



BELIEF & STATE

A Human Rights Research and Education Program

Belief & State is a human rights research and education program on the World Wide Web, dedicated to monitoring Article 18 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. These and other human rights instruments can be found in the [Documents Library](#). Belief & State is a program of [The Tandem Project](#), an international human rights organization founded in 1985 and dedicated to implementation of the 1981 U.N. Declaration.

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Belief & State uses Article 18 of the UDHR and the 1981 U.N. Declaration as primary universal standards for research on the root causes of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, and effective measures to combat such causes. If you have any questions or observations concerning this website please direct them to: mroan@beliefs.org.

BELIEF & STATE

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1999 Country Report

The 1981 U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief

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- Example Two: Find an example of group discrimination against children in Israel as a demonstration of inputting information into the system. Click on the following to return to the [Homepage](#), the [Table of Contents](#) for this country report, [Articles](#) of the Declaration, [Topics](#) for the Declaration.

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- Convention on the Rights of the Child, link to CRC, in the Documents Library, This will be a table of titles of other human rights instruments. At the end of the titles, they will be given the option to return to the [Homepage](#), [Table of Contents](#) for this report, [Articles](#) of the Declaration, [Topics](#) for the Declaration.

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- Link from NGO Related Education Initiatives, 4th Quarter 1999. Report on Nazareth Conference, link back to [CRC Article 29](#) in the [Documents Library](#) , and [Proceeds of Nazareth Conference](#) in the [Documents Library](#), and [Article 5.2 in Israel Country Report](#), and Click for return to [Homepage](#), [Table of Contents](#) for this country report, [Articles](#) of the Declaration, [Topics](#) for the Declaration.

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- Nazareth Conference, example of link between Related Education Initiatives, 4.1.4.1, and CRC article 29 in the Documents Library, link to [Israel 2.3.1](#) in the violations example, and click for return to [Homepage](#), [Table of Contents](#) for Israel report, [Articles](#) of the Declaration, [Topics](#) for the Declaration

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BY
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* Keyword Search should be an option

A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE

The U.N. Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief in 1996 proposed to the General Assembly that a study be carried out, by means of a questionnaire, of issues relating to freedom of religion or belief from the perspective of the curricula and manuals of primary and secondary teaching establishments. Research from this study may make it possible to draw up an international school strategy to combat all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, centered on the elaboration and realization of a minimum joint program of tolerance and non-discrimination. As of 1999, seventy-seven member states have responded to the Questionnaire Addressed to Governments and Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief in Primary and Secondary Schools. Funds have been dedicated to support an analysis of the questionnaire by the U.N. Special Rapporteur and an international conference in 2001, to discuss the results of the study and the possibility of creating curricula for a universal strategy.

The Documents Library is a repository of articles, reports and documents for research on primary and secondary curricula to teach tolerance to young people of diverse beliefs. The questionnaire can be found in the library. To encourage curricula based on the U.N. human rights approach, Belief & State publishes a quarterly digest of education initiatives toward a culture of tolerance strategy in primary and secondary schools. If the initiative is taking place in one U.N. member state, clicking on the title below will take you to a section of that country's report. If the initiative is a generic approach by institutions and organizations, clicking on the title below will take you to its text in the Documents Library.

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- DCI-Israel Invites Special Rapporteur to Address Nazareth Conference on Children's Rights, Religion and Peace, link to Israel Country Report 4.1.4.1
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RELATED EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Claims to sources of conflict based on religion or belief and solutions to these problems are found in many social, philosophical and religious traditions. Consequently, education initiatives do not derive exclusively from a single tradition but are multi-disciplinary perspectives including; philosophy, theology, psychology, history, anthropology, political science, education, sociology, biology, arts and the media. In addition, there are many non-U.N. related initiatives by regional governmental organizations and governments. This is a quarterly digest of worldwide related education initiatives that may be helpful to the U.N. in making future policy on international freedom of religion or belief. For a compilation of research on related education initiatives refer to the [Documents Library](#). For a quarterly digest of related education initiatives, click on the table of contents listed below.

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- DCI-Israel Hosts First International Conference on Children's Rights, Religion and Peace, link to [Israel 4.1.4.1](#). [Return to Homepage](#), [Table of Contents](#), [Articles of the Declaration](#), [Topics for the Declaration](#).

INTRODUCTION TO ACTION NETWORK

Human rights action networks advocate for individuals and groups whose rights have been violated. The Belief & State Action Network is dedicated to the U.N. approach on equal emphasis for the protection of all beliefs. The network has three sections; (1) gathering and reporting recent violations to the U.N. Special Rapporteur, (2) following up on communications (allegations) made public by U.N. Special Rapporteur reports, (3) following up on issues and recommendations made by the U.N. Special Rapporteur in his annual reports.

The first section of the Action Network issues recent action alerts four times a year for groups of persons or persons whose rights have been violated under the articles of the 1981 U.N. Declaration. Information resulting in these actions alerts comes in part off the Internet, and from a variety of sources from religions or beliefs and countries without access to the Internet. This section of the Belief & State Action Network

The second section follows up on communications (allegations of violations) in annual reports of the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. This includes communications from the U.N. Special Rapporteur to member states about alleged violations against individuals or groups, and the responses by member states. These are private confidential communications that only become public in the annual report to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. After public release, the role of Belief & State is to follow up on these communications to encourage remedial actions. Each communication is assigned a case number corresponding to an article of the 1981 U.N. Declaration, a description of the communication, sample letters and addresses for messages.

The final section follows up on recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur in his reports to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. Such actions are programmatic, not involving allegations (communications) against individuals or groups. Belief & State encourages governments, religions or belief and non-governmental organizations to track the progress of these recommendations and to assist in their implementation. An example of this type of action is the support Belief & State is giving to "A Culture of Tolerance," an on-going study by the Special Rapporteur.

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RECENTLY ISSUED ACTION ALERTS

Article 2 of the 1981 U.N. Declaration on Freedom of Religion or Belief states, "No one shall be subject to discrimination by any state, institution, group of persons or person on grounds of religion or other beliefs." Belief & State reports recently alleged violations on these grounds. The sources of information for these alerts comes from a wide variety of religions other beliefs and countries of the world. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other major human rights organizations are now joined on the Internet by networks serving their own religious or non-religious constituencies. The Belief & State Action Network creates [Action Links](#) to these Internet sites, updating them frequently in the interest of giving the U.N. a picture of the wide variety of social, philosophical and religious viewpoints in the emerging defense of religion or belief worldwide. Modern communications technology is expensive and many beliefs cannot afford electronic advocacy. In the interest of the U.N. approach on an equal emphasis for the protection of all beliefs, The Tandem Project seeks out other [Sources of Information](#) to present a clear picture of the worldwide scope of the problem.

Belief & State does not take a position on these alleged violations and refers them to the U.N. Special Rapporteur for his or her disposition. There are cases where Belief & State recommends immediate action as well as referral to the Special Rapporteur, but it also refers to these cases as alleged. See our published [Principles and Guidelines of Advocacy](#) Recently Issued Action Alerts are updated quarterly. Click on the quarterly table of contents below for the text of the action alert, which is filed in the report of the country where the violation is alleged to have occurred. Filing violations under the articles of the 1981 U.N. Declaration will give the U.N. an opportunity for research on types and frequency of violations. The [List of Cases](#) is archived and each case is given a number for referral and disposition.

Fourth Quarter 1999

- United States of America, violation under article 2 of 1981 U.N. Declaration
- Israel, violation under article 2 of the 1981 U.N. Declaration, link both to 2.1.1 in their respective Country reports. These are titles only with links to the texts in the country reports.

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SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR COMMUNICATIONS

E/CN.4/1999/58

Each year, the Special Rapporteur has a section on communications (allegations) he has sent to States, the replies or absence of replies from the States concerned, and late replies. Once the report is published communications become public knowledge. They appear in Belief & State Country Reports in the year following the communications, under appropriate articles in the 1981 U.N. Declaration. The role of Belief & State is to follow up on allegations to see if action has been being taken. Communications sent by the Special Rapporteur do not cover all incidents and governmental action taken in all parts of the world that is inconsistent with the 1981 U.N. Declaration. The length of a communication does not reflect the extent of the intolerance and discrimination in that State. Cases may be isolated incidents of an exceptional nature. The communications do not cover all religions or beliefs (the number of communications depends in part on U.N. staff resources for this work). The more active and affluent religious human rights groups report violations more frequently. Communications are not meant to bring out the many positive experiences going on in each country. Clicking on the titles will bring you to the text of the communication in the identified country report. A Belief & State recommendation for follow up action may follow the text of the communication when appropriate. All the Special Rapporteur's communications are archived in the Belief & State List of Cases in order to track their eventual disposition.

1999 Communications

- Afghanistan:** Communications on Taliban Intolerance and Discrimination.
- Albania:** Restoration of Religious Property Confiscated Under Old Regime.
- Germany:** Lost Contracts and Job Because of Affiliation with Scientology.
- Angola:** Angolese Army Reportedly Massacres 21 Christians.
- Saudi Arabia:** Christians Allegedly Arrested After Bible Found Near Residence.
- Azerbaijan:** Jehovah's W. Allegedly Forced to Pay Bribes, Muslim Convert Arrested.
- Bangladesh:** Acts of Vandalism Alleged Against Christians by Muslim Extremists.
- Belarus:** Slow Restitution of Church Property Confiscated Under Old Regime.
- Belgium:** Parliamentary Commission on Sects Report Allegedly Causes Harm.
- Bhutan:** Alleged Preferential Treatment Given to Buddhism in Schools.
- Bulgaria:** Atmosphere of Intolerance for Minorities in Media and Society.
- China:** Authorities in Tibet Alleged to Interfere with Religious Beliefs and Practices.
- Cyprus:** Alleged Desecration of Religious Property of Non-Muslims by Army.
- Egypt:** Professor Declared Apostate by Al-Azhar Scholars, Copts Allegedly Murdered.
- Eritrea:** Authorities Considering Legislation to Limit Religious Communities.
- Spain:** Protestant Organizations Claim Authorities Close Local Radio Stations.
- Russian Federation:** Reported Restriction on Proselytizing by Russian Act of 1997.
- Georgia:** Report of Arrest for Conscience Objection, Restitution of Religious Property.
- Ghana:** Bill Before Parliament to Restrict Trokosi (slaves of God) Tradition.
- Greece:** Teacher Allegedly Prosecuted for References to Buddhism in Classroom
- India:** Harassment of Christians by Hindu Extremists, Alleged Gang Rape of Nuns.
- Indonesia:** Riots Allegedly Aimed at Non-Muslims; Christians, Buddhists, Confucians.
- Iran:** Three Urgent Appeals of Reported Death Sentences of Bahai's Because of Beliefs.
- Iraq:** Two Shiite Religious Leaders Reportedly Assassinated by Government Agents.
- Kazakhstan:** Jehovah's W. Allegedly Imprisoned for Objection to Military Service.

Latvia: Synagogue in Capital Reportedly Target of Bomb Attack.
Malaysia: Arrests for Preaching Shiite Teaching, Muslim Harassed for Conversion.
Maldives: Police Reportedly Make Arrests for Propagating Christian Faith.
Mali: Extremist Group Known as “Pieds Nus” Allegedly Murder Magistrate.
Morocco: Christian Foreigners Reportedly Arrested and Fined for Importing Bibles.
Mauritania: Penal Code Allegedly Punishes Muslims Conversion with Death Penalty.
Mexico: Protestants Reported Victims of Violence by Catholics and Indians in Chiapas.
Myanmar: State Practicing Discrimination Against Minority Religions in Myanmar.
Uzbekistan: Pastor in Town of Nukus Sentenced to Two Years Forced Labor.
Pakistan: Ahmadis Reportedly Sentenced to Life Imprisonment for Blasphemy.
Lao People’s Democratic Republic: Christians Allegedly Arrested at Bible Study.
Republic of Moldova: Laws Fail to Protect Preaching Not Officially Recognized.
Democratic People’s Republic of Korea: Authorities Discourage Religious Activities.
Romania: Restitution of Church Property Causes Conflict Between Christian Religions.
United Kingdom of Great Britain and N. Ireland: Media Bias Against Muslims.
Sudan: Arrests Reported of Catholic Priests, Student Disappearance After Converting.
Sri Lanka: Catholic, Hindu, Protestant Place of Worship Targets of Violence.
Turkmenistan: Legislation Reportedly Sends Conscientious Objectors to Prison
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DOCUMENTS LIBRARY

The Documents Library is a repository of government, religious, non-religious, academic and non-governmental human rights instruments, reports, articles and other materials, specifically related to the objective of eliminating intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. It serves as a research source for the work of implementing the 1981 U.N. Declaration. The library contains some complete reports, such as those of the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. But the majority of the entries are extrapolations of provisions on freedom of religion or belief. Documents exclusive to one U.N. member state are found in that countries report. Click on the table of contents below for access to the documents.

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[Report of the Secretary-General on Feasibility of Open-Ended Working Group](#)
[The Krishnaswami Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Religious Rights and Practices \(1960\)](#)
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CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on 20 November 1989

INTRODUCTION

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the long product of human rights work starting with the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924), recognition in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the (1966) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular articles 23 and 24), the (1966) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular article 10), and the Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959).

The CRC has a Preamble and 54 articles. For the purposes of the Convention, a child is described as every human being below the age of 18. The complete text of the CRC can be found by linking to [Childwatch International](#), a database monitoring implementation of the CRC in U.N. member states. The following eleven articles are most applicable for documentation research and a human rights system approach to monitoring the 1981 U.N. Declaration on Freedom of Religion or Belief:

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Article 8

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.
2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to speedily re-establishing his or her identity.

Article 10

2. A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contact with both parents.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide the direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

3. Freedom of manifest one's religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 15

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

Article 17

1. States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual, and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

Article 18

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

Article 20

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, Kafala of Islamic law, adoption, or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.

Article 30

1. In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

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