



**THE INSTITUTE
ON RELIGION
& DEMOCRACY**

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The Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD) was founded in 1981 by Christian leaders concerned about the dichotomy between the social witness of churches expressed by mainline, left-leaning leaders and that of faithful church members.

From the start, IRD was a voice for persecuted Christians, calling attention to their plight that was being ignored by Marxist and Soviet-influenced church leaders.

Today millions of followers of Christ suffer brutal persecution. But much of the Western church has been unaware of or apathetic toward their plight.

IRD's Religious Liberty Program, under the leadership of Faith McDonnell, is a voice for Christians persecuted in Marxist/Stalinist regimes like North Korea, China, Vietnam, and Cuba, as well as in Islamic, Sharia-dominated nations. We also shine a light on the abuse of Christians in countries such as India and Russia, where religion and nationalism are closely related.

McDonnell has helped draft resolutions for church conventions and for Congress, working closely with Members, partnering with church leaders in Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Pakistan, and elsewhere, and joining with other organizations to expose the egregious persecution globally of Christians.

For over twenty years, we have had a special focus on Sudan/South Sudan through our Church Alliance for a New Sudan. We encourage U.S. policy to look realistically at the plight of Christians and others suffering under the jihadist regime of Khartoum. And we continue to work to help the fledgling, beleaguered – yet sovereign – nation of South Sudan attain its full potential for democracy, prosperity and the flourishing of its citizenry.

Writing and speaking, IRD's Religious Liberty Program highlights the connection between the situation of Christians in the Islamic world and the influence of global jihad/radical Islam on Western civilization in order to both support our brothers and sisters in their ongoing struggle and to learn from their experience.

We connect U.S. Christians and churches with their international partners through our religious liberty work, fostering reasoned, effective social witness on Christian persecution and other human rights issues.