

Noteworthy

The noteworthy items are structured in three groups: annual reports and global surveys, regional and country reports, and specific issues. Though we apply serious criteria in the selection of items noted, it is beyond our capacity to scrutinize the accuracy of every statement made. We therefore disclaim responsibility for the contents of the items noted. The compilation was produced by Janet Epp Buckingham.

ANNUAL REPORTS AND GLOBAL SURVEYS

Report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief United Nations General Assembly, 12 October 2020

<https://undocs.org/A/75/385>

The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ahmed Shaheed, highlights the importance of safeguarding freedom of religion or belief for all for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

United Nations Universal Periodic Review

United Nations Human Rights Council, January-November 2020

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CyclesUPR.aspx>

The 35th and 36th sessions of the Universal Periodic Review for Human Rights took place during 2020, reviewing the human rights situation in 28 countries.

2019 Report on International Religious Freedom

US Department of State, Office of International Religious Freedom, June 2020

<https://bit.ly/3q8HnNY>

The US Department of State looks to NGOs, religious groups, media, academic reports, and other sources of information to compile an overview report on international religious freedom.

2020 Annual Report

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, April 2020

<https://bit.ly/3bKfsvr>

This report documents the violations and progress in religious freedom violations and designates 14 Countries of Particular Concern and 15 countries for the State Department's Special Watch List.

The Federal Government's Second Report on the Global Status of Freedom of Religion

Republic of Germany, Federal Foreign Office, October 2020

<https://bit.ly/2Zx7Rxp>

This report documents freedom of religion or belief around the world for the reporting period 2018-2019.

In 2018, government restrictions on religion reach highest level globally in more than a decade

Pew Forum, 10 November 2020

<https://pewrsr.ch/3ldrgwh>

This annual report on global religious freedom documents violations from 2018.

Freedom in the World 2020

Freedom House, November 2020

<https://bit.ly/3m7rWSJ>

The aim of Freedom House is to provide a comprehensive annual report assessing the state of political rights and civil liberties around the world.

World Report

Human Rights Watch, 2020

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020>

Human Rights Watch, whose aim is to defend the rights of all people, publishes an annual report examining and investigating the abuses of human rights and justice across 90 different countries. The 2020 annual report examines the major events relating to human rights that occurred in 2019.

World Watch List 2020 Compilation

Open Doors International/World Watch Research, 15 January 2020

<https://bit.ly/3ifyde4> (password: freedom)

This is a compilation of the main documents published by World Watch Research, excluding country dossiers. These reports include the ranking of countries with regard to the persecution of Christians worldwide, press releases, and statements regarding trends in religious persecution.

REGIONAL AND COUNTRY REPORTS

China: China's urban house churches amid the pandemic

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 21 September 2020

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/09/21/report/4811/article.htm>

The pandemic did not ease China's strict control over house churches in China.

China: Repressed, Removed, Re-educated: The stranglehold on religious life in China

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 30 March 2020

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020-china-report>

This report notes a downward trend in religious freedom in China, paralleling the increasing human rights abuses under Xi Jinping.

China: Ultimate Control: Lessons from China on the impact of technology on freedom of religion or belief

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 2 November 2020

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/11/02/report/4861/article.htm>

This report documents how surveillance technology is being used in China to violate freedom of religion or belief.

Cuba: Freedom of religion or belief in Cuba

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 13 January 2020

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/01/13/report/4519/article.htm>

This report documents 260 reports of religious freedom violations in Cuba in 2019.

Hong Kong: The new national security law in Hong Kong and its potential impact on freedom of religion or belief

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 3 September 2020

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/09/03/report/4783/article.htm>

This briefing examines the potential impact of the new national security law imposed by China in Hong Kong on 30 June 2020.

India: Hate and targeted violence against Christians in India (2019 Report)

Evangelical Fellowship of India, 15 March 2020

<https://bit.ly/2YaZWph>

This report documents targeted violence and other forms of persecution against Christians in India. It also raises concerns with government proposals to levy hefty fines against persons deemed to be violating anti-conversion laws.

India: Behind closed doors – Hidden abuse of Christian women in India

Open Doors International/World Watch Research, November 2020

<https://bit.ly/3m3uzoo>

This report examines sexual violence, including forced marriage and rape of women and girls in India.

Latin America: Bi-annual report July – December 2020**Observatory of Religious Freedom in Latin America, 12 February 2021**<https://bit.ly/3G8JF16>

This report documents violent incidents on the basis of religion in the Latin American region. The impact of COVID-19 placed already vulnerable people in the worst scenario. This is the first report from OLIRE available in English.

Mozambique: Islamist insurgency – In-depth analysis of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah (ASWJ)**Open Doors International/World Watch Research, July 2020**<https://bit.ly/2ZCb7YI> (password: freedom)

This report analyzes political, economic, religious and social triggers that have left Mozambique exposed to acts of violence carried out by Islamic groups such as Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah (ASWJ) and their impact on Christians.

Iraq: Fact-finding mission report**Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 18 June 2020**<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/06/18/report/4697/article.htm>

This is a report of a fact-finding mission to northern Iraq in December 2019, investigating the plight of religious minorities.

Mexico: A culture of impunity: religious discrimination in Mexico**Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 17 April 2020**<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020-mexico-report>

This report finds that despite constitutional guarantees, FoRB violations are common and widespread in certain regions of Mexico.

Nigeria: Abduction and forced conversion**Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 17 June 2020**<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/06/17/report/4693/article.htm>

This report documents the abduction and forced conversion of schoolgirls in Nigeria.

Nigeria: This genocide is loading**Jubilee Campaign, 18 November 2020**<https://bit.ly/3F3wbHr>

This is a report to the International Criminal Court documenting violence against Christians in Nigeria.

Nigeria: Nigeria – Unfolding genocide?

All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, June 2020

<https://bit.ly/3CRAQKK>

This report documents violence against Christians by Fulani herdsmen in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria and urges governments to take action to prevent genocide.

Pakistan: Abduction, conversion and child marriage of religious minority girls in Pakistan

Jubilee Campaign, 19 November 2020

<https://bit.ly/2WpH3hB>

This report provides an overview of several common factors involved in such cases of forced conversion and abduction.

Tunisia: Religious Freedom Report, Tunisia 2020

ATLAKI Association Religious Freedom Committee, 29 January 2021

<https://bit.ly/3kR6rGc>

This report was written by the Commission for Religious Freedom of the association (composed of university professors of constitutional law, public law, and sociology). The report is considered the first in Tunisia to address the issues faced by religious minorities with great precision. It expresses a warning regarding the current situation of these vulnerable groups.

SPECIFIC ISSUES**Analysis: The worrying impact of COVID-19 on religious minorities around the world**

World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission, 18 June 2020

<https://bit.ly/3CYhoME>

This analysis documents the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on religious freedom around the world.

COVID-19 Update

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 19 October 2020

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2020/10/19/report/4851/article.htm>

The report identifies how the pandemic has been and is being weaponized by governments and individuals in several of CSW's countries of focus to advance political agendas, to cement an invasive control over society and to justify an increase in repression and discrimination targeting specific religious and/or ethnic communities.

#Faith4Rights Toolkit**UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2020**

<https://bit.ly/3zTb2vO>

This online resource, launched in 2020, contains 18 peer-to-peer learning modules to enhance the skills of faith actors to manage religious diversity in real-life situations.

Statements of Concern**Ministerial to Advance Freedom of Religion or Belief 2020,
16-17 November 2020**

<https://www.gov.pl/web/diplomacy/statements-of-concern>

The Ministerial to Advance Freedom of Religion or Belief was held in Poland and issued eight Statements of Concern.

WWL 2020 Gender-Specific Religious Persecution**Open Doors International, February 2020**

<https://bit.ly/3usegW3>

This second annual WWL report examines global trends regarding gender-specific religious persecution.

**Gender-based violence and discrimination in the name
of freedom of religion or belief****UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, August 2020**

<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/43/48>

The UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief addresses situations where religious precepts underlie laws and state-sanctioned practices that violate the right to non-discrimination against women, girls and LGBTQ+ persons on the basis of sexual orientation.