



China Seeks Extradition of Detained Uyghurs in Malaysia

OE Watch Commentary: The Chinese government has requested the extradition of 11 Uyghur detainees in Malaysia in accordance with a strengthened extradition agreement signed in 2016 between the two governments. The detainees were captured during an illegal border crossing from Thailand into Malaysia. Chinese sources allege that the detainees are linked to terrorist activities, while Malaysian authorities and officials have agreed to investigate the matter.

As the first source from the pro-Chinese *Global Times* points out, following the detention of the 11 ethnic Uyghur Chinese nationals in Malaysia, the Chinese government formally requested the extradition of the detainees to China for “possible links to terror activities.” Zhu Yongbio, assistant director of the Institute of Central Asia Studies at Lanzhou University, quoted in the source, expressed confidence that the detainees would receive a “fair trial” upon their return to China and that “Western countries should not apply a double standard to China in its dealings with suspected terrorists” and added “that China is making a contribution to international anti-terrorism efforts by strengthening domestic anti-terrorism.”

China has faced increased scrutiny internationally for attempting to utilize the extradition process to renationalize foreign Uyghur scholars, migrants, and asylum seekers, with 612 “red notices” issued last year alone. Red notices are akin to an international arrest warrant and are among one of eight types of notices circulated through Interpol. Controversy surrounds the legitimacy of the claims that those sought for renationalization are linked to criminal or terrorist activity.

The Malaysian government responded to the request, as the second excerpt from the semi-independent news source, *The Star*, indicates, with Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Zahid promising an investigation, consideration, and cooperation with the Chinese request. This is not the first request of late; as recently as early 2017, the Malaysian government returned 29 other Uyghurs under similar circumstances. **End OE Watch Commentary (Shanks)**



Deputy Malaysian Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

Source: Prachatai, <https://goo.gl/Zx8pWH>, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

“China’s request to extradite from Malaysia 11 Uyghurs detainees, who illegally crossed the border and are being investigated for possible links to terror activities.”

Source: “China wants Uyghurs from Malaysia: Report,” *Global Times*, 11 February 2018. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1089256.shtml>

...“China’s request to extradite from Malaysia 11 Uyghurs detainees, who illegally crossed the border and are being investigated for possible links to terror activities... Malaysia approved a document to strengthen law enforcement cooperation with China in April 2016, in which the two sides agreed to offer wide assistance to each other on criminal procedures...”

...“It is legitimate for China to request the extradition of the Uyghurs, who are Chinese nationals. Once extradited to China, the Uyghurs would be given a fair trial in accordance with China’s laws,” Zhu Yongbiao, assistant director of the Institute of Central Asia Studies at Lanzhou University, told the *Global Times*.... “Western countries should not apply a double standard to China in its dealings with suspected terrorists as they would ask suspected terrorists involved with IS to be extradited,” Zhu said, adding that China is making a contribution to international anti-terrorism efforts by strengthening domestic anti-terrorism.

Source: Shah, M. F. and Kili, M. A. “Zahid: China has requested extradition of detained Uighurs,” *The Star (Online)*, 10 February 2018. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2018/02/10/zahid-uighur-extradiction-request/>

...Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Malaysia would honor the Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) thorough Interpol and the extradition agreement it signed with China... “Prior to this, we have extradited Malaysians from China who were involved in falsifying credit cards and other criminal activities. As such we will consider Beijing’s request,” he said....

...Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Malaysia’s Deputy Prime Minister, told local media last year that biometric information provided by Chinese authorities had enabled the arrests of 29 Uighur militants since 2011, all of whom were deported to China. That includes six Uighurs sent back to China in 2012, despite their pending refugee status determinations....