



December 19, 2024

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL)
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Senator Rubio,

We are an informal coalition of organizations, religious and secular leaders, advocates, and scholars dedicated to the protection of individuals worldwide imprisoned for their faith or beliefs, and to securing their freedom. We write to congratulate you on your nomination to Secretary of State, and to thank you for your tireless advocacy while in the Senate on behalf of prisoners of conscience. Through your advocacy, including your #ExpressionNotOppression campaign, you have helped to free prisoners globally and strengthen the rights of all people to live out their faith. We ask that, if confirmed, you use your leadership position and all tools available to you to highlight the plight of religious prisoners of conscience and work to free them.

All around the world, individuals are unjustly imprisoned for no other reason than for peacefully expressing their faith or beliefs. People like Nigerian Sufi Muslim Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, who has been imprisoned for nearly five years on allegations of “blasphemy” and who faces the death penalty only because he shared song lyrics over social media. Or like Abdulbaqi Saeed Abdo and Nour Girgis, Christian converts detained for years in Egypt on false terrorism allegations, seemingly only for their affiliation with a Facebook group that was a forum for theological discussions with other Christian converts. Or like the dozens of Ahmadis and Christians arrested and imprisoned regularly in Pakistan on blasphemy and related charges.

All of them, and many, many others, remain in prison to this day and need the strongest voices, such as yours, to put pressure on governments to release them and to cease the persecution. Senator Rubio, your work and dedication to prisoners of conscience has led to freedom for prisoners all around the world, from Nicaragua to Algeria, from Iran to China and Vietnam, and elsewhere. We have gratefully considered you a friend to the voiceless and powerless, and one of the most effective leaders in bringing justice for the oppressed.

If confirmed as Secretary of State, we ask that you use your platform to give an even greater voice to those who languish hidden away behind bars only because of their faith or beliefs. We ask that you use all available tools to ensure that those unjustly imprisoned for their faith around the world are freed. We know that advocacy for the unjustly imprisoned has been a personal priority for you, and we are confident that, through your leadership, it will be a foreign policy priority of the United States.

We thank you, again, for your tireless efforts throughout your career on behalf of the persecuted and imprisoned, particularly those imprisoned and persecuted for their faith or beliefs, and look forward to working with you to secure religious freedom worldwide in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Sean Nelson
Legal Counsel, Global Religious Freedom
ADF International
Co-Chair of the International Religious Freedom (IRF) Roundtable Prisoners of Conscience
Working Group

Hulda Fahmi
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Co-Chair of the IRF Roundtable Prisoners of Conscience Working Group

ORGANIZATIONS

21 WILBERFORCE GLOBAL FREEDOM CENTER

ADF INTERNATIONAL

ADVOCATES FOR FAITH AND JUSTICE IN VIETNAM

AMERICAN DEFENDERS FOR PERSECUTED HUMAN

AMERICAN MUSLIM & MULTIFAITH WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

ANGLICAN PERSECUTED CHURCH NETWORK

BAN PHO TE 257

BOAT PEOPLE SOS (BPSOS)

CAODAI TODAY

CHIN ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND

CHINAAID

CHRISTIAN FREEDOM INTERNATIONAL

CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY NATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

COMMITTEE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN VIETNAM

COORDINATION DES ASSOCIATIONS ET DES PARTICULIERS POUR LA LIBERTÉ DE
CONSCIENCE

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ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

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FRIENDS OF THIEN AM BUDDHIST GROUP

GLOBAL CHRISTIAN RELIEF

GLOBAL PEACE FOUNDATION

IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS

INDIAN AMERICAN MUSLIM COUNCIL

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON NIGERIA

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

JUBILEE CAMPAIGN USA

KATARTISMOS GLOBAL

LAW AND LIBERTY TRUST

MUSLIM WOMEN SPEAKERS

NO BUSINESS WITH GENOCIDE

PRAYER PIONEERS

RED EAGLE ENTERPRISES

SAVE THE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

SET MY PEOPLE FREE

UNION OF COUNCILS FOR JEWS IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

UYGHUR HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT (UHRP)

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