

Union Stance on the Imperial College deal with Huawei

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Union Notes:

1. College has agreed a £5 million deal with Huawei to *“create an environment where research can explore the boundaries of 5G and AI technologies”*^{1,2}
2. Recently, a Huawei patent has been uncovered by the BBC exposing a system that identifies people who appear to be of Uyghur origin³
3. The patent describes artificial-intelligence technology used to identify specific features of pedestrians, including whether a person is of Uyghur or Han ethnicity³
4. Furthermore, the UK’s Foreign Affairs Committee chair Tom Tugendhat stated *“Developing ethnic-labelling technology for use by a repressive regime is clearly not behaviour that lives up to our standards”*³
5. Huawei manages extensive public surveillance systems in China⁴ and a parliamentary inquiry concluded that there is a clear collusion between Huawei and the Chinese Communist Party⁵
6. There have been 380 internment camps and detention centres built in the Xinjiang region and their existence was initially denied. Later, these camps were labelled as *“vocational training and re-education programmes”*⁶
7. Uyghurs are arrested and transported to these camps in the millions⁷
8. In these camps, they have been subjected to methods of torture including: mental/psychological torture, beatings, brainwashing and systematic rape⁸
9. Uyghurs are also subject to other human rights violations in their day-to-day lives⁹⁻²¹
10. On January 19th 2021, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo declared *“China has committed genocide against the predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. I believe this genocide is ongoing, and that we are witnessing the systematic attempt to destroy Uyghurs by the Chinese party-state”*²²
11. Imperial has been under scrutiny and subject to extensive press coverage due to these ties with Huawei. Chingford and Woodford Green MP, Sir Iain Duncan Smith, said *“This is a perfect example of how the Chinese strategy is to use their money to insert their influence in the world's intellectual thought process. How ironic it is Imperial that is dealing with the fallout of Covid-19. This is a deeply worrying and dangerous relationship”*²³
12. Other academic institutions such as Oxford University, MIT and Stanford have already cut ties with Huawei^{24,25}

Union Believes:

1. Huawei is a company directly implicated in human rights violations and genocide
2. Huawei are developing and using technology that is being to facilitate the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Uyghur minority
3. The Huawei-Imperial deal violates Imperial College's Relationship Review Policy as:
 - a. Huawei does not share the College's mission "*to achieve enduring excellence in research ... for the benefit of society*" (Relationship Review Policy, Section 2)²⁶
 - b. The relationship has arisen from a company implicated in violation of human rights (Relationship Review Policy, Section 4)²⁶
 - c. The relationship has the potential to expose the College to significant liability (Relationship Review Policy, Section 4)²⁶
 - d. Such a partnership risks tarnishing the reputation of the College (Relationship Review Policy, Section 1 Paragraph 2, Section 4)²⁶
4. There is a lack of transparency in the scope of Huawei's deal with Imperial

Union Resolves:

1. To request that the College releases details of the ethical due diligence that took place before the deal was agreed (retained by the Registry²⁶) and details of the finalised contract with Huawei.
2. To recommend to the College that they take an active role in condemning the human rights violations against the Uyghur people, including through the release of a public statement of solidarity.
3. To lobby for the College to terminate their partnership with Huawei immediately due to the above-mentioned links to human rights abuses. Escalating actions to achieve this include but are not limited to:
 - a. The Union President to author an open letter to the College setting out the concerns raised within this paper and demanding for the immediate termination of this partnership.
 - b. To call for the College to commit to not taking further donations or funding from Huawei, in line with the stance taken by many other institutions.

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