

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

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USCIRF's annual report documents 2,000 victims of religious persecution

WORLD: USCIRF documents 2,000 victims, calls attention to millions persecuted for religion or belief

USCIRF (01.05.2023) – The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) today surpassed 2,000 individuals included in its **Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Victims List**, a database that catalogues victims who

have been detained, imprisoned, placed under house arrest, disappeared, forced to renounce their faith, or tortured for their religious belief, religious activity, or religious freedom advocacy. While this development represents a tragic milestone, USCIRF calls attention to the millions of other unknown victims around the world who continue to face severe oppression for their religion or belief.

“Shockingly, people all across the world face prosecution, prison time, state-sanctioned extrajudicial acts, and other forms of punishment for peacefully exercising their freedom of religion or belief and defending others’ rights to religious freedom,” said **Chair Nury Turkel**. *“By documenting these cases, USCIRF shares the horrific stories of not only those individuals experiencing severe violations of their fundamental right to freedom of religion or belief but also of the millions of others who are forced to live under the tyranny of religious repression.”*

USCIRF has regularly documented gross religious freedom violations, including mass internment and genocide. In **China**, Communist Party officials have unjustly detained or imprisoned millions of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims, in addition to Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong practitioners, House Church Protestants, and underground Catholics. Amid ongoing protests over mandatory religious headscarf laws, **Iran** has arrested many religious minority group members – particularly Baha’is – as well as opponents of the government’s religious restrictions. In the year since **Russia** launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russian forces have abducted Ukrainian religious leaders while other authorities have continued to impose lengthy prison sentences on Jehovah’s Witnesses and Muslims. **Uzbekistan** continues to jail some 2,000 Muslims for their independent religious practices, and **India** has subjected

human rights defenders and journalists to extensive periods of pre-trial detention for their work documenting religious freedom violations.

“The U.S. government must support victims and their families, push for the release of religious prisoners of conscience, and hold accountable those governments and officials that perpetrate or tolerate these egregious religious freedom violations,” said **Vice Chair Abraham Cooper**. *“USCIRF will continue to put a human face on these largely unknown victims and call for justice for those individuals targeted on the basis of their religion or belief.”*

In December 2022, USCIRF released a **FoRB Victims List Factsheet** that provided an overview of the FoRB Victims List, including its congressional mandate and criteria for including persons on the list. Individuals and organizations with credible information on victims can submit that information through the **FoRB Victims List Intake Form**.

More **reading:**
<https://bitterwinter.org/religious-liberty-in-the-world-in-2023/>

Photo :USCIRF chair Nury Turkel and the 2023 report. From Twitter.

Further reading about FORB in the World on HRWF website

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Notice: Undefined index: **et_footer_layout** in **/home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php** on line **1268**

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