

2020 Report on International Religious Freedom

[Office of International Religious Freedom](#)

May 12, 2021

The annual Report to Congress on International Religious Freedom – the International Religious Freedom Report – describes the status of religious freedom in every country. The report covers government policies violating religious belief and practices of groups, religious denominations and individuals, and U.S. policies to promote religious freedom around the world. The U.S. Department of State submits the reports in accordance with the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

[Translations](#)

[Preface](#)

“[T]he work of protecting religious freedom, for people of all faiths and none, is never finished. . . We must be vigilant against the rising tide of targeted violence and hate at home and abroad, and work to ensure that no one feels afraid to attend a religious service, school, or community center, or walk down the street wearing the symbols of their faith. My administration will guard these cherished principles, working shoulder-to-shoulder with Americans of all beliefs to preserve our nation’s founding promise as an enduring citadel of diversity, unity, and mutual respect.”

— President Joseph R. Biden

The Biden Administration is wholly committed to promoting universal respect for freedom of religion or belief for all people around the world. Religious freedom is enshrined in our Constitution’s First Amendment as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it is both a core American value and a human right. The ability to organize one’s life in accordance with one’s conscience allows one to enjoy the full constellation of human rights. But religious freedom cannot exist without defending the co-equal and interrelated freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, and can only thrive in democratic systems governed by the rule of law.

This Annual Report provides a detailed and factual account of the status of religious freedom in 200 countries and territories, and documents reports of violations and abuses committed by governments, non-state actors, and individuals. The release of this report gives voice to all those worldwide seeking to peacefully exercise their beliefs without fear or recrimination.

Across the globe, in far too many places, individuals continue to be killed, tortured, jailed, harassed, and threatened on account of their religious identity or beliefs. Left unaddressed, such abuses threaten societal cohesion and political stability, undermine economic development, and can foster radicalization and violent extremism. While promoting respect for freedom of religion or belief is a clear manifestation of American values, it is also a national security imperative. Governments that effectively safeguard religious freedom are more stable, more economically vibrant, and more peaceful.

As such, the United States resolves to continue the vital work of promoting respect for freedom of religion or belief for all people, everywhere.

I hereby transmit the Department of State's 2020 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom to the United States Congress. I appreciate the longstanding Congressional support on freedom of religion or belief and look forward to working with Congress to preserve and protect this human right.

Secretary of State
Antony J. Blinken

Overview and Acknowledgements

Why and How the Reports are Prepared

The Department of State submits this annual report to the Congress in compliance with section 102(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-292), as amended. This report covers the period between January 1 and December 31, 2020.

U.S. embassies prepare the initial drafts of country chapters based on information from government officials, religious groups, nongovernmental organizations, journalists, human rights monitors, academics, media, and others. The Office of International Religious Freedom, based in Washington, collaborates in collecting and analyzing additional information, drawing on its consultations with foreign government officials, domestic and foreign religious groups, domestic and foreign nongovernmental organizations, multilateral and other international and regional organizations, journalists, academic experts, community leaders, and other relevant U.S. government institutions.

The State Department's guiding principle is to ensure that all relevant information is presented as objectively, thoroughly, and fairly as possible. Motivations and accuracy of sources vary, however, and the Department of State is not in a position to verify independently all information contained in the reports. To the extent possible, the reports use multiple sources to increase comprehensiveness and reduce potential for bias. The views of any particular source are not necessarily those of the United States

government. The report is designed to spotlight examples of government and societal action that typify and illuminate issues reported in each country. Specific inclusions or omissions should not be interpreted as a signal that a particular case is of greater or lesser importance to the U.S. government, or that a case is the only available example. Rather, the goal is to shed light on the nature, scope, and severity of actions impacting religious freedom through illustrative examples.

Acknowledgements

This report reflects the efforts of hundreds of people in the Department of State and at U.S. missions abroad. We thank the dedicated staff at our embassies and consulates for monitoring and promoting religious freedom, and for chronicling in detail the status of freedom of religion or belief in all corners of the globe. Many of them went to great lengths under difficult circumstances to acquire the information in this report.

The reports were produced under the direction of Senior Official for International Religious Freedom Daniel L. Nadel and Office of International Religious Freedom Deputy Directors Stacy Bernard Davis, Mariah Mercer, and Carson Relitz Rocker.

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Appendix A

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore, The General Assembly, proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of a kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional, or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing, or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and the security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

2. No one shall be held guilty without any limitation due to race, of any penal offence on account of nationality or religion, have the any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

3. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
4. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

5. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
6. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

7. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
8. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor be denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

9. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality, or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
10. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
11. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

12. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
13. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

14. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
15. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

16. Everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
17. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
18. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social, and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

19. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
20. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
21. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration insuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
22. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

23. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
24. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

25. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
26. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
27. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

28. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts, and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
29. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary, or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

30. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
31. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
32. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group, or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Hundred and eighty-third plenary meeting

Resolution 217(A)(III) of the United Nations General Assembly,

December 10, 1948

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Appendix B

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Preamble

The States Parties to the present Covenant,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world,

Recognizing that these rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person,

Recognizing that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear

and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his economic, social, and cultural rights,

Considering the obligation of States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights, and freedoms,

Realizing that the individual, having duties to other individuals and to the community to which he belongs, is under a responsibility to strive for the promotion and observance of the rights recognized in the present Covenant,

Agree upon the following articles:

PART I

Article 1

1. All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.
2. All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.
3. The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

PART II

Article 2

4. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.
5. Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such laws or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.
6. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes:

- a. To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity;
- b. To ensure that any person claiming such a remedy shall have his right thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy;
- c. To ensure that the competent authorities shall enforce such remedies when granted.

Article 3

The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.

Article 4

7. In time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed, the States Parties to the present Covenant may take measures derogating from their obligations under the present Covenant to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with their other obligations under international law and do not involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion, or social origin.
8. No derogation from articles 6, 7, 8 (paragraphs 1 and 2), 11, 15, 16, and 18 may be made under this provision.
9. Any State Party to the present Covenant availing itself of the right of derogation shall immediately inform the other States Parties to the present Covenant, through the intermediary of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the provisions from which it has derogated and of the reasons by which it was actuated. A further communication shall be made, through the same intermediary, on the date on which it terminates such derogation.

Article 5

10. Nothing in the present Covenant may be interpreted as implying for any State, group, or person any right to engage in any activity or perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms recognized herein or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the present Covenant.
11. There shall be no restriction upon or derogation from any of the fundamental human rights recognized or existing in any State Party to the present Covenant pursuant to law, conventions, regulations, or custom on the pretext that the present Covenant does not recognize such rights or that it recognizes them to a lesser extent.

Part III

Article 6

12. Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.
13. In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime and not contrary to the provisions of the present Covenant and to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This penalty can only be carried out pursuant to a final judgement rendered by a competent court.
14. When deprivation of life constitutes the crime of genocide, it is understood that nothing in this article shall authorize any State Party to the present Covenant to derogate in any way from any obligation assumed under the provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
15. Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence. Amnesty, pardon, or commutation of the sentence of death may be granted in all cases.
16. Sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age and shall not be carried out on pregnant women.
17. Nothing in this article shall be invoked to delay or to prevent the abolition of capital punishment by any State Party to the present Covenant.

Article 7

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

Article 8

18. No one shall be held in slavery; slavery and the slave-trade in all their forms shall be prohibited.
19. No one shall be held in servitude.
 - a. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour;
 - b. Paragraph 3 (a) shall not be held to preclude, in countries where imprisonment with hard labour may be imposed as a punishment for a crime, the performance of hard labour in pursuance of a sentence to such punishment by a competent court;
 - c. For the purpose of this paragraph the term “forced or compulsory labour” shall not include:
 - i. Any work or service, not referred to in subparagraph (b), normally required of a person who is under detention in consequence of a lawful order of a court, or of a person during conditional release from such detention;

- ii. Any service of a military character and, in countries where conscientious objection is recognized, any national service required by law of conscientious objectors;
- iii. Any service exacted in cases of emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
- iv. Any work or service which forms part of normal civil obligations.

Article 9

- 20. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law.
- 21. Anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him.
- 22. Anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release. It shall not be the general rule that persons awaiting trial shall be detained in custody, but release may be subject to guarantees to appear for trial, at any other stage of the judicial proceedings, and, should occasion arise, for execution of the judgement.
- 23. Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings before a court, in order that court may decide without delay on the lawfulness of his detention and order his release if the detention is not lawful.
- 24. Anyone who has been the victim of unlawful arrest or detention shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

Article 10

- 25. All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.
 - a. Accused persons shall, save in exceptional circumstances, be segregated from convicted persons and shall be subject to separate treatment appropriate to their status as unconvicted persons;
 - b. Accused juvenile persons shall be separated from adults and brought as speedily as possible for adjudication.
- 26. The penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential aim of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation. Juvenile offenders shall be segregated from adults and be accorded treatment appropriate to their age and legal status.

Article 11

No one shall be imprisoned merely on the ground of inability to fulfil a contractual obligation.

Article 12

27. Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.
28. Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.
29. The above-mentioned rights shall not be subject to any restrictions except those which are provided by law, are necessary to protect national security, public order (ordre public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others, and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Covenant.
30. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country.

Article 13

An alien lawfully in the territory of a State Party to the present Covenant may be expelled therefrom only in pursuance of a decision reached in accordance with law and shall, except where compelling reasons of national security otherwise require, be allowed to submit the reasons against his expulsion and to have his case reviewed by, and be represented for the purpose before, the competent authority or a person or persons especially designated by the competent authority.

Article 14

31. All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. The press and the public may be excluded from all or part of a trial for reasons of morals, public order (ordre public), or national security in a democratic society, or when the interest of the private lives of the parties so requires, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice; but any judgement rendered in a criminal case or in a suit at law shall be made public except where the interest of juvenile persons otherwise requires or the proceedings concern matrimonial disputes or the guardianship of children.
32. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
33. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, everyone shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality:
 - a. To be informed promptly and in detail in a language which he understands of the nature and cause of the charge against him;
 - b. To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence and to communicate with counsel of his own choosing;
 - c. To be tried without undue delay;
 - d. To be tried in his presence and to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing; to be informed, if he does not have legal assistance, of this right; and to have legal assistance assigned to him, in any case where the interests of justice so require, and without payment by him in any such case if he does not have sufficient means to pay for it;

- e. To examine, or have examined, the witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
 - f. To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court;
 - g. Not to be compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt.
34. In the case of juvenile persons, the procedure shall be such as will take account of their age and the desirability of promoting their rehabilitation.
35. Everyone convicted of a crime shall have the right to his conviction and sentence being reviewed by a higher tribunal according to law.
36. When a person has by a final decision been convicted of a criminal offence and when subsequently his conviction has been reversed or he has been pardoned on the ground that a new or newly discovered fact shows conclusively that there has been a miscarriage of justice, the person who has suffered punishment as a result of such conviction shall be compensated according to law, unless it is proved that the non-disclosure of the unknown fact in time is wholly or partly attributable to him.
37. No one shall be liable to be tried or punished again for an offence for which he has already been finally convicted or acquitted in accordance with the law and penal procedure of each country.

Article 15

38. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time when the criminal offence was committed. If, subsequent to the commission of the offence, provision is made by law for the imposition of the lighter penalty, the offender shall benefit thereby.
39. Nothing in this article shall prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognized by the community of nations.

Article 16

Everyone shall have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 17

40. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation.
41. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 18

42. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice, and teaching.
43. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.
44. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.
45. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

Article 19

46. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.
47. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
48. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - a. For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
 - b. For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

Article 20

49. Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law.
50. Any advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.

Article 21

The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 22

51. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
52. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on members of the armed forces and of the police in their exercise of this right.
53. Nothing in this article shall authorize States Parties to the International Labour Organization Convention of 1948 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize to take legislative measures which would prejudice, or to apply the law in such a manner as to prejudice, the guarantees provided for in that Convention.

Article 23

54. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.
55. The right of men and women of marriageable age to marry and to found a family shall be recognized.
56. No marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
57. States Parties to the present Covenant shall take appropriate steps to ensure equality of rights and responsibilities of spouses as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. In the case of dissolution, provision shall be made for the necessary protection of any children.

Article 24

58. Every child shall have, without any discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property, or birth, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his status as a minor, on the part of his family, society and the State.
59. Every child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have a name.
60. Every child has the right to acquire a nationality.

Article 25

Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

- iii. To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
- jjj. To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;

- kkk. To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country.

Article 26

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 27

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

PART IV

Article 28

64. There shall be established a Human Rights Committee (hereafter referred to in the present Covenant as the Committee). It shall consist of eighteen members and shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided.
65. The Committee shall be composed of nationals of the States Parties to the present Covenant who shall be persons of high moral character and recognized competence in the field of human rights, consideration being given to the usefulness of the participation of some persons having legal experience.
66. The members of the Committee shall be elected and shall serve in their personal capacity.

Article 29

67. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons possessing the qualifications prescribed in article 28 and nominated for the purpose by the States Parties to the present Covenant.
68. Each State Party to the present Covenant may nominate not more than two persons. These persons shall be nationals of the nominating State.
69. A person shall be eligible for renomination.

Article 30

70. The initial election shall be held no later than six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Covenant.

71. At least four months before the date of each election to the Committee, other than an election to fill a vacancy declared in accordance with article 34, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a written invitation to the States Parties to the present Covenant to submit their nominations for membership of the Committee within three months.
72. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall prepare a list in alphabetical order of all the persons thus nominated, with an indication of the States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Covenant no later than one month before the date of each election.
73. Elections of the members of the Committee shall be held at a meeting of the States Parties to the present Covenant convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations at the Headquarters of the United Nations. At that meeting, for which two thirds of the States Parties to the present Covenant shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those nominees who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

Article 31

74. The Committee may not include more than one national of the same State.
75. In the election of the Committee, consideration shall be given to equitable geographical distribution of membership and to the representation of the different forms of civilization and of the principal legal systems.

Article 32

76. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. They shall be eligible for re-election if renominated. However, the terms of nine of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election, the names of these nine members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the meeting referred to in article 30, paragraph 4.
77. Elections at the expiry of office shall be held in accordance with the preceding articles of this part of the present Covenant.

Article 33

78. If, in the unanimous opinion of the other members, a member of the Committee has ceased to carry out his functions for any cause other than absence of a temporary character, the Chairman of the Committee shall notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then declare the seat of that member to be vacant.
79. In the event of the death or the resignation of a member of the Committee, the Chairman shall immediately notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall declare the seat vacant from the date of death or the date on which the resignation takes effect.

Article 34

80. When a vacancy is declared in accordance with article 33 and if the term of office of the member to be replaced does not expire within six months of the declaration of the vacancy, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall notify each of the States Parties to the present Covenant, which may within two months submit nominations in accordance with article 29 for the purpose of filling the vacancy.
81. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall prepare a list in alphabetical order of the persons thus nominated and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Covenant. The election to fill the vacancy shall then take place in accordance with the relevant provisions of this part of the present Covenant.
82. A member of the Committee elected to fill a vacancy declared in accordance with article 33 shall hold office for the remainder of the term of the member who vacated the seat on the Committee under the provisions of that article.

Article 35

The members of the Committee shall, with the approval of the General Assembly of the United Nations, receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may decide, having regard to the importance of the Committee's responsibilities.

Article 36

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Covenant.

Article 37

83. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall convene the initial meeting of the Committee at the Headquarters of the United Nations.
84. After its initial meeting, the Committee shall meet at such times as shall be provided in its rules of procedure.
85. The Committee shall normally meet at the Headquarters of the United Nations or at the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Article 38

Every member of the Committee shall, before taking up his duties, make a solemn declaration in open committee that he will perform his functions impartially and conscientiously.

Article 39

86. The Committee shall elect its officers for a term of two years. They may be re-elected.
87. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure, but these rules shall provide, inter alia, that:
 - a. Twelve members shall constitute a quorum;
 - b. Decisions of the Committee shall be made by a majority vote of the members present.

Article 40

88. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to submit reports on the measures they have adopted which give effect to the rights recognized herein and on the progress made in the enjoyment of those rights:
 - a. Within one year of the entry into force of the present Covenant for the States Parties concerned;
 - b. Thereafter whenever the Committee so requests.
89. All reports shall be submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall transmit them to the Committee for consideration. Reports shall indicate the factors and difficulties, if any, affecting the implementation of the present Covenant.
90. The Secretary-General of the United Nations may, after consultation with the Committee, transmit to the specialized agencies concerned copies of such parts of the reports as may fall within their field of competence.
91. The Committee shall study the reports submitted by the States Parties to the present Covenant. It shall transmit its reports, and such general comments as it may consider appropriate, to the States Parties. The Committee may also transmit to the Economic and Social Council these comments along with the copies of the reports it has received from States Parties to the present Covenant.
92. The States Parties to the present Covenant may submit to the Committee observations on any comments that may be made in accordance with paragraph 4 of this article.

Article 41

93. A State Party to the present Covenant may at any time declare under this article that it recognizes the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications to the effect that a State Party claims that another State Party is not fulfilling its obligations under the present Covenant. Communications under this article may be received and considered only if submitted by a State Party which has made a declaration recognizing in regard to itself the competence of the Committee. No communication shall be received by the Committee if it concerns a State Party which has not made such a declaration. Communications received under this article shall be dealt with in accordance with the following procedure:
 - a. If a State Party to the present Covenant considers that another State Party is not giving effect to the provisions of the present Covenant, it may, by written communication, bring the matter to the attention of that State

Party. Within three months after the receipt of the communication the receiving State shall afford the State which sent the communication an explanation, or any other statement in writing clarifying the matter which should include, to the extent possible and pertinent, reference to domestic procedures and remedies taken, pending, or available in the matter;

- b. If the matter is not adjusted to the satisfaction of both States Parties concerned within six months after the receipt by the receiving State of the initial communication, either State shall have the right to refer the matter to the Committee, by notice given to the Committee and to the other State;
- c. The Committee shall deal with a matter referred to it only after it has ascertained that all available domestic remedies have been invoked and exhausted in the matter, in conformity with the generally recognized principles of international law. This shall not be the rule where the application of the remedies is unreasonably prolonged;
- d. The Committee shall hold closed meetings when examining communications under this article;
- e. Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (c), the Committee shall make available its good offices to the States Parties concerned with a view to a friendly solution of the matter on the basis of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the present Covenant;
- f. In any matter referred to it, the Committee may call upon the States Parties concerned, referred to in subparagraph (b), to supply any relevant information;
- g. The States Parties concerned, referred to in subparagraph (b), shall have the right to be represented when the matter is being considered in the Committee and to make submissions orally and/or in writing;
- h. The Committee shall, within twelve months after the date of receipt of notice under subparagraph (b), submit a report:
 - i. If a solution within the terms of subparagraph (e) is reached, the Committee shall confine its report to a brief statement of the facts and of the solution reached;
 - ii. If a solution within the terms of subparagraph (e) is not reached, the Committee shall confine its report to a brief statement of the facts; the written submissions and record of the oral submissions made by the States Parties concerned shall be attached to the report. In every matter, the report shall be communicated to the States Parties concerned.

94. The provisions of this article shall come into force when ten States Parties to the present Covenant have made declarations under paragraph 1 of this article. Such declarations shall be deposited by the States Parties with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall transmit copies thereof to the other States Parties. A declaration may be withdrawn at any time by notification to the Secretary-General. Such a withdrawal shall not prejudice the consideration of any matter which is the subject of a communication already transmitted under this article; no further communication by any State Party shall be received after the notification

of withdrawal of the declaration has been received by the Secretary-General, unless the State Party concerned has made a new declaration.

Article 42

95. a. If a matter referred to the Committee in accordance with article 41 is not resolved to the satisfaction of the States Parties concerned, the Committee may, with the prior consent of the States Parties concerned, appoint an ad hoc Conciliation Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Commission). The good offices of the Commission shall be made available to the States Parties concerned with a view to an amicable solution of the matter on the basis of respect for the present Covenant;
b. The Commission shall consist of five persons acceptable to the States Parties concerned. If the States Parties concerned fail to reach agreement within three months on all or part of the composition of the Commission, the members of the Commission concerning whom no agreement has been reached shall be elected by secret ballot by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee from among its members.
96. The members of the Commission shall serve in their personal capacity. They shall not be nationals of the States Parties concerned, or of a State not Party to the present Covenant, or of a State Party which has not made a declaration under article 41.
97. The Commission shall elect its own Chairman and adopt its own rules of procedure.
98. The meetings of the Commission shall normally be held at the Headquarters of the United Nations or at the United Nations Office at Geneva. However, they may be held at such other convenient places as the Commission may determine in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the States Parties concerned.
99. The secretariat provided in accordance with article 36 shall also service the commissions appointed under this article.
100. The information received and collated by the Committee shall be made available to the Commission and the Commission may call upon the States Parties concerned to supply any other relevant information.
101. When the Commission has fully considered the matter, but in any event not later than twelve months after having been seized of the matter, it shall submit to the Chairman of the Committee a report for communication to the States Parties concerned:
 - a. If the Commission is unable to complete its consideration of the matter within twelve months, it shall confine its report to a brief statement of the status of its consideration of the matter;
 - b. If an amicable solution to the matter on the basis of respect for human rights as recognized in the present Covenant is reached, the Commission shall confine its report to a brief statement of the facts and of the solution reached;

- c. If a solution within the terms of subparagraph (b) is not reached, the Commission's report shall embody its findings on all questions of fact relevant to the issues between the States Parties concerned, and its views on the possibilities of an amicable solution of the matter. This report shall also contain the written submissions and a record of the oral submissions made by the States Parties concerned;
 - d. If the Commission's report is submitted under subparagraph (c), the States Parties concerned shall, within three months of the receipt of the report, notify the Chairman of the Committee whether or not they accept the contents of the report of the Commission.
102. The provisions of this article are without prejudice to the responsibilities of the Committee under article 41.
103. The States Parties concerned shall share equally all the expenses of the members of the Commission in accordance with estimates to be provided by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
104. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be empowered to pay the expenses of the members of the Commission, if necessary, before reimbursement by the States Parties concerned, in accordance with paragraph 9 of this article.

Article 43

The members of the Committee, and of the ad hoc conciliation commissions which may be appointed under article 42, shall be entitled to the facilities, privileges and immunities of experts on mission for the United Nations as laid down in the relevant sections of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

Article 44

The provisions for the implementation of the present Covenant shall apply without prejudice to the procedures prescribed in the field of human rights by or under the constituent instruments and the conventions of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies and shall not prevent the States Parties to the present Covenant from having recourse to other procedures for settling a dispute in accordance with general or special international agreements in force between them.

Article 45

The Committee shall submit to the General Assembly of the United Nations, through the Economic and Social Council, an annual report on its activities.

PART V

Article 46

Nothing in the present Covenant shall be interpreted as impairing the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of the constitutions of the specialized agencies which define the respective responsibilities of the various organs of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies in regard to the matters dealt with in the present Covenant.

Article 47

Nothing in the present Covenant shall be interpreted as impairing the inherent right of all peoples to enjoy and utilize fully and freely their natural wealth and resources.

PART VI

Article 48

105. The present Covenant is open for signature by any State Member of the United Nations or member of any of its specialized agencies, by any State Party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, and by any other State which has been invited by the General Assembly of the United Nations to become a Party to the present Covenant.
106. The present Covenant is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
107. The present Covenant shall be open to accession by any State referred to in paragraph 1 of this article.
108. Accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument of accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
109. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall inform all States which have signed this Covenant or acceded to it of the deposit of each instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 49

110. The present Covenant shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the thirty-fifth instrument of ratification or instrument of accession.
111. For each State ratifying the present Covenant or acceding to it after the deposit of the thirty-fifth instrument of ratification or instrument of accession, the present Covenant shall enter into force three months after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or instrument of accession.

Article 50

The provisions of the present Covenant shall extend to all parts of federal States without any limitations or exceptions.

Article 51

112. Any State Party to the present Covenant may propose an amendment and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall thereupon communicate any proposed amendments to the States Parties to the present Covenant with a request that they notify him whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting upon the proposals. In the event that at least one third of the States Parties favours such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of the States Parties present and voting at the conference shall be submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations for approval.
113. Amendments shall come into force when they have been approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and accepted by a two-thirds majority of the States Parties to the present Covenant in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.
114. When amendments come into force, they shall be binding on those States Parties which have accepted them, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Covenant and any earlier amendment which they have accepted.

Article 52

Irrespective of the notifications made under article 48, paragraph 5, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall inform all States referred to in paragraph 1 of the same article of the following particulars:

- kkkkk. Signatures, ratifications and accessions under article 48;
- lllll. The date of the entry into force of the present Covenant under article 49 and the date of the entry into force of any amendments under article 51.

Article 53

117. The present Covenant, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.
118. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit certified copies of the present Covenant to all States referred to in article 48.

Appendix C

Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief

The General Assembly,

Considering that one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations is that of the dignity and equality inherent in all human beings, and that all Member States have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion,

Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights proclaim the principles of nondiscrimination and equality before the law and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and belief,

Considering that the disregard and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or whatever belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to mankind, especially where they serve as a means of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States and amount to kindling hatred between peoples and nations,

Considering that religion or belief, for anyone who professes either, is one of the fundamental elements in his conception of life and that freedom of religion or belief should be fully respected and guaranteed,

Considering that it is essential to promote understanding, tolerance, and respect in matters relating to freedom of religion and belief and to ensure that the use of religion or belief for ends inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, other relevant instruments of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of the present Declaration is inadmissible,

Convinced that freedom of religion and belief should also contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples and to the elimination of ideologies or practices of colonialism and racial discrimination,

Noting with satisfaction the adoption of several, and the coming into force of some, conventions, under the aegis of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, for the elimination of various forms of discrimination,

Concerned by manifestations of intolerance and by the existence of discrimination in matters of religion or belief still in evidence in some areas of the world,

Resolved to adopt all necessary measures for the speedy elimination of such intolerance in all its forms and manifestations and to prevent and combat discrimination on the ground of religion or belief,

Proclaims this Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief:

Article 1

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice, and teaching.
2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 2

4. No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State, institution, group of persons, or person on the grounds of religion or other belief.
5. For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression "intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief" means any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

Article 3

Discrimination between human being on the grounds of religion or belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunciated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights, and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.

Article 4

6. All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life.
7. All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.

Article 5

8. The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.

9. Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.
10. The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the ground of religion or belief. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for freedom of religion or belief of others, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.
11. In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.
12. Practices of a religion or belief in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

Article 6

In accordance with article I of the present Declaration, and subject to the provisions of article 1, paragraph 3, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include, inter alia, the following freedoms:

- m. To worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;
- n. To establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions;
- o. To make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the necessary articles and materials related to the rites or customs of a religion or belief;
- p. To write, issue, and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;
- q. To teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;
- r. To solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions from individuals and institutions;
- s. To train, appoint, elect, or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;
- t. (h) To observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion or belief;
- u. (i) To establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion and belief at the national and international levels.

Article 7

The rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislation in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail himself of such rights and freedoms in practice.

Article 8

Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as restricting or derogating from any right defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

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Appendix D

Religious Freedom Provisions, Commitments, and Obligations from Regional Bodies and Instruments

Council of Europe: Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Rome 1950

Article 9 – Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

European Union: Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000

Article 10 – Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

3. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or in private, to manifest religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
4. The right to conscientious objection is recognized, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE): Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Final Act, Helsinki 1975

1. (a) Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States

VII. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief

The participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

...

Within this framework the participating States will recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience.

...

OSCE: Concluding Document of the Vienna Meeting 1986 of Representatives of the Participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held on the Basis of the Provisions of The Final Act relating to the Follow-up to the Conference

Questions Relating to Security in Europe

Principles

(16) In order to ensure the freedom of the individual to profess and practice religion or belief, the participating State will, *inter alia*,

(16.1) – take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination against individuals or communities on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, political, economic, social and cultural life, and to ensure the effective equality between believers and non-believers;

(16.2) – foster a climate of mutual tolerance and respect between believers of different communities as well as between believers and non-believers;

(16.3) – grant upon their request to communities of believers, practicing or prepared to practice their faith within the constitutional framework of their States, recognition of the status provided for them in their respective countries;

(16.4) – respect the right of these religious communities to

- establish and maintain freely accessible places of worship or assembly,

- organize themselves according to their own hierarchical and institutional structure,
- select, appoint and replace their personnel in accordance with their respective requirements and standards as well as with any freely accepted arrangement between them and their State,
- solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions.

(16.5) – engage in consultation with religious faiths, institutions and organizations in order to achieve a better understanding of the requirements of religious freedom;

(16.6) – respect the right of everyone to give and receive religious education in the language of his choice, whether individually or in association with others;

(16.7) – in this context respect, *inter alia*, the liberty of parents to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions;

(16.8) – allow the training of religious personnel in appropriate institutions;

(16.9) – respect the right of individual believers and communities of believers to acquire, possess, and use sacred books, religious publications in the language of their choice and other articles and materials related to the practice of religion or belief;

(16.10) – allow religious faiths, institutions and organizations to produce, import and disseminate religious publications and materials;

(16.11) – favorably consider the interest of religious communities to participate in public dialogue, including through the mass media.

(17) The participating States recognize that the exercise of the above-mentioned rights relating to the freedom of religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are provided by law and consistent with their obligations under international law and with their international commitments. They will ensure in their laws and regulations and in their application the full and effective exercise of the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.

...

(19) They will protect and create conditions for the promotion of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities on their territory. They will respect the free exercise of rights by persons belonging to such minorities and ensure their full equality with others.

...

Co-Operation in Humanitarian and Other Fields

Human Contacts

(32) They will allow believers, religious faiths and their representatives, in groups or on an individual basis, to establish and maintain direct personal contacts and communication with each other, in their own and other countries, *inter alia* through travel, pilgrimages and participation in assemblies and other religious events. In this context and commensurate with such contacts and events, those concerned will be allowed to acquire, receive and carry with them religious publications and objects related to the practice of their religion or belief.

OSCE: Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, June 29, 1990

(9) The participating States reaffirm that

...

(9.4) – everyone will have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change one's religion or belief and freedom to manifest one's religion or belief, either alone or in community with others, in public or in private, through worship, teaching, practice and observance. The exercise of these rights may be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and are consistent with international standards;

...

African Union: African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted June 27, 1981

Article 8

Freedom of conscience, the profession and free practice of religion shall be guaranteed. No one may, subject to law and order, be submitted to measures restricting the exercise of these freedoms.

Organization of American States (OAS): American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, adopted at Bogota, 1948

Article III – Every person has the right freely to profess a religious faith, and to manifest and practice it both in public and in private.

Article XXII – Every person has the right to associate with others to promote, exercise and protect his legitimate interests of a political, economic, religious, social, cultural, professional, labor union or other nature.

OAS: American Convention on Human Rights, adopted at San Jose, November 22, 1969

Article 12 – Freedom of Conscience and Religion

9. Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience and of religion. This right includes freedom to maintain or to change one's religion or beliefs, and freedom to profess or disseminate one's religion or beliefs, either individually or together with others, in public or in private.
 10. No one shall be subject to restrictions that might impair his freedom to maintain or to change his religion or beliefs.
 11. Freedom to manifest one's religion and beliefs may be subject only to the limitations prescribed by law that are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals, or the rights or freedoms of others.
 12. Parents or guardians, as the case may be, have the right to provide for the religious and moral education of their children or wards that is in accord with their own convictions.
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Appendix E

Department of State Training Related to the International Religious Freedom Act – 2020

I. SUMMARY

Under the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 and the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2016 (Wolf Act), the Department of State is mandated to, "... conduct training on religious freedom for all Foreign Service officers, including all entry level officers, all officers prior to departure for posting outside the United States, and all outgoing deputy chiefs of mission and ambassadors." Executive Order 13926, issued on June 2, 2020, expanded this requirement to include all civil servants in the Foreign Affairs series, and required that such training be completed every three years. The Department of State's Foreign Service Institute (FSI) works closely with the Office of International Religious Freedom (IRF) to accomplish these objectives. Foreign Service Officers receive training on international religious freedom and other human rights when they enter the Foreign Service and receive additional training through various levels and career stages.

FSI offers specialized courses on Religion and Foreign Policy and on Promoting Human Rights and Democracy, which features specific modules on international religious freedom. IRF offers Regional Religious Freedom Seminars to U.S. personnel assigned overseas. In FSI language and regional studies courses, reading materials and learning

modules regularly address topics of religious freedom, the situation of minorities, and societal tolerance.

To meet the Wolf Act's training requirements, the Department of State developed and launched a distance learning course in 2019 on the importance of advancing international religious freedom, which is now required for all Foreign Service Officers and civil servants in the Foreign Affairs series, and is available as an elective course for all other Department of State direct-hire employees. A module on international religious freedom is also presented during the Ambassadorial Seminar and Deputy Chiefs of Mission (DCM)/Principal Officer (PO) Seminar, which are mandatory before an Ambassador or a DCM/PO goes overseas, in order to meet an additional Wolf Act training requirement.

II. COURSES OFFERED

A. Courses on Human Rights and Religious Freedom

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

This FSI distance learning course is mandatory for all Foreign Service officers and Civil Service officers in the Foreign Affairs series, and is strongly recommended for all other Department direct-hire employees, including locally employed staff of U.S. missions overseas. The purpose of this course is to explain the importance of international religious freedom, illustrate how religious freedom may be violated, explain why and how the United States promotes religious freedom worldwide, and prepare U.S. personnel to engage with governments and other foreign interlocutors and religious actors on issues related to international religious freedom.

REGIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SEMINARS

These two-to-three-day in-person region-specific seminars, offered by IRF staff three to five times per year at various locations, provide practical, in-depth training on U.S. efforts to advance respect for religious freedom to human rights officers and locally employed staff currently serving at U.S. missions. These seminars focus on helping officers in the field improve tradecraft and share best practices for advancing respect for religious freedom in their assigned countries, effectively engaging local religious community and civil society actors on that topic, providing effective reporting on religious freedom topics, and understanding how U.S. Congressional interest and advocacy by U.S.-based civil society shapes this work. Sessions have taken place at locations including Bangkok, Frankfurt, Accra, Muscat, Port of Spain, Johannesburg, Panama City, and Budapest.

RELIGION AND FOREIGN POLICY

This FSI course is typically conducted in person in Washington twice a year. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is now being offered virtually. The course educates U.S. government officials on common methods appropriate for engaging religious and faith-

based communities in the field on foreign policy issues and teaches best practices for incorporating religious community outreach and religious freedom advocacy to advance broader U.S. foreign policy objectives and post engagements. Through a focus on tradecraft skills, the course trains entry- and mid-level officers serving in Washington and in embassies and consulates overseas to use the annual International Religious Freedom Report and other tools to expand outreach to, and strengthen relationships with, members of religious communities in furtherance of Department goals. Locally employed staff at missions overseas are also eligible to take the course. Course topics include: promoting religious freedom, tools for interfaith outreach and dialogue, the relationship between the religion and foreign policy, religion and national security, addressing anti-Semitism and other forms of religiously-motivated societal intolerance, promoting mutual respect in foreign societies, understanding the situation of vulnerable religious minorities, understanding the roles played by women in religious communities, and U.S. initiatives to prevent and counter violent extremism.

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

This in-person course provides a broad overview of human rights-related issues and a deeper examination of key current issues. FSI offers this course in Washington three times a year, targeting entry- and mid-level officers and locally engaged staff from posts overseas to provide them with U.S. policies, tools, and best practices for promoting democracy and human rights, including religious freedom, in the field. The course is being offered virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic. FSI and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) jointly develop the curriculum, which typically includes a session designed by IRF specifically devoted to religious freedom, along with other sessions that address issues relevant to religious freedom including human rights law, working with nongovernmental organizations, and monitoring and reporting human rights abuses.

UPDATING THE ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT AND THE INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT

FSI offers this distance learning course for personnel in U.S. missions overseas and in Washington who draft, edit, and clear the annual human rights report and the annual international religious freedom report. The course provides detailed instruction on the annual update process. It also includes information on the legislative underpinning of the reports, tips on how to collect information throughout the year for both reports, and notes on how to develop a deeper understanding of the instructions for the two reports.

B. Additional Training on Human Rights and Religious Freedom at FSI

IRF works closely with FSI to integrate material on human rights, including religious freedom into training at all levels, including during the Ambassadorial and Deputy Chiefs of Mission/Principal Officer Seminars.

IRF and FSI cooperate closely to incorporate information about human rights, including religious freedom, into the long-term geographical area studies courses associated with language training. IRF officers present topics such as international human rights law, including the right to freedom of religion; the landscape of theological beliefs of different religious groups; state actions targeting members of religious groups and violations and abuses of religious freedom; involvement of members of religious groups in politics; diplomatic tools used by the United States to promote respect for religious freedom; means of protection of those who have fled religious persecution; and the relationships among religious freedom, democracy, and national security.

FSI also offers more than 40 regional, sub-regional, country-specific, and thematic area studies courses, as well as familiarization courses on Afghanistan (16 per year), Iraq (16 per year), and Pakistan (5 per year), many of which address aspects of the role and impact of religions and religious communities, including: religious practices; religious sensitivities; differing ways of thinking about religious identity; religion as a source of community, conflict, and peacebuilding; the relationship of religion to broader questions of citizenship, enfranchisement, and politics; and the link between human rights broadly and religious freedom.

III. BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PROVIDED TO STUDENTS

IRF continually updates information and material distributed at relevant courses. It also has revamped or created intranet sites containing background materials on religious freedom and highlighting best practices for protecting and promoting religious freedom.

DRL and IRF intranet sites, which are available only to Department of State and embassy personnel, provide background on human rights and religious freedom issues, including country-specific information, information on the annual Religious Freedom Designations, and general information and points of contact in the Office of International Religious Freedom.

The following background materials related to religious freedom are made available to FSI students:

- *Annual Reports on International Religious Freedom* from 1999 through the present
- Department statements on religious freedom, specific to various countries
- Press guidance related to religious freedom themes and topics
- Policy statements of the Secretary and other U.S. government officials on religious freedom
- Diplopedia, an intranet wiki, contains an online compendium of posts' engagement with religious entities as a source for best practices in promoting religious freedom.

- Highlights from Key International Documents: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 18); and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (articles 18, 26, & 27).

Appendix F

Department of Homeland Security and the International Religious Freedom Act

When the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was created, it assumed responsibilities formerly charged to the Immigration and Naturalization Service under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA). DHS is committed to ensuring all applicants for asylum and refugee status are treated with fairness, respect, and dignity, and that all mandates of the IRFA involving the asylum and refugee programs are properly implemented. This appendix summarizes the actions of DHS U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations (RAIO) Directorate during calendar year (CY) 2020, regarding providing training to officers on violations of religious freedom and the development and implementation of guidelines that address potential hostile biases as required under Section 102(b)(1)(E) of the IRFA.

I. Training of Refugee Officers, Asylum Officers, and Other USCIS Staff Who Adjudicate Refugee and Asylum Claims

DHS USCIS is responsible for adjudicating of asylum applications, conducting protection screenings, and adjudicating requests for classification as a refugee outside of the United States. During CY 2020, USCIS also conducted interviews and made assessments pursuant to the Migrant Protection Protocol (MPP) and Asylum Cooperative Agreements (ACA).^[1] USCIS provides extensive training to refugee officers, asylum officers, international adjudication officers, and other officers temporarily detailed to perform these duties in order to prepare them to interview asylum applicants and refugee applicants and to assess, screen, or otherwise adjudicate their requests for protection.

During CY 2020, USCIS officer training for RAIO was composed of the RAIO Combined Training Program and division-specific training addressing adjudications and procedures specific to each RAIO division.

The USCIS RAIO Combined Training Program included instruction related to principles of international human rights law, U.S. law governing refugee and asylum adjudications, non-adversarial interviewing techniques, credibility assessments, national security issues, country-of-origin information and legal research, eliciting testimony, decision making, and other critical topics. During the course, students received specialized instruction to

ensure unbiased refugee and asylum adjudications, including instruction on the nature of religious persecution abroad, religious freedom, and persecution on account of religion as one of the five protected grounds on which asylum and refugee status may be based. This instruction included material specifically on the IRFA and presentations on the IRFA by experts on religious persecution. The training materials are regularly updated to reflect any change in law, policy, and procedures, and incorporate relevant information on religious persecution from the Department of State, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and other sources. In CY 2020, USCIS trained 374 new asylum officers, 12 new refugee officers, and two overseas adjudications officers who frequently adjudicate refugee claims. USCIS also trained three immigration officers from the Fraud Detection and National Security Directorate who work in RAIO offices.

The USCIS Refugee Division Officer Training Course is a six-week course and covers all topics necessary to fully adjudicate a refugee case – including content with specific emphasis on religious-based claims and claims with religious considerations, such as Lautenberg-Specter cases. Nineteen of RAIO's staff received Refugee Division Officer Training Course training in CY 2020. In addition, pre-departure briefings were provided prior to deployment on overseas refugee processing trips. These pre-departure briefings included an eight-day training session focused on specific issues related to the region where staff would travel and the refugee populations they would encounter. These briefings also highlighted particular concerns in the region regarding religious persecution, as well as specific issues related to refugee adjudications in that area.

In the USCIS Asylum Division, a continual effort is made to include further discussion of religious persecution whenever possible in both basic and advanced training courses, and in local asylum office training. The Asylum Division regularly updates its training materials and conducts training in local asylum offices to reflect any recently issued reports on religious persecution from the UNHCR and other organizations, as well as any recent developments in case law or country conditions on this issue. To this end, officers received continued instruction on how to consult and use the IRF reports in their adjudications as supplemented and enhanced with information from other reports, case law, and current events.

During CY 2020, USCIS trained a total of 62 U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) employees who were assigned to participate in a pilot program as part of the Credible Fear Taskforce. As part of this pilot, officers from CBP's Office of Field Operations and agents from U.S. Border Patrol received IRFA training while being trained to conduct credible fear interviews.

The USCIS RAIO Research Unit maintains a collection of materials regarding human rights conditions around the world. The Research Unit has published an online guide on internet research available to all USCIS staff. The guide includes links to governmental and nongovernmental web sites that contain information on religious persecution, as well as other issues relevant to asylum adjudications and refugee adjudications. The Research Unit answers queries from the field on matters of religious freedom and maintains a

database of written responses that is available to officers. The Research Unit catalogs its holdings regarding religious freedom and related issues. The Research Unit presented during pre-departure briefings, noted above, to officers as part of their preparation to adjudicate cases abroad, often delving into relevant religious freedom issues that are present in the case load. The Research Unit also provided presentations to asylum offices on country conditions that are relevant to the particular case composition of the respective offices, including issues of religious freedom. Periodically, the Research Unit invites guest speakers to USCIS to address significant international events, such as emerging or ongoing civil wars and human rights violations. When relevant, religious freedom issues are integrated into the discussion. The Research Unit produces a monthly news summary for officers throughout the agency on human rights abuses and sociopolitical developments around the world. The news summary frequently contains articles regarding religious intolerance and persecution.

II. Guidelines for Addressing Hostile Biases

For refugee applicant interviews, the Resettlement Support Centers, managed by the Department of State, hire and manage interpreters at refugee processing locations. Prior to the refugee interview, interpreters are notified of their roles and responsibilities and are placed under oath by USCIS officers and swear or affirm that interpretation will be complete and accurate and that they understand the confidential nature of the refugee interview. If there are indications the interpreter and applicant do not understand each other, or the interpreter is not properly fulfilling the obligations of the interpreter role, procedures are set forth for the USCIS officer to request a different interpreter for the interview. In the event an interpreter is found to be incompetent or displays improper conduct, the interpreter is replaced.

The USCIS Asylum Division conducts protection screening interviews as well as affirmative asylum interviews. In the protection screening context for CY 2020 (Safe Third Country screening, credible fear and reasonable fear screening interviews, and ACA and MPP interviews), the Asylum Division provided contracted interpreters for those who could not proceed with an interview in English. Separate from protection screenings, USCIS asylum officers adjudicate the asylum applications of individuals in the United States who affirmatively apply for asylum. Immigration judges within the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review adjudicate the asylum applications of individuals in the United States who are placed in removal proceedings.

In the affirmative asylum context during CY 2020 until September 23, 2020, asylum applicants who could not proceed with the asylum interview in English provided their own interpreter. For affirmative asylum interviews requiring applicant-provided interpreters, asylum officers called contracted interpreters to function as interpreter monitors to ensure the accuracy of the interpretation throughout the interview. The contracted interpreter monitor listened to the interpretation provided by the applicant's interpreter and reported any mistranslations, bias, or other problems with the interpretation.

On September 23, 2020, USCIS implemented a temporary final rule (TFR) entitled *Asylum Interview Interpreter Requirement Modification Due to COVID-19* (Asylum Interview Interpreter TFR), 85 FR 59655. The Asylum Interview Interpreter TFR temporarily modifies regulations for 180 days to provide that asylum applications who cannot proceed with the interview in English are no longer required to provide interpreters at the asylum interview but rather must ordinarily proceed with USCIS-provided telephonic interpreters as long as they are fluent in one of the 47 languages listed in 8 CFR 208.9(h)(1). This temporary change is one of USCIS's mitigation efforts to protect the health and safety of Asylum Division employees and the public as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Prior to conducting any interpretation for the asylum interview or protection screening interview, the interpreter (contracted by USCIS or applicant-provided) must take an oath to interpret fully and accurately the proceedings of the asylum interview and to keep the contents of the interview confidential. The contracted interpreter monitor must also take an oath to report to the asylum officer any mistranslation observed during the interview. Included in the oath for all contracted interpreters/monitors is the requirement to immediately notify the officer if the contracted interpreter/monitor is unable to proceed in a neutral and unbiased manner, as well as to maintain the confidentiality of the asylum interview. Procedures are in place for the asylum officer to terminate and reschedule the interview if the applicant-provided interpreter is found to be misrepresenting the applicant's testimony, is incompetent, or displays improper conduct.

USCIS includes specific confidentiality and anti-bias provisions in the interpreter services contract that is used by asylum offices to obtain interpreters for screening interviews and interpreter monitors for affirmative asylum interviews. The contracts include special provisions that ensure the security and confidentiality of the interview process. All individuals working under the Asylum Division's interpreter services contracts are required to undergo suitability determinations and background investigations conducted by the USCIS Office of Security and Integrity (OSI). As part of the package submission to OSI for the suitability determination and background investigation, contractors are required to submit a signed and witnessed DHS Form 11000-6, which is a non-disclosure agreement. Additionally, all individuals working under the contract are required to complete a signed and notarized Confidentiality and Neutrality Statement, which is a USCIS Asylum Division form. The contract also requires that individuals performing work under the contract must receive various training. This training includes sessions on security awareness and privacy to ensure the protection of sensitive information.

The USCIS Asylum Division interpreter contract also includes performance metrics to ensure professionalism, fluency, accuracy, and impartiality of contracted interpreters. To enforce these performance metrics, Asylum Division staff report to headquarters any concerns about the professionalism, accuracy, or neutrality of the interpretation. These concerns are raised with the contracting program manager of the interpreter services company and may result in performance-related penalties. Under contract, the interpreter services company must, in consultation with the Asylum Division, take appropriate steps

to address these complaints. Depending on the seriousness of the infraction and/or the interpreter's prior performance history, remedies may include retraining or removal from the contract. Ultimately, the Contracting Officer for the USCIS Asylum Division contract has the authority to remove an interpreter from the contract.

[1] DHS began MPP in January 2019 and ACA in November 2019. In March 2020 the ACA program was paused due to COVID-19.

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Appendix G

Overview of U.S. Refugee Policy – 2020

The United States seeks to enable the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their home countries – the solution that most refugees prefer. This reflects the U.S. commitment to achieving the best humanitarian outcomes while advancing the foreign policy interests of the United States.

To this end, the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy says that the United States will continue to lead the world in humanitarian assistance, that it will continue to catalyze responses to man-made and natural disasters, and that it will support displaced people as close to their homes as possible to help meet their needs until they can safely and voluntarily return home. By focusing on ending the conflicts that drive displacement in the first place, and by providing assistance overseas to prevent further displacement, the United States can help prevent the destabilizing effects of such displacement on affected countries and their neighbors.

In Fiscal Year 2020 the United States provided more than \$10.5 billion to supporting crisis responses globally, the largest contribution of any country in the world. This assistance reached tens of millions of displaced and crisis-affected people worldwide, providing urgent, life-saving support and services, including food, shelter, healthcare, education, and access to safe drinking water.

U.S. support for host countries, provided through contributions to humanitarian organizations, encourages host countries to continue sheltering those fleeing persecution and increases their access to work, education, and public services. This increases their self-reliance, encourages them to stay close to home, and facilitates their return when conditions allow. This, in turn, enables them to participate in rebuilding their homelands, promoting recovery and long-term stability of those countries and their neighbors – which also serves long-run U.S. foreign policy and national security interests.

Permanent resettlement in a third country is an option for certain refugees who cannot return to their home countries or remain in the countries of first asylum. Resettlement in

the United States is accomplished through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), which is managed by the Department of State in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

In Fiscal Year 2020, 11,814 refugees were resettled permanently in the United States and given a path to U.S. citizenship through USRAP. This included refugees who had experienced past persecution or had a well-founded fear of persecution on account of religion, as well as individuals from Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs) and Special Watch List countries, according to the following “Priorities”[\[1\]](#):

- Priority 1, Individual Referrals: Nationals of any country, including CPCs and Special Watch List countries, could be referred to the USRAP through a Priority 1 referral for reasons of religious persecution.
- Priority 2, Groups of Special Concern: Under the Lautenberg Amendment[\[2\]](#) and Specter Amendment,[\[3\]](#) members of certain religious minority groups from the former Soviet Union (including CPCs Tajikistan and Turkmenistan and Special Watch List country Russia) and Iran designated as Priority 2 had access to USRAP and could be considered under a reduced evidentiary standard for establishing a well-founded fear of persecution.
- Priority 3, Family Reunification: Refugees from the following countries, including CPCs, who had certain refugee or asylee family members in the United States had access to the USRAP through Priority 3.
 - Afghanistan
 - Burundi
 - Central African Republic
 - Cuba
 - Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) (CPC)
 - Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
 - Eritrea (CPC)
 - Ethiopia
 - Iran (CPC)
 - Iraq
 - Mali
 - Somalia
 - South Sudan
 - Sudan
 - Syria

[\[1\]](#) Entering USRAP under a certain “priority” does not establish precedence in the order in which cases will be processed. Once cases are established as eligible for access under one of the three processing priorities, they all undergo the same processing steps.

[\[2\]](#) Section 599D of Title V, P.L. 101-167, as amended.

[\[3\]](#) Section 213 of Title II, Division E, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004, P.L. 108-199, as amended.