
US LAWMAKERS URGE ACTION ON 'CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY' IN CHINA

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US lawmakers on Wednesday (Jan 8) called for President Donald Trump's administration to impose sanctions over rights abuses in China as they released a report describing "crimes against humanity" against the Uighur minority.

In a wide-ranging annual report, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, which tracks human rights in the Asian power, voiced alarm at Beijing's incarceration of more than one million Uighurs and other Muslims in the western region of Xinjiang.

"The Commission believes Chinese authorities may be committing crimes against humanity against the Uighur people and other Turkic Muslims," it said.

Representative Chris Smith, a member of the commission, pointed to Uighur witnesses who said they were targeted for their Muslim faith.

"We are talking about crimes against humanity on a massive scale," Smith told a news conference.

"We are talking, with regards to what is being done to the Uighurs, something we have not seen since World War II. And the Chinese government, particularly (President) Xi Jinping, needs to be held accountable for this egregious behaviour," he said.

Senator Marco Rubio, a close ally of President Donald Trump and co-chair of the commission, vowed that Congress would soon pass an act that seeks sanctions on officials over abuses and restricts exports of surveillance and other equipment seen as assisting in repression in Xinjiang.

The Democratic-led House of Representatives and Republican-led Senate need to reconcile similar acts they approved last year.

"The House and Senate agree on what we're trying to do. Just the language has to be identical," Rubio said, without promising a date.

Lawmakers said it was crucial that the Trump administration implements the Uighur rights law - as well as a separate act on Hong Kong and an upcoming initiative on Tibet.

Read more at: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/china-uighur-crimes-against-humanity-us-lawmakers-urge-actions-12245376>

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