

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

Aid to the Church in Need Annual Report 2025

Aid to the Church in Need, 21 October 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/5z6hyntk>

This report is published every two years. It analyzes religious freedom for all and indicates that almost 5.4 billion people live in countries with serious religious persecution.

2025 Annual Report

USCIRF, March 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/5yut2bzh>

This annual report of USCIRF on religious freedom in the world recommended maintaining the Country of Particular Concern status of 12 countries and adding an additional four to that list. It identified a further 12 countries to have the Special Watch List designation.

Regional and Country Reports

Afghanistan: Freedom of Religion and Belief in Afghanistan

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 8 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/mr4367kp>

This project evaluates the work of the Afghan National Shura al Ulema Council, an entity comprised of religious scholars who interpret and disseminate Islamic law. The study analyzes 700 cases reported as FoRB violations, from multiple municipalities, that were put before the Ulema Council between 2020 and 2022.

Afghanistan: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2025/05/29/report/6512/article.htm>

This factsheet sets out the legal framework in Afghanistan, which includes an apostasy law prohibiting conversion from Islam. It also details the continual and significant decline in religious freedom in Afghanistan.

Algeria: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 3 June 2025

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2025/06/03/report/6536/article.htm>

This factsheet describes the Algerian laws restricting religious freedom for non-Muslims. It also identifies the challenges of anti-proselytism and blasphemy laws.

Angola: Religious Freedom in Angola

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 1 July 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/mr2rha2x>

This article critically analyzes the proposed amendment to Law No. 12/19 in Angola, focusing on its compatibility with the Constitution. Based on documentary analysis, empirical data from religious leaders and experts, and legal comparison, the study concludes that the proposed law undermines religious autonomy and violates constitutional principles.

Bangladesh: General Briefing

USCIRF, 21 July 2025

<https://www.uscifr.gov/publications/bangladesh-factsheet>

This factsheet provides a summary of religious freedom conditions in Bangladesh, including key observations from USCIRF's country visit.

Central African Republic: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/463uwp7j>

This factsheet identifies ongoing violence and insecurity as threats to religious freedom in the CAR.

China: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/y9byy794>

This factsheet highlights the ongoing deterioration of conditions for religious adherents in China. In May 2025, Measures for the Suppression of Illegal Social Organisations came into force, prohibiting organizations from conducting

activities unless they are registered. This has allowed further repression of the large house church movement in China.

Colombia: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/yc82vec6>

This factsheet indicates that levels of violence have been increasing in the last six months in Colombia. Churches are seen as rivals to guerrillas and are often targeted for this reason.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Global Religious Freedom Index 2024-2026

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 1 August 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/mr28b84r>

This report analyzes the status of religious freedom in 30 post-communist countries and territories in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, using 2023 data from Round 4 of the Religion and State Project. State favoritism toward dominant religions, especially Orthodox Christianity and Sunni Islam, is widespread throughout the region.

Egypt: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 30 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/2s4jprdt>

This factsheet notes the deteriorating situation for the Christian minority in Egypt, which is subject to sectarian violence and terrorism.

Eritrea: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 18 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/y6kuea5z>

This factsheet briefly describes the ongoing forced disappearances and detention of Christians in Eritrea. It also notes the challenges of forced military service for Christians.

Europe: Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians in Europe Report 2025

Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians in Europe, 17 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/mr3cd9jy>

This report identifies 2,211 anti-Christian hate crimes in 2024. The figure includes a significant rise in personal attacks, which increased to 274 incidents, and

a sharp spike in arson attacks targeting churches and other Christian sites. According to OIDAC Europe's findings, most anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, and Austria.

Georgia: Freedom of Religion or Belief in Georgia: 2024 Report

Tolerance and Diversity Institute, July 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/zfmuh5ra>

This report focuses on the May 2024 law “On Transparency of Foreign Influence,” adopted by the Georgian Dream government, which violates freedom of religion and belief alongside other fundamental human rights and endangers the activities of religious organizations.

India: Systematic targeting of Christians in India: January-July 2025

Evangelical Fellowship of India Religious Liberty Commission, 4 August 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/2s3ts2tv>

The Religious Liberty Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of India has documented 334 incidents of systematic targeting against Christian communities across India between January and July 2025. These verified cases represent a sustained pattern of violations affecting Christians in 22 states and union territories, with incidents occurring consistently every month.

India: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2025/05/29/report/6513/article.htm>

This factsheet outlines the legal challenges for religious minorities as well as the Hindutva agenda behind them. It identifies communal violence as a leading challenge for religious minorities.

Mexico: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3ucwcmys>

This factsheet outlines the challenges faced by religious minorities, posed by both Catholic-majority communities and organized crime.

Myanmar: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3dupx7zh>

This factsheet outlines the religious intolerance Christians face under the country's Buddhist nationalist government.

Nicaragua: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/337pks86>

This factsheet identifies the deteriorating situation for religious adherents in Nicaragua. Public manifestations of religion are prohibited. Religious leaders are subject to arbitrary detention or exile.

Nicaragua: Policy Brief

Open Doors, June 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3jxwa8fe>

This brief outlines the increasing pressure faced by religious communities in the country, particularly in light of government actions that have targeted faith-based institutions, leaders, and practices.

Nigeria Country Update

USCIRF, 21 July 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/y4f5hjfy>

This report provides an update on freedom of religion or belief in Nigeria. Twelve state governments and the federal government enforce blasphemy laws, prosecuting and imprisoning individuals perceived to have insulted religion. Despite efforts to reduce violence by nonstate actors, the government is often unable to prevent or slow to react to violent attacks by Fulani herders, bandit gangs, and insurgent entities such as JAS/Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).

Nigeria: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 18 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/4bdrd66r>

This factsheet gives updates on the severe and ongoing violence against Christians in Nigeria.

Pakistan: Blasphemy Law: The Reason for Injustice in Pakistan

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 12 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/ye24nxra>

This report analyzes 117 legal cases between 2000 and 2025. The findings reveal deep flaws in police investigations, judicial processes, and state responses, with mob violence often causing an escalation of local conflicts. Victims and their families face long detentions, displacement, and social exclusion even after acquittal.

Pakistan: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/yr7j3r8e>

This factsheet outlines the challenges for religious minorities in Pakistan, including spurious blasphemy charges, entrenched discrimination, abductions, rape, forced conversion and forced marriages.

Sri Lanka: The State of Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka Annual Report

National Christian Evangelical Alliance Sri Lanka, 24 June 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/2me5ev4h>

The report looks at developments in legislation and policy, socio-political dynamics and governance, community and cultural trends, and public and media sentiment that shape the religious freedom landscape, beyond the instances of violations that are typically reported. Notably, the report also introduces a set of indicators and a scorecard designed to track and assess the religious freedom climate over time, supporting more consistent, evidence-based analysis and advocacy going forward.

Sudan: Attacks on Places of Worship

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 17 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3jsfw86r>

This factsheet documents the houses of worship that have been destroyed during the Sudan civil war, with a particular focus on El Fasher.

Sudan: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 18 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/yandepum>

This factsheet provides updates on the impact of the civil war on the Christian minority in Sudan. Of particular concern are the destruction of churches and sexual violence against women and girls.

USA: Religious Liberty in the States 2025

First Liberty Institute, 14 July 2025

<https://religiouslibertyinthestates.com/>

This is the fourth annual report of a state-by-state comparison of religious liberty in the USA.

Venezuela: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/5n7fa7rx>

This factsheet identifies the evolving situation under President Nicolas Maduro. Religious groups that support the president have freedom and benefits while those who oppose him face restrictions.

Vietnam: General Briefing

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 29 May 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3sn22jvr>

This factsheet gives significant updated information about violations against religious minorities. It also indicates that the Vietnamese government engages in transnational repression of minority members who have fled to Thailand.

Western Democracies: Global Religious Freedom Index 2024-2026

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 14 November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/w9nndp4r>

This report analyzes the status of religious freedom in 27 Western democracies, using 2023 data from Round 4 of the Religion and State Project. Overall, the findings suggest that Western democracies are moving toward a model in which religion is increasingly regulated and socially contested.

Specific Issues

Authoritarianism: Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Religious Freedom

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 25 September 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/27cy97hm>

This report calculates that 72 percent of the world's population live under authoritarian regimes. It discusses the implications for religious freedom.

Global Religious Demographics: How the Global Religious Landscape Changed From 2010 to 2020

Pew Research Center, 9 June 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/bdekc6uu>

This report on global religious demographics shows that the Muslim population grew most rapidly while Christian growth lagged behind the global population increase.

Militant Islam: Africa Surpasses 150,000 Deaths Linked to Militant Islamist Groups in Past Decade

Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 28 July 2025

<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/en-2025-mig-10-year/>

Militant Islamists have expanded their presence in Africa across the Sahel. Escalating violence in the Sahel and Somalia has caused fatalities linked to militant Islamist groups in Africa to surge by 60 percent since 2023.

Non-Governmental Actors Violating Religious Freedom in the Southern Cone of the Americas

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 25 September 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/zyknuxae>

This report states that in the Southern Cone of the Americas (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay), many of the most significant constraints arise from non-state actors. These actors exert pressure through direct violence, social exclusion, symbolic coercion, and territorial displacement.

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Inter-Parliamentary Union, June 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/35as3e23>

The report explores ways in which parliaments and especially parliamentarians interact with religion and belief to promote more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. It considers how religious engagement by policymakers can contribute to upholding the rule of law, human rights and democracy.

Book reviews

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