

A new online petition is urging Secretary of State John Kerry not to exclude Christians from a declaration of genocide at the hands of ISIS. Co-sponsored by In Defense of Christians (IDC) and the Knights of Columbus, the petition can be signed at StopTheChristianGenocide.org

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We, the undersigned, believe America must end its silence about the ongoing genocide against Christians and other minority groups in Iraq and Syria.

The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines “genocide” as killing and certain acts “committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.”

Extensive and irrefutable evidence supports a finding that the so-called Islamic State’s mistreatment of Iraqi and Syrian Christians, as well as Yazidis and other vulnerable minorities, meets this definition. This evidence includes:

- • assassinations of Church leaders
- • mass murders and deportations
- • torture
- • kidnapping for ransom
- • sexual enslavement and systematic rape of girls and women
- • forcible conversions to Islam
- • destruction of Christian churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and artifacts

ISIS’s own public statements take “credit” for the murder of Christians precisely because they are Christian and express its intent to wholly eradicate Christian and other minority communities from its “Islamic State.” Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill noted in their historic joint statement that “whole families, villages and cities of our brothers and sisters in Christ are being completely exterminated.”

The European Parliament, prominent members of both political parties in the United States, including presidential candidates on both sides, Pope Francis, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, groups such as Genocide Watch, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and American Christian leaders of a broad array of faith traditions, along with the Christian leaders of Iraq and Syria themselves, and many others, have called ISIS’s actions against Christians in Iraq and Syria genocide.

We agree, and implore you to speak up on behalf of these brutalized minority populations. We therefore urge you to declare that Christians, along with Yazidis and other minorities, are targets of ongoing genocide.

Sincerely,

Carl Anderson
Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus

Leith Anderson
President, National Association of Evangelicals

Most Rev. Samuel J. Aquila
Archbishop of Denver

Mr. Toufic Baaklini
President, In Defense of Christians

Andrew Benton
President Pepperdine University

Alejandro Bermudez
Director, ACI-Prensa/Catholic News Agency

Ambassador Kenneth Blackwell
Former U.S. Representative, United Nations Human Rights Commission

Vernon Brewer
President and CEO, World Help

Mark Burnett
Hollywood Producer

Christine Caine
Director, Equip & Empower Ministries

Most Rev. Oscar Cantú
Bishop of Las Cruces, Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Most Rev. Charles J. Chaput, OFM, Cap.
Archbishop of Philadelphia

Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan
Prelate, Armenian Apostolic Church of America (Eastern Prelacy)

Prof. Robert A. Destro
Professor of Law & Director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Law & Religion, Columbus School of Law

Cardinal Timothy Dolan
Archbishop of New York, Chairman of Catholic Near East Welfare Association

Roma Downey
Hollywood Producer

Prof. Thomas Farr
Director of the Religious Freedom Project at the Berkeley Center, Georgetown University

Steve Forbes

Chairman & Editor in Chief, Forbes Media

Jack Fowler

Publisher, National Review

Prof. Robert P. George

McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence, Princeton University, Visiting Professor of Law, Harvard University

Amb. Mary Ann Glendon

Learned Hand Professor of Law, Harvard University

Most Rev. Jose H. Gomez

Archbishop of Los Angeles

Os Guinness

Author, *The Global Public Square*

Jenny Guinness

Dr. Joel C. Hunter

Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

Dr. Sargoun Issa

Vice President, Restore Ninevah Now Foundation

Most Rev. Sarhad Jammo

Bishop of St. Peter the Apostle of San Diego (Chaldean)

Prof. Philip Jenkins

Distinguished Professor of History, Institute for Studies of Religion, Baylor University

Hon. John Kasich

Governor, State of Ohio

Rev. Benedict Kiely

<http://www.nasarean.org>

Most Rev. Joseph E. Kurtz

Archbishop of Louisville, President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Katrina Lantos Swett

President, Lantos Foundation

David Lazar

Chairman, American Mesopotamian Organization

Wendy E. Long

Attorney

Most Rev. William E. Lori

Archbishop of Baltimore

Kathryn Jean Lopez

National Review Institute

Most Rev. Gregory Mansour

Bishop of St. Maron of Brooklyn (Maronite)

Prof. Daniel Mark

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Villanova University

George J. Marlin

Chairman of the Board, Aid to the Church in Need-USA

Paul Marshall

Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

Faith J. H. McDonnell

Director, Religious Liberty Program, Institute on Religion Democracy

Eric Metaxas

Author, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*

Johnnie Moore

Author, *DEFYING ISIS*

President, The KAIROS Company

Trustee, World Evangelical Alliance

Russell D. Moore

President, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Southern Baptist Convention

William P. Mumma

President, The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty

Most Rev. William Murphy

Bishop of Rockville Centre

Rev. Eugene F. Rivers

Azusa Christian Community

Dr. Jacqueline Rivers

Executive Director, Seymour Institute for Black Church and Policy Studies

Rev. Dr. Samuel Rodriguez

President, NHCLC/CONELA, Hispanic Evangelical Association

Alan E. Sears

President, CEO, & General Counsel, Alliance Defending Freedom

Nina Shea

Director, Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom

Prof. Greg Stanton

President, Genocide Watch

Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe

Chairman, Christian Media Corp Int., Former Secretary General, World Evangelical Alliance

George Weigel

Distinguished Senior Fellow and William E. Simon Chair in Catholic Studies, Ethics and Public Policy Center

Ken Weinstein

President & CEO, Hudson Institute

Ashur Yoseph

President, Assyrian Aid Society of America

Michael Yousseff, Ph. D.

International Broadcaster

Ravi Zacharias

Founder and President, Ravi Zacharias International Ministries

Most Rev. A. Elias Zaidan

Bishop of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles (Maronite)

- See more at: <http://stopthechristianguenocide.org/en/index.html#sthash.Gp13goIz.dpuf>