

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 407

Condemning the persecution of Christians around the world.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 26, 2017

Mr. GROTHMAN (for himself, Mr. BABIN, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. YOHO, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GAETZ, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. FASO, Mr. DUNN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. SIMPSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## RESOLUTION

Condemning the persecution of Christians around the world.

Whereas the persecution of Christians is a global problem, occurring in countries across the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Americas;

Whereas Christians face persecution not only from Islamic extremist groups, like the Islamic State and Boko Haram, but also from other religious extremist groups and from officials at all levels of government;

Whereas such persecution ranges from social harassment and discrimination to physical violence, imprisonment, torture, enslavement, rape, and death;

Whereas Christianity is one of the most persecuted religions in the world;

Whereas over 200,000,000 Christians experience persecution across the globe;

Whereas the majority of persecuted Christians live in the Middle East;

Whereas Christianity is not a Western imposition on historically Islamic countries in the Middle East because the Middle East has been a home to Christians since the first century A.D.;

Whereas the Christian population in the Middle East has significantly decreased over the past few decades as a result of persecution, displacement, and genocide;

Whereas Christians in Syria and Iraq have been facing genocide for many years;

Whereas the Christian population in Iraq decreased from 1,400,000 people in 2003 to just 275,000 people in 2016, as a result of displacement and genocide caused by religious extremism;

Whereas many Syrian Christians have been displaced, and those unable to escape have been subject to imprisonment, torture, enslavement, and execution by the Islamic State;

Whereas Christian holy sites in Syria have been destroyed by the Islamic State;

Whereas in Iran, Christian converts have been banned from attending church services during the Christmas season, in an effort to limit the spread of Christianity;

Whereas in 2016, approximately 200 Christians were arrested in Iran for their faith;

Whereas in Saudi Arabia, Christians must practice their faith in secrecy because churches are not allowed, and makeshift churches in homes are raided;

Whereas Christians in Saudi Arabia face imprisonment, torture, and deportation;

Whereas in Afghanistan, where Islam is viewed as a unifying faith, Christian converts are often murdered or sent to a mental hospital after their families learn of their new faith;

Whereas Christians in Pakistan face constant accusation of blasphemy, punishable by death, and convictions and sentences for blasphemy are given despite little or no evidence of blasphemy;

Whereas in 2016, approximately 600 Christian churches were attacked in Pakistan;

Whereas Coptic Christians in Egypt have faced persecution for over 50 years, and on April 9, 2017, Palm Sunday, 44 people were killed in bomb attacks by the Islamic State on Coptic churches;

Whereas the Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attack on a bus on May 26, 2017, in which 29 Coptic Christians were killed while traveling to a monastery in Minya, Egypt;

Whereas since the fall of the Gaddafi regime, persecution of Christians in Libya has significantly increased;

Whereas Christians in Nigeria have been massacred by Islamic extremist groups like Boko Haram and the Fulani;

Whereas in January 2017, Fulani militants raided a Christian village in Nigeria, killing six police officers and four civilians;

Whereas Christian converts in Somalia often face public execution;

Whereas in 2017, a mob of 100 men attacked a Christian church in Uganda, beating and raping members of the congregation;

Whereas Christian persecution has been on the rise in Asia, primarily due to religious nationalism;

Whereas in May 2017, a Christian governor in Indonesia was found guilty of blasphemy and sentenced to two years in prison for “distorting” a Koranic teaching during a campaign speech;

Whereas in Bangladesh, hundreds of Christians are being forced off their property, and legal action rarely results in the favor of a Christian party;

Whereas communist regimes have a strong history of oppressing and persecuting Christians;

Whereas since 2013, in the Zhejiang Province of China, crosses have been removed from over 1,500 churches as part of that province’s anti-cross campaign;

Whereas in China, members of churches that are not registered with the government face imprisonment and torture;

Whereas in North Korea, the practice of Christianity is prohibited and Christians are forced to hide their faith from the government;

Whereas if caught, Christians in North Korea are forced into harsh labor camps, where approximately 70,000 Christians are imprisoned in 2017;

Whereas in November 2016, Vietnam adopted a new “Law on Belief and Religion” that limits the right to religious freedom for over 8,000,000 Christians in that country;

Whereas in Mexico, Christians and Christian church leaders are killed by drug cartels for speaking out against organized crime and corruption;

Whereas although the Colombian government respects the right to religious freedom, Christians from indigenous communities often face imprisonment because of their faith;

Whereas religious discrimination, including the persecution of Christians, is a global human rights problem; and

Whereas the right to religious freedom is a universal right recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) condemns the persecution of Christians  
3       around the world;

4               (2) calls on discriminatory regimes to cease  
5       their persecution of Christians and religious minori-  
6       ties; and

7               (3) urges the President and the heads of the  
8       governments of all democratic countries around the  
9       world to uphold the right to religious freedom and  
10      condemn the global persecution of Christians.

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