

International Freedom of Religion or Belief Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

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[AS INTRODUCED]

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B I L L

TO

Require the Prime Minister to appoint a Special Envoy for International Freedom of Religion or Belief; to establish an Office of the Special Envoy; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the King’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Special Envoy for International Freedom of Religion or Belief

- (1) The Prime Minister must appoint a Special Envoy for International Freedom of Religion or Belief (“Special Envoy”).
- (2) The duties of the Special Envoy are to—
 - (a) work to promote and protect international freedom of religion or belief, including by working with the UK Government and with civil society groups; 5
 - (b) raise awareness of cases of concern involving persecution or discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and advocate for the rights of people worldwide who are discriminated against or persecuted for their faith or belief; 10
 - (c) work with representatives of other governments, including other Special Envoys, to promote freedom of religion or belief around the world.
- (3) The Special Envoy must report from time to time to the Prime Minister on their work. 15
- (4) The terms and conditions of the appointment of the Special Envoy are to be determined by the Prime Minister.

2 Office of the Special Envoy

- (1) The Prime Minister must establish an Office of the Special Envoy (“the Office”). 20
- (2) The principal duty of the Office is to support the work of the Special Envoy.
- (3) In establishing the Office, the Prime Minister must provide the Special Envoy with—

- (a) such staff, and
- (b) such accommodation, equipment and other facilities, as the Prime Minister considers necessary for the carrying out of the Special Envoy's functions.

3 Commencement, extent and short title

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- (1) This Act comes into force on the day on which it is passed.
- (2) This Act extends to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the International Freedom of Religion or Belief Act 2023.

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