Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, Chen Quanguo
479 Zhongshan Lu
Wulumuqi Shi, Xinjiang
People's Republic of China

Dear Secretary Chen,

Hankezi Zikeli, 64, has suffered a nervous breakdown after having been detained in a "transformation-through-education" centre in Urumqi since February 2018. She is an aunt of Gulchehra Hoja, a Washington-based Radio Free Asia Uyghur Service journalist, and one of her 25 relatives who have been detained now for more than one year.

According to a relative in the XUAR, who was told by a local police officer, Hankezi Zikeli has not spoken for several months and spends her day staring at the ceiling.

Gulchehra Hoja learned in early 2018 that her relatives had all been detained in "transformation-through-education" centres in Urumqi and Yili in the XUAR after being linked to a WeChat group with her. Other than this distressing news about her aunt, Hankezi Zikeli, Gulchehra Hoja has had no updates about the situation of her brother Kaiser Keyum and other relatives.

We are extremely worried about Hankezi Zikeli and Gulchehra Hoja's other relatives' safety in the facilities as they do not have access to a lawyer of their own choice or their family members, and thus they are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Therefore, we call on you Secretary Chen to:

- immediately and unconditionally release Hankezi Zikeli, along with all Gulchehra Hoja's other relatives, unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that they have committed an internationally recognized offence and are granted a fair trial in line with international standards;
- ensure that Hankezi Zikeli and Gulchehra Hoja's other relatives are not subjected to any torture or other ill-treatment and have regular and unrestricted access to a lawyer of their choice and are able to communicate with family members and others, including with family members living in other countries, without interference unless justified in line with international human rights law.

Yours sincerely,