

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 20, 2021

Dear Secretary Blinken,

In recent years, we have seen a dramatic increase in violent Islamophobia and the persecution of Muslims manifesting itself around the world. In its 2021 annual report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) identified three Countries of Particular Concern primarily for their treatment of Muslims. Several additional countries listed by USCIRF were identified as having patterns of mistreatment and human rights violations against either their entire Muslim populations or particular sects of Muslims. This includes several Muslim-majority countries.

In addition to state-sponsored policies of Islamophobia, we have seen a disturbing rise in incidents of Islamophobic violence committed by individuals connected to larger transnational white supremacist networks, including but by no means limited to the mosque shooting in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019 and the recent murder of a Muslim Canadian family in London, Ontario.

As part of our commitment to international religious freedom and human rights, we must recognize Islamophobia as a pattern that is repeating in nearly every corner of the globe. From the ongoing atrocity crimes being committed against Uyghurs in China and the Rohingya in Burma, to the significant restrictions on Muslim populations in India and Sri Lanka, to the stoking of Islamophobia by political actors that is leading to violence in North American and Europe, to the severe human rights violations against certain sects of Muslims in Pakistan and Bahrain, this is a genuinely global problem that the United States should tackle globally.

For this reason, we are writing to strongly urge you to appoint a Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combatting Islamophobia, and to specifically include anti-Muslim violence *per se* in next year's annual human rights reports. It is past time for the United States to stand firmly in favor of religious freedom for all, and to give the global problem of Islamophobia the attention and prioritization it deserves.

We look forward to working together to pursue our shared values of religious freedom and human rights.

Sincerely,



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



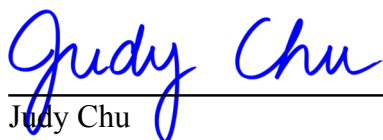
André Carson
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



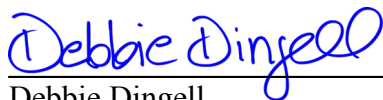
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



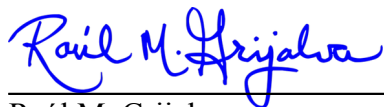
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



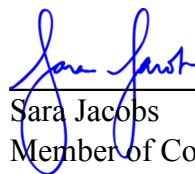
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Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
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Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
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James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



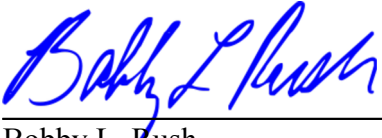
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Dean Phillips
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Mark Pocan
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Bobby L. Rush
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Bradley Scott Schneider
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