

Elements in Sudan's Islamic clergy and in the government interpret the Koran to give them license to tell people how they will live out their faith whether they consider themselves Muslim or not. In Meriam's case, her father has been absent from her life since she was a small child. Her Christian mother raised her as a Christian.

Sadly, Meriam is not the only Sudanese who chose differently on the matter of faith only to be faced with a death sentence for that choice. Sudanese civil activist Mahmud Muhammad Taha was arrested and charged with apostasy in 1984 for his efforts to end Sharia law in Sudan. He was subsequently executed.

In some countries, Christian converts have been forced to renounce their faith and conform to the version of Islam favored by the government of the day. Some of these countries have constitutions that ostensibly guarantee religious freedom even as they may also have laws that actually contradict those rights. Except for Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the other 15 countries including Sudan, have signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guaranteeing freedoms for their citizens.

Article 18 of that document enshrines "the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion." Speaking of the rights of the individual, that article also forbids "coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice. Article 18 also guarantees "the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching."

The current report by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, or USCIRF, cites Sudan as a "country of particular concern" due to its government engaging in "systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of freedom of religion or belief." According to USCIRF, Sudan is the world's most violent abuser of the right to freedom of religion or belief.

USCIRF's Zudhi Jasser recommended in his testimony that not only should the U.S. Government take appropriate actions against Sudan as detailed in the International Religious Freedom Act, but that our government should also make religious freedom and human rights a centerpiece of U.S.-Sudan bilateral relations.

The troubling case of Meriam Ibrahim Ishag should warn of future incidents in which those who do not believe in Islam as defined by a government are persecuted or placed in fear of death or torture.

THE RETIREMENT OF CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT WENDELL L. PEACOCK

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2014

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Chief Master Sergeant Wendell L. Peacock of the 94th Airlift Wing at Dobbins Air Reserve Base on the occasion of his retirement.

Chief Peacock enlisted in the Air Force in 1981 and served eight years of active duty before joining the Air Force Reserve. He has held various assignments in the security forces career field. In 2007, he moved to Dobbins Air Reserve Base as a Security Forces Manager. Chief Peacock became the Command Chief Master Sergeant for the 94th Airlift Wing at Dobbins in May 2011.

In this position, Chief Peacock has been the principal advisor to the commander and staff. He has been responsible for influencing mission readiness, utilization, morale, and quality of life for more than 1,600 enlisted Airmen. He has also coordinated with staff agencies and assists with the implementation of wing policies.

I had the privilege of working alongside Chief Peacock as a chaplain in the 94th Air Wing and had a close relationship with him. He exemplifies the very best traits that can be found among the ranks of our Armed Forces. I stand with many Airmen at Dobbins who will miss the Chief and wish him all the best in his retirement.

HONORING CELANESE CORPORATION AND HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2014

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my fellow colleagues to join me in thanking and congratulating Celanese Corporation as they celebrate their 10 year partnership with the South Collin County Habitat for Humanity.

Over the past decade, Celanese and Habitat have changed countless lives and have improved the future for families in our communities. In fact, since 2005, Celanese has donated over \$400,000 and over 7,500 volunteer hours towards building 10 Habitat for Humanity Homes. This year, almost 300 volunteers devoted 2,500 hours to complete a home for a family over 14 weekends. They must be proud of these accomplishments, I sure am.

When the strength of corporations and the hearts of volunteers come together the results are limitless. The noble work done by these two groups is to be commended and emulated by all.

A strong relationship between outstanding companies and selfless volunteer organizations is one of the fundamental building blocks of a safe and prosperous community. I thank all of those involved for their hard work, dedication, and promise of a brighter future for North Texans.

I look at the extraordinary accomplishments over the past 10 years, and can't help but look forward to the next 10 years. I'm confident that your hard-work, generosity, and compassion will continue to guide you and lead you to continued success.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Celanese for their dedication to enhancing the lives of Collin County families. It is an honor and a privilege to represent the Celanese Corporation and its numerous employees in the United States Congress. God bless you. I salute you.

CONGRATULATING JOHN HANCOCK COLLEGE PREP HIGH SCHOOL ON THEIR AWARD AT THE 2014 MATE INTERNATIONAL REMOTELY OPERATED VEHICLE COMPETITION

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John Hancock College Prep High School and their Underwater Robotics team on their award in the 2014 MATE International Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Competition. I appreciate all of the hard work and dedication the team members have put in to build their ROV and would like to congratulate them on this tremendous accomplishment.

The Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) Center created the ROV competition in partnership with the Marine Technology Society ROV Committee to encourage students to excel in mathematics and science and to pursue careers in these fields. The MATE competition brings together K-12, community college, and university students from all over the world to design and build ROVs based on scenarios from the ocean workplace. In addition to engineering their ROVs, students were required to create technical reports and presentations to be delivered to competition judges.

In June, John Hancock College Prep High School traveled to Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in Alpena, MI after advancing from the Midwest regional. In competition with 29 other teams, they were awarded the "Biggest Bang for Buck Award" in the Ranger category for spending the least amount of money on a vehicle that performed exceptionally. Their underwater ROV, the "Aquatic Eagle", was designed to be a low-cost option for shipwreck and science investigations, as well as for conservation efforts. It was equipped with a camera, four motors, two hooks, and flotation devices. This is the first year that John Hancock College Prep High School has competed in the MATE contest.

The team included Hancock seniors Irving Alamilla, Jesus Caballero, Vincent Calderon, and Marisol Ramirez as well as juniors Carlos Barrios, Ivan Lopez, and Jennifer Mondragon. Ms. Jennifer McConnell Stites, a science teacher at John Hancock College Prep, was a mentor to the team.

John Hancock College Prep High School is a high school focused on college preparation, community service, and leadership. The school opened in 1999 and is located in the Third Congressional District on the Southwest Side of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating John Hancock College Prep High School on their remarkable achievement and I wish them the best in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF RONALD W. WALKER

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2014

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ronald W. Walker of Piperton, Tennessee. Today, Mr. Walker retires from the