

House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Hearing  
on  
Discrimination and Persecution Against Muslims Worldwide

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STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

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Honorable Co-Chairmen and members of the Commission, Justice For All is an American human rights organization with a 30 year history of work on genocide and minority rights, starting with Bosnia. We have experience in recognizing markers of genocide, from the Central African Republic, the Uyghur in China to Rohingya in Burma and now India.

The US recognizes that Uyghurs in China and Rohingyas in Burma faced genocide. However, similar methods in extremism are evident right now, especially in India. It leads us to believe that Islamophobia leads to genocide as anti-semitic hate led to the Holocaust.

The Islamophobic narrative asserts that Islam and Muslims constitute an essential and existential threat both to national security and to national purity. Some of the harshest impacts of Islamophobia exist in Asian nations<sup>1</sup>, where social disruption occurs as each nation struggles with the economic and cultural challenges of adapting to globalization. In Europe, especially France rightwing politics is the driver of anti-Muslim bigotry and persecution.

Many persecutors of Muslims are ideologically connected and they collaborate with each other.

1. Ideological connection: Norwegian mass killer Anders Behring Breivik hailed India's Hindu nationalist movement and praised Hindutva as a key ally in a global struggle to bring down democratic regimes across the world. Anders Behring Breivik is the killer of 77 Labor Party's youth, mostly Christians in Norway.<sup>2</sup> The New Zealand terrorist who killed 51 Muslims claimed inspiration from Norwegian rightwing extremist, Breivik.<sup>3</sup> India and the Indian fascists are featured on 102 pages of his manifesto, "2080: A European declaration of independence." It includes a road map for using terrorism to a global war involving weapons of mass destruction for the survival of White Europeans.<sup>4</sup> In the Manifesto Breivik lists the websites of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) as resources for further information.
2. Collaboration in practice: An October 15, 2014 editorial of New York Times entitled "Deadly Alliances Against Muslims"<sup>5</sup> provides the main evidence of collaboration of Burmese Buddhist with Indian Hindu extremists and Sri Lankan Buddhist extremists against Muslims. Since then Justice For All research has documented extremists and governments using similar methodology in persecution of Muslims in these three countries and beyond:
  - a. The government:
    - i. Challenging citizenship of Muslims
    - ii. expanding abusive preventive detention laws
    - iii. Police attacking Muslims
    - iv. Judiciary failing to protect
    - v. use of detention camps
    - vi. denial of opportunities
  - b. By extremist organizations:
    - i. Economic boycott

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<sup>1</sup>Islamophobia in Three Asian Contexts: India, Myanmar and China. Justice for All Analysis for OHCHR

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23065638>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/now/breiviks-shadow-hangs-heavy-over-christchurch-attack-153427163.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article60501211.ece>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/16/opinion/deadly-alliances-against-muslims.html>

- ii. Attacks on Muslim businesses
- iii. Attacks on Muslim women
- iv. Limiting religious freedoms

### **Persecution of Muslims in India**

Justice For All observes how the media is being used to target Muslims like Bosnia, how Facebook and Whatsapp is being used like it was used in Burma. India is building a network of detention camps like China and genocidal language is rampant like Rwanda. Other state sanctioned tactics include arrests of journalists and activists and the bulldozing of Muslim homes.

In a speech from 2016, the BJP Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship stated, “as long as there is Islam in the world, there will be terrorism. Until we uproot Islam, we can’t remove terrorism.”<sup>6</sup> In 2019, BJP President Amit Shah promised, “We will ensure implementation of NRC in the entire country. We will remove every single infiltrator from the country, except Buddha, Hindus and Sikhs.”<sup>7</sup> This threat refers to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state of Assam, used to purge the region and send 1.9 million now stateless people to detention centers.<sup>8</sup>

It’s important to recognize and name the ideology Hindutva and the organizations that perpetrate the violence. is the Ku Klux Klan, but worse in that it is a paramilitary force that works hand in glove with the ruling party in India.

### **Roll of religious leaders: Calls to Genocide:**

Hindu Dharam Sansads, or Hindu Religious Parliaments, led by the most prominent groups of Hindu monks, priests and religious teachers openly called for a genocide of India’s Muslims<sup>9</sup>. A clear action plan emerged from this Parliament:

- Collect arms and train
- Announce 10 million rupees in reward to recruit Suicide Bombers
- Kill 2 million Muslims to drive away the rest in fear

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and BJP leaders remained silent.

### **Media Is Amplifying Hate Against Minorities**

Some media-related issues faced by the minority community are:<sup>10</sup> Accusing Muslims of spreading coronavirus<sup>11</sup>; Calling Muslims Anti-nationals<sup>12</sup>; Blaming Muslims for troubles faced by Hindus<sup>13</sup>; Vilifying Muslims in Bollywood and via propaganda in movies generally<sup>14</sup>; Routinely engaging in such vilification that results in bigotry, hate, and intolerance.<sup>15</sup>

Indian media by and large is unable to play a positive role resulting in Reporters Without Borders rating Indian media freedom to 150th level in the world.<sup>16</sup>

### **Police Complicity In Attacks On Minorities**

There have been multiple attacks by RSS-BJP militias on Muslims and other minorities where one can see a recurring methodology: Priests call for violence; BJP leaders make remarks against minority communities; Militias take processions to Muslim ghettos; Militia targets Mosques; Police do not stop the attackers; In many cases, police participate in attacking Muslims; If Muslims resist attacks on mosques, they are accused of stone pelting; Police arrest the victims as perpetrators; Police refuse to register reports by victims; Sometimes police block ambulances trying to reach the injured Muslims; Police forces Muslims out of their property within hours, as government bulldozers demolish their homes without any due process<sup>17</sup>

The case of Delhi police aiding attackers during 2020 pogroms there is well documented and illustrates the above pattern.<sup>18 19 20</sup>

In more recent attacks, video has been widely shared on social media that shows police attacking young Muslim men while in custody. The BBC has identified several of the beaten young men and has reported their story.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.justiceforall.org/saveindia/hindutva-extremists-hate-conference-haridwar-dec-2021/>

<sup>10</sup> [Is India Headed for an Anti-Muslim Genocide? | Time](#)

<sup>11</sup> [CoronaJihad is Only the Latest Manifestation: Islamophobia in India has Been Years in the Making | Human Rights Watch](#)

<sup>12</sup> [“Shoot the Traitors”: Discrimination Against Muslims under India’s New Citizenship Policy | HRW](#)

<sup>13</sup> [New India has a solution to all its problems — Blame the Muslim](#)

<sup>14</sup> [‘The Kashmir Files’ Marks India’s Descent Into Darkness | Time](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Vilification of Indian Muslims: The method in the madness](#)

<sup>16</sup> <https://rsf.org/en/country/india>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.vice.com/en/article/k7wv8a/modi-india-muslim-homes-bulldozed-mob-attacks-arrests>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/07/17/indias-police-found-complicit-anti-muslim-mob-violence>

<sup>19</sup> [How Delhi’s Police Turned Against Muslims - The New York Times](#)

<sup>20</sup> <https://ia601906.us.archive.org/11/items/dmc-delhi-riot-fact-report-2020/-Delhi-riots-Fact-Finding-2020.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-61822271>

### **Judiciary Fails To Protect Minorities**

While police fail to protect Muslims, the judiciary is often biased in favor of the Hindu attackers of minorities.<sup>22</sup> Members of NGOs, human rights activists, and journalists are jailed and denied bail, sometimes for years for speaking against the policies of the BJP-RSS. They are also often charged as anti-nationals.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast, Hindu extremists leaders are either not charged or they go through an expedited bail process. An Indian state court has ruled that Hijab is not an essential part of Islam and the Indian Supreme Court has ruled that a mosque is not an essential part of Islam, thereby interfering in religious matters that directly impact India's over 200 million Muslims.

The Indian government also interferes in the judicial process. When a judge in Delhi ordered police to allow ambulances to reach injured Muslims, within hours, the judge was transferred by the government.

### **Assam As A Laboratory For Taking Away Citizenship Of Muslims**

The Indian state of Assam has a process of randomly questioning the citizenship of residents without any investigation. In 2015, Assam started an exercise under the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to scrutinize the citizenship of its 33 million residents.<sup>24</sup> At the end of the exercise, 1.9 million people were excluded from the citizenship list.<sup>25</sup> Some of those excluded were veterans of the Indian Army.<sup>26</sup>

1. More than 140,000 people have been stripped of their citizenship and rendered stateless.
2. Thousands are detained in the detention centers.<sup>27</sup>
3. The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) will protect the non-Muslims. But all Muslims from this 1.9 million should now prove their citizenship before a tribunal which arbitrarily strips citizenship even for typographical errors in documents.
4. Now, the BJP government wants another NRC to strip the citizenship of 5 million more Muslims. Only International pressure can stop this catastrophe and the disruption of millions of lives.
5. Any non-Muslim that finds themselves excluded from citizenship because of the NRC, can easily re-apply under the CAA to become a citizen again, by making claims that the act accommodates.
6. Muslims who find themselves excluded, will remain stateless.

### **30+ Anti-Minority Laws**

Anti-Conversion laws have been passed in 10 states in India.<sup>28</sup> According to the 2020 report of the bipartisan United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's (USCIRF), while the Indian constitution protects the right to proselytize, many of these laws use "vague language that can be interpreted as prohibiting consensual conversions." USCIRF also notes that, "empowered by anti-conversion laws and often with the police's complicity, Hindutva groups also conduct campaigns of harassment, social exclusion, and violence against Christians, Muslims, and other religious minorities across the country."<sup>29</sup>

**Hijab ban:** In March 2022, Karnataka's High Court upheld a rule banning Muslim girls and women from wearing hijabs at state-run schools.<sup>30</sup> Supporters of the ban allege that the law upholds secularism and interferes with the oppression of Muslim women by Muslim men. However, the hijab ban effectively regulates Muslim girls' bodily autonomy, their ability to practice their faith, and their access to education

### **Indian Government Targeting Human Rights Defenders And Journalists Through The Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA):**

The State Department's 2021 country report on India extensively covers the harms caused by the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) which is used to target human rights defenders, journalists, and other members of civil society. While 10,552 arrests have been made in the past 7 years, only 253 have been convicted of any crime. Four ex-justices of the Indian Supreme Court, Madan Lokur, Aftab Alam, Gopal Gowda, and Deepak Gupta have spoken out about the misuse of the UAPA.

### **Persecution of Kashmiri Muslims continues unabated**

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/19/india-government-policies-actions-target-minorities>

<sup>23</sup> <https://thewire.in/rights/india-modi-anti-national-protest-arrest-sedition-authoritarianism>

<sup>24</sup> The National Register of Citizens is a proposed registry which puts the onus of proving citizenship on the citizen rather than on authorities.

<sup>25</sup> [Assam NRC: What next for 1.9 million 'stateless' Indians? - BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/india-55555555)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/retired-army-officer-excluded-from-citizens-list-he-is-not-surprised-2093546>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/9/17/20861427/india-assam-citizenship-muslim-detention-camps>

<sup>28</sup> <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/l1/l1lrd/2018298841/2018298841.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Hindutva is a supremacist ideology of members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. It was inspired by Nazi Germany, and early leaders praised Hitler's methods in what they termed as Germany's goal of racial purity. The ideology considers Hindus as superior and seeks to make a Hindu-nation of India, where minorities remain subservient. Followers of Abrahamic faiths (Muslims & Christians) are the primary target.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/15/world/asia/india-hijab-ban-schools.html>

Due to lack of international checks and control on Indian government, Justice For All discerns with concern systematic clampdown on civil society, journalists, human rights defenders and political activists in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (JK). The Modi government has been using so-called anti-terror laws as a weapon to silence the voices of dissent in the occupied territory. In addition to PSA, AFSPA and other draconian laws, the decades old anti-terror law UAPA is being arbitrarily used by India as a weapon of war to enforce complete censorship in Kashmir.<sup>31</sup>

India has broadened the definition of “terrorism” to include all forms of resistance against the occupation, including the peaceful and non-violent expression. UAPA dilutes the provisions of bail; it also authorizes police to conduct warrantless searches, arrest individuals, and keep them in custody for up to 6 months without formally filing any charges.<sup>32</sup> This move jeopardizes the Kashmiri civil society and rights defenders. Presently, besides empowering the government to declare any individual as a terrorist, the notorious law allows the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to seize the property of dissidents under Section 25.<sup>33</sup>

It is noted with concern that dozens of rights activists including Khurram Pervaiz, Ahsan Untoo and others, who worked extensively to document human rights violations being committed by India, were booked under the same infamous law and put behind the bars.<sup>34</sup> Post August 5th 2019, pro-freedom leadership is being systematically eliminated through prolonged detentions in different jails across India.<sup>35</sup> Some political activists have been released on surety bonds, only after pledging that they will not involve themselves in any form of activism.<sup>36</sup> Since the annulment of JK special status in August 2019, the Indian occupation authorities have arrested many human rights defenders under UAPA. According to Amnesty International, at least 36 journalists have faced interrogation, raids, threats or physical assault.<sup>37</sup> Since 2019, 2,300 people have been arrested under the UAPA in Kashmir.<sup>38</sup> Around half of them are still in prison. Of 5,922 persons charged under this law across India, between 2016 and 2019, individuals from occupied Kashmir account for around 15 percent (876). The conviction rate remains little over 2 percent.<sup>39</sup>

Indian occupation’s pattern of arbitrary restrictions of Kashmiri journalists is evident through their barring Kashmiri photojournalist Sana Irshad Mattoo from traveling to Paris to receive her award despite holding a valid visa.<sup>40</sup> This instance of repression of freedom of press and the denial of the right to mobility ought to be connected to the broader decline of freedom of press in India and particularly in occupied Kashmir, and not as an isolated event.<sup>41</sup>

Names of historic places are being changed into ones that are more aligned with Hindu historiography. Jammu City Chowk is now called Bharat Mata Chowk, Water Department is now called Jal Shakti Department.<sup>42</sup> The Chenani-Nashri Tunnel has been named after Hindutva ideologue Syama Prasad Mookerjee.<sup>43</sup> A new domicile law has been instituted that allows Hindus to permanently settle in Indian occupied Kashmir, raising fears that the process is aimed at gradually rendering Kashmiri Muslims a minority in the region.<sup>44</sup> Up to 25,000 people have been granted these domicile certificates. Recently, the Modi government published a list of renewed electoral constituencies in the region. The new scheme gives greater representation to Hindu areas, essentially gerrymandering the region to marginalize Muslims.<sup>45</sup>

## Persecution and Genocide of Muslims in Burma

While the Burmese military persecuted minorities in earlier decades, in the last ten years they have proved especially adept at using social media to spread negative and false information about Islam and demonizing the Rohingya. The result: hundreds of Rohingya villages burned and bulldozed, hundreds of mosques destroyed, and countless murders and rapes.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://standwithkashmir.org/india-is-arresting-kashmiri-for-anything-everything-under-the-uapa-law/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/empty-fields-the-use-and-abuse-of-uapa-in-kashmir/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.kmsnews.org/kms/2021/07/24/indias-nia-seizes-property-of-freedom-activist-in-kishtwar.html>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-59383554>

<sup>35</sup> <https://freepresskashmir.news/2021/05/09/shift-them-to-kashmir-jails-chorus-grows-as-covid-turns-terminal/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/bond-of-silence-buys-freedom-in-kashmir/1698670>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/06/india-increase-in-unlawful-killings-in-jammu-kashmir-highlights-governments-failure-to-protect-its-minorities/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/23/india-kashmir-khurram-parvez-arrest-human-rights-uapa-terror-law>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/22-of-cases-registered-under-the-uapa-from-2016-2019-ended-in-court-conviction/article33804099.ece>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/india-pulitzer-prize-winning-photojournalist-banned-from-travelling-abroad.html>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/05/03/india-media-freedom-under-threat>

<sup>42</sup> <https://kashmirilife.net/govt-renames-phe-ifc-department-to-jal-shakti-department-231053/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.news18.com/news/india/jks-chenani-nashri-tunnel-to-be-renamed-after-bhartiya-jansangh-founder-sp-mukherjee-2348645.html>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/6/28/kashmir-muslims-fear-demographic-shift-as-thousands-get-residency>

<sup>45</sup> <https://thewire.in/government/why-jks-proposed-delimitation-is-being-viewed-as-unfair-to-kashmir>

Despite Aung San Suu Kyi's defense of the military from charges of Genocide in the International Court of Justice, the Burmese military leadership eventually tired of power sharing, used to the perks of absolute power, and thus seized control in a violent coup in February 2021. Since then, as much of the population struggles to resist brutal military domination, the military has doubled down on its attacks on minority ethnic and religious identity. Bombing of churches is becoming frequent in Chin State.

Ongoing Islamophobia is instrumentalized by Burmese military leaders and their proxies, the nationalist Buddhist leaders.<sup>46</sup> While the divisive and social destructive work of these Buddhist leaders was especially clear in the period leading up to the mass killing and rapes, since 2017 some leaders like U Wirathu have been reprimanded, only to reappear again and again as a public influencer. Certain Buddhist leaders continue to spread hatred, violence and disinformation. For example, on March 2 2022, armed nationalist monks appeared at the Yadanar Kan Myint monastery to give a sermon.<sup>47</sup> On March 24, a pro-junta group called the Young Men Buddhist Association strongly criticized the US State Department recognition of the Rohingya genocide.

The military has also continued to spread propaganda. On January 9, 2022, the Khit Thit news media reported<sup>48</sup> that military helicopters dropped leaflets on Kamma town, Pakokku Township, Magwe Region, claiming that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was providing funding to kill Buddhist monks. The same media source reported on January 22 that the military-owned Myawaddy newspaper printed an editorial denouncing the civilian leaders of NLD for allegedly defaming Buddhism.<sup>49</sup>

After years of civil society complaints, Facebook's August 2018 removal of Myanmar military accounts was the first time the social networking site had removed the account of any country's military or political leaders for spreading Islamophobia.<sup>50 51</sup> It was too little, too late. Moreover, in a more controversial move in February 2019, Facebook also banned four ethnic 'insurgent' groups as 'dangerous organizations. This raised some questions about false equivalence.<sup>52</sup>

Social media continues to be a vehicle for spreading hate and Islamophobia. In 2022 the rights advocacy group Global Witness submitted eight paid ads for approval to Facebook, each including different versions of hate speech against Rohingya. All eight ads were approved by Facebook to be published.<sup>53</sup> The ads were not subtle; for example, one stated: "The current killing of the Kalar is not enough, we need to kill more!" "Kalar" is a racial slur used to refer to the dark skinned Rohingya.

Rohingya refugees have recently sued Facebook for more than \$150 billion, accusing it of failing to stop hate speech that incited violence against the Muslim ethnic group by military rulers and their supporters in Burma. One of Justice For All's Rohingya staff members, Sharifah Shakirah, is a plaintiff in this legal action.

While social media has been problematic, the military has also selectively shut down the internet, isolating communities that resist the military, and making it much more difficult to collect evidence<sup>54</sup> of human rights abuse.<sup>55</sup>

As a persecuted minority in Myanmar (Burma), Rohingya Muslims have long faced drastic limits on access to school in their homeland of Rakhine State. Increasingly disenfranchised, most Rohingya were violently displaced by the brutal Burmese military during genocidal "clearance" operations in August and September 2017. Since then, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya children have been crowded into vast refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh with little access to education and no access to higher education.

### **China's Repression on Islam in East Turkestan During Recent Years**

After years of advocacy the genocide of Uyghur Muslims is recognized by the US government.

Justice for all Uyghur staff members Serwi Huseyin and RizwanGul NurMuhammad's<sup>56</sup> testimony on the imprisonment of their own relatives is a sample of thousands in the diaspora desperately searching for their family members.

In 1949, China invaded East Turkestan (Xinjiang) and claimed the invasion as a "peaceful liberation". In the constitutional agreement China promised to give autonomy to East Turkestan people on religion, culture, and language. However, China carried out a systematic assimilation policy on Uyghur, Kazak, Krgyz and other Turkic speaking nations in East Turkestan. Strict

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00472336.2022.2032801>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1438219383282070>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1397231800714162>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/khitthitnews/posts/1407057899731552>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/meghara/zuckerberg-open-letter-hate-speech-myanmar>

<sup>51</sup> <https://teacircleoxford.com/2019/01/22/shooting-the-facebook-messenger-part-ii/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2019/02/dangerous-organizations-in-myanmar/>

<sup>53</sup> <https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/kill-facebook-fails-detect-hate-rohingya-83576729>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.article19.org/resources/myanmar-internet-shutdowns-torchings-killings/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.voanews.com/a/myanmar-junta-hits-opposition-forces-with-communications-blackouts-/6550158.html>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.saveuighur.org/mewlan-is-imprisoned-by-chinese-government/>



measures have been taken to meld Uyghurs and other Turkic speaking people into a big HanXia society.. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) views Islam as a barrier to the assimilation of Uyghurs. In 2016, CCP detained millions of Uyghurs and others in the massive network of concentration camps under the name of “reeducation” or “vocational training.” CCP’s religious persecution and restriction in the region reached an unprecedented level. Thousands of mosques in East Turkestan were demolished and were turned into recreational facilities. Thousands of Islamic scholars<sup>57</sup> leaders, academics, philanthropists, showbiz personalities were victims of enforced disappearance or arbitrarily detained by the Chinese government. According to the Xinjiang Police Files, thousands of Uyghur detainees in the detention camps were held captive for practicing Islam.<sup>58</sup> They show that Uyghurs were detained or charged with draconian prison sentences for keeping copies of the Quran, performing pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, worshiping at masjids or at home, teaching and reading the Quran.

The majority of these detainees are charged with “terrorism” crimes and are punished for these “crimes” decades later such as “studying the Holy Quran with their grandmother at a young age.” According to the testimonies of Uyghur camp survivors, countless Uyghurs were detained for downloading Islamic apps or keeping soundtracks of Islamic lectures on their phones. This phenomenon also was verified by the police records in the Xinjiang police files.. The Chinese government has banned Muslim names and have distributed manuals of Uyghur names for newborns which differentiates names with Uyghur and Arab origin. Hijabs are forbidden, and greeting each other in an Islamic manner are reasons for incarceration.

Imams and scholars at functioning mosques are recruited and can only preach after special CCP training and under strict supervision. Chinese state media propaganda footage reveals that Uyghur people are forced to drink alcohol and eat pork against their Islamic belief to prove loyalty to the party and firm ground to the party. Uyghur families are forcibly bonded with Han Chinese party officials under the Uyghur-Han twin relative policy, and Uyghur people’s religious activities were monitored closely and reported to local community party offices. Uyghur women are forced to get married with Han Chinese against their Islamic rules. The religious persecution in East Turkestan aims to eradicate Uyghur people’s Islamic and cultural identity all together, and increase the speed of assimilating them into the HuaXia nationality.

### **Persecution of Muslims in Sri Lanka**

Justice For All has been troubled by developments in Sri Lanka since the end of the civil war in 2009, particularly after the 2019 Easter Sunday terrorist attacks.

Anti-Muslim vandalism and violence has regularly occurred in Sri Lanka in recent years, notably in Aluthgama (2014), Ginthota (2017), Digana and Teldeniya (2018) and Gampaha and Kurunegala (2019). Anti Muslim policies such as the bans on burqa, cattle slaughter and on Islamic books and religious material are still on the books.

The attacks on Muslims have continued with impunity, leading to a systematic build-up of anti-Muslim hysteria with several flashpoints over the last decade. Ahmed Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on freedom of religious belief, has documented the incidents in his Mission to Sri Lanka report, presented to the Human Rights Council Forty-third session, February 24, 2020 - March 2020.<sup>59</sup>

**Forced Cremation:** Sri Lanka stood as the only country in the world which enforced mandatory cremation of COVID-19 victims as the only means of disposing of bodies. The mandatory cremation policy by the Sri Lankan government is a discriminatory regulation that represses and violates the religious rights of the minority Christians and Muslims.

The Sri Lankan government takes no initiative to communicate the reasons for its measures but instead maintains its violation of the sacrosanct religious rights of its minority citizens. After international pressure, Sri Lanka now allows Muslim burials on a remote island<sup>60</sup>.

Since then, there have been attacks on women wearing hijab, boycotts on Muslim businesses, social media rumor and propaganda campaigns, and other orchestrated and directed attacks<sup>61</sup>.

In 2018, Buddhist nationalists had attacked Muslim businesses in the district of Kandy to the point that a state of emergency had been declared<sup>62</sup>. The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has been utilized to target mostly Muslims and Tamils. Up to 1,000 Islamic schools are to be closed by the government. Face veils such as burqa and niqab are to be banned, and all Islamic religious items coming into the country are banned. Those who are suspected of racial, religious, or social disharmony can face up to two years in prison without trial under new regulations which call for ‘deradicalization.’ This is terrifyingly parallel to what China is doing to Uyghur Muslims in East Turkestan.

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<sup>57</sup> [Islam Dispossessed China: Persecution of Uyghur Imams and Religious Figures](#) June 2022

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.xinjiangpolicefiles.org/>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomReligion/Pages/Visits.aspx>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56249805>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/tamil-villagers-protest-against-sri-lanka-s-decision-use-iranaitivu-burial-site-covid-19>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/21/world/asia/sri-lanka-history-civil-war.html>

## Persecution of Muslims in France

President Macron continues implementing his anti-Muslim policies, delegated to his minister of interior, Gerald Darmanin. The current government, who has been elected to defeat the far right, is actually open to a parliamentary coalition with Marine le Pen's party, to compensate for the fact that they don't have an absolute majority to pass legislation.

Posing internationally as a champion of freedom against autocrats, President Macron avoids international criticism by dismissing articles and expert comments as uninformed or unable to grasp the complexity of the "universalist French model". Nonetheless, hate crimes against Muslims are at an all time high and controversies on hijab, burkini, halal food (and any issue related to Muslims) are central in the media. Islamic institutions (organizations and mosques) are targeted and criminalized, impacting and harming communities on the long run, and causing them to leave the country by the thousands.

Human rights organizations including Justice For All consider France a second-tier country in terms of human rights and fundamental freedoms:

Amnesty International explains<sup>63</sup> how there is a gap between France's image on the international scene and the actual situation on the ground. Human Rights Watch raises serious concerns<sup>64</sup> on the way Muslim organizations are disbanded when they criticize the government's stance on Islamophobia. 72 European Human Rights organizations have notably expressed their support for anti-Islamophobia orgs and denounced political harassment and criminalization of Muslim activists.<sup>65</sup>

Academia, which was a target of the government's agenda against Muslims, through an investigation of "islamo-leftism in universities," has strongly responded, with an open letter, from prominent academics to Macron, calling out the institutionalization of Islamophobia.<sup>66</sup>

This, along with hate crime and a daily obsession for their way of life in the public debate, makes the situation unbearable for many Muslims. As a consequence, thousands of them leave France. In a recent article, the New York Times started shedding some light on this long term phenomenon.<sup>67</sup>

Justice For All observes that any organization working on Islamophobia or criticizing the government on this issue is disbanded. Case in point: the Collective against Islamophobia in France and the Coordination against Racism and Islamophobia were disbanded in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Anti-fascist groups, organizations supporting Palestinian rights and left wing media have also been a target. A group of academics and NGOs have methodically documented this witch hunt.<sup>68</sup>

Justice For All observes that mosques are being forced to sign up to the "Charter of Values" or closed. The French state intends to control every aspect of Muslims' life and organizations, by imposing on them a set of values and defining for them the way they should organize. Mosques and federations who refuse to sign up to this legal and political exceptionalism rooted in colonialism, are considered "enemies of the republic" and targeted with abusive administrative controls and closed down.<sup>69</sup>

Justice For All observes that Muslim women are the main targets in public debate and are harmed by exclusive policies, condoned at the highest level of the government:

French public debate is ridden with hijab controversies and endless panels debating Muslim women's various dress styles, without ever including them in the conversation. This ongoing demonization and de-humanization makes them a target for hate crime and violence. In addition, the government supports any measure restricting their rights, including the banning of the headscarf in sports competition<sup>70</sup> and took legal action to ban Muslim women from accessing swimming pools (Muslim women queuing for the swimming pool are then identified and controlled by the police).<sup>71</sup>

## Central African Republic

After Séléka, an interfaith coalition of Christians and Muslims rebel groups, rose to power, bringing the first government in power in Central African Republic that was not in submission to former colonial power, France, the French television which controlled the airwaves in CAR started saying Muslims have taken over the country. It led to Christian militia attacking Muslims,

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<sup>63</sup> [France is not the free-speech champion it says it is - Amnesty International](#)

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/09/27/french-court-confirms-dissolution-anti-discrimination-group>

<sup>65</sup> [Lettre ouverte à E.MACRON : stop à l'institutionnalisation de l'islamophobie ! | Le Club](#)

<sup>66</sup> Ibid

<sup>67</sup> [The Quiet Flight of Muslims From France - The New York Times](#)

<sup>68</sup> [https://www.lacoalition.fr/IMG/pdf/rapport\\_chasse-aux-sorcières\\_2022\\_vf.pdf](https://www.lacoalition.fr/IMG/pdf/rapport_chasse-aux-sorcières_2022_vf.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> [Macron's Islamic charter is an unprecedented attack on French secularism | Middle East Eye](#)

<sup>70</sup> [https://rnc.bfmtv.com/actualites/politique/interdiction-du-voile-dans-les-competitions-sportives-cacophonie-au-gouvernement-entre-les-pour-et-les-contre\\_AV-202202140580.html](https://rnc.bfmtv.com/actualites/politique/interdiction-du-voile-dans-les-competitions-sportives-cacophonie-au-gouvernement-entre-les-pour-et-les-contre_AV-202202140580.html)

<sup>71</sup> [Top French court upholds ban on 'burkini' swimsuits in Grenoble's public pools](#)

leading to French forces landing once again in the name of security displacing the coalition government and aiding Christian militia.

It resulted in an almost complete wipeout of Muslims from CAR. U.N. humanitarian chief Stephen O'Brien saw "the early warnings of genocide" in Central African Republic<sup>72</sup>, where almost all Muslim were either killed or made refugees. By contrast, he said, "every Christian family's house was left standing."<sup>73</sup> According to then U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Powers, almost all of the 436 mosques in the Central African Republic have been destroyed by months of vicious fighting between Christians and Muslims<sup>74</sup>. This was corroborated by a Justice For All envoy that visited the area. Muslims have not been returned their property nor have their mosques been restored.

**Recommendations:** Our specific policy recommendations for the Commission, the U.S. Congress and the administration are as follows:

### 1. The Commission should

- Make these hearings on Islamophobia a regular quarterly occurrence considering that the persecution of Muslims continues to increase.
- Although the Commission is a House based commission, it should engage colleagues in the Senate to get S.3384 - Combating International Islamophobia Act, which would establish a Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Islamophobia around the world passed. This mechanism can potentially become a systemic solution to the ongoing persecution and discrimination.
- The Commission should hold hearings specifically on the denial of education to Rohingyas in Bangladesh and Burma. This is the third generation of Rohingyas being raised mostly in Bangladesh but some in Burma without any access to education. Bangladesh as a policy does not allow any of the estimated 500,000 Rohingya children to study beyond 3rd grade level.
- The Commission should hold hearings on the plight of human rights organizations and its workers in India and Kashmir.

### 2. Legislation: Congress should pass the following:

- Burma Act of 2022 (H.R. 5497)
- On India: HRes 1196 (Resolution on Indian human rights and religious freedom situation)
- On Uyghurs: H.R.4785 & S.4073 the Uyghur Policy Act; H.R. 1630 & S. 1080 Uyghur Human Rights Protection Act; the H.R. 1592 & S.602 - Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act of 2021

### 3. Administration:

- **International Sanctions:** US Government should accept the Bi-Partisan commission USCIRF recommendations to sanction Indians responsible for persecution and violence.
- **Trade and Aid:** The United States government should ensure that any international aid, collaboration and trade agreements with Burma, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, India, and France are explicitly and specifically conditioned on human rights, non-discrimination, non-segregation and equality.
- **Monitoring:** The government should ensure rigorous and ongoing assessments of all trade and assistance to ensure they are implemented in a way that does not entrench, support or perpetuate discrimination and segregation of Muslims.

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<sup>72</sup> <https://www.voanews.com/a/genocide-threat-central-african-republic-un-official-says/3996922.html>

<sup>73</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/car-theres-not-one-single-muslim-left-bocaranga>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/almost-all-436-central-african-republic-mosques-destroyed-u-s-diplomat-1.2284619>