April 26, 2017

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:


The 2017 Annual Report documents religious freedom conditions in more than 35 countries and makes many policy recommendations, including:

- The Secretary of State should:
  - Continue to designate 10 countries as “countries of particular concern,” or CPCs, under IRFA for egregious religious freedom violations: Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan;
  - Designate six additional countries as CPCs: Central African Republic, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Syria, and Vietnam; and
  - Designate as “entities of particular concern” for religious freedom violations under IRFA, as amended by the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act (P.L. 114-281): the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Taliban in Afghanistan, and al-Shabaab in Somalia.

- The U.S. government should closely monitor religious freedom violations in 12 countries placed on USCIRF’s Tier 2: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cuba, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Laos, Malaysia, and Turkey.

Additionally, the 2017 Annual Report highlights concerns in Bangladesh, Belarus, Ethiopia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Nepal, Somalia, and Western Europe.

USCIRF believes that the adoption of the recommendations outlined in the Annual Report would advance U.S. efforts to protect and promote the universal right to freedom of religion or belief worldwide.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our work and these policy recommendations.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Reese, S.J.
Chair
April 26, 2017

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:


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Chair
April 26, 2017

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
President Pro Tempore of the Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hatch:


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Thomas J. Reese, S.J.
Chair
April 26, 2017

The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Tillerson:


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