



EndThePersecution

*2021/2022
Places of Worship Toolkit*

Letter from the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Fiona Bruce MP

Welcome to the EndThePersecution Toolkit! This year marks 40 years since the signing of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination or Belief. Yet, ensuring that Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is a human right for all remains a considerable challenge. With 83% of the world's population living in countries where their right to FoRB is threatened or banned, this is a challenge that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. One of my priorities is to ensure that we move from awareness raising to action—to making a real difference in the lives of people who are losing their jobs, education, homes, livelihoods, families, freedom, access to justice and even life itself, simply on account of what they believe. These people are being discriminated against, marginalised, beaten, threatened, tortured and killed. So, I thank you for partnering with us on this campaign as we fight to EndThePersecution together.

Article 18 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”. This human right is not exclusively for people of faith, but for everyone. The freedom to hold any religion, belief, or none at all. This human right forms the basis for a stable society in which all people can freely practice their freedom of religion or belief, without fear of persecution or discrimination.

There are considerable violations against freedom of religion or belief globally today. The statistics are both shocking and staggering. For example:

- Over half of the world reside in countries deemed the highest category of religious freedom violations¹
- 4,761 Christians were murdered for their faith last year²
- Ahmadi Muslims have been denied the freedom to practise their religion for nearly 50 years by the Government of Pakistan³
- An estimated 1-3 million Uyghur Muslims, Kazakhs and other ethnic and faith groups have been detained in China since 2017⁴. Though these are referred to as “transformation-through-education” centres, details of detainee experiences have been similar to those of concentration camps⁵
- Religious minorities have repeatedly been blamed for the pandemic in countries such as China, Niger, Turkey, and Egypt⁶

On the 5th and 6th July 2022, the United Kingdom will be hosting a Ministerial level Conference in London, inviting Foreign Ministers, high level officials and international organisations from all over the globe to discuss issues relating to FoRB and protect and

¹ <https://acninternational.org/religiousfreedomreport/global-analysis/>

² <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

³ <https://stopthepersécution.org/>

⁴ <https://www.csw.org.uk/notbuyingit-faqs>

⁵ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2021/06/china-draconian-repression-of-muslims-in-xinjiang-amounts-to-crimes-against-humanity/>

⁶ <https://acninternational.org/religiousfreedomreport/main-findings/>

implement this human right. Previous FoRB conferences have been hosted by the US and (virtually) by Poland. 2022 presents a real opportunity for the UK to champion the issue of FoRB across the world.

As we look ahead to this pivotal moment, it's important to recognise that learning, advocacy, and education remain at the forefront of our efforts to end persecution on the basis of religion or belief. No Parliamentarian or civil society group can tackle this issue on their own. I am passionate about inspiring and motivating the next generation to champion FoRB. My hope is that through the EndThePersecution campaign, young people will learn more about this fundamental human right and become Ambassadors for FoRB for years to come. This is especially important as the UK attempts to counter hate narratives currently spreading internationally. I hope that by building this campaign, young people across our nation will join in solidarity with others of their generation in countries across the world, to help build a common understanding that Article 18 ought to be upheld.

Through using this toolkit, I hope that you will feel inspired to join us on this mission. Every event takes us one step closer to ending persecution on the basis of religion or belief for all, so please do share your events on social media, using #EndThePersecution and tagging @FoRBMinisterial. If you require any assistance with your event or if you would like further details on how to get involved, please contact the [FoRB Parliamentary Office](#), as we would love help in any way we can.

The challenge of FoRB internationally is huge, but together we can start a conversation, set up events, and help EndThePersecution.

Thank you again for taking an interest in this important mission.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fiona." The signature is written in a cursive style with a small crown-like flourish above the letter 'i'.

Fiona Bruce MP
Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief

Ideas for Events in your Place of Worship

Making an event to educate others on the need to EndThePersecution is a key part of improving religious literacy and boost current understanding on the scale of the problem. Although this list of potential events is far from exhaustive and those best suited to a constituency will differ, please find below some ideas for events you can hold to start conversations regarding FoRB. Remember when you're hosting any event to share it on social media, using the #EndThePersecution, to help share what you're doing with others.

Host an Information Evening

- 1) Host an event where you discuss the scale of religious persecution globally, the need to promote FoRB for all and a constructive discussion on what your place of worship can do to aid in this challenge
- 2) Ensure that there is a Q&A style session at the end, so that those that have any questions or ideas can be heard and listened to collectively
- 3) Contact the [FoRB Parliamentary Office](#) if you would like someone to come and speak at your event, or to provide more details and example presentations

Create a Prayer Group

- 1) In the run up to the FoRB Ministerial in London this July, you can set up a prayer group that is dedicated to the issue of FoRB
- 2) Advertise this is a limited time group, so as to create momentum and a clear commitment for those that are interested
- 3) Dedicate real time to thinking and praying about this issue, including prayer for supporting Fiona Bruce MP as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB and David as the Prime Minister's Deputy Special Envoy for FoRB in their roles.

Set up an Event for the FoRB Fringe 2022

- 1) Discuss with your place of worship which area of FoRB you would like to highlight; the skillset you have in your community that you can best showcase and the resources you would like to dedicate to hosting an event. This could be celebrating efforts made in your area, in collaboration with other places of worship in your region or something totally different!
- 2) Head to endthepersecution.uk and register your event
- 3) Invite as many people as possible to your event, including your MP and members of your local council
- 4) If selected, your event will be included in the official FoRB Fringe programme, attracting more attention and publicity to your hard efforts

Further Information

A key place to find the latest reports on countries of concern and appropriate research on FoRB is the [All-Party Parliamentary Group website](#). This website includes the list of stakeholders, all with corresponding research for their religious or faith group. Furthermore, if you would like a briefing or more information on this topic, then please do get in contact with the [FoRB Parliamentary Office](#).

Whilst the stakeholder list is not a finite list of organisations working to promote FoRB, they provide key and accurate research that will enable you to broaden your knowledge and understanding in this area. Through having a broad knowledge on the topic, you will be best equipped to tailor any event you do to your specific audience, whether that be in a place of worship or a school.

- 1) Think through who your audience is – ask yourself the following questions as you prepare your material and activities:
 - i. How old is your audience?
 - ii. Do they have any prior knowledge on the topic?
 - iii. What are you trying to achieve with your event and how can you cater that goal to this specific group?
 - iv. How can you best equip them to share what they have learnt with others?
 - 2) Advertise your event and share it with others who might be interested – social media can be a great tool to do this. It's important that as many people as possible know about the event so that more people can champion this issue and tell others about it. Be sure to include #EndThePersecution in the caption!
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