

Canada votes to take in 10,000 Uyghur refugees amid Chinese pressure to force their return

Move shows ‘what is happening to the Uyghurs is unacceptable’, says MP after non-binding parliamentary ballot with prime minister’s support

Canada’s parliament has unanimously passed a motion to take in 10,000 Uyghur refugees who fled China, but are now facing pressure to return.

The vote on Wednesday builds on a February 2021 move by Canadian lawmakers to label Beijing’s treatment of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in its north-western Xinjiang territory as genocide.

Rights groups believe at least 1 million Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim minorities have been incarcerated in internment camps in the region, where China is also accused of forcibly sterilising women and imposing forced labour.

Tens of thousands have fled the region, and according to Canadian backbench MP Sameer Zuberi, who sponsored the motion, at least 1,600 have been detained in other countries at China’s behest or forcibly repatriated.

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