

May 14, 2007: Argue, Cromartie, Eid, and Leo Appointed to Commission

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WASHINGTON -President George W. Bush today appointed Dr. Imam Talal Y. Eid and Leonard Leo to the United States Commission on International Religious freedom, an independent, bipartisan federal agency, and reappointed Michael Cromartie. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) appointed Dr. Don H. Argue as a Commissioner. The terms of Messrs. Argue and Eid will run from May 15, 2007 to May 14, 2009. Messrs. Cromartie and Leo will serve the remainder of terms ending May 14, 2008. "We welcome these new appointments, which will enable the Commission to continue its unique efforts to advance freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief worldwide," said Felice D. Gaer, USCIRF Chair. "Michael Cromartie has been an active member and officer of the Commission, and we look forward to his continued participation. We look forward to the contributions and insights of Dr. Argue, Imam Eid, and Mr. Leo, each of whom brings important experience to the Commission's deliberations." On behalf of the Commission, allow me to thank departing Commissioners Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, Bishop Ricardo Ramirez, and Dr. Khaled M. Abou El Fadl for their service. Bishop Ramirez and Archbishop Chaput, in particular, actively participated in the Commission's work, contributed to our studies and reports, and gave generously of their time and wise counsel. Dr. El Fadl provided valuable perspectives. "Mr. Cromartie, currently a Vice Chair of the Commission, is Vice President of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., where he directs the Evangelicals in Civic Life and the Media and Religion programs. He is also a Senior Advisor to The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life in Washington and a Senior Fellow with The Trinity Forum. Dr. Argue, president of Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington, was invited by President Bill Clinton to serve on the State Department's Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad, where he chaired the subcommittee dealing with international religious persecution. President Clinton also appointed Dr. Argue to be part of the first official delegation of U.S. religious leaders to visit the People's Republic of China. Prior to his Northwest University post, Dr. Argue served as president of the National Association of Evangelicals. Imam Eid is Founder and Director of Religious Affairs at the Islamic Institute of Boston. A native of Lebanon, he served as Imam at the Al-Nasir Mosque in Tripoli for seven years and as Imam and religious director of the Islamic Center of New England from 1983-2005. In addition to his work at the Institute, he currently serves also as Muslim chaplain at Massachusetts General Hospital and at Brandeis University. Mr. Leo is Executive Vice President of The Federalist Society for Law & Public Policy Studies, where he manages the programs of the Lawyers Division and helps manage government, media, and corporate relations. He also helps manage the organization's Supreme Court project and International Law Project, among other special initiatives. Mr. Leo serves on the Board of Directors of the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast. He has served as a U.S. delegate to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights and as an observer to the World Intellectual Property Organization. He has taken part in two World Health Organization delegations and is involved with the U.S. National Commission to UNESCO. The Commission consists of nine voting Commissioners and the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, who is a non-voting member. Three Commissioners are selected by the President, two by the leaders of the President's party in Congress, and four by the congressional leaders of the other party.

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