

Call for Canadian Sanctions Against Chinese Seafood Companies over Alleged Forced Uyghur Labor



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Human rights organizations, the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project and the Human Rights Action Group, have called upon the Canadian government to impose sanctions on seven Chinese seafood companies. The demand stems from allegations of these companies exploiting forced Uyghur labor. This plea for action is underpinned by an investigation conducted by The Outlaw Ocean Project, a non-profit journalism entity.

Findings of the Investigation

Since 2018, at least 10 large seafood companies in China have allegedly employed over 1,000 Uyghur workers. These findings were published by several media outlets, including The Globe and Mail. The seafood processed by these companies, it is claimed, has been purchased by significant North American importers. Among these importers is High Liner Foods Inc., one of the largest seafood companies in Canada.

High Liner's Response

In response to the investigation, High Liner has terminated its relationship with a Chinese seafood plant implicated in the use of Uyghur labor. Moreover, the company has conducted internal audits and is collaborating with NGOs to address the allegations. However, the specifics of these initiatives have not been made public.

Call for Sanctions and the Government's Role

The human rights groups are advocating for the involved Chinese companies to be added to Canada's Special Economic Measures Act sanctions list. Imposing sanctions would prevent Canadian importers from conducting business with these companies, thereby blocking products made with forced labor from entering the Canadian market. While the Canadian government has made efforts to prevent imports linked to forced labor, critics argue that these measures have been inadequate.

The Uyghurs, a primarily Muslim ethnic minority in China's western Xinjiang region, have been subject to numerous reports of human rights abuses, including coercive labor transfers. The call for sanctions against the implicated Chinese companies is a step towards addressing these grave human rights violations.

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Sakchi Khandelwal is a distinguished international correspondent for BNN, known for her unwavering commitment to effecting meaningful societal change through journalism. She brings to the table more than five years of multifaceted experience in print and digital spaces, shedding light on global issues with utmost rigor and versatility. Leveraging her wide range of interests and profound expertise, Sakchi delves into multiple topics, consistently delivering engaging and insightful narratives to her audience.

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