

113<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# S. 653

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## 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 intoler-  
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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