

Why Is Obama Really Downplaying Muslim Attacks on Christians?

Why is the U.S. downplaying or denying attacks against Christians?

“What about the churches which were desecrated? Is this not blasphemy? Where is justice?” asked Fr. James Channan OP, director of The Peace Center, Lahore, Pakistan.

Members of the Islamic group al-Shabaab publicly beheaded the mother of two girls, ages 8 and 15, and her cousin after discovering they were Christians. The girls “were witnesses to the slaughter.” – *Somalia*.

“Christian teaching is extremely harmful to the mental health of the people.” –*Kazakhstan*.

Five years’ imprisonment and up to \$20,000 in fines for educators if to a Muslim child of religions other than Islam. – *Brunei*

Along with an especially jarring list of atrocities committed against Christian minorities throughout the Islamic world, March also saw some callous indifference or worse from the U.S. government.

President Barack Obama was criticized by human rights activists for not addressing the plight of Christians and other minorities during his talks with leaders in Saudi Arabia, where Christianity is actively banned.

According to the Washington-based International Christian Concern advocacy group, Obama did not “publicly broach the subject of religious freedom” when he spoke on March 28 with Saudi King Abdullah, despite a letter from 70 members of

Congress urging him to “address specific human rights reforms” both in public and in direct meetings with the king and other officials.

“This visit was an excellent opportunity for the president to speak up on an issue that affects millions of Saudi citizens and millions more foreign workers living in Saudi Arabia,” said Todd Daniels, ICC’s Middle East regional manager. He added that it was “remarkable that the president could stay completely silent about religious freedom,” despite pressure from Congress “to publicly address the issue, as well as other human rights concerns, with King Abdullah...”

U.S. officials reportedly responded by saying that “Obama had not had time to raise concerns about the kingdom’s human rights record.”

Separately, after the United States Institute for Peace [USIP] brought together the governors of Nigeria’s mostly Muslim northern states for a conference in the U.S., the State Department, citing “administrative” problems, blocked the visa of the region’s only Christian governor, Jonah David Jang, an ordained minister. The USIP confirmed that all 19 northern governors were invited, but the organization did not respond to requests for comments on why it would hold talks without the region’s only Christian governor.

According to Emmanuel Ogebe, a Nigerian human rights lawyer based in Washington, the Christian governor’s “visa problems” are due to anti-Christian bias in the U.S. government: “The U.S. insists that Muslims are the primary victims of Boko Haram. It also claims that Christians discriminate against Muslims in Plateau, which is one of the few Christian majority states in the north. After [Jang, the Christian governor] told them [U.S. authorities] that they were ignoring the 12 Shariah states who [sic] institutionalized persecution ... he suddenly developed visa problems... The question remains—why is the U.S. downplaying or denying the attacks against Christians?”

March's roundup of Muslim persecution of Christians around the world includes (but is not limited to) the following accounts, listed by theme and country alphabetical order, not necessarily according to severity.

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