

URGENT ACTION

UYGHUR STUDENT DETAINED FOR POSTING PROTEST VIDEO

Kamile Wayit, a Uyghur student studying in Henan, was taken away by the police on 12 December 2022, after she returned to her home in Atush, Xinjiang, for a holiday. In November 2022, Kamile posted a video on WeChat about the “A4 protests” that took place across China after a fire in Urumqi. Soon after that, Kamile’s father received a warning call from the police and she deleted the post, which is believed to be one of the reasons for her detention. Kamile has now been detained for more than four months. Without access to her family or a lawyer of her choice, it is possible that Kamila might be subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Director of Public Security Bureau
Pamir East Road, Atushi City
Kizilsu Kyrgyz Autonomous Prefecture
Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
843500, People’s Republic of China

Dear Director,

I am writing to express concern about the detention of Uyghur student **Kamile Wayit** (卡米莱·瓦依提), who was taken away on 12 December 2022 by the police after returning home to Atush, Xinjiang for a holiday. According to her brother, she might be currently detained at a detention centre in Atush, the capital of Kyrgyz autonomous prefecture of Kizilsu in Xinjiang. Without access to her family lawyer of her choice, and information on her condition, it is possible that she might be subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Kamile Wayit is a 19-year-old first-year student at the Shangqiu Institute of Technology (商丘工学院) located in Henan(河南). It is believed that her detention may be related to a video that she posted on WeChat in November 2022 about the protests that took place across China to commemorate the victims of a fire in Urumqi. Soon after that, Kamile’s father received a warning call from the police, and she deleted the post. Additionally, during the same period, Kamile also reconnected with her brother who is currently living abroad and has spoken out on Uyghur’s issues. Her communication with her brother might have played a role in her detention.

With no information regarding the reason for Kamile Wayit’s detention, or the conditions under which she is held and without access to her family and a lawyer of her choice, I am deeply worried about her wellbeing and the risk of her being subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

I therefore urge you to:

- Immediately release Kamile Wayit, unless there is sufficient, credible and admissible evidence that she has committed an internationally recognised criminal offence;
- Pending her release, reveal her whereabouts, allow her regular access to her family and a lawyer of her choice;
- Pending her release, ensure that Kamile Wayit has access to adequate medical care, and she is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kamile Wayit is a student at the Henan Shangqiu Institute of Technology (河南省商丘工学院), majoring in preschool education. She was born in in Atush City (the capital of the Kyrgyz autonomous prefecture of Kizilsu, Xinjiang) and completed her primary school there. At the age of 14, she had to live alone in Urumqi for two years between 2017 and 2019, because her father was held in a 're-education' camp during that period. Despite her young age, Kamile's brother describes her as 'very mature and thoughtful'.

About 'A4 Protest' in China

On Thursday, 24 November, a fire broke out in an apartment building in Urumqi, killing at least 10 people, according to government sources. Many blamed Covid-19 restrictions for the deaths but local authorities have disputed this claim. This did not stop protests from breaking out in Urumqi, the capital of the western region of Xinjiang. The next morning, the government declared that the Covid-19 outbreak was under control and the city would ease lockdowns, following more than 100 days of severe restrictions on people's' movements.

Since 25 November, videos shared on social media showed protests breaking out across universities and cities throughout China, including in Beijing, Guangdong, Shanghai and Wuhan. Peaceful protesters commemorated the victims of the Urumqi fire and called for the easing of lockdown measures. Many also demanded that censorship end and some called for President Xi to step down. Large numbers of people were detained for participating in peaceful protests against Covid-19 restrictions. It remains unclear how many remain in detention. Videos circulated online show police beating protesters during arrests.

About Xinjiang

Xinjiang is one of the most ethnically diverse regions in China. More than half of the region's population of 22 million people belong to mostly Turkic and predominantly Muslim ethnic groups, including Uyghurs (around 11.3 million), Kazakhs (around 1.6 million) and other populations whose languages, cultures and ways of life are different from those of the Han, who are the majority in "interior" China.

Since 2017, under the guise of a campaign against "terrorism" and "religious extremism", the government of China has carried out widespread and systematic human rights violations against Muslims living in Xinjiang. It is estimated that over a million people have been arbitrarily detained in internment camps throughout Xinjiang since 2017.

The report [*"Like We Were Enemies in a War": China's Mass Internment, Torture, and Persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang*](#) is the most comprehensive account to date of the crushing repression faced by Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. The evidence Amnesty International has gathered provides a factual basis for the conclusion that the Chinese government has committed at a minimum the crimes against humanity of imprisonment, torture, and persecution.

The Chinese government has gone to great lengths to cover up the human rights violations taking place in Xinjiang, and to prevent members of the Uyghur diaspora from speaking up about them. Amnesty International has documented numerous cases where Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic Muslim people in Xinjiang had been detained simply for living, travelling, or studying abroad or for communicating with people abroad. Many were detained simply for being "connected" with people who lived, travelled, studied, or communicated with people abroad.

In June 2021 Amnesty launched the international campaign [Free Xinjiang Detainees](#) highlighting the stories of 126 men, women, and children reportedly missing, subjected to enforced disappearance, or believed to be arbitrarily detained in internment camps or prisons in Xinjiang. They are representative of the over one million people estimated to be missing, forcibly disappeared, or arbitrarily detained in internment camps and prisons throughout Xinjiang since 2017.

In August 2022, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a long-awaited report reinforcing previous findings by Amnesty International and others. These findings reveal the extent of arbitrary and discriminatory detention of Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslims in Xinjiang, which may constitute international crimes, in particular crimes against humanity. It also documented allegations of torture or other ill-treatment, incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, forced labour and enforced disappearances, among other grave human rights violations.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Chinese

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 May 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Kamile Wayit (she/her)