

Noteworthy

The noteworthy items described here 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

2026 Annual Report

USCIRE, 4 March 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/bdhyh3hv>

This report documents religious freedom conditions throughout 2025 and sets forth US policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and US Congress to advance freedom of religion or belief abroad. Eighteen countries are recommended for Country of Particular Concern (CPC) designation and 11 for the Special Watch List.

2026 GCR Red List

Global Christian Relief, 8 January 2026

<https://globalchristianrelief.org/resources/red-list>

This annual report covers the countries with the highest rate of Christian persecution. It is based on data from the International Institute for Religious Freedom's Violent Incidents Database.

World Watch List 2026

Open Doors, 14 January 2026

<https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>

This is Open Doors International's annual report on the 50 countries where Christians face the worst persecution. North Korea was the top country, with Somalia and Yemen close behind.

Regional and Country Reports

Algeria: Country Update

USCIRE, April 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/33vzb3y7>

This report identifies interrelated challenges and ongoing religious freedom restrictions in Algeria, with particular attention to state limitations on access to religious materials and the wider legal environment shaping FoRB in that country.

China: The Supremacy of the Party: China’s Weaponisation of Legislation and Policy to Curtail Freedom of Religion or Belief

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 1 December 2025

<https://www.csw.org.uk/chinareport2025.htm>

With an extensive analysis of case studies, this report documents the expansion of violations of FoRB in China. The ‘sinicisation’ of religion, which refers to the effort to reshape religions comprehensively to make them consistent with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ideology and to promote allegiance to the party and President Xi Jinping, is at the root of increased persecution.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea: “Daring to Even Dream of Freedom”: North Korean Women in the Hermit Kingdom, China, and South Korea

Jubilee Campaign, North Korea Freedom Coalition, March 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/3t2j7j7y>

This report documents the serious and ongoing repression North Korean women face.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Nonstate Violators of Religious Freedom in the DRC

USCIRF, March 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/2tk366ph>

This publication provides an overview of the worsening religious freedom conditions in the DRC at the hands of nonstate actors, with an emphasis on the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).

East Africa: Evolving Legal Threats to Religious Protections in East Africa

USCIRF, December 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3vmv7ksc>

This factsheet examines current and proposed regulatory frameworks in five East African countries – Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda – that collectively demonstrate a mix of growing restrictions alongside constitutional protections.

India: Christianity in Punjab: History and Challenges

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 3 February 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/zaykqp6n>

This report by Simran Sidhu provides a balanced and evidence-based understanding of the historical roots, demographic changes, and lived realities of Christianity in Punjab today.

India: Hate and Targeted Violence Against Christians in India: Yearly Report 2025

Religious Liberty Commission of Evangelical Fellowship of India, 24 March 2026

<https://bit.ly/4uySgae>

The report documents 747 incidents of hostility, intimidation, violence, and discrimination that occurred during 2025. These cases were drawn from over 915 reports received through the commission's nationwide network and have been included following a process of verification involving corroboration by multiple independent sources.

Iran: Scapegoats: Rights Violations against Christians in Iran

Article 18, Open Doors, CSW, MEC, 19 February 2026

<https://articleeighteen.com/news/23529/>

The scapegoating of Christians, especially after the Twelve-Day War with Israel (13 to 24 June 2025), is the focus of this 2026 joint annual report.

Iraq: Country Update

USCIRF, December 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/42krp622>

This report provides an expanded overview of recent religious freedom conditions in Iraq, identifying areas in which the government has failed to ensure freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for Iraqis of all religious backgrounds and belief systems.

Latin America: Annual Report 2025

Observatory of Religious Freedom in Latin America, 17 February 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/34y3chxf>

This report analyzes the main restrictions on religious freedom in Latin America recorded between January and December 2025. It shows that the violations are not isolated incidents, but rather part of structural dynamics that affect not only the individual but also the community dimension of the exercise of faith in the region.

Malaysia: Country Update

USCIRF, November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3vzvr2rb>

This country update outlines recent and ongoing religious freedom challenges in Malaysia.

MENA: Religious Freedom and Peacebuilding in the Middle East and North Africa

MENA Platform for Religious Freedom and Peacebuilding, December 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/2kj7dcdb>

This report presents the findings of a regional dialogue process in the MENA region. By gathering diverse voices across the region, including civil society leaders, religious actors, academics, youth, women's groups, legal experts, and diaspora representatives, the platform interprets how FoRB is experienced in daily life and explores its role in stability, citizenship, and coexistence in the MENA region.

Nicaragua: No Respite: Another Year of Increasing Repression in Nicaragua

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 30 March 2026

<https://www.csw.org.uk/nicaraguareport>

CSW recorded 309 separate FoRB cases in 2025. Most cases involved multiple FoRB violations, and many affected large numbers of people. The report also emphasizes that a significant percentage of violations likely goes unreported due to the climate of fear created by the government of Daniel Ortega and his wife Rosario Murillo.

Nigeria: Analytical Intelligence Report: Nigerian Christians as Victims of Islamic Extremism

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 19 December 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/42xmt5pe>

This report on Islamic extremism in Nigeria has been endorsed by leading global experts in security, terrorism, intelligence studies, and hybrid threats.

Nigeria: Hijacking Innocence: The Underreported Crisis of Abductions, Forced Faith Conversions, and Child Marriage in Nigeria

Jubilee Campaign, November 2025

<https://jubileecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/11182025.pdf>

This report examines the interconnected human rights violations of abductions, forced religious conversions, and child marriage in Nigeria, with a particular focus on their devastating impacts on Christian women and girls in the northern region.

Nigeria: Invisible Exodus: Toward a Methodology for Estimating Religious Displacement in Nigeria

International Institute for Religious Freedom, 20 January 2026

<https://iirf.global/publications/reports/invisible-exodus/>

This study assesses the religious affiliation of Nigerian displaced persons, specifically to estimate the number of internally displaced Christians. Because major displacement datasets lack religious identifiers, this study develops a proxy-based estimation model that infers the religious composition of displacement through patterns of targeted violence.

Sudan: Policy Brief

Open Doors, April 2026

<https://bit.ly/41zziDK>

This policy brief gives an overview and recommendations to address the civil war, displacement, and escalating violations against Christians in Sudan.

Venezuela: Self-Censorship and Social Control: The Situation of Freedom of Religion or Belief in Venezuela

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, 9 March 2026

<https://www.csw.org.uk/venezuelareport>

This report emphasizes that despite the United States' forcible removal of President Nicolás Maduro from power on 3 January 2026, leaders in the Socialist Union of Venezuela Party (PSUV) and allied parties remain entrenched in power and responsible for extensive violations of FoRB and other human rights.

Vietnam: Country Update

USCIRF, December 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/49pexdtx>

Despite enacting gradual reforms over the last two decades and experiencing an elevation in its international profile in recent years, Vietnam remains a country with significantly poor religious freedom conditions.

Specific Issues

Education: Freedom and Faithfulness: A Catholic Guide to Religious Liberty

Knights of Columbus, Religious Freedom Institute, November 2025

<https://tinyurl.com/3ckb7tmx>

This nine-session course is designed primarily to help Knights of Columbus college councils explore the meaning and value of religious freedom, recognize

how this freedom is protected in America, and identify ways to exercise it – as Catholics, Knights, and citizens.

Terrorism: Global Terrorism Index 2026

Institute for Economics & Peace, March 2026

<https://tinyurl.com/36bvy2zf>

Although this year’s index showed a substantial decline in terrorism worldwide, Nigeria is among the countries that experienced an increase in both incidents and the number of deaths. Of particular interest is Jessica Moody’s article on “Jihadists in the Sahel.”

Book reviews

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