

Nury Turkel

Attorney, award-winning author, and U.S.-China relations expert.



Nury Turkel

Uyghur-American, Commissioner, Attorney, Author, and Activist

Nury Turkel has an impressive career. He is an attorney, award-winning author, a leading expert on U.S.-China relations, and a rights advocate with nearly two decades of experience working in the intersection of law, business, government, and the human rights community.

Turkel has been recognized with numerous accolades. He is the first Uyghur attorney to be educated in the U.S., the first and only Life Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a Senior Advisor at the Krach Institute of Tech Diplomacy. He is a member of the Advisory Board for Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty Initiative.

He is also a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, specializing in national security, foreign policy, digital authoritarianism, emerging technologies, artificial intelligence, forced labor, and supply chain risk. His policy-oriented essays appeared in major publications such as Foreign Affairs, Wall Street Journal, New York Times Foreign Policy, TIME, Newsweek, and USA Today. He is also a sought-after commentator on television and radio programs, including CNN, BBC, Radio Free Asia, Fox News, PBS, NPR, Al Jazeera, and France 24.

Turkel was included in TIME's "100 Most Influential People in the World of 2020." In 2021, Fortune Magazine included him in the list of 50 Greatest Leaders. He received the inaugural Notre Dame Prize for Religious Liberty in June 2021 and was awarded the Global Soul Award by Jewish World Watch in September 2022.

Turkel is also a prolific public speaker and has been invited to numerous events as a keynote speaker and panelist. In 2023 alone, he was the keynote speaker at three events.

Fluent in numerous languages, Turkel speaks English, Chinese, Turkish, Uyghur, Uzbek, and Azari.

Author of No Escape

Turkel's award-winning book, No Escape, details the true story of China's genocide of the Uyghurs. The Uyghurs are barred from practicing their religion, speaking their language, and expressing other fundamental elements of their identity. China has created an extensive system of detention and enforced disappearance. Approximately one million Uyghurs are currently imprisoned in detention centers for reasons as simple as practicing their religion, having international contacts or communications, or attending a Western university.

Turkel received the “2023 Moore Prize for Human Rights Writing” for No Escape. The Moore Prize promotes and recognizes the values consistent with advancing human rights and dignity.

Turkel’s Practice Areas

Nury Turkel specializes in global corporate compliance, internal investigation, and U.S. government enforcement relating to the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA), antitrust and competition law, and other anticorruption and human rights standards. In addition, he focuses on global telecommunications, emerging technologies, customs and international trade, economic sanctions and export control, business and human rights, legislative advocacy, and humanitarian immigration. His expertise also includes global justice enforcement and the prevention of atrocities, including genocide.

Senior Compliance Counsel

Turkel is an accomplished global compliance lawyer and regulatory affairs expert. He is the Compliance Officer and Counsel for Ericsson, one of the world’s leading multinational companies in telecommunications technology, network services, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence. Since 2020, he has helped Ericsson develop and implement global antibribery and anticorruption compliance programs to create and foster a culture of ethics and integrity. He has authored several key compliance policies and procedures. He has also conducted due diligence on business partners and customers around the globe to assess FCPA risk, resulting in the identification and mitigation of potential risks. He manages communications with external stakeholders, such as regulators, banks, and insurance companies, as well as with outside counsel.

Additionally, Turkel coordinates the preparation of Ericsson's Annual Report, which includes drafting the Ethics & Compliance and Social & Corporate Responsibility sections. He provides subject matter expertise primarily on issues involving FCPA compliance and procedures, federal agency enforcement, internal investigations of employee misconduct, and third-party risk due diligence and management, helping the company to comply with all applicable laws and regulations and to protect itself from potential risks.

Before joining Ericsson, Turkel was a solo practitioner representing clients in various legal and policy issues, including trade and investment, business and human rights due diligence, commercial transactions, crisis management, legislative advocacy, and governmental affairs. He designed and implemented corporate compliance programs. He assisted foreign companies in export license applications with the Department of Treasury and represented clients in business and family immigration and employment law matters.

From 2006 to 2011, Turkel was an attorney with a boutique firm, Kristen & Young, specializing in aviation practice representing U.S. and international air carriers, airports, and transportation authorities. He represented clients in a wide range of matters before the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation Security Administration, and Department of Justice, including the start-up of new air services, regulatory compliance, competition and antitrust matters, internal investigations, enforcement actions, and government contracts. He also advised clients on negotiating, drafting, and obtaining approval of codeshare agreements and obtaining government contracts for aviation safety, airport, and air traffic control projects.

Government Service

Nury Turkel was a Congressionally appointed Commissioner and former Chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). He was the

first American of Uyghur heritage to serve as a political appointee in the U.S. government. He led the agency for two years as the Chair and Vice Chair and advocated for formal U.S. recognition of atrocities committed against the Uyghurs and Rohingya Muslims as genocide. He helped to raise the profile of USCIRF domestically and globally. Using his public profile and platforms, Turkel advocated freedom for those underrepresented groups who were subjected to mass atrocities. He is a globally recognized advocate for global justice and accountability. He also led official delegations to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for governmental engagements and fact-finding missions, as well as represented USCIRF at policy forums and congressional hearings.

Turkel has testified before Congress as a subject matter expert, including before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, and the House Ways and Means Committee, advocating firm policy to protect American national and economic interests. His recommendations have been incorporated into laws relating to China, including the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020 and the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act of 2021.

In addition to his human rights–centric foreign policy advocacy in the United States, Turkel has traveled worldwide for governmental and public engagements. He advocated for a solid and strategic China policy among like-minded nations to support the U.S.-led policy responses defending the liberal international order and U.S. national security and economic interests.

Turkel's Education

Turkel received his J.D. from the American University, Washington College of Law, and his M.A. from the American University, School of International Services. He also has his B.S. from Northwest A&F University. He is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

Turkel was born in Kashgar, China, and is married to Nazli. In his spare time, he enjoys reading, classical music, world travel, road cycling, and cooking.

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Alexandria, VA, USA

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Ericsson

Compliance Officer and Counsel

Nury Turkel is the Compliance Officer and Counsel for Ericsson, one of the world's leading multinational companies in telecommunications technology, network services, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence.

Alexandria, Virginia, United States

Solo Practitioner

Before joining Ericsson, Turkel was a solo practitioner representing clients in various legal and policy issues, including trade and investment, business and human rights due diligence, commercial transactions, crisis management, legislative advocacy, and governmental affairs. He designed and implemented corporate compliance programs.

U.S. Commission On International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)

Commissioner and former Chairman

Nury Turkel was a Congressionally appointed Commissioner and former Chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). He was the first American of Uyghur heritage to serve as a political appointee in the U.S. government.

EDUCATION

American University, Washington College Of Law

J.D.

Turkel received his J.D. from the American University, Washington College of Law.

United States

American University, School Of International Services
M.A.

Northwest A&F University
B.S.
United States

LANGUAGES

English (Fluent)

AWARDS

100 Most Influential People in the World of 2020
2020

50 Greatest Leaders (2021)
2021

Religious Liberty (2021)
2021

Jewish World
Global Soul
2022

Moore
Human Rights Writing
2023