

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IMPERILED WORLDWIDE

Bill Donohue comments on the findings of the 2015 International Religious Freedom Report issued by the U.S. State Department:

It is a mistake to ascribe all religious persecution to Muslim madmen who belong to terrorist groups such as ISIS, al Qaeda, al Shabab, and Boko Haram. The sad fact is that Muslim-run governments are centrally involved in oppression, as are Communist-run governments.

The Report cites Penn State researchers who found that “the number of countries that require some sort of [religious] registration has increased significantly over the last two decades, to nearly 90 percent of all countries.” Worse is the practice of punishing people for merely criticizing Islam or converting to another religion. Such persons are routinely tortured and killed, with the approval of street mobs.

In Mauritania, a blogger critical of the government was initially sentenced to death, but it was revoked after he apologized; he is still in prison. Mobs in Pakistan have killed 62 persons for blasphemy since 1990. Sudan punishes anyone who claims that the Quran—not the government—is the sole source of authority.

In Saudi Arabia, a Palestinian poet was sentenced to 8 years in prison and 800 lashes (he was initially sentenced to death); three others had their death sentences upheld. The Syrian government has been on a tear killing Sunnis and other religious minorities. Iran executed at least 20 persons for blasphemy. Religious minorities were tortured in Eritrea, and three persons were legally stoned to death in Brunei for apostasy. China demolished several Catholic and Protestant

churches, and “the exercise of religious freedom continued to be nearly non-existent in North Korea.”

Still worse is the fact that the Obama administration continues to cut deals with Iran, and has been muted in its condemnation of Christian persecution. Beyond belief is the fact that the Clinton Foundation has received upwards of \$25 million from the thugs in Saudi Arabia. For obvious reasons, the Democratic-controlled State Department failed to cite any of these facts.