

International Religious Freedom Summit Advocates for the Persecuted Church

“Standing for religious freedom for everyone, everywhere, all the time.”

These words serve as the theme of The 2021 International Religious Freedom Summit, at which advocates for religious freedom will gather July 13-15 in Washington, D.C.

An estimated nearly 300 million Christians live under persecution for their faith worldwide.

One of the reasons the summit was started was to gather resources and encourage people together to stand up for those being persecuted worldwide.

“The purpose of the conference is to put together a coalition of organizations and individuals working for religious freedom so we can continue the momentum of the past three years and put together a network of information, support and action,” said former Sen. Sam Brownback, the summit’s co-chair.

Brownback, along with Gayle Manchin, former chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and wife of Sen. Joe Manchin, hopes this summit brings a bipartisan framework to the important work of advocating for persecuted believers worldwide.

Other notable leaders involved with the summit include Sen. Christ Coons and Sen. James Lankford, who serve as honorary Senate co-chairs, and U.S. Reps. Henry Cuellar and Chris Smith, who serve as honorary House co-chairs.

Major international organizations involved include Alliance Defending Freedom, Family Research Council, Open Doors, the

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the Religious Freedom Institute, the Philos Project, Samaritan's Purse, International Christian Concern and others.

"We are looking forward to a fruitful time of network building, information exchange and following through on the momentum that has developed. We have seen major progress in religious freedom in countries such as Sudan, while working to further advance religious freedom in major problem countries [such as] China, to countries throughout the Middle East, Africa and more," says Brownback.

He continues, "We are asking believers to pray for the conference, let your churches and other groups know: sign up, support and help us as we watch God raise up help for the hundreds of millions suffering for the cause of Christ."

In 2018 and 2019, the Trump administration, supported by then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, ushered in two years of the Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom: a special conference during which foreign ministers and world officials gather for consultation on international affairs of importance.

In years past during the conference, nearly 80 foreign ministers and other government officials gathered in a massive tent in the center of the U.S. Department of State, along with dozens of organizations advocating for international aid, religious freedom and other such causes. Those gathered discussed and put together a framework for an international religious freedom regime to push forward a cause close to the then-president's heart. During this time, Trump appealed to the United Nations, and along with the secretary general, called for an immediate end to the persecution of Christians and others.

Brownback, a former Kansas senator, governor and most recently appointed ambassador for International Religious Freedom, established the United States Commission on International

Religious Freedom. The concept was based on the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. This commission is chartered by the U.S. government to annually report on and act on religious freedom throughout the world.

Registration for the conference can be found at [. A number of opportunities still remain for organizations host a booth, be part of the event and more.](#) {eo}

Amir George *directs The World Helpline at .*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.