

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 653

AN ACT

To provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Near East and South
3 Central Asia Religious Freedom Act of 2014”.

4 **SEC. 2. SPECIAL ENVOY TO PROMOTE RELIGIOUS FREE-**
5 **DOM OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN THE**
6 **NEAR EAST AND SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA.**

7 (a) **APPOINTMENT.**—The President may appoint a
8 Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious
9 Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia (in
10 this Act referred to as the “Special Envoy”) within the
11 Department of State. The Special Envoy shall have the
12 rank of ambassador and shall hold the office at the pleas-
13 ure of the President.

14 (b) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—The Special Envoy should be
15 a person of recognized distinction in the field of human
16 rights and religious freedom and with expertise in the
17 Near East and South Central Asia.

18 **SEC. 3. DUTIES.**

19 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Special Envoy shall carry out
20 the following duties:

21 (1) Promote the right of religious freedom of
22 religious minorities in the countries of the Near
23 East and the countries of South Central Asia, de-
24 nounce the violation of such right, and recommend
25 appropriate responses by the United States Govern-
26 ment when such right is violated.

1 (2) Monitor and combat acts of religious intol-
2 erance and incitement targeted against religious mi-
3 norities in the countries of the Near East and the
4 countries of South Central Asia.

5 (3) Work to ensure that the unique needs of re-
6 ligious minority communities in the countries of the
7 Near East and the countries of South Central Asia
8 are addressed, including the economic and security
9 needs of such communities.

10 (4) Work with foreign governments of the coun-
11 tries of the Near East and the countries of South
12 Central Asia to address laws that are discriminatory
13 toward religious minority communities in such coun-
14 tries.

15 (5) Coordinate and assist in the preparation of
16 that portion of the report required by sections
17 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act
18 of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)) relating
19 to the nature and extent of religious freedom of reli-
20 gious minorities in the countries of the Near East
21 and the countries of South Central Asia.

22 (6) Coordinate and assist in the preparation of
23 that portion of the report required by section 102(b)
24 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998
25 (22 U.S.C. 6412(b)) relating to the nature and ex-

1 tent of religious freedom of religious minorities in
2 the countries of the Near East and the countries of
3 South Central Asia.

4 (b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the duties
5 under subsection (a), the Special Envoy shall, to the max-
6 imum extent practicable, coordinate with the Assistant
7 Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migra-
8 tion, the Ambassador at Large for International Religious
9 Freedom, the United States Commission on International
10 Religious Freedom, and other relevant Federal agencies
11 and officials.

12 **SEC. 4. DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION.**

13 Subject to the direction of the President and the Sec-
14 retary of State, the Special Envoy is authorized to rep-
15 resent the United States in matters and cases relevant to
16 religious freedom in the countries of the Near East and
17 the countries of South Central Asia in—

18 (1) contacts with foreign governments, intergov-
19 ernmental organizations, and specialized agencies of
20 the United Nations, the Organization of Security
21 and Cooperation in Europe, and other international
22 organizations of which the United States is a mem-
23 ber; and

1 (2) multilateral conferences and meetings rel-
2 evant to religious freedom in the countries of the
3 Near East and the countries of South Central Asia.

4 **SEC. 5. CONSULTATIONS.**

5 The Special Envoy shall consult with domestic and
6 international nongovernmental organizations and multilat-
7 eral organizations and institutions, as the Special Envoy
8 considers appropriate to fulfill the purposes of this Act.

9 **SEC. 6. SUNSET.**

10 This Act shall cease to be effective beginning on Octo-
11 ber 1, 2019.

12 **SEC. 7. FUNDING.**

13 Of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made
14 available to the Secretary of State for “Diplomatic and
15 Consular Programs” for fiscal years 2015 through 2019,
16 the Secretary of State is authorized to provide to the Spe-
17 cial Envoy \$1,000,000 for each such fiscal year for the
18 hiring of staff, the conduct of investigations, and nec-
19 essary travel to carry out the provisions of this Act.

 Passed the Senate July 10, 2014.

 Attest:

Secretary.

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