

Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

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[AS INTRODUCED]

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BILL

TO

Require the continued appointment of a special envoy for freedom of religion or belief and make provision about the special envoy's functions.

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 Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief

- (1) There continues to be a special envoy called the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief.
- (2) The special envoy is to be appointed by and may be removed from office at any time by the Prime Minister. 5
- (3) The special envoy must act with a view to—
 - (a) promoting freedom of religion or belief abroad, in particular by working with the government of the United Kingdom, with other governments and their representatives (including special envoys), and with organisations outside government; 10
 - (b) raising awareness of cases in which people abroad are persecuted or discriminated against on the grounds of religion or belief and advocating for the rights of such people.
- (4) The special envoy must from time to time give a report about their work to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs. 15
- (5) A Minister of the Crown may give the special envoy directions about the exercise of their functions.
- (6) A Minister of the Crown—
 - (a) *must provide the special envoy with such staff, accommodation, equipment and other facilities as the Minister considers necessary for the carrying out of the special envoy's functions;* 20
 - (b) *may pay allowances or other payments to or in respect of the special envoy.*
- (7) The special envoy's functions are exercisable on behalf of the Crown.

2 Commencement, extent and short title

- (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 Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief Act 2024.

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Require the continued appointment of a special envoy for freedom of religion or belief and make provision about the special envoy's functions.

Presented by Jim Shannon

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be
Printed, 21st October 2024.

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