

May 22, 2000: Commission to Testify Before the House Int'l Relations Committee on Annual Report

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2000 Contact:

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WHAT: Members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom will testify before the House International Relations Committee during a hearing on the Commission's first annual report, issued May 1. Commission Chair Rabbi David Saperstein and Commissioners Elliott Abrams and Nina Shea will testify. The hearing is being held during the height of the debate in Congress about Permanent Normal Trade Relations status for China, as well as the beginning of a "Sudan Campaign," organized by non-governmental organizations, taking place in Washington, D.C. **WHEN:** Wednesday, May 24, 2000 at 10:00 a.m. **WHERE:** Room 2172, Rayburn Building **BACKGROUND:** The Commission issued its first annual report to the President, Secretary of State, and Congress on May 1. The Commission made recommendations on China, Sudan, and Russia, most notably recommending that Congress grant China Permanent Normal Trade Relations status only after China makes substantial improvement in respect for religious freedom. With regard to Sudan, the Commission recommended the U.S. begin a 12-month plan to pressure Sudan's government to improve human rights and bring an end to a 17-year civil war that has killed some 2 million people, mostly Christians and animists in the south. The full report can be found on the Commission's Web site at www.uscirf.gov.

Rabbi David Saperstein, Chair

- Dean Michael K. Young, Vice Chair Hon. Elliott Abrams Laila Al-Marayati, M.D. Hon. John R. Bolton Firuz Kazemzadeh Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick Nina Shea Justice Charles Z. Smith Ambassador Robert Seiple, Ex-Officio Steven T. McFarland, Executive Director