cit., p. 121, and Gaye Christoffersen, "Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle: The Impact of Transnational Forces on Chinese Regional Planning", *The China Quarterly*, No.133, March 1993, pp.130-151.

reverted to restrictive policies, amidst fears that Islam might provide a rallying point for ethnic nationalism and that Islamist movements abroad might inspire young Uighurs who had gone to study in foreign Islamic schools. These fears were apparently reinforced by an incident in Baren, near Kashgar, in April 1990, when protests and rioting, reportedly led by members of an Islamic nationalist group, resulted in many deaths (see below page 65)

Since then, many mosques and Koranic schools have been closed down, the use of the Arabic script has been stopped, tight controls have been imposed on the Islamic clergy, and religious leaders who are deemed to be too independent or “subversive” have been dismissed or arrested. Muslims working in government offices and other official institutions are prohibited from practising their religion, failing which they lose their jobs. Since 1996, the government has intensified its campaign against “national separatists”, “religious extremists” and “illegal religious activities”, launching at the same time an “in-depth atheist education” campaign to purge grassroots communist party committees and other institutions of Muslim believers. Reporting on such a campaign in Turpan Prefecture in 1997, the official newspaper *Xinjiang Daily* said: “Those party members who firmly believe in religion and who refuse to change their ways after education should be given a certain time period to make corrections, be persuaded to withdraw from the party or dismissed from the party according to the seriousness of their case. In recent years, 98 religious party members [in Turpan prefecture] have been dealt with.” The newspaper further reported:

“Party organisations and government organs at all levels have tightened the control of religious affairs, and further improved religion control committees at township, town and village levels.” [Xinjiang Daily, 9 April 1997].

In June 1997, the same newspaper reported on the crackdown on “illegal” religious activities in Ili Prefecture following ethnic unrest there in February 1997. It said: “Illegal religious activities were cleaned up in Ili, village by village, hamlet by hamlet.” The newspaper also reported that 40 “core participants in illegal religious activities” had been arrested, 35 communist party leaders in villages and towns and 19 village mayors or factory owners had been sacked, and the unauthorised construction or renovation of 133 mosques had been stopped in the area.¹⁵

On 17 April 1998, the *Urumqi Evening News* reported on police searches carried out in the 56 mosques of Egarqi, in Aksu district: “Recently, the police has searched these mosques and tightly controlled their activities, their Imams and Muezzins. Activities not seen as normal have been halted.”

¹⁵ See Reuters, Beijing, 26 June 1997, citing the *Xinjiang Daily* of 21 June 1997.

Unofficial sources report that many secret Koranic classes and religious groups were founded during the 1990s when the authorities started closing down the religious schools which they had initially encouraged to open. Some religious leaders then started religious classes to teach the Koran in people's homes. Many such private classes were formed in the south, where Islamic traditions remain strong. These classes were periodically discovered by police and closed down. According to unofficial sources, the Mullahs (religious teachers) - and sometimes also the religious students - were taken into police custody, detained for two or three months, and usually then released on condition of paying a fine. Some were detained repeatedly. Others, whether leaders or participants in these groups, were kept in detention. In recent years, some have been sent to "re-education through labour" camps or sentenced to prison terms.

Social and cultural rights

Social and cultural rights have also been curtailed. In Urumqi, the regional capital, some Uighur entrepreneurs who manufactured traditional ethnic clothes or who became involved in social issues have suffered harassment – some had to close down their businesses as a result. In cities in the north, some people are also reported to have been harassed or detained simply for displaying signs of their ethnic or religious identity, such as headscarves for Muslim women. In Ili and other areas, a social and cultural forum known as the "meshreps", which was revived in 1994 by Uighurs in Gulja (*Yining*) city, was banned by the authorities in 1995 (see below, page 18)

Birth control

Since the late 1980s, the enforcement of the national birth control policy in the XUAR has created strong resentment among Uighurs and other ethnic groups. Both official and unofficial sources indicate that the implementation of the policy has led to incidents of violence, including attacks on birth control offices or personnel (see page 52). Under the official birth control policy, national minority couples are allowed to have three children in rural areas and two children in urban areas. According to unofficial sources, however, the authorities in the region have increasingly exerted pressure on couples to reduce the number to two and one. As in the rest of the country, pregnancies have to be planned according to the quotas of permitted births allocated to a particular area for a given period. A couple may then be denied permission to conceive for a number of years until the “plan” allows it. The plan is enforced in principle with a system of rewards and penalties. However, many women who become pregnant “outside the plan” are reportedly forced to have abortions and those who give birth outside the plan face penalties which often jeopardise the family’s livelihood. Forced sterilisation is also reported to be common.

Recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

In 1996, the Committee, which monitors the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) to which China is a party, examined China’s combined fifth, sixth and seventh periodic reports on its implementation of the CERD. In its concluding observations the Committee expressed concern about several issues, including the “lack of protective legal provisions for minority groups” in China, reports about “incentives granted to members of the Han Nationality to settle in autonomous areas”, the “actual enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion”, particularly in Xinjiang and Tibet, and “disparities in access to economic, social and cultural benefits by different ethnic groups” - which the Committee thought “may generate racial discrimination towards disadvantaged groups”.

The Committee also expressed concern about “reported cases of violation in the autonomous regions of Xinjiang and Tibet of the right to security of the person and protection against violence or bodily harm, as contained in article 5(b) of the Convention.” It made a number of recommendations to the PRC government, including “to make all acts of racial discrimination, as specified in article 4 of the Convention, punishable by law”, to review “any policies or practices that may result in a substantial alteration of the demographic composition of the autonomous areas” and to avoid “any restriction on the exercise of religious rights of the members of minority nationalities.” It also requested China to provide information in its next report on “the number and percentage of person detained who are of minority origin

relative to the total prison population of the State party.”¹⁶ China has not yet presented any new report to the Committee. It is clear, though, that most of the recommendations made by the Committee in 1996 have been ignored in the XUAR.

DISSENT, RESISTANCE AND REPRESSION

An official research study on “Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism”,¹⁷ published in 1994 by the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences (XASS) for “internal” (non-public) distribution, listed a number of “major incidents” of “ethnic rebellion” which had occurred in the XUAR from the 1950s to the early 1990s. The book distinguished between various types of individuals and groups who were directly or indirectly seeking or promoting independence from Chinese rule. It cited for example a number of clandestine opposition parties which had been formed and crushed over the years. Most of these parties bore the name of “Eastern Turkestan” in reference to the short-lived independent republics of Eastern Turkestan formed in Kashgar in 1933 and in Ili in 1944. For example, the “Islamic Party of Eastern Turkestan” was named as the force behind the 1990 riots in Baren township, near Kashgar (see below page 65 for details of the incident), and members of the “Islamic Reformist Party of Eastern Turkestan”, set up in 1990 in Urumqi, were blamed for bombings there in February 1992. According to the book, 60 “counter-revolutionary” organisations and other dissident groups were “investigated” during the years 1990-93, which amounted to more than four times the number investigated in the previous four-year period.

The authors of the book also blamed other types of “counter-revolutionary elements” for inciting unrest among the masses and causing “public disturbances”. It cited such “disturbances” as the 1985 demonstrations by 7000 students in Urumqi against nuclear testing, birth control and Han migration in the XUAR, and public protests by Muslims in 1989 against the publication of a book on “Sexual Customs” which contained material offensive to Islam.

¹⁶ United Nations, CERD, Forty-ninth session, “Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - People’s Republic of China”, CERD/C/304/Add.15, 27 September 1996, pp.3-4.

¹⁷ “*Fan yisilan zhuyi, fan tujue zhuyi yanjiu*” (Research on Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism), Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences, October 1994, pp. 47-48.

The XASS book also attacked nationalist intellectuals for generating “counter-revolutionary separatist thinking among the public” through their literary works and scholarly research, which “distorted the history of Xinjiang, propagating a reactionary, nationalist point of view which promoted the independence of Xinjiang”. It gave the example of Turgun Almas, criticising in particular his book “The Uighurs” for being “erroneous” on several counts, including for having “elevated the historical importance of the Uighurs” and “denied the harmony of the coexistence of the Chinese and Uighur people”. Turgun Almas, a Uighur historian and researcher at the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences in Urumqi, came under heavy and prolonged public criticism after the publication of his book “The Uighurs” in 1989. Then aged in his 60s, he was placed under house arrest and his family has suffered discrimination and police harassment since then.¹⁸

With growing repression during the 1990s, dissent of this nature has now been driven underground. According to various sources, poems, songs, plays and other works by Uighur artists and writers have been banned by the authorities when they were deemed to arouse nationalist feelings, and some people have reportedly been detained merely for possessing banned tapes or literature. However, ethnic unrest and public protests have continued. The following are two of the “major incidents” of unrest which have taken place since the mid-1990s.

The July 1995 incident in Khotan (Hetian)

On 7 July 1995, a protest started in Khotan (*Hetian*) when local Muslims arrived at the Baytulla mosque for Friday prayer and found that the Imam (Islamic preacher), Abdul Kayum, had disappeared. He was reported to have been arrested the previous day. According to unofficial sources, Abdul Keyum, a young man, had been appointed Imam after two other Imams were dismissed by the authorities for interpreting the Koran by making reference to current events, which drew a growing number of worshippers to the mosque. Abdul Keyum reportedly was as charismatic as his predecessors and had started to refer to women’s rights while interpreting the holy scriptures in the mosque. His reported arrest on 7 July 1995 provoked anger. Several hundred people among those gathered at the mosque went to the nearby local government offices, located in a compound which also housed the local police and Communist Party headquarters.

According to unofficial sources, the crowd first stood outside the compound, asking where the Imam was and calling for his release; then, as they received no satisfactory response, they walked into the compound and occupied some of the offices. A violent confrontation soon developed between the protesters and the approximately 50 armed police present there. Some cadres, police officers and civilians in the crowd were injured, and equipment was destroyed. As the fighting got worse, more than 20 lorries full of riot police arrived on the scene. They

¹⁸ See Amnesty International, “*PRC – Secret violence: Human rights violations in Xinjiang*”, November 1992, AI Index: ASA 17/50/92, p.10.

closed the doors of the compound trapping inside some of the protesters, fired tear gas, and arrested the protesters there, reportedly beating them up badly in the process.

According to official sources, 66 cadres and officers were injured during the confrontation, five of them seriously, and a police car, some doors and many window panes were damaged or broken by the protesters. An official account of the incident published in the *Khotan Daily* on 9 July 1995 said that the officials injured included the deputy head of the police office and a cadre from the political-judicial commission. This account made no mention of civilians having been injured, but it confirmed that protesters had been arrested without saying how many. The account did not refer either to the Imam, whose arrest, according to unofficial sources, had sparked the incident. The official explanation for the incident was that “an extremely small number of counter-revolutionary criminals had used religion as the pretext to deceive and incite a small number of ill-informed believers to carry out attacks on the party, government and police headquarters.”

On 9 July 1995, the Khotan local government posted a public notice calling on people to denounce those involved in the disturbance and on the “planners, organisers and main participants” in the disturbance to turn themselves in to the police and “confess their crime”, failing which they would face severe punishment.

According to unofficial sources, several hundred people were detained on the spot on 7 July 1995 and many more during the following weeks, both in and around Khotan. Many arrests were reportedly made on Fridays in Khotan when people from nearby villages came to the mosque, and on market days in villages in the area. According to some sources, most of those detained on 7 July 1995 were held without charge for periods varying from 2 weeks to 3 months, but some were kept in custody. Some 20 people accused of involvement in the incident were subsequently sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from three to 16 years at a “big sentencing rally” held in Khotan two or three months after the 7 July incident (see below, page 40).

**PRISONERS ARRESTED FOLLOWING THE 7 JULY 1995 INCIDENT IN
KHOTAN**

On 25 July 1995, in a separate case, a group of 10 Uighurs were also tried in Guma (*Pishan*), in Khotan district. They were accused of being active members of a clandestine organisation founded in 1991, the “Eastern Turkestan Democratic Islamic Party”, and were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 10 to 21 years. (see list of prisoners, Mehmet Sadir and others, in Appendix 3)

Arrests of suspected separatists and members of religious groups subsequently continued in Khotan. During the 1996 “strike hard” anti-crime campaign, more riot police were moved into Khotan and, according to some sources, at least 600 people, mostly young educated people, were arrested.¹⁹ Incidents of violence have also been reported. In November 1996, one Uighur nationalist reportedly killed 16 Chinese policemen with a machine gun.²⁰

Many of those detained in Khotan since 1995 were arrested for taking part in “illegal” religious activities. Some have received sentences of three years of “re-education through labour”, an administrative punishment imposed without charge or trial, and were sent to carry out the sentences in a labour camp at Mush, near Kashgar. The camp, a “re-education through labour farm”, reportedly held some 380 political prisoners in 1998 (see below page 48).

The 5 February 1997 incident in Gulja (Yining) and its context

¹⁹ See Michael Winchester, Inside China Story, in *Asiaweek*, 24 October 1997, p.42.

²⁰ See “China’s rebellious province”, *The Economist*, 23 August 1997, p. 29.

In 1994, a movement was started by Uighurs in the city of Gulja (*Yining*) in Ili Prefecture to revive a traditional form of social gathering, the “meshrep”, in order to tackle social problems. The meshreps are traditional parties which may involve women, men, young people or a mixed group, and are held like a play, with one person leading the group and giving turns to those assembled to speak, play music, sing songs or recite poems. According to unofficial sources, the Ili Youth Meshrep was organised by some young Uighurs in Gulja at the end of 1994, with the agreement of the city authorities. It was set up as an attempt to tackle drug abuse which had become widespread among young Uighurs - mostly the uneducated and unemployed - and related problems affecting the local Uighur community. The initiative is said to have been initially supported by several cultural institutions in the city, who donated materials for a library set up by the Youth Meshrep in Kepekyuzi, one of the villages surrounding Gulja.²¹ The meshreps were organised regularly in villages for a period of months. They tried to revive cultural and Islamic traditions and a sense of moral values, enforcing rules which prohibited drinking, smoking and drug taking. They reportedly achieved some success in reducing the drug problem among the young. The movement was popular and spread to other areas in the XUAR. According to some sources, there were soon some 400 meshreps in the region.²²

In April 1995, a meeting of the youth meshreps of the Ili region was held, during which one of the initial founders of the movement, Abdulhelil (see below page 26), was elected as their main leader. Immediately after, the police reportedly summoned Abdulhelil and other participants for questioning but took no further action at that time. However, the authorities apparently became increasingly worried about the strength of the meshreps. On 13 August 1995, for no apparent reason, Abdulhelil was detained again together with two other Uighurs. This provoked a protest demonstration by young Uighurs in Gulja the next day. Soon after, the authorities banned the meshreps. According to unofficial sources, other initiatives launched by members of the Uighur community in Gulja to give a sense of purpose to local youths, such as the formation of a local Uighur football team, were also stopped by the authorities.

The meshreps reportedly continued secretly and arbitrary arrests increased over the following eighteen months, particularly during the 1996 “strike hard” anti-crime campaign, which led to large-scale arrests and numerous executions.²³ Discontent apparently grew in Gulja in proportion with repression. On 5 February 1997, a demonstration was held in the city,

²¹ Article in *New Life*, a Uighur publication in Kazakstan, 17 January 1998.

²² “Le ‘separatisme’ ouïgour au XXème siècle: histoire et actualité”, by Artoush Kumul, in CEMOTI, no. 25 janvier-juin 1998, pp.83-91.

²³ The “Strike Hard” anti-crime campaign applied throughout China, though in Xinjiang and Tibet it was escorted by a political campaign to crackdown on “separatists”. The anti-crime campaign led to thousands of executions across the PRC, on a level unprecedented since 1983. For further information, see Amnesty International report, “*The death penalty in China: Breaking records, breaking rules*”, AI Index: ASA 17/38/97, August 1997.

followed by sporadic protests and rioting for two days. According to unofficial sources, the 5 February demonstration was provoked by a series of incidents during the Holy month of Ramadan, marked that year by a heavy police presence in the city. Shortly before 5 February, an incident reportedly occurred at a mosque when police came to arrest two Uighur “talibs” (religious students). According to reports, people at the mosque tried to intervene, a violent fight ensued and both civilians and police were killed or injured in the clash. Dozens of civilians were then reportedly arrested.

On 5 February 1997, at 9 o’clock in the morning, several hundred young Uighurs started demonstrating through the streets of Gulja, holding banners, shouting religious slogans and calling for equal treatment for Uighurs. Unofficial sources say that the demonstration lasted for about two hours and was peaceful. At around 11.00 am the demonstrators were stopped by armed police units escorted by trained dogs. Arrests started soon after. According to some sources, between 300 and 500 demonstrators and bystanders were arrested on 5 February. The protests continued sporadically for two days, spreading to the suburbs, and rioting broke out in some areas. It is not clear when or how violence started. Some unofficial sources claim that there was no violence until 6 February, though too little is known about what happened across the city to confirm this claim. By 6 February, a large number of anti-riot squads and troops had been brought into the city. They reportedly went through the streets arresting and beating people, including children. In some areas, protesters reportedly attacked police or Chinese residents and shops and set fire to some vehicles, while the security forces reportedly opened fire on protesters and bystanders. Many people were killed or injured (see page 65, “extra-judicial executions”). Soon after, more troops were brought into the city, a curfew was imposed, the airport and the railway station were closed and the city was sealed off for two weeks.

Amnesty International has received many reports alleging that the security forces carried out arrests and treated people detained in Gulja during and after the protests with extreme brutality. One incident reported by various sources concerned a group of 300 or 400 of the demonstrators and residents arrested on 5 February. According to some sources, they were hosed with icy cold water by some soldiers or riot police in an open place, identified by some sources as a stadium, where they were temporarily held. The group, including some children, were reportedly kept there, wet, for two hours in the freezing cold February temperature. According to other sources, some young men and women among the detainees were forced to run barefoot in the snow. It is also alleged that one of the detainees, a young man identified as Abdu Gani, was taken away by soldiers when he tried to question their actions, and had a dog set upon him. Eventually, after two hours, those among the detainees who were suffering from severe frostbite were taken to hospital - some allegedly had to have their feet, fingers or hands amputated. The rest of the group was taken to prison.

Frostbite/amputee photos here

duing the two weeks which followed the protests, house to house searches and large-scale arbitrary arrests were reportedly carried out by the security forces. Unofficial estimates of the number of arrests during these two weeks vary from 3000 to over 5,000. Many sources have reported that all the places of detention in Gulja city were full and some of those arrested were held in improvised places of detention or taken to jails outside the city. A large number of the Uighur traders in the city were reportedly detained during the week after 5 February and many of them allegedly robbed by police or soldiers of their money and other valuables. Those held included relatives and friends of people arrested during the protests and anyone suspected of being a nationalist sympathiser. Most of those detained were held for several weeks or months, without charge and incommunicado, and many were reportedly tortured. Their relatives reportedly had to give money to police officers in order to secure their release. Several hundred people are believed to have remained in detention. Some of them have been sentenced during “public sentencing rallies” held in Ili since then.

Arbitrary arrests continued throughout Ili Prefecture during the following months and people who had formed or taken part in religious classes were particularly targeted (see “background” above, page 5).

The aftermath of the February 1997 incident

On 25 February 1997, three bombs exploded in the regional capital Urumqi, causing civilian casualties. Eight Uighurs were executed three months later for allegedly carrying out the bombings (see below, page 54 on the death penalty). The crackdown against suspected “separatists” and “terrorists” intensified across the region, particularly in May and June 1997 during the weeks which preceded the handover of Hong Kong. On 22 May 1997, for example, the *Ili Evening News* reported on police raids carried out in the eight counties of Ili Prefecture and Gulja city. As part of a “strike hard” action, 61 trucks carrying 248 police officers had been sent on 18 May in various directions to arrest “violent criminals”, “terrorists” and “main religious leaders”. As a result, 84 criminal suspects were arrested that day.

A report in the *Xinjiang Daily* of 28 June 1997 indicated that, in addition to Gulja, the police crackdown in the region had focussed on the cities of Kashgar, Aksu, Khotan and the regional capital, Urumqi. The report said that more than 1000 denunciations of “separatists” or “terrorists” had been received “recently” from just three of these cities - Urumqi, Khotan and Aksu. The report further said that some of those investigated as a result of denunciations had “given information” about others, allowing the authorities to smash “organisations and illegal groups”. In the context of this crackdown, the number of denunciations indicates that at least hundreds of suspected opponents may have been detained in these three cities alone at that

time. There were also reports that summary executions were carried out in several cities towards the end of June 1997.

In July 1997, the head of the Xinjiang Regional Communist Party Committee, Wang Lequan, called for renewed efforts in the campaign against separatism in the region, indicating that 17,000 officials had already been sent to carry out “propaganda and education” in key villages, work units and military farms. Later the same month, Amudun Niyaz, Chairman of the Xinjiang Regional People’s Congress, called for a “people’s war” against “ethnic separatists and illegal religious activities”. “Our struggle against national separatists is neither an ethnic nor a religious problem”, he said. “It is a political struggle between those who safeguard the motherland’s unification and security and those who split the motherland.”²⁴ This was repeated in 1998 by regional Party leader Wang Lequan in more radical language, ominously reminiscent of that used during the Cultural Revolution, as being “a life-or-death struggle between ourselves and the enemy”.²⁵

The crackdown has continued. As well as arbitrary arrests, a growing number of violent clashes between Uighurs and the security forces have been reported from the Ili region and elsewhere. In the past few months, numerous executions of alleged “terrorists” have been carried out in Ili (see page 64) and, in January 1999, Chinese official sources reported that 1,000 riot police had recently been posted in the area.

²⁴ *Xinjiang Daily* of 17 July 1997, see Reuters, 22 July 1997.

²⁵ Xinjiang Television, Urumqi, 28 April 1998.

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND IMPRISONMENT

The following are illustrative cases of untried detainees and convicted prisoners who are believed to have been jailed for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights, in violation of international standards. Other cases are cited in a list of prisoners included in the Appendices. In many of the cases described below, the prisoners are not known to have been charged or tried. They have been held incommunicado since their arrest and their relatives have received no notification about their detention or the charges against them. In other cases, the prisoners were sentenced to long prison terms for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights. Others who are reported to be detained on political grounds have received terms of “re-education through labour”, an administrative punishment involving long-term detention without charge or trial which is inherently arbitrary.

In view of the secrecy with which the authorities treat cases of political detainees and prisoners, detailed information is lacking in some cases and the legal status of those who have been held incommunicado since their arrest is not known. However, Amnesty International believes that most of them are prisoners of conscience arbitrarily detained or imprisoned in violation of international human rights standards. Amnesty International’s specific concerns in the light of the information currently available about these prisoners is stated in each case. Amnesty International calls on the Chinese authorities to disclose without delay information about their cases, including their whereabouts and details of the charges against those who have not yet been tried, and to release immediately and unconditionally all those held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights.

Abdulhelil, a 28 year-old businessman from Gulja (*Yining*), married with three children, was arrested on 5 February 1997 after taking part in a demonstration in the city (see above page 18). According to unofficial sources, he was arrested immediately after the demonstration was stopped by the security forces and did not take part in the subsequent violence. His arrest was officially confirmed on 13 February 1997. An official in the city said that Abdulhelil was “under investigation” as the suspected “ringleader” of the 5 February demonstration. The official added that he had been detained previously in 1995, but released “after receiving education”.²⁶ Abdulhelil was the main leader of the “meshreps”, a socio-cultural forum revived in Gulja in 1994 which was banned by the authorities in 1995 (see above, page 18). According to unofficial sources, Abdulhelil was subjected to severe torture in detention (see below page 49). As of late 1998, his family had reportedly received no official notification about the charges against him or his place of detention. According to unofficial sources, he was held in the prison of the Bingtuan 4th Division outside Gulja. As of March 1999, he was not known to have been charged or tried. Amnesty International believes that Abdulhelil is arbitrarily detained for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights, in violation of international standards, and that he should be released immediately and unconditionally.

²⁶ See *Reuters*, Beijing, 13 February 1997.

Abdulhajat Haji (also known as **Ablat Kari Haji**), a 60 year-old Islamic scholar and Mullah (Koranic teacher) from Uchun village, near Gulja city in Ili Prefecture, was reportedly arrested shortly after the 5 February 1997 demonstrations in Gulja (see above page 18). During the mid-1980s, several religious leaders from Gulja, including Abdulhajat Haji, had formed an Islamic school, the creation of which had reportedly been encouraged by the authorities. From the late 1980s, however, the government policy on religion changed and such activities were curbed. Others involved in the religious school included **Abdulshukur Abliz Haji**, the head of the Islamic Society in Gulja who was also arrested in 1997 and is reported to be still detained (see page 50). According to unofficial sources, Abdulhajat Haji had continued to teach the Koran privately to students in his village of Uchun. This is believed to be the reason for his arrest. There has been no news of him since then and his legal status is not known. Amnesty International is concerned that Abdulhajat Haji and Abdulshukur Abliz Haji are reported to have been arbitrarily detained for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of religion. It is calling on the authorities to disclose without delay their whereabouts, the charges against them and the specific accusations on which these charges are based, or to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Kasim Sadik, a 45 year-old writer and poet from Gulja (*Yining*), was reportedly arrested in early 1998 because of his suspected nationalist sympathies. The exact date of his arrest is not known. During the mid-1980s, Kasim Sadik had studied at the Xinjiang Teacher Training College in Urumqi. He then returned to Gulja (*Yining*) and first became a school teacher, later joining the Yining Art Institute as a writer. He wrote some plays and poems, some of which reportedly included political messages. This is believed to be the reason for his arrest. There has been no news of him since his arrest. Amnesty International is concerned that Kasim Sadik is reported to have been detained for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of opinion and expression. It is calling on the authorities to disclose without delay his whereabouts and legal status and, should he still be detained, to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Kasim Haji, aged about 35, a businessman from Gulja, was among several people arrested in late March or April 1997 for meeting a team of foreign reporters visiting Gulja. The reporters were themselves detained by police then expelled from the country. Other Uighurs detained for talking to the reporters reportedly included two men identified as **Shevket Sakhal** (or **Shevket Tursun**), a 35 year-old businessman in Gulja, and **Hamit Mejit**, 39, also from Gulja. There are unconfirmed reports that the three men were subsequently sentenced to prison terms of 15 or 18 years for passing on "secret" information to foreigners. According to some sources, in 1998, the three men were held in Gulja and their relatives were allowed to take food for them to the prison, but not to see them. The reports that they were tried and sentenced have remained unconfirmed and their legal status is not known. Amnesty International is concerned that they were detained for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of opinion and association, in violation of international human rights standards. It is

calling on the authorities to disclose without delay their whereabouts and legal status and, should they still be detained, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Alimjan, a teacher at Gulja's Middle School No.5 and Secretary of the school Communist Party Committee, is reported to have arrested at his home by officers of the People's Armed Police on 18 July 1998 and accused of participation in a secret gathering of "nationalist separatists". From 18 to 28 July, he was held in a prison of the Bingtuan 4th Division, located in Ili. On 22 July 1998, Alimjan was reportedly removed from all his posts by decision of the Gulja city government, and deprived of his salary. On or after 28 July, he was transferred to Gulja city jail in Yengi Hayat district. He is believed to be still detained, though it is not known whether he has been formally charged with a crime. Three other men were reportedly arrested on similar charges in Gulja in July 1998. They included **Tursun Mehmet**, the Deputy Director of the study section of Middle school No.14 in Gulja, and **Abdushukur**, Deputy Head of the administration of Doletbagst district in Gulja. Both were accused of having helped "nationalist separatists". A third man, **Abdat Patar**, a medical surgeon at Gulja's military hospital, is reported to have been detained in early July 1998 accused of having given medical treatment to "nationalist separatists".²⁷ All four were reported to be still detained in December 1998, but their current whereabouts and legal status are not known. Amnesty International is concerned that they were detained for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of opinion and conscience. It is calling on the authorities to disclose without delay their whereabouts and legal status and, should they be still detained, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Abdurazzak Shamseden, a 28 year-old farmer and wood worker in Kepekyuzi (*Kebaikeyuzi*) village, near Gulja in Ili prefecture, was arrested following an incident in Hudiyaryuze village on 18 April 1998 in which six Uighur youths, including Abdurazzak's nephew, were killed during a clash with the security forces. His relation to one of the youths is believed to be the only reason for his detention. Abdurazzak Shamseden is not known to have been involved in political activities. Described as a "quiet" man, he was about to get married when he was arrested. He was still detained in early 1999 but he was not known to have been charged or tried. He is believed to be held in Gulja (*Yining*) city jail in Yengi Hayat district. Scores of other villagers were reportedly detained in the area following the 18 April incident in which the six youths were killed. They included **Abduhalik Abdureshit**, **Abdulhekim Abdulletip**, **Hudiyumberdi Begzad**, **Elyas Jalal**, **Jur'at Nuri**, **Nurmuhammad Yarmuhammad**, and **Saydulla Kurban**, all farmers from Kepekyuzi

²⁷ For further information, see Amnesty International report, "Appeal for Uighurs Arbitrarily Detained", AI Index: ASA 17/02/99, January 1999, p.2.

PRISONERS ARRESTED IN APRIL 1998 NEAR GULJA

STUDENTS ARRESTED IN JANUARY 1995 IN KASHGAR

illage.²⁸ Amnesty International is concerned that Abdurazzak Shamseden and others are reported to have been detained because of their relation or connection with suspected opponents. It is calling on the authorities to disclose without delay the whereabouts and legal status of Abdurazzak Shamseden and others detained in connection with the 18 April incident and, unless they have been charged with offences which are recognisably criminal by international standards, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Abidjan Obulkasim (or **Abit Ubulkasim**), is one of four students from Kashgar who were arrested in early 1995 and subsequently sentenced to prison terms ranging from 5 to 15 years for having discussed political issues among themselves. They were aged in their late teens or early 20s at the time of their arrest. Abidjan Obulkasim, now aged about 23, was a student at the Physics Department of the Kashgar Teacher's Training College. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in mid-1995 and the sentence was reportedly increased by one year in appeal. Those arrested and tried with him included **Aichat Mehmet** (or **Reshat Mehmet**), also a student at the Kashgar Teacher's Training College, then aged about 20, who received a 12 years' prison sentence subsequently increased by one year; **Ismael Mehmet**, a student at the same college in Kashgar, then aged about 19, who was sentenced to 8 years' imprisonment subsequently increased by one year on appeal; and **Tursun Mehmet**, a friend of the other three who, according to some sources, was a student at the Minorities Institute of Xian University (Shanxi province). He was tried with the others in Kashgar and sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment. The four students had reportedly discussed political and human rights issues on a few occasions, including during a birthday party for Ismael Mehmet in August 1994. At their trial in mid-1995, they were accused of having formed a "counter-revolutionary group" and of "planning" to engage in "separatist" activities. About 100 people attended their trial, during which Abit Obulkasim spoke in his own defence, reportedly arguing that he had not committed any crime under the law and had been detained illegally for several months. He also reportedly objected to being referred to as "the criminal" by the judge before he was convicted. The four students however were convicted. In September 1995, their sentences were announced at a sentencing rally held in a public place in Kashgar during which Abidjan Obulkasim was ill-treated by a soldier in front of the assembled crowd (see below page 50). The three students who had received the longest sentences subsequently appealed against the verdict to the XUAR High People's Court 1997 but their sentences were reportedly increased by one year as a result. They are reported to be held at Liu Daowan prison in Urumqi. Amnesty International believes that all four are arbitrarily imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of opinion and association, in violation of international standards. It is calling on the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Mat Tursun Ahun, a 70 year-old Uighur from Kashgar, is reported to have been arrested for making copies of an unapproved or banned religious newspaper. The exact date of his arrest is not known, but is believed to have been in 1996. On the basis of this accusation, he was reportedly sentenced without trial to three years of "re-education through labour" - an

²⁸ *ibid*, p.3.

administrative punishment imposed without charge or trial, which involves detention in a forced labour camp. **Hedayitila**, a 22 year-old Uighur from Kashgar, reportedly received the same sentence for distributing copies of the religious newspaper. The two men were sent to carry out their sentence at a “Re-education Through Labour Farm” at Mush, south of Kashgar, a labour camp where several hundred political prisoners are reported to be detained (see below page 48). Both were reported to be still held there in 1998, but their current whereabouts are not known. Amnesty International is concerned that they are reported to have been arbitrarily detained for political reasons and sentenced to a punishment which is inherently arbitrary. It calls on the authorities to disclose their legal status and current whereabouts and, if they are still detained for labour-reeducation, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Yasim Kari, aged about 35, and **Abla Karim**, aged about 40, both Mullahs (religious teachers) from Kashgar, are reported to have been detained in Kashgar since they were forcibly returned to the XUAR from Kazakstan in September 1998. They were returned together with their four children and two other men who were also detained. The four children were held for 18 days before being released, while the four men were kept in detention. Yasim Kari had reportedly been detained for four months in 1995 because of his religious activities. He had formed a religious class in Kashgar to teach the Koran. According to unofficial sources, both he and Abla Karim had failed to comply with the authorities’ requirement that religious leaders should publicly acknowledge the ‘merits’ of government policies. Amidst the government’s growing repression of religion, they were fearing arrest and fled the PRC in July 1998, reaching Kazakstan in August 1998. They were forcibly returned at the end of August, detained first in Urumqi, then transferred to a jail in Kashgar.²⁹ They are reported to be still detained but it is not known whether they have been charged. Amnesty International is concerned that they are reported to be detained for seeking political asylum abroad. It is calling on the authorities to disclose without delay their whereabouts and legal status and, unless they have been charged with offences which are recognisably criminal by international standards, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Nurhahmat Yusup, a 22 year old Uighur from Kashgar, is reported to have been arrested in July 1996 after replacing the PRC flag on People’s Square in Kashgar with the banned flag of Eastern Turkestan. According to unofficial sources, police searched his home and found a banned tape of poems from a well-known Uighur poet. The tape had at first circulated legally but was later banned by the authorities when the poems were found to be “reactionary”. Possession of the tape in itself reportedly became an offence. According to the sources, Nurhahmat Yusup was charged with “counter-revolutionary” offences and sentenced in September 1997 to 20 years’ imprisonment. After his trial, his family was allowed to visit him in prison. He is held at Liu Daowan jail in Urumqi. Amnesty International is concerned that Murhahmat Yusup is reported to have received a heavy prison sentence for the peaceful

²⁹ See AI Index: ASA 17/02/99, op.cit, p.4.

exercise of his right to freedom of opinion and expression. It calls on the authorities to disclose information about his trial, the exact charges and the evidence against him and, if he is imprisoned as reported in violation of international standards, to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Azimet, a 26 year-old Uighur from Urumqi, is reported to have been arrested in Urumqi in early 1998 on suspicion that he was involved in a nationalist political organisation. Three of his friends were also arrested between January and March 1998, reportedly as a result of denunciations. According to unofficial sources, the group had just had a few meetings during which they discussed political issues, including the issue of Uighur nationality and culture, but they were not involved in any organised opposition activities. Following his arrest, Azimet was held in the detention Centre of Urumqi city Public Security Bureau. As of late 1998, he was reported to be still detained without charge or trial. His current legal status is not known. Amnesty International is concerned that Azimet is reported to be detained for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of opinion and association. It calls on the authorities to disclose without delay his legal status and whereabouts and, unless he has been charged with offences which are recognisably criminal by international standards, to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Kahriman Abdukirim, 29, secretary to the well-known Uighur businesswoman Rebiya Kadeer, was taken away by police from his place of work at her office in Urumqi on 21 November 1998. He was held for one night in a local police station, where he was reportedly beaten, then transferred on 22 November 1998 to the Detention Centre of Urumqi city Public Security Bureau. Originally from Kashgar, Kahriman Abdukirim had studied at Xinjiang University from which he graduated in 1996. While a student, he had reportedly discussed political issues with other students and spoken about "Eastern Turkestan". A bright student, upon graduation, he was given a job at the regional Academy of Sciences, but he was reportedly dismissed after a few months when the academy learnt that he had spoken about Eastern Turkestan while at University. He started working as Rebiya Kadeer's secretary at the end of 1996. The authorities have not disclosed the reason for his detention, though it is believed to be related to his political discussions with other students while he was at university and possibly to his association with Rebiya Kadeer.³⁰ He is reported to be still detained incommunicado and without charge. Amnesty International is concerned that Kahriman Abdukirim is detained for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression and association. It calls on the authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Tohti, a Uighur scholar who spent several years as a visiting scholar in Japan, was reportedly arrested when he returned to China to visit his relatives in 1998. Prior to visiting Japan, he had worked at the Minorities Institute in Beijing. According to unofficial sources, after his arrest, he was tried in Beijing and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for publishing a book in Chinese language on Uighur history while he was studying in Japan. The date of his

³⁰ See AI Index: ASA 17/02/99, op.cit, p.5.

trial and the place where he is imprisoned are not known. There has been no official report about his arrest and trial. Amnesty International is concerned that Tohti is reported to be imprisoned for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of opinion and expression. It calls on the authorities to disclose without delay information about his reported trial and current whereabouts and, if he is imprisoned as reported in violation of international standards, to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Abdul Ayrat, a 37 year-old Uighur from Khotan district, is reported to have been arrested in 1997 in Khotan for organising a religious class. According to unofficial sources, he was accused of involvement in “illegal religious activities” and sentenced, without charge or trial, to three years of “re-education through labour”. He was sent to carry out the sentence at the “Re-education Through Labour Farm” at Mush, south of Kashgar, a labour camp where many political detainees are held. He is believed to be still held there. Amnesty International is concerned that Abdul Ayrat is reported to have been arbitrarily detained for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of religion, and sentenced to a punishment which is inherently arbitrary. It calls on the authorities to disclose information about his legal status and, if he is still detained as reported, to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Abdu Habar, 32, and **Mehmet Abdullah Mersum**, 36, two Uighurs from Kargilik (*Yecheng*) were arrested in late 1995 or early 1996 for taking part in a religious class. A few months after their arrest, they were sentenced, without charge or trial, to three years of “re-education through labour” after being accused of having “taken part in illegal religious activities”. They were subsequently detained at the labour-reeducation camp at Mush, south of Kashgar. Their sentences were due to expire in early 1999, but it is not known whether they have been released. Five other Uighurs from Kargilik were reported in late 1998 to be held at the same labour camp near Kashgar because of their religious activities: **Abdulah**, 25, **Idris**, 32, **Mehmet Imin**, 25, **Kahar**, 25, **Abdujelil**, 29. According to unofficial sources, they had been accused of “carrying out religious propaganda” and received terms of three years of “re-education through labour”. Two other Uighurs from Kargilik were also serving similar sentences in the labour camp: **Memetimin**, 34, had been sentenced for “taking part in an illegal organisation” and **Bavudun**, 58, for “insulting the government”. Amnesty International is concerned that these prisoners are reported to have been arbitrarily detained for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of religion or association, and sentenced to a punishment which is inherently arbitrary. It calls on the authorities to disclose information about their legal status and current whereabouts and, if they are still detained as reported, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Habubilla, aged 16, **Abduvely**, 22, **Abdumijit**, 27, all three from Karakash (*Moyu*), located a few miles north-west of Khotan city, were reported in late 1998 to be serving administrative sentences of three years “re-education through labour”, imposed without charge or trial, at the Mush labour camp near Kashgar. All three had reportedly been sentenced for reading a banned “foreign magazine”. The nature of the foreign magazine and the exact date of their

arrest are not known, though they are believed to have been sent to the camp on or after March 1996. **Abdugine**, a 23 year-old man from Keriya (*Yutian*), east of Khotan, was reportedly held in the camp for the same reason, having also received a term of three years of “re-education through labour”. Amnesty International is concerned that these prisoners are reported to have been arbitrarily detained for political reasons, and sentenced to a punishment which is inherently arbitrary. It calls on the authorities to disclose information about their legal status and current whereabouts and, if they are still detained as reported, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Abdukerim Mettersun, a 24 year-old Uighur from Lop (*Luo Pu*), near Khotan, was reportedly taken into police custody in August 1995 on suspicion that he had given out “nationalist propaganda” to Uighur students. According to unofficial sources, he was taken to the detention centre of Lop county Public Security Bureau and continued to be detained there for more than three years without being questioned or charged. At some point he reportedly requested a defence lawyer, but his request was ignored. He was last reported to be still held without charge at the end of 1998. At the time, the Lop county detention centre reportedly held some 280 untried political detainees who had been detained for periods varying from a few months to nearly four years without being charged. They included a detainee identified as **Ansary Bary**, aged 32, who had reportedly been held without charge since 1995 for speaking out against the government. Another detainee, **Abdullah Ahun**, a 65 year-old Uighur from Dol village, had reportedly been taken into police custody in mid-1998 when his son, Tohti Niyaz, escaped from the Lop county detention centre, and was then held there as hostage instead of his son. Others reportedly held without charge at the detention centre in late 1998, several months after they were taken in police custody, included: **Ablimet**, aged 30, detained for “expressing dissatisfaction with the government”; **Memit Tursun**, aged 22, detained for “reading a newspaper”; **Mohtar**, aged 29, and **Rozi Mamet Tohti**, aged 19, both detained for “speaking out against the government”; **Abdul Hemitgaz**, aged 24, detained for “taking part in an organisation”; **Ili Mamet Tursun**, aged 19, detained for “swearing at Han Chinese”. The current fate of these men is not known, but it is feared that they and many others may still be held without charge at the Lop county Public Security Bureau detention centre. Amnesty International is concerned that these detainees are reported to have been arbitrarily detained for political reasons and held without charge for periods varying from several months to several years. It is calling on the authorities to investigate their situation without delay and, if they are still detained as reported, to release them immediately and unconditionally.

POLITICAL PRISONERS AND UNFAIR TRIALS

In the XUAR, as elsewhere in the PRC, political trials are a mere formality. The verdict is usually pre-determined and decided by or in consultation with the political authorities. Political prisoners in the XUAR are often held incommunicado for months or even years before they are tried, and torture is reported to be systematic. Few defendants have access to lawyers. According to some sources, some defendants in the XUAR are not given a formal trial hearing but are simply informed of their sentences after the court's adjudication committee deliberates on the case among themselves and decides on the verdict on the basis of files prepared by the police and procuracy.

The cases below are illustrative examples of political prisoners who were arrested at various periods during the 1990s and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment after unfair trials. The case of a prisoner who was executed at the end of January 1999 is also cited as an example of those sentenced to death after unfair trials (see also section on the death penalty, page 54). The prisoners cited below were convicted of political offences and/or politically-motivated crimes which usually involved the advocacy or the use of violence. In many cases, they were tried behind closed doors, often without defence lawyers. Some of them were taken to "public sentencing rallies" - show trials attended by hundreds or thousands of people - during which their sentences were announced. In all cases, the prisoners are reported to have been tortured to force them to give incriminating information or to sign "confessions".

Amnesty International is concerned that they were convicted and sentenced after unfair trials and that some of them may be prisoners of conscience held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights. It is calling on the authorities to review these cases, to release all those held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights and to grant others a new, fair and open trial, in accordance with international standards for fair trial, or failing this release them.

Abdukiram Abduveli, a Uighur from Kucha county in Aksu district, aged 37 in 1993, was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment and four years' deprivation of political rights in May 1993 on "counter-revolutionary" charges. The court verdict against him by the Urumqi city Intermediate People's Court, a copy of which is available to Amnesty International, shows that Abdukiram Abduveli was tried in a "closed" hearing and did not have a lawyer to represent him. It also indicates that the charges against him may have been manipulated in order to ensure his conviction. At his trial, Abduveli was found guilty on two political charges: "organising a counter-revolutionary group" and "carrying out counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation". According to the court verdict, the first charge referred to the organisation of a political party called the "Islamic Reformist Party", which Abdukiram Abduveli and four other Uighurs had allegedly planned to form in October 1990. Abduveli, however, was arrested soon after on 17 November 1990, before the group had undertaken any activities and long before others in the group were arrested (in 1992). According to the court verdict, the second charge against Abduveli referred to his religious activities: he was accused

of having gone to various places from 1988-89, taking part in religious activities to explain the Koran and advocating spreading the religion. The court verdict claimed that he had advocated violence, allegedly saying things like “when the time is ripe we will lose blood”, “if you do not want to lose blood you are not Muslim” and “we must clean people’s mind of poisonous Marxist theory and replace it with the Koran, Hadith, and the Prophet’s teachings”. The court verdict said there were “witnesses’ statements and material evidence” as evidence of his “crimes”, but did not give details. According to the verdict, Abduveli had been charged on 24 July 1991 (eight months after he was taken into police custody) with the second charge only. The charge of “organising a counter-revolutionary group” was therefore added later, presumably after other alleged members of the Islamic Reformist Party were arrested in 1992. The addition of this second charge at a late stage raises strong doubts as to the nature of the evidence against him both on this count and on the other charge. Abdukiram Abduveli’s current place of detention is not known.

Rahmatjan, a 16 year-old Uighur boy, was among 29 people sentenced at a public sentencing rally held in a sports stadium in Gulja (*Yining*) city on 22 July 1997 for alleged offences committed during protests and rioting in the city in February 1997 (see page 18 for further details.) Rahmatjan was sentenced to 18 years’ imprisonment for assault causing death and damaging property during the protests on 6 February 1997. According to a report on the sentencing rally published on 24 July 1997 by the *Ili Evening News*, during the “Ili event”, on

6 February, Rahmatjan had allegedly taken part with others in beating two “innocent persons” identified by the newspaper with Chinese surnames, one of whom was reportedly killed. Rahmatjan was also accused of having joined others in overturning a minibus during the protests on 6 February. Some unofficial sources claim that the boy was in fact arrested when police searched his mother’s house, where he lived, and found a package reportedly containing explosives which had been left there by a friend. According to the sources, neither the boy nor his mother knew what the package contained and, by the time police searched their house, the man who had left the package there had already been sentenced to death and executed. Amnesty International is concerned that Rahmatjan, a juvenile, received a long prison sentence after an unfair political trial. The conflicting accounts about the reason for his arrest reinforce concerns that the charges on which he was convicted may be unfounded. His current whereabouts are unknown.

Over 50 people were sentenced at public rallies in Gulja in 1997 for involvement in the February 97 protests. 30 of them were sentenced at a rally on 24 April 1997, including three Uighurs who were sentenced to death. One defendant, identified as Xiernali Shadeke, was sentenced to life imprisonment for “hooliganism”. The 26 others received prison terms ranging from seven to 18 years. Another rally involving 29 defendants, including Ramatjan took place on 22 July 1997: seven Uighurs were sentenced to death; three others were sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years; seven received life imprisonment and ten others prison terms of up to 18 years. (see page 54, section on the death penalty, for further details on the rallies).

Among other cases of people who are reported to have been sentenced after unfair trials in connection with the February 97 protests in Gulja are **Turgan Tay**, a 27 year-old businessman in Gulja, and **Iminjan**, a 28 year-old teacher who was reportedly severely tortured after his arrest (see below page 50). According to unofficial sources, both were accused of involvement in “illegal religious activities” and sentenced in March or April 1998 to 10 years’ imprisonment at trial hearings which were closed to the public. It is reported that their family were not informed of the trial and that they had no lawyer.

Ibrahim Ismael, 42, a religious scholar from Memeyuzi village, near Gulja city, Ili Prefecture, was executed on 28 January 1999 after a public sentencing meeting by the Ili Intermediate People’s Court. Ibrahim Ismael had been arrested in 1997. A report published in an official newspaper just a few days after his arrest shows that Ibrahim Ismael was considered guilty long before he was tried. According to unofficial sources, Ibrahim Ismael was well known in Ili for having held private religious classes to teach the Koran to youths in villages around Gulja for several years before his arrest. A warrant for his arrest had been issued by the authorities before the February 1997 protests in Gulja and he had been in hiding since then. According to an official report in the *Ili Evening News* of 26 August 1997 (Uighur edition), Ibrahim Ismael was arrested in the evening of 18 August 1997 at the house of a person named as Rozahun Abbas, in Gulja city, and the officials involved in his arrest

received rewards. The newspaper described Ibrahim Ismael as a terrorist and “the main criminal” and leader of the February 1997 protests. It said “he held the Koran in one hand but at the same time he attacked cadres and innocent people spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda”. The newspaper warned Ibrahim’s followers that they should turn themselves in and could “only save their lives” by “confessing their crimes”, failing which they would “suffer the same fate as Ibrahim.”

This report, published in an official newspaper just a few days after his arrest, shows clearly that Ibrahim Ismael was considered guilty long before he was tried. The warning given to his followers by the newspaper also ominously suggested that Ibrahim Ismael might be sentenced to death, which was indeed the case seventeen months later. Ibrahim Ismael is reported to have been tortured after his arrest. He was reportedly shown on local television soon after his arrest was officially reported, with his face showing signs of bruises and appearing to be in pain when he sat down. He reportedly admitted on television that he and his friends, three of whom he named, had been wrong - a “confession” apparently out of character which is believed to have been the result of torture. He was reportedly held in Chapchal county jail near Gulja after his arrest. A photograph of him being interrogated by police officials was published in August 1997 in a local newspaper. Following his execution on 28 January 1999, official sources stated that he had joined a “reactionary organisation” in 1991 and had taken part in “illegal religious activities” and a series of protests in 1995 (see above, page 18). He was also accused of having helped to plan the February 97 protests in Gulja and of involvement in an attack in June 1997 in which four civilians and one police officer were killed.³¹ The official date of his arrest does not tally with unofficial reports according to which Ibrahim Ismael was arrested during police raids on villages around Gulja in late June 1997. The police raids reportedly targeted groups of people attending religious activities (tablih) in the villages of Turpanyuzi, Pangem, Araostang, Kepekyuzi and Yingeavat. According to the reports, apart from Ibrahim Ismael, 73 people were arrested during the raids on these villages between 26 and 28 June 1997, including Abbas Abdukerim (imamahun), Abduhabar, Abdumijit Masum, Tohtahun Turdi, Hamit Abdulhay, Imam Hasan, Dilshat Shamahun, Naserdin, Amerdin, Hal Muhamat Abdusalam, Halmurat, and Azat.

Omer Abdullah, a Uighur from Khotan, was one of around 20 people who were taken to a “mass sentencing rally” in Khotan in August or September 1995 . The group was tried for having taken part in a protest which developed into rioting, following the reported arrest of a local Imam (Muslim preacher) on 7 July 1995 (see above page 14). The sentencing rally, attended by 5000 people in the city stadium, was held by the Khotan district Intermediate People’s Court and chaired by the deputy secretary of the Khotan Communist Party Committee. The prisoners were taken to the sentencing rally with their arms tied behind their back and reportedly had wires passed through their mouths to prevent them speaking or shouting. They had reportedly been held incommunicado since their arrest and tortured in detention. According to unofficial sources, there was no public trial hearing before the rally.

³¹ See *Reuters*, Beijing, 5 February 1999.

Those sentenced at the rally included **Omar Abdullah**, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and 5 years deprivation of political rights; **Tursun Tohti Ahmed**, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment and 4 years' deprivation of political rights; **Abdulhalil Tursun**, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and 3 years' deprivation of political rights; **Salih Ahmed Ismael**, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment; **Roze Mehmet Baki**, sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment; and **Omerjan Abdullah**, sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment. The exact charges against them are not known, though they are believed to have been accused of a range of crimes including "hooliganism". The place where they are imprisoned is not known.

Jelil Aval and seven other Uighurs, most of them farmers from Baren township, in Akto county, near Kashgar, were tried in August 1993 by the Intermediate People's Court of the Kilzilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture. They had been detained in October 1992 and were charged with forming a "counter-revolutionary group" in an attempt to allegedly re-organise the "Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party", whose leaders had reportedly led the uprising in Baren in April 1990 (see below page 65). Several of the defendants were also charged with "counter-revolutionary sabotage" for allegedly buying arms, ammunitions and material to make bombs. According to the court verdict against them, they were planning "to take action to follow in their predecessors footsteps" by carrying out "sabotage". However, they were arrested before they could put any of their alleged plans into action. Several of the defendants had previously been detained in April and May 1990 for taking part in the April 1990 Baren "rebellion", but had been released after periods varying from a few weeks to over a year. The court verdict said that Jelil Aval had been released on bail from this first period in detention in 1991, suffering from "bad health". According to the court verdict, at his trial in 1993, Jelil Aval and six other defendants were represented by lawyers. However, the verdict states that "from the beginning to the end of the prosecution's accusations" Jelil Aval "refused to confess anything and did not defend himself"; his defence lawyer "refused to defend Jelil Aval because he did not present his version of what really happened and during the Judge's investigation he behaved stubbornly". Another defendant, **Aysa Yoldash**, apparently behaved in the same way, "pretending in court that he was dumb and stubbornly refusing to confess" or to defend himself, so that his lawyer "refused to defend him". As a result both received severe punishment. Jelil Aval was sentenced to life imprisonment with deprivation of political rights for life on the two charges described above. Aysa Yoldash was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for five years on the charge of "organising and leading a counter-revolutionary group". The six other defendants were sentenced to prison terms varying from one to ten years. Four of the defendants who received sentences of 10 years and above are presumed to be still imprisoned. The place where they are held is not known.

Amnesty International is also concerned about prisoners who received heavy sentences for taking part in the April 1990 protests and rioting in Baren. They include **Mahat Hasan**, a

farmer from Khorgan village in Baren township, aged 30 in 1990, who was sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years. It is not known whether his death sentence was commuted at the end of the two years. **Urayim Amet**, a farmer from Khorgan village,

aged 28 at the time and married with three children, was sentenced to life imprisonment and sent to carry out his sentence in a prison in Urumqi. **Tohti Islam**, from Khorgan village, aged 18 at the time, was sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment reportedly for failing to report the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party to the authorities; he was sent to carry out his sentence in Wusu (*Xihe*). **Turgun Abduyim**, then aged 28, from Khorgan village, was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment and sent to carry out the sentence in Nashim Bulak labour camp in Wusu. Many others are known to have received long prison sentences. They are presumed to be still imprisoned, but there has been no news of them for several years.

PRISONERS ARRESTED DURING THE BAREN INCIDENT, APRIL 1990

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Although Chinese law explicitly prohibits “torture to extract confessions”, and China has been a party to the UN Convention against Torture since 1988, torture remains widespread in the PRC. The XUAR is no exception. The reports received by Amnesty International from many sources indicate that torture and ill-treatment of prisoners are endemic in the region.

Particularly disturbing allegations have been made about the brutal treatment of people held in Gulja after the February 97 protests there and about the use in the XUAR of some forms of torture which, to Amnesty International’s knowledge, are not being used elsewhere in the PRC.

While Amnesty International is not in a position to verify the specific allegations made in individual testimonies and reports, it believes that the number and consistency of these allegations suggest a pattern which warrants immediate action by the authorities, including thorough and impartial investigations of all reports and complaints of torture.

Amnesty International is concerned that the authorities appear to have taken no action to curb torture in the region or to bring alleged perpetrators of torture to justice. There is a striking absence of official reports about prosecutions for torture in the XUAR. Amnesty International has not come across any such report in the regional media over the past two years. This contrasts sharply with the Chinese provinces, where local newspapers and other media have often reported cases in which police officials have been prosecuted for torture. The absence of such reports in the XUAR suggests that the authorities either ignore or cover up the widespread practice of torture in the region, or may even sanction its use in the context of repression.

One former court official, for example, told Amnesty International that ninety percent of defendants who appear in court in the XUAR tell the judges they have been tortured in police custody to force them to confess to the accusations, but the judges invariably ignore these allegations. The informant added that, in his three years of work in a criminal court in the region, he had not come across a single case in which a judge receiving allegations of torture had asked the procuracy to investigate the allegations or suspended the defendant’s trial.

Under international human rights law, the right not to be tortured can never be derogated from, even “in time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation”.³² This right applies whoever the detainee may be and whatever the crimes he or she is suspected of having committed.

Methods of torture

³² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 4.

The forms of torture most frequently reported in the region are similar to those used across the PRC. They include severe beatings with fists or a variety of instruments; kicking; the use of electric batons which give powerful electric shocks; the use of handcuffs, shackles or ropes to tie prisoners in ways which cause intense pain; suspension by the arms or feet, often combined with beatings, and exposure to extreme cold or heat. Some sources have also reported the use of trained dogs to attack prisoners; the use of live electric wires to give electric shocks; and the insertion of sticks or needles under the nails or having fingernails pulled out.

Other reported methods of torture, which to Amnesty International's knowledge are not being used elsewhere in the PRC, include the use of unidentified injections which caused the victims to become mentally unbalanced or to lose the ability to speak coherently; the insertion of pepper, chilli powder or other substances in the mouth, nose or genital organs; and, in the case of male prisoners, the insertion of horse hair or wires into the penis.

Testimonies and allegations

Following are some of the testimonies received by Amnesty International from victims of torture and relatives or friends of prisoners. Their names and some details of their account which may help identifying them are withheld in order to protect them and their families. For narrative purposes, some are identified by names which are not their real names. It is impossible to confirm these specific accounts, but they are consistent with many other reports of torture in the region. They are reported here in detail because of the gravity of the allegations they make and the pattern of torture they suggest.

The relative of a 17 year-old boy who was detained in Gulja (*Yining*) in February 1997 has given the following account to Amnesty International of how prisoners were treated in the aftermath of the protests in the city at that time. He referred to the prison in which his young relative was held as the "Yining city jail" – presumably the detention centre of the Yining city Public Security Bureau. According to his account, *"the jail was so crowded that prisoners were held 5 or 6 to a single cell – too small to allow them all to lie down at night; they had to take turns to sleep. Whenever police officers "visited" them in their cells, they were beaten. Those prisoners selected for interrogation were taken to a special room where they were beaten, kicked and given electric shocks with electric batons. The interrogation room was equipped with a rail fixed on the wall. Some prisoners were hung on the rail with one foot and one hand tied to the rail with handcuffs. They were left in that position for 24 hours. When they were untied, they could not stand straight. Some prisoners had their fingernails pulled out with pliers. Others had wires inserted under the nails. Some prisoners had paper shoved into their anus by interrogators who then set the paper on fire. The prisoners were made to run in the "flying aeroplane" position, arms spread out and bent forward [...]"*. The source said that his young relative was detained for about two months and that his family managed to get him released by paying 2,000 yuan to some police officers. Many police

officers were corrupt, he said, and giving them money was about the only way to obtain the release of a relative or friend if the case was not considered important.

Severe torture of suspected political opponents is reported to have continued in the Ili area since the February 97 protests. According to some sources, the extent of torture in Ili Prefecture is such that many political detainees have been brought to court barely conscious and unable to walk.

One former detainee, named Yusuf for the purpose of this account, reported to Amnesty International how he was tortured by police while detained for a few weeks in Urumqi in 1998. Yusuf had been arrested together with several friends on suspicion they had formed a political group and had links with exiled Uighur organisations. According to Yusuf, he and his friends had merely discussed political issues on a few occasions. He believed their discussions were overheard and they were denounced to the police. After his arrest, he was held in the Detention Centre of Urumqi city Public Security Bureau (PSB). According to his account, *“next to the detention centre is an underground place where some suspects are interrogated. He was questioned there in the evenings and tortured in various ways. For example, his hands were tied behind his back and the interrogators would lift his arms, pulling them up high in a twisted and painful position behind his back. He was given electric shocks with electric batons. The shocks were applied all over his body, including in his mouth and on his penis, which caused intense pain. The interrogators hit him on the bones of the legs with a wooden baton. They made him kneel down and hit him on the thighs and the shoulders with the baton. While tortured, he was made to wear a kind of metal helmet which came down over his eyes. The interrogators used this helmet to prevent fatalities, as some prisoners cannot bear the pain of torture and try to kill themselves by bashing their heads against the walls. He knew one prisoner who had bashed his head against a radiator to escape torture. The prisoner did not die, but he suffered skull fractures and became mentally disturbed. He was released as a result [..].”* Yusuf reported that he was himself released after a few weeks due to the efforts of a relative who used his connections to secure his release. His friends are still imprisoned.

Abdul (not his real name), a Uighur in his late 20s, has given Amnesty International the following account of his treatment in police custody in Kashgar city in 1996. He was held in what he described as an “underground prison” within the jail (detention centre) of the Kashgar Public Security Bureau [*Kashe diqu gonganju jianyu*]. The police had detained him on suspicion that he had some connection with several Uighurs arrested earlier on political grounds, though Abdul said he did not know them. According to his account, *he was held in a cell alone for two weeks and questioned every day for at least two hours. His interrogators were ethnic Chinese. During interrogation, he was tortured with 20 different methods. This included beatings, being kicked, having needles inserted under his toe nails while he was tied up, and being given electric shocks with both electric batons and electric wires. The wires were attached to his chest. The interrogators used a generator to control the electric current,*

increasing the power as they went along. Still, Abdul maintained he did not know the prisoners of interest to them. On the fourth day of his detention, Abdul was stripped of his pants and tied to a chair with his arms twisted and handcuffed behind the back the chair, and his legs tied to the front legs of the chair so that his knees were wide apart. The interrogators then inserted horsehair into his penis, causing extreme pain. This lasted for about 20 to 30 minutes. Afterwards, his genitals were very swollen and he bled a lot.[...] However he kept denying that he knew the prisoners in connection with whom he had been detained, so his interrogators eventually let him go. His release was also speeded up by the assistance of a friend who paid 5,000 yuan to the police. Before Abdul was released, his interrogators told him not to speak about the torture to anyone. They threatened that they would arrest and kill his family if he did. For two months after his release Abdul continued bleeding from the penis whenever he urinated. He went to hospital to get some treatment and the bleeding gradually subsided after six months.

Other sources, who were unrelated to Abdul and came from different areas in the XUAR, have reported to Amnesty International that either horse hair, thin wires or chilli powder are sometimes used in this fashion to torture male prisoners. One source from Khotan (*Hetian*) for example alleged that some prisoners, usually “important” political cases, were tortured with horse hair inserted into the penis, and claimed that this was a fairly well known method of torture in the Khotan area. Two sources from Gulja (*Yining*) alleged that some political prisoners there had been tortured by having a special wire inserted into the penis: the wire had small spikes which folded flat against the wire when it was inserted but which extended when it was pulled out. These methods of torture are not known to be used elsewhere in the PRC. According to former political prisoners who were imprisoned at various periods since the 1960s, such methods of sexual torture have been used for many years in the XUAR.

Former prisoners and other sources claim that torture and ill-treatment of prisoners is common across the XUAR. Some places of detention are particularly notorious for the extent of torture and harsh treatment inflicted on prisoners. This is notably reported to be the case at Liu Daowan jail in Urumqi, where many political prisoners are held, and in some jails of Ili Prefecture (see list of places of detention in Appendix 1). One example of the torture reportedly inflicted on political prisoners at Liu Daowan jail is given in the Section on extra-judicial executions (see below, page 65).

Prisoners serving sentences are also subjected to ill-treatment. Below are extracts from a report received by Amnesty International about political prisoners held in a labour camp near Kashgar. The labour camp is a “re-education through labour farm”, located at a place called Mush, about 36 kilometres from Kashgar on the way to Akto. In 1998, the camp reportedly held some 380 Uighur political prisoners serving sentences of up to three years of “re-education through labour” – a form of administrative detention imposed without formal charge or trial. According to the report, *prisoners in the camp work on average 10 hours a day at making and carrying bricks, cutting and transporting stones, and agricultural work. They are punished severely if they do not go to bed or get up on time, if they talk to each*

other, if they sing songs or shout, laugh or cry, if they secretly take water to wash themselves for prayer, if they do not finish their allotted tasks, or if they answer back to the police or guards. The punishments include being hit on the head, stomach and crutch with electric batons; being made to lie down and having their hand trodden on; being made to stand in the "flying aeroplane" position; being strapped to a pole and beaten, and being hung from the ceiling and beaten. On several occasions, police officers inserted an electric baton into a prisoner's anus, laughing among themselves as they did so. [...] Many prisoners have lost their teeth, have bleeding ears, broken arms, infected and useless testicles due to torture. They are frequently insulted and humiliated by the guards. [...] At mealtime, they have to sing songs of praise in Chinese, failing which they reportedly go without food. The camp has no doctor. Prisoners who are sick have to work or are given no food, and only those who are incontinent are taken to the hospital 36 kilometres away. Some have died on the way to hospital. [...] Alemjan, a 28 year-old [muezzin from the Baytulla mosque in Khotan] detained since July 1995, reportedly developed a bad liver condition while in the camp but was not taken to hospital. Mahmet Abdullah Mehsun [another prisoner from Kargilik] became diabetic and asked for medical treatment but this was refused. ... Amnesty International has the names and details of 26 political prisoners who were sent to the camp in 1996 from places including Kashgar, Kargilik (*Yecheng*), Yarkant (*Shache*), Keriya (*Yutian*), Qiha and Karakash (*Moyu*) near Khotan (*Hetian*). Most of them are believed to be still held there.

Current prisoner cases

The following are examples of prisoners reported to have been tortured or ill-treated who are still currently detained or restricted. They are only a few examples among others reported to Amnesty International, some of which are cited elsewhere in this report. Other cases cannot be publicised because the sources have requested confidentiality.

Abdulhelil, a 28 year-old businessman from Gulja, is reported to have been severely tortured in detention. He was arrested on 5 February 1997 after taking part in a demonstration in the city that day (see above, page 18). According to unofficial sources, he was arrested immediately after the 5 February demonstration, beaten and later taken to the local jail. Upon arrival at the jail, he was made to face a wall with his two arms raised against it and police officers proceeded immediately to beat him on the back. He was then taken away for interrogation and tortured. According to reports, shortly after his arrest, he was shown on state television and a commentator said he had "confessed" to being the leader of the 5 February demonstration. Little information has been available about him since then and the authorities have not disclosed any information about his situation. According to unofficial sources, up to April 1998, Abdulhelil was held in Chapchal county jail, some 30 kilometres from Gulja, in Ili prefecture, then moved to other places of detention. He was last known to be held in the prison of the *Bingtuan* 4th Division outside Gulja. He has reportedly continued to be subjected to ill treatment. According to one source, a former prisoner who had been held in

the same prison in 1998 said he had seen a guard set a dog upon Abdulhelil. His legal status is not known.

Abdulshukur Abliz Haji (also known as Abdushukur Haji), an Imam and Chair of the Islamic Society in Gulja city, aged in his early 40s, was reportedly tortured while held in Urumqi following his arrest in March 1997 (see above page 27). According to unofficial sources, he was released a few months later in poor health. Some sources allege that he was given injections in detention and became unable to speak coherently as a result. Following his release he went to Beijing to seek medical treatment but was reportedly re-arrested there in early 1998. He is reported to be held in Urumqi, but his legal status is unknown.

Iminjan, a 28 year-old teacher at the Gulja (*Yining*) Teachers Training College, was detained during the February 1997 protests in the city. According to unofficial sources, he was severely tortured in detention, including by being made to stand barefoot in the snow and having cold water poured over him in the freezing winter temperature. He reportedly suffered severe frostbites on both feet as a result. He is reported to be still imprisoned in Gulja (see page 38).

Abidjan Obulkasim, one of four students tried on political charges in Kashgar in mid-1995 (see above page 31) was taken to a “public sentencing rally” together with his co-defendants in September 1995. The rally was held in a square near Aitgar Mosque in Kashgar and about 1,000 people attended it. The police reportedly warned people in the audience not to speak, not to shout, not to record the proceedings and not to take photographs. Those who had cameras had them confiscated and police barred foreigners and tourists from entering the area. The four students were taken to the square by soldiers, with their hands tied and wearing a placard around their neck. According to eyewitnesses, soon after they arrived, Abidjan Obulkasim shouted “down with the Chinese Communist Party, long live the minorities!”, whereupon a soldier immediately forced him to kneel down and repeatedly bashed his head violently on the ground. When the soldier stopped, Abidjan’s face was covered with blood and a guard put a gag in his mouth to prevent him shouting, the eyewitnesses said. They further reported that when the soldier started bashing Abidjan’s head on the ground, several people in the audience objected loudly that this was not legal, but they were quickly surrounded by plainclothes police and taken away into police custody.

Ahmed, a trader in leather in Aksu, married with two children, is reported to have been arrested in Aksu in 1996 on suspicion of possessing a gun. According to a report received by Amnesty International, the police tortured him in detention to find information about the gun, then detained his wife and children in order to put further pressure on him, deliberately depriving the children of food for a period of time. The children were released together with their mother after a few weeks, while Ahmed was reportedly tried in secret and sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment on a different charge unrelated to the initial accusation against him (see below page 54). His current whereabouts are not known.

Obul Kasem Imin, a Uighur from Dol village in Lop county, near Khotan, was reportedly taken into custody by public security officers from Lop County in September 1996 for “speaking out against the government”. According to unofficial sources, while detained he was kneed and kicked in the groin by a police officer, injuring one of his testicles. The testicle was removed in hospital and Obul Kasem Imin was subsequently released, but placed under house arrest. According to the sources, the police officer responsible remains unpunished.

Deaths in custody

Amnesty International has received allegations from various sources about deaths in custody due to torture or a combination of ill-treatment and neglect, but in most cases the names and details of the prisoners were not known. These include, for example, allegations that four unidentified Uighur political prisoners died of starvation at Chapchal prison in Ili Prefecture in March 1998. Various sources had also alleged that up to fourteen people arrested in Gulja during the February 97 protests died in detention due to torture within a few days of their arrest. According to the reports, in some cases, the bodies of the dead were given back to the families, while others were just dumped on the streets. Below are two cases of deaths in custody reportedly due to torture where the names of the prisoners are known. Amnesty International is calling on the government to launch an impartial enquiry into the circumstances of their death and to make the result of the enquiry public. Some cases of prisoners who were allegedly shot dead by prison guards are also described in a separate section of this report (see below page 65).

Salam Kari, a young Uighur from Gulja (*Yining*) who had formed a Uighur football team in the city in the mid-1990s, was reportedly arrested in May 1997 in connection with the February 97 protests in Gulja. According to unofficial sources, a few days after his arrest, he was dead. His body, which was given back to his family, reportedly showed marks of torture. The police reportedly claimed that he had committed suicide in prison. As far as Amnesty International is aware, there has been no independent enquiry into his death.

Nizamidin Yusayin, a scholar from Urumqi aged about 70 and former journalist for the official newspaper *Xinjiang Daily*, reportedly died in police custody due to ill-treatment on 7 April 1998. According to unofficial sources, he was held in the custody of the Urumqi city Public Security Bureau and was beaten by police to force him to “confess” to the accusations against him. He had reportedly been arrested on suspicion that he had sheltered people wanted in connection with the February 1997 protests in Gulja (*Yining*). The exact date of his arrest is not known, but is believed to have been in or after September 1997. His relatives were reportedly denied permission to see him in prison. The authorities have not published any information about his detention or the circumstances of his death. During the mid-1980s, Nizamudin Yusayin had published a series of articles in a magazine on the theme of religion in Central Asia. In the articles, he reportedly referred to politically sensitive topics, such as the reasons why the Uighurs had become dominated by the Chinese in recent history.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS RESULTING FROM THE BIRTH CONTROL POLICY

Amnesty International does not take a position on the official birth control policy in the PRC, but it is concerned about human rights violations falling within its mandate which result from the implementation of the policy. In the XUAR, these include reports of forced abortions and sterilisations, and of arbitrary arrests made in the aftermath of attacks on family planning offices or birth control officials.

While it is difficult to document specific examples of women who have suffered such human rights violations, notably due to the sensitivity of an issue which touches on people's private life, it is clear from many reports that the primary victims of these violations are women. Amnesty International considers that forced abortions and sterilizations carried out on women who are forcibly taken away from their homes by people acting in an official capacity, such as family planning officials, to have the operation amounts to ill-treatment of restricted persons by government officials. Reports of violence against women in the context of implementation of the birth control policy in the XUAR refer not only to forced abortions and sterilizations, but also to cases where women have suffered permanent health damage or even died as a result of careless surgery during such operations.

The authorities have reportedly introduced personal "birth limitation contracts" which women must sign. The contracts indicate that contraception is compulsory and that abortion is the only remedy in the case of unauthorised pregnancies. In Kashgar city, the "birth limitation contracts" specify the method of contraception chosen, the rewards given to couples when the woman does not become pregnant "without a plan" and the punishments for those who become pregnant outside the plan, whether or not they have used contraceptives. The punishments include fines "until the child is aborted". A translation of one of these contracts and the original text, obtained by Amnesty International, are included in Appendix 2. According to unofficial sources, Kashgar has a "Centre for the Protection of Mothers' and Children's Health" which functions mainly as a birth control and abortion clinic. Forced abortions have allegedly been carried out on women nine months pregnant. Abortions are reportedly carried out with little regard for the health of the women concerned, as a result of which many women reportedly suffer permanent health damages. Some have reportedly died due to carelessness by medical staff performing abortions. Similar allegations have been made about other areas in the XUAR.

A short news item published in the *Urumqi Evening News* of 2 June 1998 said that "birth control organisations" had issued "personal birth certificates" to 18,000 women of child bearing age in the Ili area. The newspaper added that these organisations had controlled itinerant families and achieved 100% success in implementing the birth control policy in Gulja city.

There is evidence from many sources that implementation of the birth control policy has caused a great deal of discontent among the local population, leading in some areas to incidents of violence. Aksu district is one of the areas where such incidents have been reported and where arbitrary arrests and other human rights violations related to the birth control policy are reported to have occurred for many years.

In 1994, large-scale arbitrary arrests were reportedly carried out in Aksu district in the aftermath of two bombs explosions, one of which was planted at the Family Planning and Birth Control Organisation of Toksu county. The bombs had exploded on 18 July 1994. By the end of that month over one thousand people in the area had reportedly been arrested during police searches for those responsible for the explosions, and arrests continued during the following weeks. According to a report received by Amnesty International, the explosions followed one year of “family planning trials and birth control experiments” started in June 1993 in Toksu and Yopurgar counties. These counties had reportedly been chosen as the two main areas where the experiments would be conducted for the XUAR. The experiments reportedly included reducing the number of children per couple to two, introducing personal birth control “plans” and “contracts”, and carrying out forced abortions against women who had already their full quota of authorised births. According to the report, during the one year experiment, over a hundred women in Toksu county were given forced abortions, including some who were nine months pregnant who were reportedly given caesarean operations. It is alleged that in Chkyayuzi, abortion and sterilization operations were carried out very quickly with no attention to hygiene, as a result of which many women became ill and some died within three months of the operation. The report did not say what happened to the people detained in Toksu in the aftermath of the bomb explosions on 18 July 1994, but it indicated that the county was in a state of terror for weeks, with daily arrests made by the security forces and people being treated so brutally in the process that many local farmers left the county. Repression and discontent related to the birth control policy have continued, as shown by the two cases below.

In 1996, a Uighur named **Ahmed**, a trader in leather in Aksu who was married with two children, was reportedly sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment on a charge of “opposing the birth control policy”. The initial reason for his detention had apparently nothing to do with the birth control policy. According to information received by Amnesty International, he had been detained on suspicion of possessing a gun and tortured by police to force him to give information about the gun. His wife and children were also reportedly detained for a few weeks in order to put further pressure on him, but apparently to no avail. The police eventually dropped the accusation of illegal possession of a gun against Ahmed, but charged him instead with opposing the birth control policy. This charge was apparently based on comments Ahmed had allegedly made on this topic during conversations with people in his village. A few months later, Ahmed was reportedly sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment on this charge after a secret trial. He reportedly did not have a lawyer and his family was not officially informed of the trial. Amnesty International is concerned that he is reported to be

arbitrarily imprisoned for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of opinion and expression.

On 15 July 1998, Rehem Sajeden, a Uighur farmer in Aksu, was executed for allegedly killing a birth control official. According to official press reports, the official – a Uighur woman - had been killed on 10 May 1998 when she went to Rehem Sajeden's house to "talk to his wife about birth control". An article in the Xinjiang Daily on 17 July 1998 indicated the incident had occurred in the course of controls and "medical examinations" carried out in the area on women of child bearing age by officials and medical personnel from the Birth Control offices of Awat county and Yenge Erik township. The official press dedicated a series of articles to the murdered birth control official, describing her as a martyr who had worked without respite to enforce the government birth control policy. In this context, there is some doubt as to whether Rehem Sajeden had a fair trial.

THE DEATH PENALTY

Amnesty International is gravely concerned about the growing number of executions and the use of the death penalty as a tool of political repression in the XUAR. It is also concerned that many of those executed are reported to have been sentenced to death after summary proceedings, in violation of international fair trial standards.

The XUAR is the only region of the People's Republic of China where political prisoners have been executed in large numbers in recent years. The unrest in the region and the continued use of the "Strike Hard" anti-crime campaign to target 'separatism' have resulted in a growing number of executions of Uighurs. As elsewhere in the PRC, the death penalty is also applicable for a very wide range of offences, including many non violent offences such as theft, economic and drug related crime.³³

Since January 1997, Amnesty international has recorded at least 210 death sentences in the region, of which 190 were executed shortly after sentencing - the real figures are believed to be higher. Almost two thirds of the cases recorded were publicly reported by Chinese official sources. The vast majority of those sentenced to death and executed were Uighurs. These figures indicate that the ratio of death sentences to the population is several times higher in the XUAR than elsewhere in China. The execution rate vis a vis the number of death sentences appears also to be higher.

Most of those sentenced to death in the region have been accused of offences related to clandestine opposition activities, street protests, violent clashes with the security forces, or terrorist incidents. Some of these cases have been publicly reported by the Chinese

³³ See Amnesty International report, "PRC - The Death Penalty in 1997", AI Index: ASA 17/28/98, August 1998.

authorities, but others have not. When they are reported, official sources merely list the accusations against the defendants and do not provide any detail about the evidence against them or the trial proceedings.

Political prisoners are often tried in secret, under procedures which are reported to be summary. Trials are a mere formality, with the verdict usually decided by the authorities before the trial. Convictions are frequently based on forced confessions and statements extracted under torture. The families are often excluded from the trials and few defendants are known to have had the assistance of defence lawyers. Defendants who appeal against the verdict invariably see their appeal rejected. If they do not appeal and their case is reviewed by the regional High People's Court, as required by law in death penalty cases, the process of review is also a mere formality.³⁴ In none of the cases recorded by Amnesty International in recent years have any death sentences been reversed in appeal or review in the XUAR.

In many cases, the authorities have staged "public sentencing rallies" to publicly "pronounce" sentences imposed on alleged offenders. The defendants taken to such rallies have usually been tried behind closed doors beforehand, though in some cases it is unclear whether they have actually gone through any prior formal trial process. Public sentencing rallies usually make clear that justice is dictated by political considerations. For example, at one such rally held in Gulja (*Yining*) on 22 July 1997 - during which nine people were sentenced to death, the Deputy Communist Party Secretary of Ili Prefecture stated:

"Today's rally to pronounce judgement has once again forcefully clamped down on the arrogance of the enemy... fully demonstrated the strong power of the people's democratic dictatorship, demonstrated the party and government's determination to crack down on national separatism and on safeguarding national unity and political stability in Ili ..." (*Urumqi Xinjiang Television*, in Mandarin, 23 July 1997)

Defendants who are taken to public sentencing rallies and who receive straight death sentences (as opposed to death sentences "with suspension of execution for two years") are invariably taken away to the execution ground immediately after the rallies.

³⁴ Though the Criminal Procedure Law (1997) requires that death sentences be reviewed and approved by the Supreme People's Court before they are carried out, this procedure is rarely implemented in practice. Indeed, some regulations adopted in January 1998 effectively cancelled this provision of the CPL, confirming that the High People's Courts retain the power of final approval of death sentences, except when the court of second instance (usually a high court) increases the sentence passed by a lower court to the death penalty (see AI Index: ASA 17/28/98, August 1998, p.13).

Official reports often show that the judicial process is tailored for the purpose of these show trials. On 29 May 1997, for example, the official Xinhua news agency reported on a public sentencing rally held in Urumqi on that day, following which eight Uighurs, whose death sentences were confirmed at the rally, were immediately executed. The Xinhua report had obviously been prepared in advance, giving detailed information about the alleged crimes of the eight defendants. They were convicted of a series of bombings that had occurred in Urumqi on 25 February 1997. Xinhua did not indicate when they had been arrested and gave no detail of their trial, except to say that they had been sentenced to death by the Urumqi Intermediate People's Court on 16 May 1997. Following this, Xinhua said, six of them had appealed against the verdict and had their appeal heard and rejected by the XUAR High People's Court. Presumably, the high court also 'reviewed and approved'³⁵ all the death sentences, as required by law, before 29 May, though the Xinhua report did not indicate whether this had been the case.

Thus, the sentencing hearing by the court of first instance, the appeal and review process, and the executions all took place within 13 days, between 16 and 29 May 1997. There can be little doubt that the fate of the defendants was sealed long before the rally - probably from the time they were sentenced to death on 16 May - if not before. Indeed, the organisation of a sentencing rally which is to be attended by several thousand people invited from government offices and units, and which is to be followed by executions, requires a fair degree of advance preparation, particularly when the rally is due to be shown on television and is given lengthy and instantaneous press coverage, as this one was. One can safely assume, therefore, that the sentencing hearing and the appeal and review process, if they all indeed took place within the 13 days before the rally, were just formalities in preparation for a show trial and executions.³⁶ International standards require that the most careful legal procedures and all possible safeguards for the accused be guaranteed in death penalty cases. These safeguards include the presumption of innocence; the right to have adequate time and facilities to prepare the defence; the right to have adequate legal assistance at all stages of the judicial proceedings; the right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal; and

³⁵ In practice, when defendants appeal in death penalty cases, the procedure for appeal and that for review and approval of the verdict are amalgamated into one, so that in many cases death sentences are approved by the high courts almost immediately after trial and the defendants executed soon after being sentenced. Moreover, in violation of UN standards, Chinese law does not allow those sentenced to death to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence.

³⁶ The Xinhua report also said that the defendants had been convicted under the Criminal Law and a Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on "the Severe Punishment of Criminal Elements who Seriously Endanger Public Security". This Decision, introduced in 1983, has been normally used in conjunction with another 1983 Decision on the "rapid adjudication" of such cases, which provides for summary trial and curtailed procedures for the appeal and review of death sentences (see Amnesty International report, "*Law Reform and Human Rights*", AI Index: ASA 17/14/97, March 1997, p.17). Though the latter Decision was formally repealed on 1 January 1997, reports about the speedy imposition and approval of death sentences in various places in China indicate it may still be applied in practice.

the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence. None of these safeguards are available to defendants liable to the death penalty in the XUAR.

Amnesty International is also concerned about common practices which constitute cruel and degrading treatment of prisoners sentenced to the death penalty. Prisoners sentenced to death are usually kept handcuffed and some also have their feet shackled from the time they are sentenced to death until their execution. Those taken to public sentencing rallies are made to stand facing the audience with their hands tied behind their back and wearing a placard on their chest, on which their name and crime are written. They are usually forced to keep their head bowed by soldiers escorting them. In some cases, their feet are also chained and their mouth is gagged with a rope or wire tied tightly at their back to prevent them from speaking or shouting. These practices violate international standards on the treatment of prisoners, by which China has agreed to abide, and unnecessarily add to the inherent cruelty of the death penalty.

There have been reports that some prisoners have been executed in public, notably in villages of Ili Prefecture (see example below; 20 January 1998 cases). It has also been reported that the authorities have refused to return the bodies of some executed prisoners to their family (see below; 24 April and 22 July 1997 cases), thus preventing the families from burying their dead according to Muslim customs. This increases concern about reports that the prisoners were tortured to extract forced confessions.

Often, the families of those sentenced to death have not been informed until the last minute about the fate of their imprisoned relatives. For example, the parents of 23 year-old Jappar Talet, one of those executed after a sentencing rally in Gulja on 22 July 1997, were reportedly informed of his execution just a few hours before it was carried out. According to the testimony of a relative who has left China, a policeman came to their house at 8.00 am on 22 July, informed them of their son's impending public trial and execution and told them they could see him for five minutes at the prison beforehand. The parents apparently had no prior warning of what awaited their son. After his execution, they requested his body in order to give him a proper burial, but the authorities refused to return the body.³⁷

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases, on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment.

Cases reported since 1997

³⁷ Testimony by Parhat Yasin, presented before the US Congress House Committee on International Relations, Washington DC, 16 June 1998.

- On 30 January 1997, 17 men including four Uighurs were executed in Urumqi, the regional capital, immediately after they were sentenced that day by the Urumqi Intermediate People's Court in an "open" court hearing. Reporting on the court hearing on 31 January 1997, the official *Xinjiang Daily* made no mention of any appeal or review process in these cases; it simply stated that the prisoners were executed on the day of the hearing. The 17 men were among a larger group of prisoners tried on that day on various charges. Sixteen of those executed, including 13 ethnic Chinese and three Uighurs, were convicted of murder, robbery, theft, assault and drug offences. Another Uighur, Mamat Obulhashim, was executed for having allegedly organised a bombing attack in Urumqi on 13 February 1996. Seven other Uighurs were sentenced at the rally for alleged involvement in the bombing. One of them, Maimaiti Musulimu Abudurahman, was sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years; the others received prison terms.
- On 24 April 1997, a "public sentencing rally" attended by some 5000 people was held at a stadium in Gulja (*Yining*) city to pronounce sentences against 30 Uighurs who had taken part in the protests in the city on 5 and 6 February 1997. Three of them, Yusuf Tursun (Yusufu Tuersun), Aishan Maimati and Ibrahim Kasim (Yibulayin Kasenmu), were sentenced to death on charges of "causing injury, arson, hooliganism, smashing property and looting" during the protests. They were executed immediately after the rally at an execution ground on the outskirts of the city. According to unofficial sources, their bodies were not given back to their families.
- On 29 May 1997, eight Uighurs were executed in Urumqi after being convicted of involvement in a bombing which had occurred in the city on 25 February 1997. The eight, identified as Mahmut Abdurahman, Abdullah Mollaji, Abdulahat Memet, Aisha Amet, Yusuf Heyit, Mustafa Lua, Ali Keyum and Jelil Bilal, had appealed against the verdict but the appeals were rejected. Four other defendants in the same case, including Ibrahim Tohti, received the death penalty with suspension of execution for two years. The sentences against the 12 men were announced at a "public sentencing rally" held at the chief courthouse of the XUAR High People's Court in Urumqi. The rally was televised. The prisoners were shown standing in the dock of the courthouse, each with hands cuffed, legs chained, and a rope around the neck which was held in the back by guards wearing military uniforms.
- In June 1997, unofficial sources reported that five Uighurs had been executed in Kashgar city after hanging the banned flag of Eastern Turkestan on the statue of Mao Zedong in the city's main square. No further details were available.
- In late June 1997, unofficial sources reported that a large number of arrests and summary executions were carried out in various cities in the XUAR as part of security measures and a "clean up" campaign carried out to prevent disturbances during the handover of Hong Kong. The reported executions included the following: 14 Uighurs executed on or around 24 June in Gulja (*Yining*), and 23 executions in Urumqi on 29 June 1997.

- On 22 July 1997, 9 people were executed immediately after a “public sentencing rally” held in Gulja city stadium, and three others were sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years. Altogether 29 people were sentenced at the rally, including 27 Uighurs, most of them tried for their alleged part in the February 1997 protests in Gulja. The nine executed included one Chinese identified as Tang Jun, accused of theft, one Hui (Chinese Muslim) identified as Machingling, accused of drug trafficking, and seven Uighurs accused of offences committed during and after the February 1997 protests. The latter were identified as Jappar Talet, Hesengan Imin, Alimjan Yolvas, Abdurehim Tudahun, Abdurehim Memet, Sidik Rozi and Memetjan Nurmemet. Three other Uighurs, including one named Halmemet Islam, were sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years. The 17 other defendants were sentenced to prison terms or life imprisonment. The sentencing rally, presided over by several local government leaders and attended by over 4,000 people, was shown on television on 23 July. The prisoners were shown standing in military trucks, with their hands tied behind their back, carrying a placard inscribed with their names and crimes on their chest, and being forced to keep their head bowed by armed police officers escorting them. They were subsequently paraded through the city streets.
- On 15 September 1997, three Uighurs were sentenced to death, one of them with suspension of execution for two years, in Yarkant (*Shache*) in the southwest of the XUAR. According to unofficial sources, they were among seven men and boys, aged from 16 to 25, who were sentenced for alleged involvement in “separatist” activities at a “public sentencing rally” held in the city on that date. The rally was attended by several thousand people.
- On 29 December 1997, 16 people, including 13 Uighurs, were executed after a “public sentencing rally” in Urumqi. They were convicted of murder, robbery and involvement in “separatist” activities.
- On 20 January 1998, 11 Uighurs were executed after a public sentencing rally held on that day by the Ili Prefecture Intermediate People’s Court, at which 45 “serious criminals” involved in four different cases were sentenced. The 11 executed included a man named in Chinese as Abudousilimu Kahaer (Abdusilim Kari, or Abbas Kari). In addition, three other defendants were sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years. The prisoners were accused of having “threatened state security and conducted reactionary incitement on a large scale”, as well as “burning police cars, murdering ordinary people and injuring and killing basic level cadres”.³⁸ According to unofficial sources, the 11 sentenced to death were publicly executed on 20 January 1998 in the village of Jelilyuzi, north of the city of Gulja (*Yining*). They had been arrested during an incident in the village on 26 July 1997, after a van of armed police arrived to arrest 15 villagers. According to the sources, the villagers doubted the guilt of those being arrested and a religious teacher from the village, 50 year-old Abbas Kari, tried to intervene. He was immediately surrounded by the armed police and taken

³⁸ *Xinjiang Daily*, 22 January 1998.

towards the police van. His students then tried to free him. A fight followed and quickly grew into a violent confrontation, during which the police van was set on fire by the religious students and several people, including some police officers, were killed or injured. Armed police reinforcements arrived soon after and arrested 42 people, including Abbas Kari and 26 of his students. The 11 people reportedly executed in public in the village on 20 January 1998 included Abbas Kari, three of his students identified as Tursun Muhammad, Nuri and Abdullah, and seven other young Uighurs whose names are not known.

- On 29 April 1998, seven people were executed in Urumqi immediately after a sentencing rally held on that day by the Urumqi Intermediate People's Court and attended by 500 people. They included a man named as Bai Baoshan, who was convicted of multiple murder and robbery. The six others, convicted of murder and robbery, were not identified.³⁹
- On 25 May 1998, three Uighurs were executed in Yarkant (*Shache*) county for allegedly killing three Chinese peasants as part of a strategy to frighten Chinese settlers in the area. Five others tried at the same time on similar charges were sentenced to prison terms or life imprisonment.⁴⁰
- On 26 June 1998, a man identified as Yan Yongxin was executed after being convicted of intentional injury causing death. He had been sentenced to death by the Kela Mayi Intermediate People's Court on 14 November 1997 and the sentence was upheld by the XUAR High People's Court on 1 June 1998.⁴¹

³⁹ *Xinjiang Daily*, 30 April 1998.

⁴⁰ *Reuters*, 4 December 1998, citing the *Legal Daily*.

⁴¹ *Xinjiang Daily*, 13 July 1998.

- On 15 July 1998, a Uighur man named as Rehem Sajeden was executed in Aksu immediately after a public sentencing rally held by the Aksu District Intermediate People's Court and attended by 5000 people. According to a report in the official press, on 10 May 1998 Rehem Sajeden had killed the leader of the local Family Planning and Birth Control Office when the latter – a Uighur woman - had come to Rehem Sajeden's house "to talk to his wife about birth control". This visit was part of checks and medical examinations carried out by birth control teams on women of child bearing age in this area. According to the report, Rehem Sajeden fled after the murder but gave himself up to police after three days and "confessed to his crime". He was then tried by the Aksu Intermediate People's Court on 16 June 1998, found guilty of "intentional murder" and sentenced to death. His appeal against the verdict was subsequently rejected by the XUAR High People's Court.⁴²
- On 27 August 1998, 13 unidentified persons were executed in Urumqi for murder and armed robbery. They had been sentenced to death by the Urumqi city Intermediate People's Court as part of a "crackdown on crime".⁴³
- On 27 September 1998, a 46 year-old peasant identified as Ma Me'nai was sentenced to death by the Urumqi Railway Transport Intermediate People's Court for drug offences. He had reportedly been arrested on a train in possession of 5.2 kg of heroin.⁴⁴
- In October 1998, according to unofficial sources, a group of young Uighurs, including Abdusalam Shamseden and Abdusalam Abdurahman, were sentenced to death after being convicted of political offences at a secret trial by the Ili Prefecture Intermediate People's Court. They were accused of forming a political group and involvement in "armed activities to overthrow the government", reportedly in connection with the February 1997 protests in Gulja (*Yining*) city. According to the sources, Abdusalam Shamseden, a 29 year-old worker at a textile factory in Gulja, appealed against the death sentence but the appeal was rejected by the XUAR High People's Court in early January 1999. As of March 1999, they were not known to have been executed.
- On 20 October 1998, 10 Uighurs, including two women, were reportedly executed after a public sentencing rally held in Urumqi. They were convicted of "separatist" activities and reportedly included six religious students. According to unofficial sources the ten executed came from various counties and cities around Urumqi, including areas controlled by the Bingtuan. They were: Tursun Kirem, age unknown; Gulam Tash, 24; Sadik Yasin, 20; Tursun Reveydullah, 26; Asim Yakup, 40; Rehmetul Siddik, 28; Helimhan Hesem (female), 22; Hepizem Han (female), age unknown; Abdullahjan Semet, age unknown; and Nurdin Sabir, 24.

⁴² *Xinjiang Daily*, 17 July 1998.

⁴³ *Xinjiang Daily*, 27 August 1998 and 1 September 1998.

⁴⁴ *Xinjiang Daily*, 27 September 1998.

- On 3 December 1998, 15 unidentified persons, including one woman, were executed in Urumqi after the XUAR High People's Court upheld the death sentences passed earlier by the Urumqi city Intermediate People's Court. They were reportedly involved in 13 separate cases of murder and armed robbery. Among them, one woman and her brother were convicted of murder during an armed robbery at the Urumqi Commercial Bank in September 1998.⁴⁵
- On 8 January 1999, one unidentified person was reportedly sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years by the Ili Prefecture Intermediate People's Court. According to a report by the Reuters news agency on 22 January 1999, a local court official said that 29 people had been sentenced at the 8 January hearing on a range of charges including subversion, larceny, assault and inciting people to demonstrate. One of the 29 was sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years and another to life imprisonment, the court official said without giving further details. According to unofficial sources, the 29 included 27 Uighurs and two Kazaks.
- On 16 January 1999, two Uighurs were reportedly sentenced to death, one of them with suspension of execution for two years, in Korgas, Ili Prefecture. According to unofficial sources, the two were among 12 Uighurs given various sentences after being convicted of subversion and making bombs at a secret trial by a court in Korgas (*Huo'erguosi*) county on 16 January 1999. Abdushukur Nurallah, a 33 year-old teacher, was reportedly sentenced to death for making bombs. A 1987 graduate from the Chemistry faculty of the Ili Teachers Training College, he was a chemistry teacher at a middle school in Korgas county before his arrest. Perhat Mollahun, a 35 year-old teacher, was reportedly sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years. A 1985 graduate from the Mathematics faculty of Xinjiang University in Urumqi, he was a teacher at Nemune school, Langaer village, in Korgas county, before his arrest. According to a report by Agence France Presse on 28 January 1999, a court official in the area refused to confirm whether any death sentences had been passed, but said there had been a major public hearing in Korgas on 25 January at which 39 people were "sentenced". Abdushukur Nurallah was later confirmed to have been executed between 27 and 29 January 1999 (see below.)

⁴⁵ Reuters and Agence France Presse, December 1998.

- On 27 January 1999 one Uighur identified as Rouzi Keyum was executed and another sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years after being convicted of “terrorist activities” at a hearing by the Ili Intermediate People’s Court. Sixteen other people were convicted on similar charges at the hearing. Rouzi Keyum, a 45 year-old entrepreneur in Nilka county, originally from Atush near Kashgar, was allegedly responsible for a bomb explosion which wounded three shoppers in a shopping centre and police station in March 1997.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ *Reuters*, Beijing, 10 February 1999, citing local officials and the *Ili Evening News*.

- On 28 January 1999, two Uighurs, Ibrahim Ismael and Abdureyim Aisha, were executed in Ili for alleged involvement in violent opposition activities after a public sentencing hearing by the Ili Intermediate People's Court (see above page 38 for further information on Ibrahim Ismael). Two other alleged members of Ibrahim Ismael's group were sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years, and six others received terms of imprisonment. Ibrahim Ismael, 42, had allegedly helped to plan the February 1997 protests in Gulja and been involved in an attack later that year which reportedly killed four civilians and one police officer. Abdureyim Aisha, 29, was officially described as Ibrahim Ismael's bomb expert. He had allegedly taken part in an attack on government offices in Ili in June 1997 and was reportedly arrested in July 1997.⁴⁷
- Seven other Uighurs were reported to have been executed in Ili between 25 and 29 January 1999 for a range of politically motivated offences. According to a court official from Nilka district court cited by Agence France Presse in Beijing on 1 March 1999, in addition to the three cases cited above (27 and 28 January), seven other people from Yining (Gulja) city, Yining county and Huocheng (Korgas) and Nilka counties were executed during that period after trials held in different counties. In Nilka county the sentences were passed and carried out on 27 January. The seven executed, all Uighurs, included Nurmemet Ismael, 24, and Abdulkarim Abdurahim, 21, both convicted of murder, Abdulits (or Abliz) Osman, 25, convicted of robbery and separatism, and Ablimit Mehmet, 29, Alim Yakup, 22, Abdushukur Nurallah (see above, 16 January 1998) and Hashanjan Mushajan, 28, convicted of terrorist or subversive activities. These trials and executions were further confirmed on 28 February 1999 in an Urumqi radio broadcast. The radio reported that a number of "terrorists" – including at least eight people – had been executed immediately after two separate public hearings held by the Ili Intermediate People's Court in Huocheng and Nilka. The report indicated that at least 53 people had received various sentences at the hearings, but it did not give their names or the dates of the hearings. According to the report, those executed included "eight violent terrorist ringleaders" who had taken part in "illegal religious terrorist activities" in recent years "in a vain attempt to split the motherland". Another 45 prisoners were sentenced at the hearings, receiving the death penalty suspended for two years, life imprisonment or varying terms of imprisonment. The number of suspended death sentences was not specified.⁴⁸ According to unofficial sources, two of those sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years were Hamit Ablyat, a 22 year-old Uzbek, and Ahmatjan Seyit, a 23 year-old Uighur, both from Gulja.
- On 3 February 1999, 11 people were reportedly executed in Urumqi after their sentences were upheld by the XUAR High People's Court. They were convicted by a court in Urumqi of a range of crimes including theft, rape, drug trafficking and gun running. According to press reports, one of those executed, identified as Rehemutulah Aibibulah, was convicted of

⁴⁷ Reuters, Beijing, 5 February 1999, citing local officials and the *Ili Evening News*.

⁴⁸ Xinjiang People's Broadcasting Station, Urumqi, 28 February 1999, in BBC Monitoring, 1 March 1999.

organising “separatist” activities, theft and harbouring weapons. Two others, Anwar Niyaz (Ainiwa’er Niyazi) and Rehemutulah Kurban, were executed on conviction of murder.⁴⁹

- On 6 February 1999, unofficial sources reported that 11 Uighurs had been executed a few days earlier after being sentenced to death by a court in Kashgar city. No further details were available.

EXTRA-JUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Amnesty International is concerned about reports alleging that civilians and, in some cases, prisoners have been killed by the security forces or prison guards in the XUAR in circumstances which appear to constitute extra-judicial executions: deliberate and arbitrary killings by government forces acting outside the limits of the law. International law provides that lethal force should only be used when absolutely necessary and in direct proportion to the legitimate objective it is intended to achieve.

⁴⁹ *Agence France Presse*, Beijing, 9 February 1999, citing a local newspaper.

The first major incident in which such killings were reported during the 1990s occurred in Baren, a rural county in the Akto district south of Kashgar. Violent clashes occurred in Baren on 5 April 1990 when government forces moved in to disperse hundreds of Uighur villagers protesting in front of the local government offices. In an official report published soon after, the authorities described the incident as a “counter-revolutionary rebellion” and stated that 22 people, including seven members of the security forces, had died during the clashes. Unofficial sources reported that 50 protesters had died, including some shot dead by the security forces while they were running away from Baren township and posed no immediate threat of violence. Those reportedly killed in such circumstances included Abdugeni Tursun, 22, Isakkary Bayhan, 30, Yolwas Tohti, 28, Ablimit Palty, 18, and Ababekir Turghun, 20. They were allegedly killed in Uzun Kargay woodland and Hanterak village in mortar attacks and firing by troops from helicopters⁵⁰. In 1992, Amnesty International called on the government to initiate independent and impartial investigations into the reported killings and to make the findings public. No such investigation is known to have taken place.

Other incidents in which such killings allegedly took place have been reported since then. These include notably the 5 and 6 February 1997 protests in Gulja. According to officials in the city cited in press reports at the time, a group of Uighur youths demonstrated on 5 February, the crowd grew and some protesters attacked Han Chinese, smashed cars and ransacked Chinese shops. Official sources reported on 13 February 1997 that nine people including four policemen had been killed and 198 people injured during the two days of protests. Estimates of the casualties by unofficial sources varied from 30 to 100. Unofficial sources also claimed that violence had occurred due to the actions of the security forces and that some protesters and bystanders who posed no threat of violence had been shot dead by the security forces both during the protests and the following days. These reportedly included a woman and a child, both Uighur, who were allegedly shot dead by soldiers or riot police when they demanded the release of detained relatives at the city Public Security Bureau on 10 February. Little specific information has become available since then about the circumstances in which people were killed during the protests or subsequently and it remains unclear how many people died due to the actions of the security forces and how many due to the actions of protesters. No official report has been published about the incident and in view of the tense situation in the city and continuous repression since then, it has remained impossible to check information with eyewitnesses in the city.

Other alleged killings of unarmed civilians by the security forces include the following:

- Four members of one Uighur family, including two women, and one Uighur villager were allegedly killed by armed police officers in Uchun village, near Gulja, in Ili Prefecture, on 8 or 9 February 1997. There is no public official record of the incident. According to unofficial sources, the incident occurred in the context of the sweeping searches and arrests of suspected

⁵⁰ See Amnesty International report, “*PRC - Secret Violence: Human Rights Violations in Xinjiang*”, AI Index: ASA 17/50/92, about the large number of troops sent to the area to quell the protests

nationalists and members of independent religious groups which were carried out by the security forces in Ili in the aftermath of the 5 February 1997 protests in Gulja. Two persons who came from the area have given Amnesty International the following account of what happened on 8 or 9 February in Uchun village: *“That day, a truck full of armed police arrived in the village to arrest a man who had organised a Koranic religious class. The wanted man had been detained twice before and both times his father, a farmer, had to give money to the police to secure his release. When the armed police came to his house that day, the father said his son was not at home. He tried to argue, saying that his son had not committed any crime, that he just taught his students to be good, that he himself was just a farmer and could not pay for his son’s release if they arrested him again. But the officers pushed him away and entered his house. The father then picked up an axe and followed them inside with it. The police shot him dead on the spot. The women in the house started screaming, whereupon the son appeared. He attacked the police officers and injured some. He himself was shot in the leg but managed to run away dragging his leg. He sought refuge on the roof of a house in the village. Some villagers had seen what had happened... One young villager who knew the wanted man – having taken part in his religious class - tried to help him and snatched a machine gun from one of the armed police, then climbed onto the roof of the house where the wanted man was. That house was surrounded by the armed police. The young villager did not know how to use the machine gun. While he struggled with it, both him and the wanted man were shot dead on the roof by the officers. The police also shot dead the wanted man’s mother and sister in their house. Altogether they killed five people ...”*

Amnesty International is not in a position to verify the accuracy of this report, but it is gravely concerned by the allegations it makes. At least two of the killings reported in this account appear to be extra-judicial executions and Amnesty International is also concerned that the security forces may have used excessive force in the other cases. To Amnesty International’s knowledge, there has been no official enquiry into the incident and no police officer is known to have been investigated or charged for the alleged killings.

- Three Uighur civilians were reportedly killed and 10 others reportedly injured by armed police officers in Gulja city on 24 April 1997. The incident occurred after a “public sentencing rally” held in the city’s stadium during which 30 Uighurs were sentenced, three of them to death, for their part in the February 97 protests in the city. Following the rally, the 27 prisoners who had received prison sentences were taken in a convoy of open trucks and buses through the streets of the city. According to unofficial sources, while the convoy drove through the streets, a crowd consisting of the relatives and friends of the prisoners approached the trucks in order to say a few words to the prisoners. The armed police escort then opened fire on the crowd, reportedly killing three people and injuring 10 others. One of those killed was reportedly a 43 year-old Uighur named Anwar who was the father of seven children. The death of two civilians was subsequently confirmed by official sources. One report in the *Ili Evening News* of 1 May 1997, which described the civilians as “rioters”, said that seven of them had been injured by police fire and two had died later in hospital. Official accounts of

the incident varied, with some claiming that the civilians had “tried to rescue the prisoners” and others saying that the civilians had tried to enter a “no go area”, though all claimed that the armed police had first fired warning shots into the air with no result. One local official was cited as stating shortly after the incident that about 100 people had approached the trucks at a road junction and tried to rescue the prisoners, so that the armed police escort “had no choice but to take action” after firing warning shots into the air, though, he added, “the whole incident lasted only a few minutes”.⁵¹ The authorities gave no further explanation of how the crowd had “tried to rescue” the prisoners. This claim is unconvincing in view of the small size of the crowd, the short duration of the incident and the reported heavy military presence in the city on that day. Furthermore, there is no justification for firing at unarmed civilians who did not use violence and, as far as the official account shows, did not pose any immediate threat of violence. The authorities have not made public any further information about the incident and no official enquiry is known to have been carried out.

⁵¹ *Reuters*, Beijing, 28 April 1997.

• Two Uighur prisoners from Urumqi, identified as **Ahmat Imin** and **Eysa Tursun**, were allegedly shot dead in 1998 at Dachang prison in Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu province which borders the XUAR. According to unofficial sources, the two men had been previously employed by the State Security Bureau in Urumqi but were fired from their jobs for praying.⁵² They were reportedly arrested three months later on charges of “leaking state secrets” and sent to the Dachang prison in Lanzhou. After another three months, their dead bodies were reportedly returned to their families and the latter informed by the authorities that the two men had been shot while trying to escape from the prison. Amnesty International is not aware of any public official report about the alleged deaths. Unofficial sources believe the two men may have been deliberately shot because of their work for a sensitive security office.

⁵² Since 1997 the authorities have launched an “atheist education” campaign to purge the local organs of the Chinese Communist Party from religious believers. As a result, many Muslims have been dismissed from their Party membership or posts. Praying is also prohibited for Muslims who work in government offices and other official institutions and many have to hide their beliefs if they want to keep their jobs.

• **Obulkasim Yusuf** and three other Uighur political prisoners were allegedly shot dead by prison guards at Liu Daowan jail, in Urumqi, on 18 March 1994. According to a written account signed in the name of Umit - a Uighur who says he was imprisoned at Liu Daowan until May 1994, the four prisoners were shot dead by Chinese armed guards in their cell, identified as cell No 7 in Block 1 of the prison. The account does not identify the three other prisoners who were reportedly killed. It gives the following description of the incident: *“On the evening of 17 March 1994, at 11.00 pm, Chinese police cadres took Obulkasim from his cell and returned him half dead to the cell at 4.00 am the next day. His throat had a 5 millimetre wide and 2 centimetre long mark from having had something pushed hard against it. The inside of his mouth was severely injured and he was unable to speak. That evening high level Chinese cadres said to him ‘Your crime is terrorism and social sabotage, not a political crime’⁵³ and they severely tortured him to force him to confess to these crimes. They squeezed his fingers with pliers, pressed something into his neck, pushed needles under his nails, tightly tied the tops of his legs together with 1 cm thick wire and kicked his testicles and kidneys and stuck a prong up his penis. Other prisoners in the cell were infuriated and wanted to protect him. The next day, 18 March, at 11.00am, fully armed Chinese cadres and police came to cell No.7 of Block 1, opened the door and ordered Obulkasim to stand up. The other prisoners in the cell surrounded Obulkasim and the Chinese cadres and officers without hesitation fired their automatic guns and handguns at them and the four martyrs fell down dead [...] Other prisoners in the jail were warned about talking about this event.[...] After I was released I returned to Liu Daowan neighbourhood and asked what had happened to Obulkasim’s body. People said that on 7 April that year the body was prepared for burial. Chinese [police] were present at the burial and the names of those attending the service at the mosque were taken and their backgrounds subsequently investigated. Obulkasim’s body had one bullet hole 2 cm above the nipple on the right side of his chest and another bullet hole left of his heart. When checking the body, the Chinese coroners changed the facts, saying that one hole was a knife wound and the other was from a gun. They stitched one hole with two stitches...”* According to the account, Chinese officials told Obulkasim’s parents that he had attacked and injured the police; the police had then fired into the air but one bullet had hit him in the chest and he died later in hospital. The former prisoner’s account states that Obulkasim Yusuf and other prisoners continued to be interrogated and tortured after they were tried and sentenced.

According to various documents available to Amnesty International, Obulkasim and several other political prisoners were tried in Urumqi in June 1993 for alleged involvement in subversive activities. Six of them, including Obulkasim, were subsequently sentenced to death. A public notice by the Urumqi city Intermediate People’s Court, dated 30 May 1995, announced the execution on that day of five young Uighurs accused of being members of the

⁵³ The investigators were apparently trying to make Obulkasim admit to involvement in terrorism and sabotage, as opposed to non violent political opposition activities. Acts of terrorism and “sabotage” in themselves are not considered political crimes in China, and the authorities generally give little recognition of the existence of political crimes under the law.

“Islamic Reformist Party” and of having planted bombs in Urumqi in February 1992. According to the public notice, Obulkasim Yusuf did not take part in these activities, but he is briefly cited in the notice as having allegedly taken care of land mines brought to Kucha at an unspecified date by one of the five men executed on 30 May 1995. The public notice, a copy of which is available to Amnesty International, cites Obulkasim Yusuf’s name followed by the mention “shot dead”. It also cites the name of another alleged member of the Islamic Reformist Party, Mahammad Yunus, with the mention “already short dead”, without specifying the circumstances. A letter dated 21 May 1994, reportedly written and smuggled out of prison by Idrisjan Omar, one of the five prisoners who were executed on 30 May 1995, also cites Obulkasim Yusuf and other political prisoners held at the time at Liu Daowan prison and says that Obulkasim “for some reason died as a martyr in the prison in the evening of 18 March”. Obulkasim Yusuf, aged 28 in 1994, had reportedly been arrested on 17 July 1992 by the Kucha county Public Security Bureau, then moved to Liu Daowan jail in Urumqi. He was reportedly born into an educated family in Konashahar Bazar, Kucha county, Aksu District, and became involved in a local religious group in the late 1980s.

Reports from unofficial sources suggest that the security forces in the XUAR regularly resort to lethal force, even in circumstances where this may endanger the life of innocent bystanders. One source for example reported the following to Amnesty International about an alleged incident in Kashgar at the end of July 1998. According to the source, *“the incident started in a small market near Hospital No. 2 in Kashgar when Chinese police officers intervened in a dispute between a Uighur butcher and a Chinese man who had bought some meat from him.[...] The police listen to the complaint of the Chinese man but did not let the Uighur butcher speak and took him aside to interrogate him. Increasingly angry, the butcher at some point pulled out a knife and slightly injured a police officer who was trying to seize the knife. Then, in a subsequent fight with other officers, the butcher killed one of them with the knife and ran outside. Meanwhile, Uighurs and Chinese in a fairly large crowd gathered outside were taking sides in the argument, and started fighting. Several cars of armed police quickly arrived on the scene and surrounded the area. The crowd stopped fighting. The butcher tried to make his way through the crowd. One armed police officer opened fire to shoot him, but missed the butcher and instead killed a Chinese vegetable seller.[...] The butcher was eventually shot dead by the armed police.[...] After the incident the authorities gave their own version of what had happened to cover up for the armed police officer who had accidentally killed the Chinese vegetable seller; they said that the Uighur butcher had a gun and had killed the Chinese vegetable seller ...”*

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report documents a pattern of gross human rights violations in the XUAR which include arbitrary detention and imprisonment, torture, and arbitrary and summary executions. These violations are occurring in a context where incidents of violence have increased in proportion with repression, curbs on fundamental freedoms and the erosion of economic, social and cultural rights for the indigenous population in the region.

Amnesty International believes that the government should institute an impartial commission of enquiry to investigate reports of human rights violations in the region, suggest remedial measures and provide a forum for individuals and groups to voice their grievances. This should be accompanied by a comprehensive assessment of the needs in education, health and the economic disparities in the region, particularly given China's signature of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

Amnesty International is also calling on the government to take measures without delay to curb the gross human rights occurring in the region, including:

- to stop executions and take steps towards abolition of the death penalty, including the restriction of the number of offences punishable by death;
- pending such measures, to ensure that every prisoner accused of an offence liable to the death penalty is afforded all facilities to prepare his or her defence, including access to a lawyer of his or her choice soon after detention and regularly thereafter;
- to stop practices, including public sentencing rallies and the parading of prisoners in public, which constitute cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners;
- to ensure that everyone sentenced to death has the right to seek pardon or commutation of sentence;
- to initiate independent and impartial investigations which conform to the United Nations Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, into the killings reportedly committed by the security forces in various areas, in particular Ili, in the past few years, and to make public the findings of the investigations;
- to initiate independent and impartial investigations into all reports and complaints of torture and ill-treatment of prisoners, take measures to protect the victims and any witnesses, and ensure that the perpetrators of torture are brought to justice;

- to investigate all cases of prisoners and detainees cited in this report and release immediately and unconditionally all those held solely for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights;
- to review without delay the cases of all those tried on political grounds and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, and grant them a new fair and open trial in accordance with international standards for fair trial, or failing this, release them;
- to make public information about all those detained on political grounds without charge or trial and, if they have not been charged with offences recognised as criminal by international standards, to release them.

APPENDIX 1

Places of detention in Urumqi

According to various sources, there are five prisons in Urumqi which come under the regional or city authorities, plus five prisons or detention centres which are under the control of the Bingtuan. There are also several detention centres in the city. The following have been identified:

- **The XUAR No.1 Prison**, under the regional Public Security Department. In the past, it reportedly held only political prisoners, but now has both political and criminal prisoners. Possibly the same as 'Baijiahu prison' (see below).
- **The XUAR No.2 Prison**, under the regional authorities. It is or includes a women's jail which was said to have between 500 and 600 female prisoners in 1998. Some sources said it was close to No.1 Prison, in a compound which also includes a holding centre for juveniles. It is reportedly located at No. 17 Kashe Dong Lu, in Urumqi. One former prisoner described a prison in Urumqi, which he simply called 'No.2 Prison', as being known in the past as the "New Life Machinery Plant" (*xinsheng jixie chang*), which until the 1980s held "free workers" – that is prisoners who were kept in prison to work after completing their sentences. It is not clear, however, whether this is the XUAR No.2 Prison or Urumqi City No.2 Prison.
- **The XUAR No.3 Prison**, in Urumqi city.
- **Lucaogu Prison** has been described by one source as a new prison near Prison No.1 and Prison No.2. Another source also mentioned that a new jail had been built in recent years opposite the XUAR No.2 Prison and said that the new jail was much bigger than No.2 Prison and had big watch towers.
- **Baijiahu Prison** is believed to be used mainly for convicted prisoners who carry out forced labour, it is said to be a very big prison. Important political prisoners are held there. It has been used as a prison for several decades. In the 1960s and 70s, prisoners worked there at breaking and carrying stones and some were reportedly subjected to appalling ill-treatment. Some allegedly had their clothes taken away from them in winter and were confined in bare cells where they were left to die of cold. Others were allegedly given 'injections' which caused them to become mentally disturbed or to die. The prison reportedly had some 10,000 prisoners in the early 1980s.
- **Liudaowan jail** is under the Urumqi city Public Security Bureau. Though it is usually referred to as a prison, this appears to be a detention centre for prisoners who have not yet been convicted. It reportedly holds many political detainees and conditions there are said to be very harsh. The jail has existed for several decades.

There are also detention centres in the four administrative districts of Urumqi city, each under the control of the district Public Security Sub-Bureau, as follows:

- **The Tianshan District Detention Centre**, Urumqi city.
- **The Saybag District Detention Centre**, Urumqi city.
- **The Xinshichu District Detention Centre**, Urumqi city.
- **The Shuimugou District Detention Centre**, Urumqi city.

One former prisoner has also named one prison or detention centre as the **Urumqi county jail**, controlled by the county authorities, and one reform-through-labour camp for convicted prisoners as the “**Wulabei labour-reform farm**”.

Places of detentions in Aksu and Kashgar

- **Aksu Talimu Prison**
- **Kashgar Talimi Prison**
- **Kashgar Pailuo Labour-Reform Camp** (*laogai nongchang*), is a very large camp for convicted prisoners. It covers a large area and includes several factories and workshops where prisoners make televisions, tape recorders, fabric, etc. One brigade in the camp has 2000 to 3000 prisoners. The camp reportedly includes two or three inside buildings, some used as offices and others holding political prisoners.
- **Kashgar Labour-Reeducation Camp** (*laojiao nonchang*), located at Mush on the way between Kashgar and Akto;

Places of detention in Ili Prefecture (including Gulja [Yining])

- **Ili Kazak Autonomous Prefecture Public Security Bureau Jail/Detention Centre**
- **Gulja (Yining) City Public Security Bureau Jail/Detention Centre**
- **Yining Bingtuan 4th Division Prison**
- **Eight prisons/detention centres**: one in each of the eight counties of Ili Prefecture: Jikesi, Zhaosu, Gongliu, Xinyuan, Nilike (*Nilka*), Huoerguosi (*Korgas*), Chapchal and Gulja (*Yining*) counties. The prison/detention centre in Chapchal county is reportedly under the XUAR

· **Gulja City Dadamtu Labour-Reform Farm, and Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre**

- A large labour-reform camp (*laogai nongchang*) in Xinyuan county, under the XUAR

According to some sources, 5400 political prisoners from Ili were reportedly moved to prisons in Sichuan province in November 1997, transported in 100 trucks.

PRISON AND DETENTION CENTRE PLANS

APPENDIX 2

Kashgar City Birth Limitation Contract

APPENDIX 3

LIST OF PRISONERS

Abaydulla Marop Damola, 58, from Shaya, arrested there in April 1990 in connection with protests and rioting in Baren; sentence not known.

Abbas Abdukerim, from Ili, reported detained at end June 1997, with scores of people attending a religious activity, during police raids on villages around Gulja; legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Abdugine, 23, from Keriya, near Khotan, reported detained for "reading a foreign magazine", sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour"; last known to be held in 1998 in a labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Abduhabar, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim)

Abdu Habar, 32, from Khotan; arrested at the end of 1995 accused of taking part in "illegal religious activities", sentenced in 1996 to three years of "re-education through labour" and sent to a labour camp near Kashgar.

Abduhalik Abdurashit, from Kepekyuzi near Gulja, reported arrested there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden), believed to be held in Gulja; charges not known.

Abduhamjan Kari, 35, Mullah from Kashgar, reported detained in June 1998 in Shufu county for religious activities; still detained but not known to have been charged or tried; he had been detained one month earlier, then released.

Abdulhelil, 28, businessman from Gulja, arrested there for taking part in 5 February 1997 demonstration; first jailed in Chapchal prison, moved to another prison in April 1998, then to the Bingtuan's 4th Division prison outside Gulja; had been previously been detained in 1995 as leader of the "meshreps"; still detained but legal status unknown.

Abdu Helil Zimin, 34, from Yarkant; reported detained for "hiding" suspected nationalists and sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour" around March 1996; reported held at Alabour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abdujelil, 31, from Kargilik, reported detained for "religious propaganda" and sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour" around March 1996; detained at Alabour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abdu Kadir Ayup, 45, arrested July 1990 in Kargilik in connection with circulating a pamphlet protesting against curbs on religious activities; subsequent legal status unknown. (Related arrests, Abdul Malik, Abdurahman Abliz, Alimjan Karihajim, and Omer Khan Mahsun.)

Abdukiram Abduvali, 37, from Kucha, Aksu district; detained 1 July 1991 together with Erkin Abdurazzak and Osman Amet; accused of forming Islamic Reformist Party with others on 20 October 1990 and "counter-revolutionary incitement" related to religious activities; tried in Urumqi and sentenced on 5 May 1993 to 12 years' imprisonment. Other alleged members of the Islamic Reformist Party include Idrisjan Omar and Ablimit Talip, arrested after 5 February 1992 and executed with 3 others (not the two above) on 30 May 1995.

Abdukerim Kari, 65, intellectual and religious scholar, arrested 17 March 1992, with Abdukerim Yakup and Omar Turdi; subsequently detained in Kargilik; not known whether formally charged or tried.

Abdukerim Mettursun, 24, detained in Lop near Khotan in August 1995 for reportedly "giving out nationalist propaganda to students"; late 1998 reported to be still held at Lop County's Public Security Bureau Detention Centre without being questioned or charged.

Abdukerim Yakup, 58, intellectual and religious scholar, arrested 17 March 1992, with Abdukerim Kari and Omar Turdi; not known to have been formally charged; last known detained in Kargilik.

Abdullah, 27, from Kargilik, reported detained for “teaching religious students” and sentenced to three years of “re-education through labour”, in 1998 known to be detained in Alabour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abdul Ahat, 26, from Yarkant, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation, sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour". In 1998 known to be in Alabour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abdulah Ahun, 65, reported detained in mid-1998 by police in Lop, near Khotan, as hostage in place of his son, Tohti Niyaz, who escaped from the Lop county Public Security Bureau Detention Centre; still reported detained there without charge in late 1998.

Abdul Ayrat, 38, from Khotan, arrested there in 1997, accused of organising areligious class, sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour"; held in labour re-education farm in Kashgar.

Abdul Aziz, 35, from Khotan; arrested there in March or April 1997 at the same time as Yusuf Haji (see below); presumed accused of involvement in "separatist" activities, reported held in Urumqi Public Security Department Detention Centre; not known to have been charged or tried.

Abdul Baset, from Lop county near Khotan, reported detained there in 1998 for political reasons and still held without charge in late 1998 in Lop County's Public Security Bureau Detention Centre.

Abdulhajat Haji, (see Ablat Kari).

Abdulhalil Tursun, 20 in 1995, construction worker, detained after protests and rioting in Khotan on 7 July 1995 following reported arrest of Imam, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights at sentencing rally in Khotan in September 1995; place of detention unknown.

Abdul Hemit, from Kargilik, arrested in August 1992 (reportedly while trying to leave China) in connection with others accused of forming Islamic Reformist Party (Idrisjan Omar, Obulkasim Yusuf, Heli, Mohammed Imin Kari and Abdullah Gazi who received the death penalty; Mutalip sentenced to 10 years). Abdul Hemit was sentenced on 29 July 1993 to seven years' imprisonment; in 1994 known to be held at Liudaowan jail in Urumqi.

Abdul Hemitgaz, 24, reported detained in Lop near Khotan in mid-1998 for taking part in an "illegal" organisation; still held without charge in Lop County Public Security Bureau Detention Centre five months later; current fate unknown.

Abdul Kadir, arrested October 1990 in Kashgar in connection with protests and rioting in Baren in April 1990; reported still detained one year later but subsequent whereabouts and legal status unknown.

Abdulkayum Abdulkadir, 25, farmer, detained following protests and rioting in Khotan on 7 July 1995, sentenced in September 1995 at sentencing rally; sentence unknown. (see Abdulhalil Tursun.)

Abdul Malik, shop worker, reported detained on 10 August 1990 in Kargilik; October 1992 sentenced to five years' imprisonment for "counter-revolutionary" offences reportedly based on involvement in writing and circulating a pamphlet (with Abdu Kadir Ayup, Abdurahman Abliz, Alimjan Karihaji, and Omer Khan Mahsun.) Not known whether released as due.

Abdullah Abdullezi, reported detained May 1996 after alleged assassination attempt on a senior official in Kashgar earlier in May; Abdullah Abdullezi was badly wounded in a subsequent shootout with security forces, he was charged with "attempted counter-revolutionary murder" which may carry the death penalty; no further news.

Abdumannam Abdureshit, reported detained April 1998 in a village near Gulja in connection with an incident in the village (see Abdurazzak Shamseden), believed held in Gulja; not known to have been charged.

Abdu Medchit, 25, student in Gulja; reported arrested there for involvement in February 1997 protests; subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Abdumijit, 27, from Karakash, near Khotan, reported detained for "reading a foreign magazine" and sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour"; last known held in 1998 at Alabour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abdumijit Masum, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Abdurahim Turdi, born 1960, repair worker from Baren, reported detained for involvement in Baren protests on 5 April 1990; subsequent legal status unknown, may have received death penalty.

Abduraham Abliz, 47, arrested July 1990 in Kargilik in connection with circulating a pamphlet protesting curbs on religious activities; not known to have been charged or tried and whereabouts unknown; (see Abdu Kadir Ayup, Abdul Malik, Alimjan Karihajim, and Omer Khan Mahsun).

Abdurashit Ahat, 32, 1993 reported detained in Shaya city for suspected political activities; subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Abdurazzak, 35, worker at food processing factory in Guma, near Khotan, reported detained January 1992 for political activities, reported held without charge several months later; subsequent fate not known.

Abdurazzak Shamseden, 35, farmer and wood worker from Kepekyuzi village near Gulja, detained April 1998 following a violent clash between six local youths, including his nephew, and the security forces; the six youths were shot dead. Abdurazzak had nothing to do with the incident but was among scores of villagers arrested after the incident.

Abdurim Mehsum, 32, from Qira, near Khotan, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation, sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; sent to a labour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abdusala Abdumijit, detained for taking part in February 1997 protests in Gulja; received a life sentence at public sentencing rally held in Gulja on 22 July 1997, for alleged involvement in rioting.

Abdusalam, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Abdushukur Kari, Urumqi businessman, reported detained May 1997 in connection with February 1997 protests in Gulja, but not known to have been involved; subsequent fate and whereabouts unknown.

Abdushukur, deputy head of the administration of Doletbagsk district in Gulja city, reportedly detained 20 July 1998 at the city's party committee; accused of helping "nationalist separatists" to leave the country; not known to have been charged.

Abdushukur Abliz (Abdushukur Haji), 40, Chair of Islamic Society in Gulja, reported detained in Urumqi on 25 March 1997 in connection with February 1997 protests in Gulja, released several months later in poor health, went to Beijing for medical treatment and reported re-arrested there; held in Urumqi.

Abduveli, 38, from Kashgar, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation, in 1996 sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour"; detained at a labour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abduveli, 24, from Karakash, near Khotan, reported detained for "reading a foreign magazine" and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour"; last known detained in a labour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Abduveli, aged 23 in 1992, student at Xinjiang University Faculty of Law; detained 15 June 1992 and sentenced to four years' imprisonment and two years' deprivation of political rights for organising a "counter-revolutionary" group; sent to serve sentence at "Kaerdun" reform through labour camp (possibly in Awati county, near Aksu); due for release in 1996, but current status unknown.

Abduwayit Ahmat (Ahmed), student, sentenced 14 May 1996 to three years' imprisonment by the Urumqi Intermediate Court for writing and distributing "counter-revolutionary" materials as part of an alleged "separatist plot" aimed at "splitting the motherland", also accused of attempting to "overturn the rule of the people's democratic dictatorship" and spreading "counter-revolutionary propaganda" in Beijing; current whereabouts unknown.

Abidjan Obulkasim (or Abit Ubulkasim), 23, student from Kashgar Teacher Training College, detained January 1995 (with Aichat Mehmet, Ismael Mehmet and Tursun Mehmet), sentenced mid-1995 to 15 years' imprisonment for "forming a counter-revolutionary group", sentence reportedly increased by one year on appeal; last known to be held at Urumqi's Liudaowan prison.

Abla Karim, 40, Mullah from Kashgar, studied at Xinjiang Islamic Minorities Institute, later refused to praise government in the mosque, July 1998 escaped from China with his eight year-old son and 70

year-old uncle, plus others (see Yasim Kari); was returned from Kazakstan to China at end of August 1998; now imprisoned in Kashgar.

Abla Musa, 34, farmer and street vendor from Kashgar, detained 10 October 1992 for taking part in a "counter-revolutionary organisation", held at Artush Public Security Bureau jail, charged on 27 April 1993 and sentenced later that year to five years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court. Not known whether released as due in 1998.

Ablat Kari (Ablat Kari Haji or Abdulhajat Haji), 60, Islamic scholar and religious leader from Uchun, near Gulja, opened a small religious school with other religious leaders (see Abdushukur Abliz Haji) and was researching religious issues, detained after February 1997 protests in Gulja (according to some sources detained May 1997); not known to have been charged and whereabouts unknown.

Ablat Patar, Gulja military hospital surgeon, reported detained July 1998 in Gulja accused of giving medical treatment to "nationalist-separatists"; from 28 July held at Yengyi Hayat jail, Gulja; legal status unknown.

Ablikim Haji (Abdul Hekim Haji), 23, from Khotan, reported detained there in May 1998 while walking in the street, allegedly carrying dynamite; educated in Pakistan; reported held in the Public Security Bureau's Turma detention centre in Khotan; not known to have been charged; family not officially informed.

Ablikim Hushur (or Ablikim Vusur), one of 21 people detained for allegedly forming a "counter-revolutionary group" and sentenced in August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between 4 and 15 years' imprisonment in Guma County; he was seen as one of six ringleaders; the group had allegedly formed the Eastern Turkestan Democratic Islamic Party in June 1991.

Ablikim Omer, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, with several others, in August 1995 for alleged involvement in Eastern Turkestan Democratic Islamic Party (see Ablikim Hushur) and for "possessing weapons, collecting donations from the people, and inciting a revolt against the state."

Ablimit, 30, reported detained in 1998 in Lop County Public Security Bureau Detention Centre, for "expressing dissatisfaction with the government"; still held without charge in late 1998.

Ablimit (Ablimit Mehmet), one of 21 people detained for allegedly forming a "counter-revolutionary group" and sentenced in August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between 4 and 15 years' imprisonment in Guma County; he was seen as one of six ringleaders (see Ablikim Hushur).

Ablimit Hapiz (Abdulimit Apisu), sentenced April 1998 to three years' imprisonment and eighteen months' deprivation of political rights, by the Hami District Intermediate People's Court for allegedly taking part in "separatist activities" and giving shelter to "separatists" (sentenced with Mahmut Abdulla and Ismail Yakub.)

Abliz Memet, one of 21 people detained for allegedly forming a "counter-revolutionary group" and sentenced in August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between 4 and 15 years' imprisonment in Guma County; he was seen as one of six ringleaders (see Ablikim Hushur).

Abu Khair, 25, Gulja student, reported detained for alleged involvement in protests in the city in February 1997; subsequent fate unknown.

Adil, 20, from Kashgar, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; held at a labour camp at Mush, near Kashgar.

Ahad Allahverdi (Ahed Allawardy), aged 30 in 1990, from Baren, reported detained April 1990 for involvement in protests and rioting in Baren 5 April 1990, subsequently detained in Shihezi prison and reportedly charged with organising the protests; subsequent fate not known.

Ahmed, trader in leather in Aksu, detained in Aksu in 1996 on suspicion of possessing a gun, but sentenced later to 15 years' imprisonment for opposing the birth control policy.

Ahmetjan, 26 in 1992, graduate of Xinjiang Technology Institute working at the Personnel department of the XUAR People's Government, reportedly detained in Urumqi in September 1992 and accused of establishing a "reactionary organisation"; subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Ahmet Maksut, 34, reported detained in Shaya city in 1993 for suspected political activities; subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Aisha Awazi, detained July 1996 for reportedly appointing himself imam at a mosque in Akto County near Kashgar in 1992; subsequent fate unknown.

Ali, 18, from Kashgar, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation and sentenced to three years "re-education through labour", sent to a labour camp at Mush near Kashgar and still held there in 1998; current whereabouts unknown.

Alimjan, 30, muezzin of Baytulla Mosque in Khotan, detained 7 July 1995 during incident in Khotan, sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour", in 1996 sent to labour camp at Mush near Kashgar; not known whether released as due in 1998.

Alimjan, teacher at Gulja's Middle School No.5, detained 18 July 1998 at home in Gulja, accused of participation in a secret gathering of "nationalists", held in Yengi Hayat jail in Gulja from 28 July; legal status unknown.

Amerdin, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Ansary Bary, 32, reported detained in Lop near Khotan in 1995 for "speaking out against the government" and still held without charge in 1998 at Lop County's Public Security Bureau Detention Centre.

Attawulla Begzad, 33, from Kepekyuzi near Gulja, reported detained there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden), believed held in Gulja; charges not known.

Aysa Yoldash, 45, from Baren, taken into custody 18 May 1990 after taking part in April 1990 "counter-revolutionary riot" in Baren, charged July 1990, but exempted from prosecution and released in 1991. Re-detained 10 January 1993, charged 26 April 1993, held in Artush City Public Security Bureau jail, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and 5 years' deprivation of political rights for "counter-revolutionary" offences by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court Verdict.

Azat, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Azimet, 26, from Urumqi, detained with three others early 1998 on suspicion of involvement in "separatist" activities, reported held in Urumqi City Detention Centre; not known to have been charged or sentenced.

Azmet Jamal (or Ahmet Celal), one of 21 people detained for allegedly forming a "counter-revolutionary group", sentenced August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between 4 and 15 years' imprisonment in Guma County, he was seen as one of six ringleaders (see Ablikim Hushur).

Aziz Abdulaziz, 26, student, reported detained in Karakas on 30 May 1993, accused of "counter-revolutionary activities"; subsequent legal status not known.

Aziz Kurban, born 1960, from Baren, one of founders of the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party which reportedly led the protests in Baren in April 1990, reported detained on 5 October 1990 and subsequently held in Urumqi; believed to have been sentenced but subsequent whereabouts and legal status unknown.

Bavudun, 60, from Kargilik, reported detained for "insulting the government" and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" in 1996; last known held at labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Diishat Shamahun, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Eiyas Jalal, born 1970, from Kepekyuzi near Gulja, reported detained there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden); believed held in Gulja, charges not known.

Erkin Abdurazzak, detained 1 July 1991 together with two others accused of forming an opposition party (one of whom is known to have been tried - see Abdukiram Abduveli), presumed tried, but sentence and whereabouts unknown.

Habubilla, 18, from Karakash, near Khotan, reported detained for "reading a foreign magazine" and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour"; 1998 held in labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Husein Kurban, detained 1990 in connection with riots in Baren in April 1990, reported still detained in 1992 but legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Hushar Eysa, 26, from Aksu, student from Highway University in Urumqi who went to Beijing to take an advanced course, reported detained in Beijing May 1998 during crackdown on suspected separatists in the capital; subsequent whereabouts and legal status unknown.

Hal Muhamat, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Halmurat, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Hamit Abdullay, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Hamit Mejit, from Gulja, reported detained with others in March/April 1997 in Gulja for meeting foreign reporters, reported still detained; unconfirmed reports of long sentences (see Kasim Haji.)

Hemit Memet (or Khamit Memet), 28, from Ili, name appeared in 1998 wanted poster for alleged subversive activities, believed detained in XUAR since forcibly returned from Kazakhstan to China in February 1999 with two others (Kasim Mahpir and Ilyas Zordun).

Hasim Yusuf, 44, from Baren, detained with others on 10 October 1992 for "counter-revolutionary" activities and charged on 26 April 1993, held in Artush Public Security Bureau jail, sentenced to 5 years' and 2 years' deprivation of political rights by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court Verdict; not known whether he has been released as due in 1998.

Hidayitilla, 24, from Kashgar, reported detained for distributing a religious newspaper and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; sent to labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Ibrahim Tobut (Tohti), (see Ibrahim Tohti, in list of prisoners sentenced to death, below.)

Ibrahim Ahmed, from Baren, detained during or after the April 1990 protests and rioting in Baren; sentenced to life imprisonment and jailed in Urumqi.

Ibrahim Ismael, (see list of prisoners sentenced to death, below.)

Idris, 34, from Kargilik, reported detained for involvement in "religious propaganda" and sentenced to 3 years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; sent to a labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Ili, 19, from Maralbishi, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; sent to a labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Ili Mamet Tursan, 19, reported detained in 1998 in Lop, near Khotan, for "insulting the Chinese", held without charge for seven months in Lop County Public Security Bureau Detention Centre; still detained when last heard of in late 1998.

Ilyas Zordun, from Ili (see Hemit Memet).

Imam Hasan, from Ili (see Abbas Abdukerim).

Iminjan, 28, teacher at the Teacher Training College of Gulja, detained 5 or 6 February 1997 after protests in the city; reportedly tortured, tried behind closed doors and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in March or April 1998 for "illegal religious activities".

Ismael/Ismael Mehmet, 22, student from Kashgar, detained with three other students in January 1995 (see Abit Obulkasim), subsequently sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for "forming a counter-revolutionary group"; reported imprisoned in Urumqi's Liudaowan jail.

Ismail Yakub (Yahefu), sentenced in April 1998 to eighteen months' imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights by the Hami District Intermediate People's Court for "taking part in separatist activities"; (sentenced with Mahmut Abdulla and Ablimit Yakub.)

Ismail Haji, 25, detained in Yingjisha in July 1990 with Muhammad Amin Yapkan in connection with the April 1990 protests in Baren; subsequently held in Kargilik prison, but current whereabouts and legal status unknown.

Jelil Aval, from Baren, alleged leader of group who attempted to reorganise the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party, detained for the second time in 1992. Had first been detained for reportedly taking part in Baren 1990 "counter-revolutionary" riot, but was released on bail on 6 August 1991 on grounds of poor health. Taken into custody again on 10 October 1992 and charged on 27 April 1993, held then in Artush City Public Security Bureau prison; sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in 1993 by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court Verdict.

Jamal Muhammed, reported detained in April 1990 for taking part in Baren uprising and later sentenced to life imprisonment; current whereabouts unknown.

Jur'at Nuri, from Kepekyuzi near Gulja, reported detained there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden); believed held in Gulja, charges not known.

Kahar, 27, from Kargilik, reported detained for involvement in "religious propaganda" and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; held at labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Kahriman Abdukirim, 25, detained in Urumqi on 22 November 1998, reasons not known but believed related to comments he made about Eastern Turkestan while a student at Xinjiang University, was working for Uighur businesswoman Rebiya Kadeer at the time of this arrest; still detained without charge as of March 1999.

Kajikumar Shabdan, ethnic Kazak writer and poet born 1924 in Kazakstan, chief editor of a radio station prior to detention, detained December 1988 in Tacheng, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for alleged links with a nationalist group in Kazakstan. Last known to be held in No. 1 Prison in Urumqi.

Kasim Haji, businessman from Gulja, detained March/April 1997 for meeting foreign reporters together with Shevket Sakhal and Hamit Mejit; rumoured to have been sentenced to 15 years, but not confirmed, reported held in Gulja city.

Kasim Mahpir, from Ili; believed detained since February 1999 (see Hemit Memet.)

Kasim Sidik, 45, writer and poet from Gulja, worked at Yining Art Institute as a writer, reported detained in 1998 because of political messages in some of his plays and poems and as suspected nationalist sympathiser; current fate unknown.

Kawul Kurban, 39, from district of Jiashi, east of Kashgar, reported detained there with others in February 1992, for political activities; subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Kerim Kari, reported detained in Urumqi in July 1990 in connection with April 1990 protest in Baren and subsequently imprisoned in Urumqi, but legal status unknown.

Kurban Juma, born 1974, from Baren, reported detained for involvement in Baren protests in April 1990, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment, sent to serve the sentence in Wusu prison; current fate unknown.

Mahmet Abdullah Mersum, 36, teacher from Kargilik, reported detained for political reasons and sentenced to 3 years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; detained in labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Mahmut Abdulla, sentenced in Hami district in April 1998 to six years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights by Hami District Intermediate People's Court for "actively taking part in a separatist organisation" and "giving shelter to separatists" (sentenced with Ablimit Hapiz and Ismail Yakub.)

Mahmut Alim, 34, reported detained in Karakash, near Khotan on 30 May 1993 and accused of "counter-revolutionary" activities, but not known whether tried or sentenced.

Mahmut Metsiyit Haji, one of 21 people sentenced in August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between 4 and 15 years' imprisonment for involvement in a "counter-revolutionary group" in Guma (Pishan) County, described as an accomplice; current whereabouts unknown.

Mamat (or Mehmet) Imin Kari, 23, from Khotan, reported detained in 1997 for taking part in a religious class; now serving three years' "reeducation through labour" in a labour camp in/near Kashgar.

Mat Tursun Ahun, 70, from Kashgar, reported detained for making copies of a religious newspaper and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; detained at labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Mehmet Emin Omer, 25, worker at a cotton factory in Khotan, detained following protests and rioting in Khotan on 7 July 1995, reported sentenced in September 1995 at sentencing rally, but sentence not known (see Abdulhalil Tursun.)

Mehmut (Memet) Rozi, born 1964, reported detained for involvement in Baren protests in April 1990 and sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment, sent to serve the sentence in Xihe prison; current whereabouts unknown.

Memet Imin (Mantimyn), administrator at No.5 Middle School in Urumqi, detained in southern XUAR on suspicion of having written an appeal to the United Nations in 1988 about human rights violations in XUAR; reported still held in 1992 but subsequent fate unknown.

Memet Shar (Mehmet Sadir), one of 21 people sentenced in August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between four and 15 years' imprisonment for involvement in a "counter-revolutionary group" – the Eastern Turkestan Democratic Islamic Party - in Guma County; he was described as one of six "ringleaders" of the group.

Memit Tursun, 22, reported detained in 1998 in Lop county near Khotan for reading an "illegal" newspaper, by late 1998, had been held at Lop County's Public Security Bureau Detention Centre for four months without being charged.

Memtimin, 36, from Kargilik, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour" around March 1996; held at labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Memtimin Ceyit, 46, from Kashgar, taken into custody for political reasons on 10 October 1992 and charged on 29 April 1993 for buying guns and ammunitions by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Procuratorate's Indictment; subsequent sentence and whereabouts not known.

Mohamet, 19, from Keriya (Yutian), reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation and sentenced to three years' "re-education through labour"; in 1998 held in labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Mohtar, 29, reported detained in Lop near Khotan in 1998 for speaking out against the government, by late 1998 held without charge for 5 months in Lop County's Public Security Bureau Detention Centre; current fate unknown.

Mollah Mohamed, 44, from Baren, detained October 1992, charged April 1993 with "counter-revolutionary" activities, held then in Artush City Public Security Bureau jail, sentenced to five years' imprisonment by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court Verdict; not known whether released as due.

Muhammad Amin Yapkan, 32, detained in Yingjisha in July 1990 with Ismail Haji in connection with the April 1990 protests in Baren; subsequently held in Kargilik prison, but legal status not known.

Muhammed Emin Omer, born 1960, detained in 1990 in connection with Baren uprising in April 1990 and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment; place of detention unknown.

Muhtar Chong Kadir, 26, student, reported detained 23 June 1992 in Kashgar, accused of carrying out "counter-revolutionary" activities; subsequent whereabouts and legal status not known.

Mukaram Haji Nenim (Henim), 22, female, reported detained in Kucha in 1990 for involvement in Baren protests in April 1990; believed sentenced but subsequent legal status unknown.

Mutalip, from Kargilik, detained August 1992 for alleged involvement in a "counter-revolutionary group" with 8 others (Idrisjan, Abdul Hemit Kari, Obulkasim Yusuf, Heli, Mohammed Imin Kari, Abdullah Gazi and Abdul Hemit); reported sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in July 1993.

Namat Abdumat (Namadi Aboudumadi), from Karakash (Moyu) county, near Khotan, sentenced April 1991 to 15 years' imprisonment and 5 years' deprivation of political rights on charges of "counter-revolutionary" propaganda and agitation" and "counter-revolutionary arson." Accused of having circulated leaflets opposing the Chinese Communist Party and family planning and of attempting to set fire to a local family planning office in Khotan in March 1990.

Naserdin, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim.)

Nizamudim Husayin, 70, scholar from Urumqi and former reporter for the Xinjiang Daily, reported detained September 1997 for sheltering wanted people, died in custody in April 1998 reportedly due to torture. In mid-1980s had written articles about religion in Central Asia.

Noormuhammad Yarmuhammad, from Kepekyuzi near Gulja, reported detained there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden), believed held in Gulja; charges not known.

Nurhahmat Yusup, 22, from Kashgar, detained in July 1997 for putting Eastern Turkestan flag on People's Square in Kashgar instead of PRC flag, charged with "counter-revolutionary" activities and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment in September 1997; held at Urumqi's Liudaowan prison.

Nurmuhammad, 33, teacher, detained in Karakash near Khotan on 10 June 10 1993 and accused of supporting "counter-revolutionaries"; subsequent fate unknown.

Nurmuhammad Abdurahman, 33, architecture graduate of the Xinjiang Technology Institute, employed in housing planning office in Urumqi; reportedly detained in August 1992 for political reason, but subsequent fate not known.

Obul Kasem (or Obulkasim) Amat, 46, from Kashgar, taken into custody on political grounds in October 1992 and charged in April 1993 with "counter-revolutionary" activities and supplying arms, sentenced 10 years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights by the Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court.

Obul Kasim Imin, from Dol village, Lop county, near Khotan, placed under house arrest after being detained by police from Dol village on 15 September 1996 for "speaking out against the Government", badly beaten, he required hospital treatment, was released from hospital to house arrest; current legal status unknown.

Omar Turdi, 31, intellectual and religious scholar, detained 13 March 1992, with Abdukerim Yakup and Abdukerim Kari, subsequently detained in Kargilik prison but legal status not known.

Omer (or Omerjan) Abdullah, 25, mechanic, detained following protests and rioting in Khotan on 07.07.95 (see Abdulhalil Tursun), reported sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and 5 years' deprivation of political rights at sentencing rally in Khotan in September 1995.

Omerjan (or Omer Khan) Mahsun, 72, detained in July 1990 reportedly for circulating a pamphlet protesting curbs on religious activities (with Abdu Kadir Ayup, Abdurahman Abliz, Alimjan Karihajim, and Omer Khan Mahsun); subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Osman Amet, detained 1 July 1991 in connection with others accused of forming a political opposition party (see Abdukiram Abduvali); presumed sentenced but sentence not known.

Rebiya Kadeer (f), 50 year-old Uighur businesswoman from Urumqi, reportedly restricted and deprived of her passport since 1997 in connection with her husband's alleged opposition activities abroad. Not clear whether the restrictions on leaving Urumqi still apply, though she is still deprived of her passport.

Rahmanjan Ahmed, from Baren, reported detained in 1990 as alleged member of Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party and involvement in April 1990 protests in Baren, sentenced to 16 years imprisonment and sent to serve the sentence in Wusu (Xihe) prison; current fate unknown.

Rahmatjan, 16, from Gulja, detained for alleged involvement in rioting during February 1997 protests in Gulja, and sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment on 22 July 1997 at public sentencing rally in Gulja, for injury and damaging property during the protests.

Reshat (Aishat) Mehmet, 24, one of four students from Kashgar (Tursunjan Mehmet, Ismail Mehmet, and Abidjan Obulkasim) who were detained in 1995 and sentenced between 4 and 15 years'

imprisonment for having "organised a counter-revolutionary group". Reshat was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment; imprisoned in Urumqi's Liudaowan prison.

Rahmatjan Rabet (Rihemaitijiang Rebuke), from Gulja, sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment for involvement in February 1997 protests on charges of "intentional injury causing death" and "hooliganism", at sentencing rally by Ili Intermediate People's Court on 22 July 1997.

Rozahun Abbas, presumed detained in 1997 for sheltering Ibrahim Ismael (see above).

Rozi Hashim, born 1970, from Baren, one of founders of Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party detained for involvement in April 1990 protests in Baren, serving unknown term in Artush prison; said to be in poor health.

Rozi Juma, born 1964, a caterer from Baren, detained for involvement in April 1990 protests in Baren; subsequent whereabouts not known.

Rozi Mamet, from Gulja, detained in connection with February 1997 protests in Gulja, reported released twice, then redetained, last known detained in Chapchal county jail near Gulja; legal status unknown.

Rozi Mamet, from Lop, near Khotan, reported detained in 1998 for political reasons and still held without charge at Lop Public Security Bureau Detention centre in late 1998; current fate unknown.

Rozi Mamet Tohti, 21, reported detained in 1998 in Lop for "speaking out against the Government", by late 1998 still held without charge after 7 months' detention at Lop Public Security Bureau Detention Centre; current fate unknown.

Rozi Mehmet Baki, a tailor in Karakash, near Khotan, detained following protests and riots in Khotan on 7 July 1995 (see Abdulhalil Tursun); sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment at sentencing rally in Khotan in September 1995.

Sadikjan (Shadikejiang), aged 20 in 1989, a Uighur student reportedly studying in Gansu province at the time of the 1989 pro-democracy protests, named as "already arrested" on "most wanted" list issued by Ministry of Public Security in September 1989, but subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Saidulla Kurban, Born 1967, from village near Gulja, reported detained there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden), believed held in Gulja; charges not known.

Saladhin, reported detained for political reasons in 1998 in Lop, near Khotan; still held without charge in Lop County's Public Security Bureau Detention Centre in late 1998.

Salam Kari, from Gulja, detained after February 1997 events, reportedly died in custody due to torture. He had been detained previously in 1995.

Salih Ahmed Ismael, 22, detained following protests and riots in Khotan 7 July 1995 (see Abdulhalil Tursun) and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment at sentencing rally in Khotan in September 1995.

Samet Maksut, 32, reported detained in Shaya city in 1993 for suspected political activities, subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Shevket (Sakhal)Tursun, from Gulja, one of several people detained in March/April 1997 in Gulja for meeting foreign reporters, reported sentenced to 15 or 18 years' imprisonment remain unconfirmed, believed still held in Gulja.

Sheraly Sadik (Xiernali Shadeke), detained for involvement in February 1997 protest in Gulja, sentenced to life imprisonment for "hooliganism" at sentencing rally on 24 April 1997 by Ili Prefecture Intermediate People's Court.

Shemsedin, 20, from Kashgar, reported detained for taking part in an "illegal" organisation, sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour" in or around March 1996, held at labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Sulayman Eysa (Isa), from Baren, detained for involvement in April 1990 protests in Baren, sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment, imprisoned in Wusu (Xihe) prison.

Sultan Ahmet, 35, reported detained in Shaya city in 1993 for suspected political activities, subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Tohtahun Turdi, from Ili, reported detained June 1997 (see Abbas Abdukerim.)

Tohtahun Yarmuhammed, about 23, from village near Gulja, reported detained there in April 1998 following an incident (see Abdurazzak Shamseden), believed held in Gulja, charges not known.

Tohti, Uighur scholar, reported detained 1998 when returned to China from stay in Japan and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for publishing book on Uighur history while in Japan, believed held in Beijing but not confirmed.

Tohti Hoshur, 34, from Kashgar, detained with others 10 October 1992 for alleged political activities (see Jelil Aval), charged 2 February 1993 with participation "counter-revolutionary gang", sentenced to one year imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights, presumed released but not confirmed.

Tohti Islam, born 1972, from Baren, detained in connection with April 1990 protests in Baren, reported accused of not reporting the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party to the police, sentenced 19 years' imprisonment and sent to serve sentence in Wusu county (Xihe) prison.

Tohti Memet Omar, one of 21 people sentenced in August 1995 by Khotan Intermediate People's Court to between four and 15 years' imprisonment for involvement in a "counter-revolutionary group" in Guma (Pishan) County, he was described as an accomplice.

Turdi Obul, detained on 6 April 1990 for taking part in Baren riots, warned and released on 29 June 1990, re-detained with others 10 October 1992 and charged on 26 April 1993 with political offences (see JelilAval case), sentenced 10 years' imprisonment and 4 years' deprivation political rights(Khizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture Intermediate People's Court Verdict, 1993.)

Turgan Abdulkarim, born 1964, detained 5 April 1990 for involvement in Baren April 1990 uprising, sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment, held in Xihe prison.

Turgan Tay (1), 27, businessman from Gulja, involved in religious activities, detained 5 February 1997 in Gulja, sentenced April 1998 to 10 years imprisonment for "illegal religious activities" - closed trial by Gulja Intermediate People's Court, no lawyer present.

Turgan Tay (2), 30, factory worker from Gulja, detained February 1997 during protests in Gulja, sentenced in 1998 to 10 years' imprisonment for involvement in "illegal religious activities", as his namesake above.

Turgun Almas, 74, historian and former researcher at Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences in Urumqi, placed under house arrest in Urumqi in early 1992 because of books he wrote on Uighur history, current fate unknown

Turgunjan Muhammed, born 1973, from Baren, detained for involvement in April 1990 protests in Baren, sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment and sent to Wusu (Xihe) prison.

Tursan Mehmet, deputy director of study division of middle school no. 14 in Gulja, detained 18 July 1998, accused of helping "nationalist separatists", from 28 July 1998 held in Yengi Hayat jail in Gulja, exact charges not known.

Tursan Niyaz, 34, from Qira near Khotan, reported detained for taking part in "illegal" organisation and sentenced to three years of "re-education through labour" in or around March 1996; held at labour camp at Mush near Kashgar.

Tursun (or Tursunjan) Mehmet, 22, one of four students from Kashgar detained in January 1995 (see Abidjan Obulkasim) and sentenced in mid-1995 for "organising a counter-revolutionary group", he was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment, others received sentences of up to 15 years.

Tursun Salei, believed detained with others after violent clash between Uighur group and security forces in Maimayuze market near Gulja on 28 May 1998, legal status and whereabouts unknown.

Tursun Sultan, reported detained in Gulja during February 1997 incident and tortured by being made to stand on ice, barefoot. According to some sources released after spending time in hospital, had been involved in meshreps.

Tursun Tohti Ahmet, 30, detained following protests and rioting in Khotan 7 July 1995 (see Abdulhalil Tursun), sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment and 4 years' deprivation political rights, at sentencing rally in Khotan in September 1995.

Ubul (or Obul) Emil, under 18 at time of arrest, from Karakash (Moyu) near Khotan, detained in 1990 or 1991 with Namat Abdumat (see above) and Balat Niyaz Mohammed Tohti for posting political leaflets

in various places, charged "counter-revolutionary incitement", sentenced in 1991 to three years' imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights, presumed released.

Yar Mehmet, from Gulja, detained for taking part in February 1997 demonstration in Gulja, reported still detained in late 1998, but charges and exact whereabouts not known.

Yasim Kari, 35, Mullah from Kashgar, reported detained since September 1998 in Kashgar after forcibly returned from Kazakstan at end August 1998 with three other men and four children (see Abla Karim), not known to have been charged, had previously been detained four months in 1995 for religious activities.

Yasin Kari, 33, reported detained with two others in March 1992 in home district of Payzawat (Jiashi), east of Kashgar, for involvement in political activities, subsequent legal status and whereabouts unknown

Yasin Turdi, 53, from Shaya, reported detained in June 1990 in Kucha in connection with April 1990 protest in Baren, subsequently imprisoned but sentence not known.

Yusuf Haji, 25, from Khotan, in 1996 went to Saudi Arabia, after return, detained in March/April 1997, accused of "separatist" activities, now still detained but not known to have been charged or tried, reported held in XUAR Public Security Department Detention Centre in Urumqi, near railway station.

Prisoners executed or sentenced to death

Abbas Kari (or Abdusalim Kari, Abudousilimu Kahaer), 50, religious teacher, executed on 20.01.98 in village of Jelilyuzi, Ili, for involvement in an incident in that village on 26.06.97.

Abdul Hemit Kari, sentenced to death in July 1993 in Urumqi, with others accused of subversive activities, reported to be from Kargilik, detained August 1992.

Abdulimit Mehmet, executed in Ili between 27/29.01.99 for alleged terrorist or subversive activities.

Abdulits Osman, executed in Ili between 27/29.01.99 for robbery and separatism.

Abdulkarim Abdurahim, executed in Ili between 27 and 29.01.1999 for murder.

Abdullah, religious student of Abbas Kari, executed on 20.01.98 in village of Jelilyuzi, Ili, for involvement in an incident in that village on 26.06.97.

Abdullah Gazi, sentenced to death in July 1993 in Urumqi, with others accused of subversive activities, reported to be from Kargilik, detained August 1992.

Abdullah Mamat, 22, from Kargilik, executed on 30.05.95 for bombings in Urumqi in 1992.

Abdullah Mollagi, sentenced to death at a public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97.

Abdullahjan Samet, from Karasheher city, sentenced to death by Urumqi City People's Court at a mass trial 20.10.98 and executed, was charged with separatism (with 9 others).

Abdurehim Aisha, 29, executed on 29.01.99 in Ili for involvement in violent opposition activities

Abdurehim Memet, sentenced to death on 22.07.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed the same day.

Abdusalam Abdurahman, sentenced to death in October 1998 by the Ili Prefecture Intermediate People's Court after being convicted of political offences.

Abdusalam Shamseden, 29 year-old worker at a textile factory in Gulja, sentenced to death in October 1998 by the Ili Prefecture Intermediate People's Court after being convicted of political offences.

Abdushukur Nurallah, a 33 year-old teacher from Ili, sentenced to death in January 1999 in Korgas for allegedly making bombs, confirmed to have been executed between 27 and 29 January 1999.

Ablimit Talip, 32, from Kucha, leader of "counter-revolutionary organisation", sentenced to death in 1993 for alleged bombings in Urumqi in February 1992, executed 30.05.95.

Abulahat Memet, sentenced to death at a public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97, and executed same day.

Adurehim Tudahun, sentenced to death on 22.07.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed on the same day.

Ahmetjan Seyit, 23, sentenced to death with suspension of execution two years on 27/28 January 1999 in Ili.

Ali Keyum, sentenced to death at a public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97 and executed the same day.

Anwar Niyaz (Ainiwa'er Niyazi), executed on 3.02.99 in Urumqi for murder.

Aishan Mahmat, sentenced to death on 24.04.97 by Ili People's Court for involvement in February 1997 protest.

Alim Yamkup, executed in Ili between 27/29.1.99 for terrorist or subversive activities.

Alimjan Yolvas, sentenced to death on 22.07.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed the same day.

Asim Yaqup, 40, from Bingtuan's 29th Regiment, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at a mass trial on 20 October 1998 and executed same day, charged with separatism (with 9 others).

Aysa Amet, sentenced to death at public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97 and executed the same day.

Bai Baoshan, executed in Urumqi on 29.4.98 for multiple murder and robbery.

Gulam Tash, 24, From Vasi town, Cherchen county, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at a mass trial on 20.10.98 and executed same day, charged with separatism (with 9 others).

Halmemet Islam, sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years on 22 July 1997 in Gulja city.

Helil, sentenced to death in July 1993 in Urumqi, with others accused of subversive activities, reported to be from Kargilik, detained August 1992.

Helimhan Hesen (f), 22, from Korla, Bingtuan's 30th Regiment, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at mass trial on 20.10.98 and executed same day. She was charged with separatism (with 9 others).

Hepizem Han (f), from Dengzil village, Kara sheher county, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at a mass trial 20.10.98 and executed same day. She was charged with separatism (with 9 others).

Hesenjan Imin, sentenced to death on 22.07.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed on the same day.

Hoshanjan Musajan (Aishanjiang Mushajiang), executed in Ili between 27/29.01.99 for alleged terrorist or subversive activities.

Ibrahim Kasem, sentenced to death on 24.04.97 by Ili Intermediate People's Court for involvement in February 1997 protests.

Ibrahim Ismael (Yibulayin Simayin), 42, executed on 28 January 1999 in Ili for alleged involvement in "terrorist religious activities".

Ibrahim Tohti, sentenced to death penalty with suspension of execution for two years in Urumqi on 29 May 1997 for involvement in a bombing on 25.02.97

Idrisjan Omar, sentenced to death in July 1993 in Urumqi, with others accused of subversive activities, executed 30.05.95, reported to be from Kargilik, detained August 1992 while trying to flee the country.

Jappar Talet, sentenced to death on 22.07.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed on the same day.

Jelil Bilal, sentenced to death at a public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97 and executed same day.

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- Khelil Altun**, 30, from Kucha, executed on 30.05.95 for bombings in Urumqi in 1992.
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- Machingling**, executed on 22 July 1997 in Gulja city stadium for drug trafficking.
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- Mahmut Abdurahman**, sentenced to death at a public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.5.97.
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- Memet Muslim Abdurahman**, sentenced to death with suspension of execution for two years for involvement in a bombing on 13.02.96 in Urumqi.
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- Memet Obulkasim**, executed with 16 others in Urumqi on 30.01.97 for involvement in 13.02.96 bombing in Urumqi.
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- Mamtimin Siyit**, 24, from Kucha, executed on 30.5.95 for bombings in Urumqi in 1992.
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- Memetjan Nurmemet**, sentenced to death on 22.7.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed on the same day.
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- Mohammed Imin Kari**, sentenced to death in July 1993 in Urumqi, with others accused of subversive activities, reported to be from Kargilik, detained August 1992.
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- Mustafa Lua**, sentenced to death at a public sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97.
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- Nurdin Sabir**, 24, from Baghrash county, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at mass trial on 20.20.98 and executed same day, charged with separatism (with 9 others).
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- Nuri**, religious student of Abbas Kari, executed on 20.01.98 in the village of Jelilyuzi, Ili, for involvement in incident in that village on 26.06.97
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- Nurmemet Ismael**, executed in Ili between 27 and 29 January 1999 for murder.
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- Obulkasim Yusuf**, reported shot dead by prison officials at Liudaowan jail in May 1994 (see p.67).
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- Perhat Mollahun**, a 35 year-old teacher, sentenced to death with suspension of execution for 2 years in January 1999 in Korgas.
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- Rehem Sajeden**, executed on 15.7.98 in Aksu for "intentional murder".
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- Rahmutulah Sidik**, 28, from Korla Bingtuan's 30th Regiment, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at mass trial on 20.10.98 and executed same day, was charged with separatism (with 9 others).
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- Rahmutulah Abla**, executed in Urumqi on 03.02.99 for organising "separatist" activities, theft and harboring weapons.
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- Rahmutulah Kurban**, executed on 03.02.99 in Urumqi for murder.
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- Rouzi Keyum**, executed in Ili on 27.01.99 for bomb explosion in March 1997.
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- Sadiq Yasin**, 20, from Chumpaq village, Bugur county, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at mass trial on 20.10.98 and executed same day, charged with separatism (with 9 others).
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- Sidik Rozi**, sentenced to death 22.07.97 at public sentencing rally in Gulja and executed on the same day.
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- Tang Jun**, executed on 22 July 1997 in Gulja city for theft.
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- Tursun Kirem**, from Karabag village, Bugur county, sentenced to death by Urumqi City People's Court at mass trial on 20.10.98 and executed same day, charged with separatism (with 9 others).
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- Tursun Muhammad**, religious student of Abbas Kari, executed on 20.01.98 in the village of Jelilyuzi, Ili, for involvement in incident in that village on 26.06.97.
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- Tursun Reveydullah**, 26, from Bingtuan's 29th Regiment, sentenced to death by the Urumqi City People's Court at mass trial on 20.10.98 and executed same day, charged with separatism (with 9 others).
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- Yusuf Heyit**, sentenced to death at sentencing rally in Urumqi on 29.05.97 and executed same day.
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- Yusuf Tursun**, sentenced to death 24.04.97 in Gulja on charges related to February 1997 protests and executed the same day.
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