

DECLARATION GENEVA FORUM 2019

14-15 NOVEMBER 2019, GENEVA

We, the experts and witnesses at the 2019 Geneva Forum on “China’s High-Tech Repression and Freedom of Religion”,

Express Our Grave Concern over the reports of high-tech systemic violations of human rights, including freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of movement and peaceful assembly, right to privacy, right against torture, and the likes enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, perpetrated by the Government of People’s Republic of China against people under its rule, including Tibetans, Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples, Mongolians, Hong- Kongers and Human Rights Defenders, as well as people beyond its borders;

Are Deeply Concerned by the reports of high-tech religious persecution carried out by the Government of People’s Republic of China against the people of faith including Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Falun Gong Practitioners, Taoists and believers in folk religions, aimed at destruction of the core belief systems and religious traditions of the believers;

Gravely Note the repressive policies of the Communist Party of China and its government to destroy the distinct way of life, rich heritage, cultural diversity, language and identity of people under its rule including Tibetans, Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples, Mongolians and Hong-Kongers;

Are Gravely Concerned by the sophisticated surveillance used by China, including the usage of artificial intelligence, facial recognition, biometric registration, data mining, phone spyware, GPS tagging, drones, DNA profiling etc., and the new Social Credit System being introduced which will further perpetuate the oppressive regime of Communist Party of China;

Note with Deep Concern the export, sale, transfer and servicing of the high-tech surveillance systems and internet controls by China’s autocratic regime across the globe which is resulting in declining democracies and rise of autocrats in the world.

And Thereby We,

Call Upon the Government of People’s Republic of China to:

– STOP WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT the abuse of technology and the high-tech human rights violations carried out against people under its rule including Tibetans, Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples, Mongolians, and Hong-Kongers; the high-tech religious persecution of people of faith; and the export, sale, transfer and servicing of its high-tech surveillance tools to other countries;

– RESPECT AND GUARANTEE all Human Rights, including the freedom of religion or belief and the right of the believers to choose their own religious leaders as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ensure personal data protection and maintain transparency in public affairs;

Call Upon the Governments and the European Union to create a binding human rights compliant safeguards regime for the investment, development, manufacture and export of surveillance tools and internet controls, and on the UN to provide all possible support and co-operation in this regard;

Call Upon the international community and organizations, governments, civil societies to press China to respect and guarantee human rights and to stop the export of tools of authoritarianism;

Call Upon governments, international institutions and business enterprises, including multi-national companies, to fully and meaningfully implement the UN Guiding Principles and relevant treaty obligations in their business dealings with China and to stop funding/investing in research and manufacturing of surveillance tools by China,

And hereby so declared.