

June 4, 2002: Commission Urges Stationing U.S. Human Rights Official in Afghanistan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2003Contact:

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WASHINGTON - With Afghanistan about to begin the process of selecting a permanent government, now is the time for the United States to promote religious freedom and other human rights there, says the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom in a report and recommendations issued today. That process is at a crucial stage with the ongoing selection of members of the Emergency Loya Jirga, which is scheduled to begin its work in mid-June. Among its recommendations, the Commission, a federal agency advising the Administration and Congress, calls for the stationing at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul a person whose sole responsibility is to promote religious freedom and other human rights, including by coordinating U.S. participation in relevant international initiatives and by monitoring and reporting publicly human rights and religious freedom conditions. If the Administration does not send a representative to Afghanistan to perform these functions, the Commission is prepared to do so. The full text of the Commission's report and recommendations on Afghanistan can be found on the Commission's Web site at www.uscirf.gov. A printed copy can be obtained by calling the phone number above.

Michael K. Young, Chair

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