

U.S. Continues to Fight for Release of Wrongfully-Imprisoned Pastor

Wednesday—the 313th day of American Pastor Andrew Brunson’s wrongful imprisonment in Turkey because of his Christian faith—the State Department released a report on International Religious Freedom, highlighting Pastor Brunson’s plight.

Although the report analyzes freedom violations across the world, in his remarks, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson specifically addressed the plight of Pastor Brunson. He said, “[T]he United States continues to advocate for the release of Pastor Andrew Brunson, who has been wrongfully imprisoned in Turkey.”

Secretary Tillerson opened his remarks by stating the purpose of the report and the requirement of the law that the U.S. must stand:

“... for liberty and with the persecuted, to use and implement appropriate tools in the United States foreign policy apparatus, including diplomatic, political, commercial, charitable, educational, and cultural channels, to promote respect for religious freedom by all governments and peoples.”

As previously reported, Pastor Andrew has been wrongfully detained in Turkey since October 7, 2016, after serving as a pastor in Turkey for over 23 years.

As we approach almost a year of Pastor Brunson languishing in a prison cell, there has yet to be a formal indictment handed down, although one was promised months ago. As Secretary Tillerson said in his remarks regarding religious freedom, “[w]e cannot ignore these conditions.”

We must continue to increase our efforts to make sure Pastor Brunson is released to be reunited with his family and once again is able to enjoy the religious freedom to which he is entitled.

We are continuing our aggressive global legal advocacy, including at the highest levels of the U.S. government, for Pastor Brunson's freedom. Please join us by signing and sharing our petition to Free Pastor Andrew [here](#).