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Lawyers Call on International Court to Investigate Uyghur Treatment

June 22, 2022

A team of lawyers recently renewed calls for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to open an investigation into the treatment of Uyghurs and others in China's Xinjiang area. The group presented an evidence report to the ICC.

Activists and lawyers accuse China of crimes against humanity and genocide against Uyghurs and other ethnic minority groups. China's ruling Communist Party has denied all reports of human rights violations and genocide in Xinjiang.

The filing is the latest attempt to have the international court open an investigation into widespread claims of abuse against Uyghurs by Chinese officials.

The legal team said it provided evidence that includes statements from a witness who escaped from an **internment** camp in 2018. The witness claims that he and others were tortured and forced to undergo medical treatments. One treatment included "being injected with unknown substances."

In recent years, China has carried out a severe **crackdown** on the Uyghurs, which it has described as a war on terror. The government's campaign has sent one million or more people to internment camps and prisons. The latest filing seeks to support the legal team's claim that ICC **prosecutors** have **jurisdiction**, even though China is not a member of the court. The lawyers argue that Uyghurs and others are being gathered on the territory of an ICC member state and sent to China.

The court's judges previously ruled that the ICC has jurisdiction to investigate abuses against Myanmar's Rohingya minority group. Myanmar is also not a member of the court. But thousands of Rohingya were forced to flee to neighboring Bangladesh, which is an ICC member.

British lawyer Rodney Dixon said evidence presented to the court's prosecutor's office uncovers a plan "to round up Uyghurs in neighboring countries...and elsewhere, to force them back into China."

The legal team said in a statement, "The ICC has jurisdiction over these crimes that **commence** on ICC territory and continue into China and is urged to act immediately to open an investigation."

The filing comes one year after lawyers first called on the ICC to open an investigation.

I'm Jonathan Evans.

Jonathan Evans adapted this story for Learning English based on a report from the Associated Press.

Words in This Story

internment – *n.* the state of being confined as a prisoner, especially for political or military reasons.

crackdown – *n.* severe measures to restrict or discourage undesirable or illegal people or behavior.

prosecutor – *n.* a lawyer in a criminal case who tries to prove that the accused person is guilty

jurisdiction – *n.* the power, right, or authority to interpret and apply the law

commence – *v.* to begin

