

## 7/27/09: USCIRF Seeks Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### About the Commission

The impact of religion in international affairs and U.S. foreign policy has grown markedly in recent years. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, a bipartisan independent federal commission created by Congress in 1998, is the only independent government body in the world focused principally on monitoring and advancing the internationally recognized freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief and related human rights. It is also the only international human rights commission in the United States government.

Established by Congress as part of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, the Commission's primary responsibilities are to make foreign policy recommendations to the President and Congress related to the status and impact of freedom of religion or belief around the world. During its nearly ten years in operation, the Commission has generated key policy recommendations that have been incorporated into U.S. foreign policy with respect to dozens of issues and countries, including recommendations concerning the constitutions of Iraq and Afghanistan; the global exportation of an ideology of hatred and intolerance by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; human rights abuses and repression by China, Russia, Burma, Iran and others; and the long-term conflict in Sudan. The Commission's activities include disseminating information to the public and to policymakers through op-editorials, press statements and policy briefs; participating in Congressional hearings; convening public hearings and expert briefings; engaging in overseas diplomatic visits and inquiries; engaging with Administration officials, members of Congress, think tanks and policy experts; participating in multilateral fora such as the UN and OSCE; and generating expert studies on critical issues, such as an award-winning study on the expedited removal process for U.S. asylum seekers and the first study of religious freedom conditions in North Korea based on refugee interviews.

The bipartisan Commission is comprised of nine private citizens who are appointed for their expertise in law, human rights, and international affairs by the President and the leadership of both parties in the Senate and the House of Representatives; the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom at the U.S. State Department serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member.

### About the Position

The Executive Director will have principal responsibility directing the day-to-day operations of the Commission, managing its staff, as well as overseeing its budget and the drafting and production of its reports and statements. Working with the Commissioners and senior staff members of the Commission, the Executive Director will develop and implement a strategic plan for the Commission's activities. Possessing excellent managerial, interpersonal, and communication skills, the Executive Director will also routinely interact with Commissioners, staff, Members of Congress and senior Administration officials, and a diverse constituency of human rights, foreign policy and religious groups.

The Commission seeks an individual with the following skills and experience:

- Foreign policy expertise;
- Excellent research, analytical, writing, and managerial skills and experience;
- Understanding of the international human rights instruments;
- Experience developing creative policy ideas and their strategic implementation;
- Ability to develop strong relationships with Commissioners, congressional leadership and senior congressional staff, as well as with senior Administration officials;
- Capacity to develop and implement, under the direction of the Commission members, a far-reaching and dynamic strategic plan for the Commission's activities; and
- Ability to execute activities of the Commission, including travel abroad by Commissioners and staff, public events, press statements, and research activities, all with the aim of developing policy recommendations and then generating necessary levels of public awareness to advance these recommendations appropriately.

The Commission also seeks an Executive Director with both expertise in and commitment to the policy goals of the Commission. This position has been designated the equivalent of an Executive Schedule (EX) V for purposes of compensation, with federal government benefits. The position is available immediately, and the Commission intends to fill it as soon as possible.

Interested parties should send resumes with cover letter to:

Leonard A. Leo

Chair

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The Commission is an equal opportunity employer.