



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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MOTION REGARDING UYGHUR RIGHTS

2023-01-19

Submitted for: 2023-01-19

Submitted to: SSMU Legislative Council **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2023-01-19-001

Moved by: Samuel Massey **Current Status:** FOR APPROVAL
 APPROVED
 POSTPONED
 COMMITTED
 NOT APPROVED

Seconded by: Leo

Issue

This motion seeks to clarify SSMU's existing commitments to advocacy for divestment from entities tied to human rights abuses by clarifying criteria for divestment from entities complicit in the genocide of Uyghurs.

Background and Rationale

On July 22, 2021, SSMU's Board ratified a "Divest for Human Rights Policy" which called for McGill University to "divest from, refrain from investing in, or terminate any other relationships with companies or other institutions listed within [the policy]," including companies complicit in the use of Uyghur forced labor in the People's Republic of China. As the Divest for Human Rights Policy noted, McGill has a history of divesting from companies linked to human rights abuses, including South African Apartheid and military rule in Myanmar.

A report by the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project, released in December 2022 (See Appendix B), found that McGill's investment portfolio included at least 111 companies with known or potential links to the Uyghur genocide, with a total investment value of more than \$115 million. This motion would expand the mandates established by the Divest for Human Rights Policy to include that SSMU's campaign for divestment from entities tied to human



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rights abuses includes the companies identified in Appendix B, as well as all other companies linked to the Uyghur genocide.

Alignment with Mission

The Divest for Human Rights Policy committed SSMU to advocate for divestment from entities tied to human rights abuses, including the Uyghur genocide. This motion expands on that commitment in light of new evidence revealing McGill University's broad financial links to entities complicit in the Uyghur genocide.

This motion aligns with the SSMU's commitment to demonstrating leadership on matters of human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. The Policy appended to this motion also elaborates the SSMU's commitments to equity, social sustainability, and international solidarity, as outlined in the Positions Book, the Equity Policy, and the Sustainability Policy.

Consultations Completed

Consultations have been completed with SSMU Members, VP External Affairs, President, Governance Manager, and the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Adopting the Uyghur Genocide Divestment Plan would clarify SSMU's commitments to solidarity with the victims of human rights abuses by establishing a well-defined set of criteria for divestment from entities tied to human rights abuses against Uyghurs. The proposed plan, like the Divest for Human Rights Policy, would implicate the resources of SSMU's Campaigns Department.

Should this motion fail to be ratified by the General Assembly or the Board of Directors, the Divest for Human Rights Policy will remain as is. Further, the Appendixes will not be added to the Policy and it will become more difficult for SSMU to further advocate on specific initiatives and advocacy campaigns against human rights abuses against Uyghurs.



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Sustainability Considerations

The proposed motion would further SSMU's commitment to social sustainability by establishing a clearer set of criteria for divestment from entities complicit in the genocide of Uyghurs.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If approved, this Motion would build on existing SSMU mandates established by the Divest for Human Rights Policy. The Motion would establish more concrete parameters for the implementation of mandates facing the Offices of the President, Vice-President (External Affairs), and Vice-President (University Affairs) under the Divest for Human Rights Policy.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the General Assembly approve the addition of Appendix A and Appendix B to the Divest for Human Rights Policy;

Be it further resolved, that the General Assembly recommend to the SSMU Board of Directors to ratify this Motion.

Results of the Vote

	In favour	(17)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Opposed	(1)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Abstain	(0)



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Appendix A : Uyghur Genocide Divestment

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1. Scope

This Appendix further expands on point 3.3 of the *Divest for Human Rights Policy: Forced labour and Genocide*. It will be used as a guide for decision-making to guide McGill University toward divestment from corporations and institutions implicated in the genocide of Uyghurs in the People's Republic of China (PRC).

2. Interpretation

This Appendix concerns the financial entanglements between McGill University and corporations & other entities complicit in the genocide of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in the People's Republic of China. It should in no way be interpreted as a justification for racism or xenophobia against people of Chinese descent or against any other ethnic, religious or social group.

3. Background and Context

McGill University's investment portfolio held through various chains of ownership, holdings in at least 111 companies with known or suspected ties to the genocide of Uyghurs, including the use of Uyghur forced labour, as of December 2022, with a total market value of \$115,137,775. These holdings include investments in companies operating in East Turkestan (Xinjiang), companies with known links to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), and companies with known or suspected links to the transfer of Uyghur forced labour or the mass surveillance of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in the PRC. A full list of investments in known or suspected complicit entities is available in the "[Report on McGill University's Endowment Fund Complicity in Uyghur Genocide](#)".¹

As such, the complicit companies, corporations, and institutions outlined in the report will be added to the divestment target list of the *Divest for Human Rights Policy*. All other companies complicit in the genocide of Uyghurs will also be added to the divestment target list, including the following:

¹ Teich, M., Offman E. et al. (2022).



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1. Any company producing or manufacturing, in whole or in part, any product in East Turkestan/the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) of the PRC.
2. Any company operating facilities in East Turkestan (the XUAR).
3. Any company which contracts with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC).
4. Any company which receives, or participates in the transfer of, Uyghur forced labor.
5. Any biotech company operating the PRC which engages in genomic identification.
6. Any company that provides surveillance technology to the PRC or any agency, subdivision, or instrumentality of the PRC.

4. Mandates

All mandates outlined in the *Divest for Human Rights Policy* now apply to the companies listed in the [Report on McGill University's Endowment Fund Complicity in Uyghur Genocide](#) and this Appendix. As such, any advocacy or political action undertaken under this Policy will include the companies aforementioned.

5. Accountability

The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) will be charged with monitoring and overseeing compliance with this Appendix as part of the continued implementation of the Divest for Human Rights Policy.