



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY

United States of America

Press Release

For Immediate Release:

April 2, 2019

Contact:

Harris Zafar

harris.zafar@ahmadiyya.us

@AhmadiyyaUSA

Ahmadi Muslims Unite Hundreds of U.S. Lawmakers in a Call to Action to Address Plight of Uyghur Population in China

***125 volunteers from over 30 states host Uyghur Muslim leadership at
Congressional Caucus reception***

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA, among the nation's leading organizations advocating for international religious freedom, received bipartisan support Monday for its ninth annual "Day on the Hill." The event drew 125 Community leaders from over 30 states, who partnered with Uyghur Muslim leadership to brief over 200 U.S. Congressional offices on the crisis involving the Uyghur population. According to published reports by the U.S. State Department, Human Rights Watch and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), authorities in China have detained at least one million Uyghur Muslims in re-education camps, denying them freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of movement and the right to due process. The Uyghur population has been subject to widespread mass surveillance to restrict their religious activities as Muslims, enduring major cruelties such as torture, beatings, food deprivation, and solitary confinement.

As co-chairs of the bi-partisan 34-member Ahmadiyya Muslim Congressional Caucus, the only Muslim caucus in Congress, U.S. Representatives Jackie Speier (D-CA) and Peter King (R-NY) headlined a special reception to draw awareness to the plight of the Uyghurs. They were joined by fellow U.S. lawmakers and Ahmadi and Uyghur leaders from across the nation, including Rushan Abbas (Campaign for Uyghurs), who shared personal accounts of the atrocities leveled against her Uyghur brethren. President Trump's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Sam Brownback, along with subject matter experts and religious freedom advocates, also participated in the event and emphasized the need for immediate intervention to prevent further atrocities against the Uyghur Muslim minority.

"The effort being made to help the Uyghur community is truly outstanding. It's very unusual that a group that is under siege themselves [like the Ahmadi community] takes the time to reach out on behalf of another community, realizing that religious freedom must be truly universal. You bring us all together," said Rep. Peter King (R-NY).

“Even as you are concerned of persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan, you have always been part of an effort to go beyond yourselves. That’s extraordinary,” said Rep. Jackie Speier (D-NY). *“The fact that we have a million Uyghur Muslims in internment camps in China and there’s hardly a blip in the radio or television about it is truly shocking, and I fear we may repeat history if we don’t learn from the past.”*

“Regarding the Uyghur issue, there is nothing more important than our commitment to human rights, dignity and freedom, and if we cannot uphold those values abroad, then where are we as a country?” said Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL).

“I am delighted you advocate for the Rohingyas and Uyghurs. You bringing and pushing for them is a wonderful thing,” said Sam Brownback, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. *“China seems to be at war with faith; it’s a war they will not win. Faith is how people direct their souls; it’s something that lives within people. We need to push aggressively on the plight of the Uyghurs. Include these issues also in your prayers and put them up before God.”*

“Everything that makes the Uyghurs unique has been targeted and treated as abnormality: language, culture, religion, history and ethnic identity. All normal activities in Islam are being banned and labelled as ‘religious extremism’ as part of a ‘war on terror,’” said Rushan Abbas, Founder and Director of the Campaign for Uyghurs. *“The only crime of my sister and the other millions of Uyghur Muslims suffering is being Uyghur Muslim. It is a crime against humanity and civilization – collectively punishing an ethnic group should not be allowed in 2019. I thank members of the American Ahmadi community for your solidarity.”*

“There is nothing more powerful and potent than watching Ahmadi Muslims advocating for Uyghur Muslims,” said Sophie Richardson, Director of the Asia Division for Human Rights Watch. *“There is literally no basis in Chinese or international law for what Chinese authorities have done to the Uyghurs. It’s very distressing to see Muslim organizations sell out Uyghur Muslims. We urge all governments to relentlessly, publicly and unapologetically call to end to the persecution of the Uyghur community.”*

“The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has been alarmed about the situation for Uyghurs and this past year there has been a marked downturn,” said Dwight Bashir, Director of Research & Policy for the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. *“The sheer numbers of those detained in camps and the degree to which the government is willing to go needs to be monitored. We will continue to be unflinching and unwavering in our support of the [Uyghur and Ahmadi communities] and in our advice and recommendations to the U.S. government on these issues.”*

“His Holiness, the spiritual leader of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, told a bi-partisan Congress seven years ago that without justice, there can be no peace in the world. Without liberties being protected, we are in danger of losing our own peace,” said Imam Azhar Haneef, National Vice President of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA. *“I appeal to all of us as American citizens to think not just about what’s happening in our own country and to think about the words ‘with liberty and justice for all’ in our Pledge of Allegiance. Let us stand together on these words and bring them to all who need them, including the Uyghur Muslims.”*

“As a community that is persecuted ourselves, we are deeply grief-stricken at the extreme persecution of the Uyghur community in China and the general silence about this crisis,” said Amjad Mahmood Khan, National Director of Public Affairs for Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA. *“The cruelties committed at this scale amount to crimes against humanity requiring immediate intervention.”*

About the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community:

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a dynamic, reformist and fast-growing international movement within Islam. Founded in 1889, the Community spans more than 200 countries with tens of millions of members. Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA, established in 1920, is among the first American-Muslim organizations.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the only Islamic organization to believe that the long-awaited messiah has come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) of Qadian, India. Ahmad claimed to be the metaphorical second coming of Jesus of Nazareth and the divine guide, whose advent was foretold by the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad. The Community believes that God sent Ahmad, like Jesus, to end religious wars, condemn bloodshed and reinstitute morality, justice and peace. Ahmad’s advent has brought about an unprecedented era of Islamic revival and moderation. He divested Muslims of fanatical beliefs and practices by vigorously championing Islam’s true and essential teachings.

###