



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

*New Comment,*

**RE: PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS**

Thank you for your recent correspondence about the persecution of Christians; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

The UK champions freedom of religion or belief for everyone. As a country that is a beacon for freedom and tolerance, I passionately believe the UK should not shirk its responsibilities.

That is why I am glad the independent review of Foreign & Commonwealth Office support for persecuted Christians, conducted by the Anglican Bishop of Truro, the Right Reverend Philip Mounstephen, was published.

The Government has committed to implementing the Bishop's twenty-two recommendations in full, and work continues to implement them in a way that will bring real improvements to the lives of those persecuted because of their faith or belief. Of the twenty-two recommendations, the UK has fully delivered ten, made good progress on a further eight, and Ministers are confident that all twenty-two will be delivered by the time of the independent review in 2022.

I also welcome the appointment of Fiona Bruce MP as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief. Some of the recommendations will take longer to implement and will require an ongoing effort to embed into the working practices of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

The FCDO regularly engages with Open Doors UK and has taken note of *the 2021 World Watch List Report* and its findings. I am glad that the report has praised the UK Government for the many positive advances it has made in the past year.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes*  
*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**