

Press Release

# WUC Condemns Kunming Violence and Calls for Calm

Tuesday 4 March 2014, by [WUC](#) (Date first published: 3 March 2014).

**The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) unequivocally condemns the violence that took place at Kunming railway station on 1 March 2014, in which 29 people were reportedly killed. The WUC expresses its condolences to the victims and their families.**

**One named person has been implicated in the attack, Abdurehim Kurban. The ethnicities and identities of the other assailants have not been disclosed, although Chinese state media has blamed “Xinjiang separatists” for the attack. The WUC urges calm on all sides and calls on the Chinese government to provide assurances that Uyghurs will not be subjected to indiscriminate reprisals.**

“At this time of heightened tensions, it is important the Chinese government deal with the incident rationally and not set about demonising the Uyghur people as state enemies. The Chinese government and state media have a responsibility to not inflame the emotions of Chinese citizens making the Uyghurs in China vulnerable to reprisals,” remarked WUC President and prominent Uyghur rights activist Ms Rebiya Kadeer. “The fact remains that peaceful dissent against repressive government policies targeting Uyghurs is legitimate, so the Chinese government must not conflate this constructive criticism with the events of 1 March. It is absolutely vital the Chinese government deal with the longstanding and deteriorating human rights issues facing Uyghurs if tensions are to be reduced.”

Eight attackers (ten in other sources) reportedly entered Kunming City railway station and proceeded to stab bystanders at random, killing 29 (33 in other sources) and injuring many more. Following the arrival of the police, four of the attackers were shot dead and one woman was immediately arrested, with the remaining three arrested on 3 March 2014. Beyond information provided by the Chinese state media, details are few at present; government censors quickly deleted social media posts in China citing the incident.

The incident falls against the backdrop of the US State Department’s 2013 report on human rights practices in China, which indicated, “there was severe official repression of the freedoms of speech, religion, association, and assembly of ethnic Uighurs in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR).” In addition, the ongoing and widely condemned detention of Uyghur economist, Ilham Tohti demonstrates the zero tolerance Chinese officials hold towards peaceful dissenting voices to its policies.

The WUC is deeply concerned about the prospect of these attacks being used as a pretext to place further repression upon the Uyghur people in the PRC, as per past precedents. Chinese officials have already avowed to undertake “all-out efforts” to “severely punish terrorists”. Yin Zhuo, director of the Expert Consultation Committee of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy, stated: “We

should launch a nationwide campaign against such terrorist activities and resolutely fight the terrorists.”

The WUC believes such rhetoric will incriminate the entire Uyghur people. The Chinese government should remind itself of a recent UN Security Council 2129 Resolution on combating terrorism which affirms that, “terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or group.” This latest incident of violence should not therefore prevent us from condemning the well documented background of human rights violations underpinning the increasingly volatile relationship between the Chinese authorities and Uyghurs.

Some segments of the overseas media have already reported Uyghurs are being targeted in Kunming. The WUC believes these actions will only serve to exacerbate the very problems the Chinese government claims it seeks to tackle, whilst also showing a lack of interest in trying to understand the problems faced by Uyghurs.

Information has been tightly controlled surrounding the events of March 1, with reports claiming the scene of the incident was completely cleaned within 24 hours. The WUC is worried that correct policing standards may not have been followed given the swift manner in which the location was cleaned up.

The WUC reiterates in the strongest possible terms its condemnation of the violence orchestrated at Kunming railway station. The WUC urges the Chinese authorities to refrain from using this as a pretext to further and indiscriminately crack down on Uyghurs as precedents suggest, and to show a measured response. The WUC also urges the Chinese authorities to be open, transparent and forthcoming regarding this incident so as to inspire confidence in the outcomes of its investigations.

## References

‘all-out’

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26381940>

Global Times citing

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/03/china-knife-attack-police-capture-suspects-kunming>

33 Killed

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-03-02/china-separatists-stab-29-to-death-at-train-station-xinhua-says.html>

Yin

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-03/02/c\\_133153594.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-03/02/c_133153594.htm)

Arrests, kills, woman

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-26420863>

Crackdown

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-03-02/china-separatists-stab-29-to-death-at-train-station-xinhua-says.html>

Uyghurs under guard

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1439152/uygur-community-kunming-under-heavy-police-watch-after-bloody-massacre>

Development issues

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/02/china-development-ethnic-tensions>

US State Department HR Report

<http://uhrp.org/press-release/us-state-department-report-details-widespread-human-rights-abuses-against-uyghur>

UN Resolution

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/sc11219.doc.htm>

---

---

**P.S.**

\*

<http://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/?p=22093%20WUC%20Condemns%20Kunming%20Violence%20and%20Calls%20for%20Calm>