

Strategy of The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) to Strive for Human Rights for Uyghur people

*Ismah Rustam**

Arida Meilani

Department of nternational Relations - University of Mataram

ismahrustam@unram.ac.id

Abstract

The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) is a diaspora of ethnic Uyghurs as well as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) which aims to realize human rights for Uyghurs ethnic, as one of the ethnic Muslim minorities in China. Thus, in this thesis the authors aim to examine the strategies used by the WUC to fight for human rights for Uyghurs ethnic. In conducting the research, the authors use qualitative research methods that emphasize the presentation of events descriptively and data collection using library research or literature studies, then the data sorted according to research needs. The authors were also assisted with the use of the concepts of NGO, Human Rights and Diaspora to answer the research questions of this thesis. In the end, the authors emphasis that the strategy used by WUC was divided into two, a nonviolent strategy that emphasized the dissemination of information and image of the WUC as a peace organization and lobbying western countries, such as Europe and the United States to get a support.

Keywords: *World Uyghur Congress, Uyghur ethnic, diaspora, human rights, non-governmental organization*

Introduction

This paper discusses the strategy adopted by a regime in responding to human rights violations against ethnic groups in China. The regime is the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) which is an international non-governmental organization. The authors analyze how the WUC organizes strategies in fighting for human rights for the people of the Uyghur minority group. Uyghur ethnicity is the name of the indigenous ethnicity, mostly Muslim, who inhabit the Xinjiang province in China. Xinjiang itself is located in the northern part of China and has directly borders with several countries in Central Asia, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan which are countries with natural wealth in the form of oil and natural gas. The abundance of this potential has made China not hesitate to invest in large numbers in several Central Asian Countries. The evidence is in 2012, China invested

* Corresponding author.

250 billion US dollars in Central Asia (Stenhauer, 2017). The proximity of Central Asia makes Xinjiang a strategic value for China, so it is not surprising that Chinese government has taken various measures to maintain Xinjiang as part of its country despite the issue of separatism.

Uyghur ethnicity has become one of the topics of the international community in the last decade because it is corresponding with the issue of human rights violations. Human rights violations against the Uyghur ethnicity can be seen using the perspective of the UN Human Rights concept, which includes several things, namely violations of cultural, social, and economic, civil, and political and democratic rights. This is related to the security of a person in his community and avoiding cultural threats, such as oppression, inter-ethnic violence, the domination of certain groups (Chen, 2011). Cultural rights also provide flexibility for everyone to develop and carry out their cultural activities (Senjaya, 2010).

Since Xinjiang is under China's rule, there has been a massive mobilization of Han ethnicity which has marginalized Uyghur ethnicity. The impact of the Chinese government's mobilization and policies in Xinjiang is the emergence of various human rights violations, such as the violation of cultural rights against Uyghurs and the right of language. The language used by the Uyghurs is the language of their own culture which has nothing to do with Mandarin. The presence of the majority Han in Xinjiang has an impact on the language policy implemented by the central government where the language used in education and the media mostly uses Mandarin. Every educational institution in Xinjiang requires graduates to master Mandarin (*putonghua*) (Finley, 2013). Also, in 2005 the Chinese government issued a Religious Affairs Regulation policy that aimed at controlling the religious activities of minorities ethnic suspected of being involved in terrorism, including Uyghur ethnicity. This policy makes *imams* or Muslim leaders in mosques obliged to take education classes from the Chinese government and prohibits Uyghur children from going to mosques before turning 18 (Kanat, 2014). Also, various mosques and religious activities are closely guarded by government officers. These rules make it unsafe for Uyghur ethnicity to simply practice their culture and religion. This ban was then followed by the government's Project Beauty Campaign policy which prohibited the existence of the burqa and niqab (hijab) for women, and for men it was forbidden to grow beards. All of these things are prohibited to do in public places (Clarke, 2017).

Furthermore, there are social and economic rights violations. The population of Xinjiang is divided into two, namely the northern region where the majority of the population is Han ethnicity and the southern region where the majority population is Uyghur ethnicity. The North is urban cities with good economies with an average population of Han ethnicity, while in the South, such as Khotan and Kashgar, 90% of

the population is Uyghur ethnic with regional conditions are including poor areas in China (Finley, 2013). In 2009, the income of the people in the north was three times from the south. The poor economic condition of the Uyghurs is due to language problems and there are difficulties in fostering trust in Uyghurs who have been labeled as separatists and terrorists by the government (Kaltman, 2007).

Moreover, there are civil and political rights violations experienced by Uyghurs ethnicity because of the various discriminations that have been committed. The Strike Hard policy aimed at countering terrorism was carried out with various accusations and sudden arrests without procedures (Rayila, 2011). In 2002, 22 Uyghurs were arrested on terrorism charges and detained at Guantanamo Bay but in the end 16 of them were released because they were not proven involved in terrorism. Besides, ethnic Uyghurs also face discrimination in several major celebrations in China, such as the 2008 Olympic celebrations, China's 60th birthday in 2009, and the Shanghai Expo event in 2010. In all these, Uyghurs are closely examined by local police so that they do not get permission to join the events (Rayila, 2011).

Another violation that can be seen in Uyghur society is the opening of a Political Education Camp in 2013 in the city of Turpan, which is one of the cities with the Uyghur majority in Xinjiang. The camp then spread to various locations in Xinjiang, such as Kashgar and other cities which are cities with Uyghur ethnicity as the majority (Zenz & Leibold, 2017). The prisoners in the camp were divided into 4 types, namely type A, who were prisoners of the Strike Hard policy, type B who were considered stubborn, type C who were exposed to extremism and type D, who was similar to type C but still less exposed to extremism (Zenz & Leibold, 2017). Inside the camp, prisoners were indoctrinated to forget their native culture. China employs about 260 police units of ethnic Han origin because the requirements are required to work as police, and camp staff are Han ethnicity, fluent in Mandarin, and have at least graduated from high school level (Zenz & Leibold, 2017).

Various cases that lead to human rights violations have received attention from various countries and international organizations. Several countries, such as the United States and Turkey, had tried to intervene in these human rights issues but only in the form of reprimands against China. Meanwhile, international organizations often provide annual reports and media coverage to convey this case to the world, including the Uyghur Human Rights Project, the Uyghur American Association, and the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) (Stenhauer, 2017). From these three organizations, the WUC is the largest and most routinely voicing cases of human rights violations against the community. The WUC itself is an international organization that voices the interests of ethnic Uyghurs in Xinjiang and other areas. This study tries to describe the strategies used by the WUC in voicing the rights of

Uyghurs ethnicity, how effective the strategies have been, and the extent to which these strategies have impacted the Uyghur ethnic community.

Research Methods

This paper uses a qualitative approach and descriptive type of research to obtain information about the current situation and see the relationship between existing variables. In explaining the variables in this study, namely the WUC strategy and human rights violations experienced by the Uyghurs, the authors explain descriptively after collecting as much information as possible about the two variables which are then recorded and analyzed to produce an interpretation as an answer to the question from problems that have been arranged.

The sequence of data analysis in qualitative methods is first, reading the data repeatedly while reducing overlapping or repetitive information. Second, see the significance or importance of the data obtained. Third, classify data that have similarities or matches with other data. Fourth, look for patterns or themes that bind thoughts to one another. Fifth, constructing a framework to get the essence of what the data is trying to convey.

The history of Uyghurs mobilization by Chinese Government

Xinjiang and China have had a long history until they were officially under China's rule in 1949 along with the emergence of the People's Republic of China at that time. In the past, the Xinjiang region was colonized by Kirgizstan and Mongolia which caused this area to be divided into two areas known as East Turkestan for areas controlled by Mongolia and West Turkestan controlled by Kirgizstan. West Turkestan eventually developed independently and now became Tajikistan, while East Turkestan is now Xinjiang Province with Uyghurs as the original ethnicity of the region who managed to break away from colonialism and stand-alone in 1876. However, this did not last long because in 1884 the Dynasty from China managed to control the area and named it Xinjiang (Bhattacharya, 2003). Based on the history of the formation of Xinjiang, it can be understood that the existence of Kirgizstan culture which is quite attached to make the indigenous people of Xinjiang, is the Uyghur ethnicity embrace Islam and have a different culture from China. Traditionally and culturally the Uyghurs have traditions such as those of Central Asia and the Middle East. In terms of language, they use their own language with Arabic letters (Stenhauer, 2017). For the face shape of the Uyghur ethnicity, it does not look like Chinese in general.

The first thing that China attempted under the rule of Mao Tse Dong was to take full control of Xinjiang province. One of the methods used was to mobilize Han ethnicity as the original ethnic group and the majority in China to the Xinjiang region under the pretext of being a development policy. Other methods were also used to achieve assimilation in Xinjiang by implementing the Chinese government or administration in Xinjiang, party members who were predominantly composed of Han ethnicity, and education of Confucianism or Chinese culture (Godbole & Goud, 2012).

The Han ethnic mobilization had a very significant impact on the percentage of Xinjiang's people. In 1949, Han ethnicity made up 7% of the population in Xinjiang but by 2002, this ethnicity had inclined to 40.61%. This number is inversely proportional to the Uyghur ethnicity, which initially became a majority that in turn become a minority. In 1949, the Uyghur ethnicity was 75% but in 2002 this number drastically decreased to 47%. The two ethnicities are also separated by location, many Han people live in the city of Urumqi as the capital of Xinjiang with very good economic development with a GDP of 24.9 in 2002 while Uyghurs live mostly in the suburbs, namely Kashgar City with a GDP of only 6.9 (Bhattacharya, 2003).

The mobilization carried out by the Chinese government aims to improve the economy of Xinjiang in general, but in fact, the only areas that get good economic improvement are the northern Xinjiang region, which is the Urumqi City area and its surroundings. Meanwhile, the southern region of Xinjiang, namely Kashgar City, and its surroundings, has not experienced economic progress. The Han ethnic group has a fairly good educational background so that the majority work in the industrial sectors while the Uyghurs who have low education and have jobs as farmers in Kashgar City which provide raw materials for existing industries (Lee, 2014). This disparity indicates the different life between the Han in Urumqi and the Uyghurs in Kashgar.

Figure 1. Map of Xinjiang Province (Xinjiang Maps, 2018)



The existence of different treatment from the Chinese government became the beginning of a form of discrimination against Uyghurs ethnicity. This led to the emergence of separatist actions in 1990 which were carried out by an organization called ETIM (*East Turkestan Islamic Movement*). ETIM started to fight back against the Chinese government with attacked on government officials which killed 6 people. This action sparked riots that took place in the Baren, Kizilsu area, which is in the southern region of Xinjiang province, adjacent to Kashgar City. The act of attack in the end caused great riots between ethnic groups and the government. The emergence of ETIM was the starting point for the emergence of other separatist organizations such as the Eastern Turkestan Popular Liberation Front based in Turkey, the Committee for Eastern Turkestan based in Kazakhstan, and several other organizations that have grown along with the emergence of the term "*jihad*" (struggle in the name of religion) through the resistance agenda in Xinjiang. Although they have the same goal, namely to make Xinjiang a country, these organizations have their own ways, views, and approaches in realizing their desire to become an independent state. From 1991 to 1993 attacks were carried out by separatists by detonating buses and government buildings in Kashgar City (Xinjiang Maps, 2018).

The rebellious actions by the ETIM and other groups were reacted with a policy called the "Strike Hard Policy" by the Chinese government. This policy is an act against terrorism because these organizations are considered both rebels and terrorists because the background of ETIM members are Muslim and are considered affiliated with terrorist groups in the Middle East (Stenhauer p. 3-4). The Strike Hard Policy aims to fight 3 crimes, that is terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism. This

policy is also referred to as a hardline approach because terrorism is seen as a very serious crime (Godbole & Goud, 2012). Various actions carried out by separatist's elements in Xinjiang have an impact on civilians, that is ordinary people, especially the Uyghurs. The Uyghur ethnic group is then labeled as an ethnic rebel by the Chinese government and targeted of human rights violations that started with the Strike Hard policy.

The Strike Hard policy was the beginning for Chinese government to strengthen surveillance on Uyghurs to limit their space. Religious days such as *Ramadan* are under surveillance, mosques are closed and imams arrested for being seen as a source of radicalism through "*illegal religious activities*" (Stenhauer, 2017). Then, China and Uyghurs have each other's perceptions. Uyghurs see China as oppressor and China see Uyghurs as a group of terrorists. Even though the Strike Hard policy has been implemented, riots in several cities in Xinjiang are still frequent, especially in the city of Kashgar. The southern of Xinjiang region has become the center of attention of the Chinese government by exercising strict control (Wardhani, 2011). The following is a list number of violent incidents that have occurred in Xinjiang region as a form of resistance by separatist groups.

Figure 2. Violent Incident in Xinjiang (2008-2013) (Lee, 2014)

| Violent Incident | Time & Place | Description |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Shache Violent Attack | 2013.12.30, Kashgar | Shache public security bureau was attacked by nine ethnic minority Uyghurs. Eight suspects were shot dead by the Police, and one was arrested. |
| Shufu Violent Attack | 2013.12.15, Kashgar | The police were under attack by an explosive device and a machete when arresting suspects. Two policemen were killed. Fourteen suspects were shot dead and eight were arrested. |
| Bachu Violent Attack | 2013.11.16, Kashgar | The mob assaulted a police station by wielding knives and axes. Two policemen were killed and two were injured. All nine suspects were all shot dead. |
| Tiananmen Square Car Blaze | 2013.10.2, Beijing | A car crashed and exploded in the Tiananmen Square. Chinese police said they found knives, iron rods, canisters of gasoline, and a flag covered in religious |

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | slogans inside the car. Three suspects and two tourists were killed and 38 bystanders were injured. |
| Needle Attack | 2009.08.17, Urumqi | Three Uyghurs randomly assaulted people by syringe stabbings or needle attacks and triggered public scare in Urumqi. Official statistics showed more than 100 people were attacked. |
| 2009 Urumqi Riots | 2009.07.15, Urumqi | A large-scale violence that involves with a series of violent attacks targeted ethnic Han people. There were 198 people killed and 1700 injured. |
| 2008 Kashgar Attack | 2008.08.04, Kashgar | A terrorist attack initiated by two men who drove a truck and killed jogging police officers with grenades and machetes. There were 16 officers killed and 16 injured. Two suspects were arrested. |

The violent incident that occurred had an impact to the problem of human rights violations worse than before. It also affects to all Uyghur society even though they are not a part of separatist group. Human rights violations that were originally just discrimination have worsened with various restrictions in daily life, such as the problem of religious freedom. This condition became worse after the incident on July 5, 2009 in Urumqi City. At the moment, there was an ethnic Uyghur protest demanding responsibility for the killing of two people because they were accused of harassing two Han women in Guangdong province (Rayila, 2011). The Uyghur group asked for further investigation because they did not see true evidence of the alleged sexual harassment. However, these actions ended in riots because the government refused the request of the protesters and even deployed many officers to carry out security which led to a conflict that worsened the situation. After this incident, the relation between the Uyghurs ethnic and the government deteriorated.

After the 2009 riots, the Uyghurs were increasingly under pressure. They found it difficult to access housing because rental prices were intentionally increased and access to jobs was increasingly restricted (Rayila, 2011, p. 4). In 2014, a ban on wearing the headscarf (*Hijab*) in schools and at work began to appear, also a ban on fasting in the month of Ramadan for students, teachers, and workers (Sun, 2014). In 2016 there was a ban for Uyghur ethnic to travel to 26 countries which were considered sensitive

countries because they were countries with a majority Muslim population. These countries included: Afghanistan, Libya, Thailand, Algeria, Malaysia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Nigeria, Turkmenistan, Egypt, Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Russia, Uzbekistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, Kazakhstan, South Sudan, Kenya, Syria, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

In 2016, Xinjiang was under Chen Quanguo's rule which was chosen as party secretary in Xinjiang. Chen was previously assigned to Tibet in 2011 by the central government to bring stability to Tibet. Chen had tightened the security by recruiting 2,500 police officers during his five-year term in Tibet. Chen did the same thing in 2016-2017 in Xinjiang, which was recruiting 90,000 police to improve the security environment. Chen was considered as a figure who had experience in protecting the area from the threat of separatism (Zenz & Leibold, 2017). During his leadership, Chen further exacerbated human rights violations in Uyghur by opening a Political Education Camp. This camp has served to educate people who were considered suspicious and threatening, such as activists and suspected terrorists, most of whom were Uyghur ethnic. They were arrested without a warrant and often experienced torture in the camp, especially during the interrogation (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

In 2017, 120,000 Uyghur people were arrested and put in the camps. The camps are claimed to be a way to return the ideology of prisoners to the way they should because they were considered to have been affected by religious extremism. The methods used at the camp have been various, from unity education to inculcate Chinese ideology, psychological counseling, and study about government policies (Human Rights Watch, 2018, p. 13). Various human rights violations continued until 2018. The United Nations said the human rights violations in Uyghur had reached their worst condition in the last 5 years (Tempo.co.id, 2018).

Development of the World Uyghur Congress (WUC)

The WUC is an organization formed on 16 April 2004 in Germany which was a combination of two organizations, namely the East Turkestan National Congress and the World Uyghur Youth Congress. This organization aims to promote the rights of the Uyghur people in a peaceful, non-violent, and democratic way to strive for the political fate of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang. This organization began to expand its relations by establishing relationships with other Uyghur organizations as well as relations with the US Congress (Washington), the EU, and the Human Rights Council at the United Nations (World Uyghur Congress, 2018). The WUC was pioneered by a group of people with the Uyghur backgrounds who have traveled to various

countries. Much has been done by the WUC in response to human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

According to the concept of Non-Governmental Organization from Coplin, the WUC is an organization formed as a combination of groups or organizations that have the same social goals. The WUC is the largest Uyghur ethnic organization that houses dozens of other Uyghur associations spread across various countries, such as the Uyghur America Association (UAA), Uyghur Canada Association (UCA), Uyghur Australia Association and other associations spread across 16 countries. Each association leader has a different role in the WUC as the central organization (YW Chen, 2011). Dozens of active organizations engaged in various fields of activity provide support and are affiliated with the WUC.

Human rights violations are one of the reasons that underlie the existence of the NGO. If we see WUC from Volker Heins concept, WUC arose because of the violation in the aspect of mistreatment, being ignored, not being considered the same, and getting a bad image. The victims of this violation are the Uyghur ethnic minority. Therefore, the WUC wants a solution that able to end these violations.

Each WUC leader has its own charisma and influence. For example, Rebiya Kadeer is the leader WUC who had attracted international attention. Rebiya Kadeer was not only known as the leader of the WUC but also as an Uyghur activist and politician that had a high international link, especially in the US. Rebiya also often visited several countries, such as Australia, America, Germany, Tibet, and other countries to voice out the Uyghur ethnic rights in front of the parliament, state officials, and other agencies (Chen, 2011). In each of her visits, Rebiya was always covered by various media which indirectly helped the campaign on the issue of Uyghur ethnicity. The media were Voice of America, Free Tibet Radio, Taiwan Central News Agency, RBB Cultural Radio,

Since 2004, as an organization that avoids violence and promotes dialogue and negotiation, the WUC has conducted various lobbies and approaches to many stakeholders to gain support from them. The WUC also has collaborated with several other organizations (NGOs), such as Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Association for Threatened People, Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO) and National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Some types of cooperation have been made with these organizations, ranging from exchanging information to obtaining financial assistance. The WUC is also actively making contact with several media, such as CNN, BBC, Reuters, Al-Jazeera, CBC, and other media. They share information in two ways between one and another, where the WUC occasionally provided information to help disseminate the Uyghur ethnic situation or it could be the media that contacting the WUC to conduct interviews or to clarify

information (World Uyghur Congress, 2009). The WUC also increasingly involves in various workshops, symposiums, and international seminars to promote the rights of Uyghur ethnic, such as a conference in Turkey attended by 250 people in February 2011 and also in Italy in the same month where it was attended by 400 people. Another conference that the WUC involved in was held in Balkans, attended by members of parliament (Congress, 2010)

On June 26, 2012, the WUC attended the 20th UN Human Rights Council Conference Session for the first time. In the conference related to human rights, the WUC, represented by Michael Phillips as the WUC Project Coordinator, had an opportunity to deliver a speech about the situation experienced by the Uyghur ethnic group. In the presentation, the WUC discussed the protection of all forms of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights (Uyghur, 2012). Also, the WUC uses new ways to voice human rights violations experienced by the Uyghur ethnic by issuing an annual report which has started in 2014. The report contains various human rights violations committed by the Chinese government against Uyghur ethnic for one full year (World Uyghur Congress, 2014).

Furthermore, the WUC held a conference in the European Parliament on March 29 2016 in collaboration with the Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO). The conference aimed directly at the human rights violations experienced by the Uyghur ethnic with the theme "Forbidden to Move, Forbidden to Pray: The Plight of Uyghur in China" (Congress, May Newsletter, 2017). The WUC's struggle was also carried out by sending an open letter at the G20 meeting held in China in 2016. The WUC sent an open letter together with various other organizations and activists from various countries. The contents of the letter were about China's treatment that did not respect the rights of Uyghur civil society and WUC asked China to release the innocent Uyghur prisoners.

In March 2018, Dolkun Isa, an Uyghur activist, received an invitation to the United States Department of State and had an opportunity to meet with the International Ambassadors for Religious Freedom who was a member of the previous senate. Dolkun also attended the United States congress meeting on the issue of religious freedom (World Uyghur Congress, 2018). WUC's visits to America took place several times during 2018. During various visits to seek support, the WUC also sent a parallel report to the UN Committee on the Elimination for Racial Discrimination (CERD) regarding the discriminatory treatment perpetrated by China against the Uyghur ethnic. The report would later be considered in an international session (World Uyghur Congress, 2018).

The World Uyghur Congress's Efforts

To strive for the rights of the Uyghur ethnicity, the WUC has implemented several strategies, including using nonviolent methods, that is focused on the use of the internet as a campaign platform and conducting lobbying activities to Western countries.

Campaign on the Internet

The main objective of the campaign on the Internet is sending the narrative about the conditions experienced by the Uyghurs in the issue of human rights violations. As explained in the NGO concept, the delivery of this narrative is important to attract sympathy from the international community. These various violations were then disseminated on the internet. On the campaign through the website, the WUC also explains the history and culture of Uyghurs which are very different from Chinese culture, especially in terms of language (Kuscu, 2014). Uyghurs are different from the Chinese nation and have the right to maintain their identity, which is something that the diaspora community is very proud of. The purpose of the diaspora is to give the right to their identity to develop without any pressure from any party. The website is an easy way to attract supporters who feel empathy for the cases experienced by the Uyghurs. The WUC website receives 40,000 - 50,000 visits per day (World Uyghur Congress, 2009). The WUC is not like other diaspora websites which only include news adapted from various media, but the WUC has an independent press release that regularly issues articles, news, and periodical reports every month and even every week. The WUC website uses several languages; English, Uyghur, German, Chinese, and Japanese (Kuscu, 2014). The method that has been used by the WUC is in accordance with the NGO concept described by Heins, which is to disseminate as much information as possible to get sympathy from the international community.

Lobbying Various Actors/Stake Holders

Lobbying by the WUC is useful to attract sympathy from various parties. There are several NGOs that have collaborated with WUC including Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Association for Threatened People, Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO), Human Rights Without Frontier (HRWF), Rafto Foundation, Human Rights in China, Interfaith International and National Endowment for Democracy (NED) (World Uyghur Congress, 2009, pp. 6-7). The forms of cooperation that are built also vary, ranging from assistance in the form of funds to various information about the situation experienced by the Uyghurs which are then disseminated and appointed in meetings or sessions within the United Nations.

The WUC actively does lobbying to the United Nations. WUC's first opportunity at the UN began with obtaining permission to attend the UNHRC Human Rights

meeting. Initially, the status obtained by WUC was only observatory status, which only allowed WUC to be an observer at the meeting but then after attending several meetings, WUC received consultative status which allowed them to deliver statements regarding cases experienced by Uyghurs. Furthermore, the WUC in collaboration with UNPO sent a report to the UN Commission Against Torture (CAT) which was received and considered (World Uyghur Congress, 2009, pp. 12-13).

Every year, in every UN Human Rights meeting, WUC always attends to expand its lobby to many commissions of the UN. In 2018, WUC began its approach to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The approach was carried out by sending proposals or reports of human rights violations focusing on the issue of political education camps that have attracted international attention (World Uyghur Congress, 2018). This activity was also covered by several media such as the New York Times, Washington Post, Guardian, and BBC (World Uyghur Congress, 2018).

The various non-violent approaches mentioned above are a form of WUC's support for human rights enforcement in order to build a good image in the eyes of the international community. On its official website, the WUC emphasizes itself as an organization or a large platform established on behalf of the Uyghurs, both in Xinjiang and in other areas. The WUC claims to be an organization that strives for the rights of Uyghur ethnic through a peaceful method that emphasizes democracy and the principles of non-violence (World Uyghur Congress, 2018) The method of non-violence was chosen by the WUC because it learned from the form of resistance to violent actions carried out by the Uyghur group that only will be reciprocated by violence by the Chinese side.

The Milestones

WUC's struggle to realize human rights enforcement for ethnic Uyghurs emphasizes two methods, non-violent methods and approaches to Western countries. The method of nonviolence is carried out by using moderate ways, such as lobbying to other human rights NGOs and the United Nations, and also disseminating reports and news about human rights violations experienced by ethnic Uyghurs. The next method is approaching Western countries, like Europe and the United States that aims to get support. From these two methods, the WUC gained several milestones which in the end was able to raise the issue of human rights violations experienced by the Uyghurs as an international issue.

Raising the Uyghur issue at the UN Meeting

The WUC approach at the UN was carried out in various ways, such as attending various human rights meetings at the UN and routinely giving speech reports on human rights violations experienced by ethnic Uyghurs. This was done to attract sympathy and support from many UN member states. At the UN annual session on human rights in 2011, the WUC delivered proposals and speeches related to the Uyghur issue which received good responses from several countries, such as the United States, Germany, the Czech Republic, and Hungary (Uyghur, 2012). Even when the support was still in the form of verbal support delivered in the UN meeting but it had become a valuable achievement for the WUC in the last few years since WUC attended the annual UN Human Rights meeting.

Apart from the approaching to the human rights council, the WUC also lobbied the United Nations Economic Social Council (ECOSOC), a branch of the United Nations organization that focuses on solving social and economic problems. At ECOSOC, the WUC is granted permission to attend meetings as an NGO and has Consultative Status, which is a status that allows the WUC to be able to convey its views on an issue and influence policy in every ECOSOC session. WUC uses the forum to raise the cases experienced by ethnic Uyghurs (World Uyghur Congress, 2018). On May 17, 2018, China filed an objection to the existence of WUC in ECOSOC on terrorism charges and asked to remove the WUC from the organization. However, because of the close relationship between the WUC and the United States, WUC received support from the United States through the US Ambassador for ECOSOC, Kelley Currie. The United States also rejected China's request, so that the WUC was still in ECOSOC and had the right to submit its proposal regarding the Uyghurs (World Uyghur Congress, 2018).

WUC's efforts at the UN then further increased by filing a request to the UN Security Council to take any action against China over the construction of the camp which according to data from the WUC has detained 3 million people by 2018. Although in the end, there was still no international party allowed to investigate the camp, at least countries like Germany and France appreciated the WUC's efforts by giving a warning to China to close the camp and allow the Head of the UN Security Council to monitor it (Sharp, 2018).

Various media began to raise the issue of detention of the Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in China, including *The Diplomat*, which continued to highlight this case based on various UN sessions. The diplomat reported that various reports from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International that had exchanged information and collaborated with the WUC had been received by the United Nations. It said that there had been 3 million detainees in the camp. In addition, the Diplomat media branch in

the United Kingdom also visited the location, Xinjiang, and confirmed the existence of the camp. In addition, the Diplomat also began to discuss in detail the various human rights violations that the Uyghur ethnic group had to experience, such as the reason of prisoners were put in camps was just because they downloaded the *WhatsApp* application, had family or relatives abroad, accessing religious materials through the internet, visiting certain countries and sometimes even without any clear reason. In the camp, the torture also reportedly happened, such as beatings, disturbing sleep and others (Rogers, 2019). The news about Uyghurs then made more and more people find out about Uyghurs, as shown by Google search data that in 2018, searches about Uyghurs had increased from the previous few years.

Received International Support

The support from the international community comes from Western countries that have been lobbied by the WUC, such as the United States and Europe. But with the increasing number of media coverage and talks about Uyghurs at the United Nations, other countries have also given their support. However, Western countries are the main goal of the WUC to get support because they are the areas that uphold individual freedom, including freedom of religion. International supports do not only come from Western countries, but also from Turkey. Although Turkey has recently had good relations with China, especially with the existence of the Belt and Road Initiative, Turkey has reprimanded China regarding the Political Education camp case which is claimed to have detained one million innocent people.

Conclusion

From the previous explanation, it can be seen that the two strategies carried out by the WUC to strive for human rights for the Uyghurs have succeeded in disseminating Uyghur issues to the international community. This is the success of reporting dissemination and lobbying to NGOs, the United Nations, and Western countries. the WUC has also been able to explain the difference between this organization and the ETIM group to the international community. This is the result of the emphasis on non-violent methods by the WUC. The WUC has also been able to get the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations to exert pressure on China. However, until now the WUC has not been able to completely stop the violations committed by China because of the enormous power it has. Especially in the UN, China has a Veto power as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

The WUC can carry out its function as an NGO that aims to spread the issue of human rights violations against Uyghurs in the international world. The WUC has also succeeded in taking advantage of the UN forum to ask member countries to put

pressure on China for its human rights violations. This is a form of Uyghur diaspora's concern in striving for the human rights of their brothers and sisters in Xinjiang.

Bibliography

- AsiaNews.it. (2018, May 23). US Against China's Request to Exclude World Uyghur Congress from UN's ECOSOC. *AsiaNews.it*. Retrieved March 8, 2019, from <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/US-against-China%E2%80%99s-request-to-exclude-World-Uyghur-Congress-from-UN%E2%80%99s-ECOSOC-43965.html>
- Bhattacharya, A. (2003). Conceptualising Uyghur separatism in Chinese nationalism. *Strategic Analysis*, 27(3), 357–381. Taylor & Francis.
- Chen, Y.-W. (2011). Transporting conflicts via migratory routes: A social network analysis (SNA) of uyghur international mobilization. *NTS-Asia Research Paper No, 5*.
- Chen, Y.-W. (2012). A Network approach to the study of the World Uyghur Congress' global outreach: A methodological note. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 17(1), 77–88. Springer.
- China Highlights. (n.d.). Xinjiang Maps. *China Highlights*. Retrieved November 28, 2018, from <https://www.chinahighlights.com/xinjiang/map.htm>
- Clarke, M. (2017). The impact of ethnic minorities on China's foreign policy: The case of Xinjiang and the Uyghur. *China report*, 53(1), 1–25. SAGE Publications Sage India: New Delhi, India.
- Finley, J. N. S. (2013). *The art of symbolic resistance: Uyghur identities and Uyghur-Han relations in contemporary Xinjiang*. Brill.
- Godbole, A., & Goud, A. S. (2012). *China's Xinjiang Problem: The 2009 Riots and Its Aftermath*. Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses.
- Human Rights Watch. (2018). *Eradicating Ideological Viruses, China's Campaign of Repression Against Xinjiang's Muslim*. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Kaltman, B. (2014). *Under the heel of the dragon: Islam, racism, crime, and the Uighur in China* (Vol. 7). Ohio University Press.
- Kanat, K. (2014). Repression in China and Its Consequences in Xinjiang. *Hudson Institute*, (July 20, 2014), <http://bit.ly/1Q5PLVD>.
- Kanat, K. (2016). The securitization of the Uyghur question and its challenges. *Insight Turkey 2016-Winter 2016 (Vol. 18, No. 1): Interdependence Between Germany & Turkey*, 191. SET Vakfı İktisadi İşletmesi.
- Kuscu, I. (2014). The Uyghur diaspora in cyberspace: Identity and homeland cause. *Bilig*, 69, 143. Ahmet Yesesvi Universitesi, Management Center.
- Lee, R. (2014). Unrest in Xinjiang, Uyghur Province in China. *Aljazeera Centre for Studies*, 02–20.

- Rayila, M. (2011). The pain of a Nation: The invisibility of Uyghurs in China Proper. *The Equal Rights Review*, 6, 45.
- Robert, B. (2019, February 15). The World Must Save the Uyghurs. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved March 9, 2019, from <https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/the-world-must-save-the-uyghurs>
- Rodríguez, P. A. (2013). Violence resistance in Xinjiang (China): Tracking militancy, ethnic riots and “knife-wielding” terrorist (1978-2012). *Historia Actual Online*, (30), 135–149. Asociación de Historia Actual (AHA).
- Senjaya, A. A. (2010). *Hak Asasi Manusia, Dasar-dasar HAM dan Penerapannya*. Bekasi: Nusa Agung.
- Sharp, A. (2018, September 23). Exiled Uyghur Leader See UN Security Council Action on China. *NIKKEI Asian Review*. Retrieved February 23, 2019, from <https://asia.nikkei.com/Editor-s-Picks/Interview/Exiled-Uyghur-leader-seeks-UN-Security-Council-action-on-China>
- Steinhauer, I. (2017). International Social Support and Intervention: The Uyghur Movement-Xinjiang Province, China. *Undergraduate Honors Thesis*. University of Colorado Boulder.
- Sun, Y. (2014). The Roots of China’s Ethnic Conflicts. *Current History*, 113(764), 231. Current History, Inc.
- Tadjbakhsh, S., & Chenoy, A. (2007). *Human security: Concepts and implications* (Vol. 51). Routledge.
- Tempo.co. (2018, November 5). Dugaan Pelanggaran HAM, Aktivis Minta PBB Tekan Cina. *Tempo*. Retrieved November 6, 2018, from <https://dunia.tempo.co/read/1143116/dugaan-pelanggaran-ham-aktivis-minta-pbb-tekan-cina/full&view=ok>
- Wardhani, B. L. (2011). Respon Cina atas Gerakan Pan-Uyghuris di Provinsi Xinjiang. *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan dan Politik*, 24(4), 292–301.
- World Uyghur Congress. (2009). *World Uyghur Congress Activities Report (October 2006 – March 2009)*. Munich: World Uyghur Congress.
- World Uyghur Congress. (2010). *World Uyghur Congress Newsletter No. 1*. Munich: World Uyghur Congress.
- World Uyghur Congress. (2011, April). *World Uyghur Congress Newsletter No. 9*. World Uyghur Congress. Retrieved March 8, 2019, from <https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?cat=284&paged=9>
- World Uyghur Congress. (2012, July). *World Uyghur Congress Newsletter*. World Uyghur Congress. Retrieved February 6, 2019, from <https://us4.campaignarchive.com/?u=29a2adbe90c2a0c8e045eb20e&id=8323e82506&e>
- World Uyghur Congress. (2014). *2014 Report on Human Rights Violations in East Turkestan*. Munich: World Uyghur Congress.

- World Uyghur Congress. (2016, June). World Uyghur Congress: June Newsletter. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 6, 2019, from [https://us4.campaignarchive.com/?u=29a2adbe90c2a0c8e045eb20e&id=d01fb378f1&e=\[UNIQID\]](https://us4.campaignarchive.com/?u=29a2adbe90c2a0c8e045eb20e&id=d01fb378f1&e=[UNIQID])
- World Uyghur Congress. (2017, May). May Newsletter. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 6, 2019, from <https://mailchi.mp/1cee15af0fa8/world-uyghur-congress-may-newsletter>
- World Uyghur Congress. (2018a, April 6). April Newsletter. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 7, 2019, from <https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?cat=284&paged=2>
- World Uyghur Congress. (2018b, August). August Newsletter. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 7, 2019, from <https://mailchi.mp/e7a503af24a8/august-newsletter-1389745>
- World Uyghur Congress. (2018c, September 2). September Newsletter. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 7, 2019, from <https://mailchi.mp/c0b8c2b280a5/august-newsletter-1397865>
- World Uyghur Congress. (n.d.). Media. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 6, 2019a, from https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?page_id=31465
- World Uyghur Congress. (n.d.). Who We Are. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved November 7, 2018b, from http://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?page_id=33467
- World Uyghur Congress. (n.d.). World Uyghur Congress 4th General Assembly. *World Uyghur Congress*. Retrieved February 6, 2019c, from https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?page_id=29526
- World Uyghur Congress Fanpage. (n.d.). Page Information. *Facebook*. Retrieved February 7, 2019, from https://web.facebook.com/pg/uyghurcongress/ads/?ref=page_internal
- Zenz, A., & Leibold, J. (2017). Chen Quanguo: The strongman behind Beijing's securitization strategy in Tibet and Xinjiang. *China Brief*, 17(12), 16–24.