

H.R. 244 - Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017

One Hundred Fifteenth Congress

of the

United States of America

AT THE FIRST SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the third day of January, two thousand and seventeen*

An Act

Division J: Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriation Act, 2017

Title VIII – General Provisions

International Religious Freedom

SEC. 7033.

(a) International Religious Freedom Office And Special Envoy To Promote Religious Freedom.—

(1) Funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Diplomatic and Consular Programs” shall be made available for the Office of International Religious Freedom, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Department of State, the Office of the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, and the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia, as authorized in the Near East and South Central Asia Religious Freedom Act of 2014 ([Public Law 113–161](#)), including for support staff at not less than the amounts specified for such offices in the table under such heading in the explanatory statement described in section 4 (in the matter preceding division A of this Consolidated Act).

(2) Funds appropriated under the heading “Diplomatic and Consular Programs” and designated for the Office of International Religious Freedom shall be made available for the development and implementation of an international religious freedom curriculum in accordance with the criteria specified under such heading in the explanatory statement described in section 4 (in the matter preceding division A of this Consolidated Act).

(b) Assistance.—

(1) INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PROGRAMS.—Of the funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Democracy Fund” and available for the Human Rights and Democracy Fund (HRDF), not less than \$10,000,000 shall be made available for international religious freedom programs: Provided, That the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom shall consult with the Committees on Appropriations on the uses of such funds.

(2) PROTECTION AND INVESTIGATION PROGRAMS.—Of the funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Economic Support Fund”, not less than \$10,000,000 shall be made available for programs to protect vulnerable and persecuted religious minorities: Provided, That a portion of such funds shall be made available for programs to investigate the persecution of such minorities by governments and non-state actors and for the public dissemination of information collected on such persecution, including on the Department of State Web site.

(3) HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS.—Funds appropriated by this Act under the headings “International Disaster Assistance” and “Migration and Refugee Assistance” shall be made available for humanitarian assistance for vulnerable and persecuted religious minorities, including victims of genocide designated by the Secretary of State and other groups that have suffered crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, to—

(A) accelerate the implementation of an immediate, coordinated, and sustained response to provide humanitarian assistance;

(B) enhance protection of conflict victims, including those facing a dire humanitarian crisis and severe persecution because of their faith or ethnicity; and

(C) improve access to secure locations for obtaining humanitarian and resettlement services.

(4) TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION, AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGIONS.—

(A) Not later than 90 days after enactment of this Act and after consultation with relevant central governments in the Middle East and North Africa regions, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations a plan for transitional justice, reconciliation, and reintegration programs for vulnerable and persecuted religious minorities in such regions: Provided, That such plan shall include a description of actions to be taken by such governments to safeguard and promote the political and economic rights of such minorities, including the return, rehabilitation, and protection of property in areas of conflict.

(B) Of the funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Economic Support Fund” that are made available for assistance for Iraq and Syria, not less than \$5,000,000 shall be made available to support

the implementation of the plan required by subparagraph (A): Provided, That such funds shall be matched, to the maximum extent practicable, from sources other than the United States Government.

(5) RESPONSIBILITY OF FUNDS.—Funds made available by paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) shall be the responsibility of the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, in consultation with other relevant United States Government officials.

(c) International Broadcasting.—Funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Broadcasting Board of Governors, International Broadcasting Operations” shall be made available for programs related to international religious freedom, including reporting on the condition of vulnerable and persecuted religious groups.

(d) Atrocities Prevention.—Funds appropriated by this Act under the headings “Economic Support Fund” and “International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement” shall be made available for programs to prevent atrocities and to implement the recommendations of the Atrocities Prevention Board, including with respect to the evaluation required by section 7033(d) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2016 (division K of [Public Law 114–113](#)): Provided, That the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, Department of State, shall be responsible for providing the strategic policy direction for, and policy oversight of, funds made available pursuant to this subsection to the Bureaus of International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement and Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Department of State: Provided further, That such funds shall be subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations.

(e) Designation Of Non-State Actors.—The President shall, concurrent with the annual foreign country review required by section 402(b)(1) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 ([22 U.S.C. 6442\(b\)\(1\)](#)), review and identify any non-state actors in such countries that have engaged in particularly severe violations of religious freedom, and designate, in a manner consistent with such Act, each such group as a non-state actor of particular concern for religious freedom operating in such reviewed country or surrounding region: Provided, That whenever the President designates such a non-state actor under this subsection, the President shall, as soon as practicable after the designation is made, submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees detailing the reasons for such designation.

(f) Funding Clarification.—Funds made available pursuant to subsections (b) and (d) are in addition to amounts otherwise made available for such purposes.

special provisions