

Conference on  
Religious Persecution in the World Today: Diagnoses, Prognoses,  
Treatments, Cures

To be held at Christ Church, Oxford University

Friday August 2 – Saturday August 3, 2019

Sir Michael Dummett Lecture Theatre

Christ Church College, Oxford University

Held in conjunction with the International Center for Law and Religion Studies' Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law, hosted at Christ Church, Oxford, July 22-August 9, 2019

Organized by:

International Center for Law and Religion Studies

AMAR Foundation

LDS Charities

Co-organized by:

The Religion, Law, and International Relations Programme, Oxford Centre for Christianity and Culture,  
Regent's Park College, Oxford

The Oxford Journal of Law and Religion

The Oxford Society of Law and Religion

Programme for the Foundations of Law & Constitutional Government, Faculty of Law, University of  
Oxford

Centre for Law and Religion at Cardiff University

BYU London Centre

APPG on Freedom of Religion or Belief

This Conference focuses on the contemporary phenomenon of religious persecution, with a particular emphasis on better understanding how to diagnosis the causes of religious persecution in the world today, to reflect upon the diagnoses of how the persecution phenomena can be ameliorated, what the treatments are to help address crises of persecution, and what the long-term cures are for religious and other forms of persecution in the world today. The goal of the conference is to present working papers that can be developed into a book that will create a roadmap to help persecuted groups traverse the terrain from persecution to inclusion.

Nearly 75 years after the end of World War II, and 70 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in many parts of the world there are severe instances of religious persecution – not just discrimination, marginalisation or hostility, but mass atrocities, including murder, torture, bodily harm, rape and sexual violence, slavery and forced labor, forced displacement, forced conversion, and atrocities that may be classified as crimes against humanity, war crimes or even genocide. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights collectively resolved “never again” in response to the horrors of the Holocaust, but we find ourselves once again facing serious cases of religious persecution that cannot be neglected. This in spite of the fact that communication is better than it has ever been, with ease of transportation better than it has ever been, diaspora able to communicate easily with local communities, social media that has democratized the ability to shine a spotlight on problems – factors that it seems should mitigate persecution. And yet, we see examples of persecution in various places in the world: Amadis in Pakistan; Yazidis in Iraq; Rohingyas in Myanmar; Baha’is in Iran and Yemen; Christians in many parts of the Middle East; Uighurs and Tibetan Buddhists (among others) in China; Christians and Muslims in India; and resurgent anti-Semitism in France and other parts of Europe – to name a few.

This Conference aims to achieve a better understanding of why this is happening now, and what can be done to help minority groups traverse the terrain from persecution to inclusion.

The first day will be devoted to these questions: Why do we see such persecution today? What are the factors, large and small, that contribute to persecution today? How do we diagnose the contemporary phenomena of religious persecution?

The second day will be devoted to questions of prognosis, treatments, and cures. What is the prognosis, and what are the treatments and cures for religious persecution? What are the factors that make the journey from persecution to inclusion possible, including what needs to be done by the international community to effectively address the issue of religious persecution and how processes of inclusion can help ensure the future of persecuted communities?

**Friday, August 2, 2019**

**7:30—9:00 am**            **Breakfast** (Christ Church Dining Hall)

**8:30-9:00 am**            **Registration**

**9:00-9:30 am**            **Welcome and Introduction**

**Brett G. Scharffs**, *Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Brigham Young University Law School*

**Lt Col (Ret'd) Andrew Methven**, *Chief of Staff, AMAR Foundation*

**9:30-10:15 am**            **Keynote Speech**

**The Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne**, *Member of the House of Lords; Chairman, AMAR International Charitable Foundation*

*Introduced by: Lt Col (Ret'd) Andrew Methven, Chief of Staff, AMAR International Charitable Foundation*

**10:15 am**                 **Group Photo**

**10:15-10:45 am**         **Coffee break**

**10:45 am -12:45 pm**    **Panel One: Diagnosing the Causes of Religious Persecution in the World Today**

Moderator

**W. Cole Durham, Jr.**, *Founding Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University*

Speakers

**Rabbi Yaron Catane**, *Researcher; PhD Candidate, Bar Ilan University Law School, "Religious Perspectives on Religious Persecution: The Cause and The Cure"*

**Mark Hill**, *Honorary Professor, Centre for Law and Religion, Cardiff University; Extraordinary Professor, University of Pretoria, "The Development and Deployment of a Consistent Definition of Religious Persecution"*

**Joseph David**, *Associate Professor of Law, Sapir Academic College, "Religious Identity as a Basis for Deciding Cases of Religious Persecution."*

Responders

**Sir Charles Hoare Bt.**, *Independent Consultant, Centre on Religion and Global Affairs*

**Greg Mitchell**, *Managing Co-Chair, International Religious Freedom Roundtable, Washington, D.C.*

**Rodrigo Vitorino Souza Alves**, *Professor, Law Faculty, Universidade Federal de Uberlândia; Director, Brazilian Center of Studies in Law and Religion*

Q&A and discussion

**12:45-2:00 pm**                    **Lunch** (Christ Church Dining Hall)

**2:00-4:30 pm**                    **Panel Two: From Diagnosis to Prognosis, Treatment, and Cures**

Moderator

**Kristina Arriaga**, *Vice-Chair, US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)*

Speakers

**Fiona Bruce**, *Member of Parliament for Congleton, “A View from the House of Commons”*

**Nazila Ghanea**, *Associate Professor in International Human Rights Law, University of Oxford; Associate Director, Oxford Human Rights Hub and Fellow of Kellogg College, Oxford, “Causes of Religious Persecution”*

**Renata Uitz**, *Chair, Comparative Constitutional Law Program, Department of Legal Studies, Central European University, “Persecution Narratives as Identity Claims: A Closer Look at Europe”*

**Sohail Wahedi**, *PhD Candidate, Erasmus School of Law, “Islamophobia”*

**Lev Simkin**, *Professor of Law, Russian State Academy of Intellectual Property, Moscow, “Persecution of Religious Minorities”*

**Dmytro Vovk**, *Director of the Center for Rule of Law and Religion Studies, Yaroslav the Wise National Law University, “Religious Persecutions in Crimea and Donbas during the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict”*

Responder

**Maksym Vasin**, *Executive Director, Institute for Religious Freedom*

Q&A and discussion

**4:30-6:30 pm**

**Break**

**6:30 pm**

**Dinner for conference participants** (Oxford area restaurant near Christ Church)

**Saturday, August 3, 2019**

**7:30—9:00 am**

**Breakfast** (Christ Church Dining Hall)

**10:00 am-12:00 noon**

**Panel Three: Treatments**

Moderator

**Paul Kerry**, *Visiting Fellow, University of Oxford; Associate Professor of History, Brigham Young University*

Speakers

**Brett G. Scharffs**, *Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Brigham Young University Law School, “The Causes of and Solutions to Religious Persecution”*

**Stephanie Barclay**, *Associate Professor, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University*, “Religious Exemptions: A Treatment for Religious Persecution”

**Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern**, *Chairman of the Clewer Initiative*, “Working Within Communities to Create Resilience.”

Responders

**Lt Col (Ret'd) Andrew Methven**, *Chief of Staff, AMAR International Charitable Foundation*

**Revd Dr Andrew Teal**, *Chaplain, Fellow, and Lecturer in Theology, Pembroke College, Oxford*

**Q&A and discussion**

**12:00 noon-1:00 pm** **Box Lunches** (Michael Dummett Lecture Theatre)

**1:00-3:00 pm** **Panel Four: Long-Term Cures**

Moderator

**Brett G. Scharffs**, *Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Brigham Young University Law School*, “The Causes of and Solutions to Religious Persecution”

Speakers

**Ewelina Ochab**, *Legal Researcher; Author of Never Again: Legal Responses to a Broken Promise in the Middle East*, “Building Infrastructure at the U.N. for a Better Implementation of the Right to FoRB and Prevention of the Most Egregious Violations of the Right to FoRB.”

**Werner Nicolaas Nel**, *Law Lecturer, Tshwane University of Technology*, “Conceptualising 'Grievous Religious Persecution'”

**Dr Theodore Zeldin**, *Emeritus Fellow, St. Antony's College, Oxford*, “The Future of Persecution”

Responders

**Kristina Arriaga**, *Vice-Chair, US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)*

**Paul Kerry**, *Visiting Fellow, University of Oxford; Associate Professor of History, Brigham Young University*

**Alan Phillips**, *Academic Director, Brigham Young University London Centre, Lecturer in 'Freedom of Religion in British Isles' and 'Contemporary Religious Intolerance'*.

Q&A and discussion

**3:00 pm** **Tea and Coffee Break**

**3:15-4:00 pm**

**Concluding Remarks**

**Group discussion of the road forward for this project**

**4:00 pm**

**Conference Concludes (Evening Free)**