

By Andrea Hayley

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/united-states/us-panel-singles-out-top-religious-persecutors-55547.html>

WASHINGTON—The United States is the only country with an independent, permanent panel monitoring the state of religious freedom in the world, and making policy recommendations based on their findings.

The commission's annual report, released this week, details abuses, and calls out the rhetoric used by repressive regimes to carry out atrocities against religious believers. The panel's independence from the government allows it to raise concerns freely, where politics prevents most lawmakers and administration officials from treading.

"We have lots of perseverance," said Commissioner Nina Shea.

The

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)

, created by an act of Congress in 1998, carefully documents violations of religious freedom around the world.