

# China educating, not mistreating, Muslims: official

GENEVA: China is not mistreating Muslims in Xinjiang province but is putting some people through training courses to avoid spreading of extremism, unlike Europe which had failed to deal with the problem, a Chinese official told reporters on Thursday.

Reports of mass detentions of ethnic Uighurs and other Muslims in China's far-western region have prompted a growing international outcry, prompting the Trump administration to consider sanctions against officials and companies linked to the allegations of human rights abuses.

"It is not mistreatment," said Li Xiaojun, director for publicity at the Bureau of Human Rights Affairs of the State Council Information Office. "What China is doing is to establish professional training centres, educational centres.

"If you do not say it's the best way, maybe it's the necessary way to deal with Islamic or religious extremism, because the West has failed in doing so, in dealing with religious extremism. Look at Belgium, look at Paris, look at some other European countries. You have failed."

He said the Chinese education centres were not "detention centres or re-education camps", which he dismissed as "the trademark product of eastern European countries", an apparent reference to Soviet Gulag detention camps during the Cold War.

"To put it straight, it's like vocational training... like your children go to vocational training schools to get better skills and better jobs after graduation.

"But these kinds of training and education centres only accept

people for a short period of time; some people five days, some seven days, 10 days, one month, two months.”

Islam was a good thing in China’s view, but “Islamic extremists” were the common foes of mankind, he said. “They are very bad elements. You can see that in Afghanistan, in Syria, in Pakistan, in Iraq, and many other countries.”