The media statement below was used in e-mails sent to U.S. media representatives. The individualized e-mails contained some variations, such as different greetings, and different forms, and were in response to inquiries from different U.S. media representatives.

“Esquel is strongly and completely opposed to forced labor; it’s appalling and antithetical to the ethical principles on which we’ve built this company. We absolutely do not use forced labor of any kind, and our labor practices have been verified by two independent auditors.

“We’re proud to have built a vertically integrated business where employees at every level are paid good wages and benefits regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender and have the flexibility to work or leave if they choose. Esquel has a long and well-established presence in the region going back decades, due to the quality of the cotton crop there.”
The text below was used in cover e-mails sent to U.S. media representatives attaching a letter from John Cheh, CEO of Esquel Group, to Secretary Ross. The individualized e-mails contained some variations, such as different greetings, and different forms, such as a reply as compared to a new initial e-mail.

Attached is a response sent by the CEO of Esquel Group, John Cheh, to Secretary Ross [...]

A few key excerpts below:

“Because Esquel has been falsely associated with forced labor, I would like to give you the facts about our company’s labor practices and based on that, request that our mill be removed from the list immediately.”

“Let me be clear: Esquel does not use forced labor, and we never will use forced labor. We absolutely and categorically oppose forced labor. It is abhorrent and completely antithetical to Esquel’s principles and business practices.”

“We ask that those who would accuse us of using forced labor present evidence to support their allegations. Where is the evidence that Esquel has ever, in its 25 years of operations in Xinjiang, used forced labor? No agency of any government nor any non-governmental organization has presented such evidence, because it does not exist. In the lead up to including our Changji mill on the entity list, no one from the Commerce Department spoke with anyone at Esquel or we would have gladly provided them with the facts and answered any questions at that time.”