

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 6, 2020

The Honorable António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017

Dear Secretary-General Guterres:

We write to express our profound disappointment and opposition to the appointment of Jiang Duan, Minister of the Chinese Mission in Geneva, to the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council Consultative Group. As you know, in this position, Jiang will provide China with the opportunity to play a central role in picking at least 17 human rights investigators, including those who look at freedom of speech, enforced disappearance, and arbitrary detention, rights abuses which the Chinese regime routinely perpetrates.

The Chinese government's decision to deceive the international community about the grave dangers of the initial 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in Wuhan, China, violates any credibility on human rights and should disqualify them from a position on the Human Rights Council Consultative Group. Through intimidation of its medical first responders, censorship of online forums, and threats of severe punishment for anyone who dared to speak out with the truth, the Chinese Communist Party engaged in its most egregious human rights abuse: the unchecked spread of a new and dangerous virus on an unwitting global population. Chinese government actions in the early days of the outbreak are not commensurate to influencing a council responsible for upholding human rights throughout the world. Even now, China withholds critical information about the spread and death toll of the virus and continues to silence and intimidate its critics.

In addition to its willful deceit and gross negligence regarding its handling of the COVID-19 outbreak, China is guilty of widespread and well-documented cases of human rights abuses targeting the Uyghur Muslim community in Xinjiang province. Over one million Chinese Uyghurs sit in so-called re-education camps against their will, in what can only be described as ethnic cleansing on an industrial scale and millions more are treated as second-class citizens in their own country at the hands of the regime in Beijing. It is tragic such terrible crimes against humanity can be committed by a power wanting to be seen as a responsible international actor, and even more egregious such behavior can be rewarded.

The UN was created following the most devastating conflict humanity had ever endured and to safeguard against repeating the most awful crimes ever perpetrated. We must expect more from its leadership and from its member states. China should not occupy a position of prestige or influence on the UN Human Rights Council while it engages in human rights violations of the worst kind both at home and abroad. We implore you to intervene on behalf of our shared values of freedom and dignity by suspending Jiang's appointment to the UN Human Rights Council Consultative Group, and to implore all member states to condemn in strongest terms the human rights violations committed by Chinese Communist Party.

Sincerely,



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



MARCO RUBIO
United States Senator



JAMES M. INHOFE
United States Senator



MARSHA BLACKBURN
United States Senator



MARTHA MCSALLY
United States Senator



TED CRUZ
United States Senator



KEVIN CRAMER
United States Senator