

State Department May Exclude Middle East Christians from ISIS Genocide Victim Ruling



Iraqi Christian Refugees

[Nina Shea](#) of the Washington, DC-based Hudson Institute Center for Religious Freedom is the most outspoken critic of Administration policies towards Middle Eastern Christian and other non-Muslim religious minorities. The latest episode concerns a proposed ruling by the State Department of minorities threatened by extinction by the Islamic State, as a predicate for possible rescue, asylum determinations and assistance. Incredibly this ruling excludes, those Christians in Syria and Iraq, who are threatened with extinction by ISIS barbarity.. Shea writes about this in a *National Review Online* article, [“ISIS Genocide Victims Do Not Include Christians, the State Department Is Poised to Rule.”](#)

The State Department official poised to issue the ruling is none other than [Anne Patterson](#), former US Ambassador to Egypt, and now Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Near East Affairs. Patterson was a controversial figure and supporter of ousted Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood leader.

Shea cites an investigative report by Michael Isikoff about the callous rationale behind why Patterson chose to Include Yazidis, but exclude Syriac and, especially Chaldean Christians:

Yazidis, according to the story by investigative reporter Michael Isikoff, are going to be officially recognized as genocide victims, and rightly so. Yet Christians, who are

also among the most vulnerable religious minority groups that have been deliberately and mercilessly targeted for eradication by ISIS, are not. This is not an academic matter. A genocide designation would have significant policy implications for American efforts to restore property and lands taken from the minority groups and for offers of aid, asylum, and other protections to such victims. Worse, it would mean that, under the Genocide Convention, the United States and other governments would not be bound to act to suppress or even prevent the genocide of these Christians.

The rationale for Patterson ruling:

An unnamed State Department official was quoted by Isikoff as saying that only the attacks on Yazidis have made “the high bar” of the genocide standard and as pointing to the mass killing of 1,000 Yazidi men and the enslavement of thousands of Yazidi women and girls. To propose that Christians have been simply driven off their land but not suffered similar fates is deeply misinformed. In fact, the last Christians to pray in the language spoken by Jesus are also being deliberately targeted for extinction through equally brutal measures. Christians have been executed by the thousands. Christian women and girls are vulnerable to sexual enslavement. Many of their clergy have been assassinated and their churches and ancient monasteries demolished or desecrated. They have been systematically stripped of all their wealth, and those too elderly or sick to flee ISIS-controlled territory have been forcibly converted to Islam or killed, such as an 80-year-old woman who was burned to death for refusing to abide by ISIS religious rules.

Shea notes the clear evidence of ISIS atrocities against Christian communities in Syria and Iraq;

ISIS atrocities against Christians became public in June

2014 when the jihadists stamped Christian homes in Mosul with the red letter N for “Nazarene” and began enforcing its “convert or die” policy. The atrocities continue. Recently the Melkite Catholic bishop of Aleppo reported that 1,000 Christians, including two Orthodox bishops, have been kidnapped and murdered in his city alone. In September, ISIS executed, on videotape, three Assyrian Christian men and threatened to do the same to 200 more being held captive by the terrorist group. Recent reports by an American Christian aid group state that several Christians who refused to renounce their faith were raped, beheaded, or crucified a few months ago.

Christian women and girls are also enslaved and sexually abused. Three Christian females sold in ISIS slave markets were profiled in a New York Times Magazine report last summer. ISIS rules allow Christian sabaya, that is, their sexual enslavement. Its magazine Dabiq explicitly approved the enslavement of Christian girls in Nigeria, and the jihadist group posted prices for Christian, as well as Yazidi, female slaves in Raqqa.

The Congressional response to the State Department exclusion of Christians- H.R. 75:

In recent weeks, the stalwart Knights of Columbus have been placing emotionally searing ads in *Politico* and elsewhere advocating the passage of H.R. 75.

This bipartisan bill was initiated by Representative Jeff Fortenberry (R., Neb.) and Representative Anna Eshoo (D., Calif.) to declare that genocide is being faced by Christians, Yazidis, and other vulnerable groups. The ads – depicting a mother and child, who appear as the very personifications of grief, against a landscape of ISIS destruction – might strike a nerve within the Obama administration. But as of now, the administration looks poised to preempt the bill and render a grave injustice to the suffering Christians of Iraq and Syria.

One who knows how dangerous this misbegotten ruling by Patterson is Joseph Kassab, President of the Iraqi Christian Advocacy and Empowerment Institution. (See out interview with Kassab in the November, *NER*: [Iraqi Christians Face Extinction](#). Note this exchange with Kassab:

'Gordon: How threatening is the ISIS genocide towards Assyrian–Chaldean Christian communities in both Iraq and Syria?

Kassab: ISIS brutalities and atrocities committed against innocent Christians and Yazidis in Iraq is a very serious issue that needs to be immediately confronted by the international community. These evil acts of ISIS are leading to serious cultural and human genocide. ISIS' acts of brutality are intentional to gain the attention of the world and the global media is falling for it. Our suggestion is not to fall for it as it is better to look into their evil Islamic ideology and expose it to the world.

Kassab voiced prescient concern about the fate of his Chaldean Christian co-religionists following the fall of Mosul to ISIS in June 2014. [Watch](#) this You Tube *Overview* video interview by Raymond Arroyo with Kassab. Note Kassab's prediction of the fate that may already have be fallen Iraqi Christians, extinction; if assistance is not speedily forthcoming from the Administration.

Over a year has passed since Iraqi Christians fled from Mosul and the Biblical Nineveh plains. They languish ill-housed as urban refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan. They are without prospects for sanctuary in the West and Diaspora, because they allegedly do not qualify for asylum status under UN definitions applied by the State Department Bureau of population, Migration and Refugees. Now, Assistant Secretary Patterson is poised to deprive Syrian and Iraqi Christians of sanctuary here in the

US. Despite, as Kassab has demonstrated they have been vetted and accredited for possible P2/P3 Family reunification Visas. The mean-spiritedness of Patterson and the State Department may assign these ancient Christian minorities to possible extinction with this proposed Genocide ruling. Their behavior is appalling and beyond contempt. All Americans should be outraged. They should press for passage of H.R. 75 by the House effectively rebuking this incredible State Department proposed ruling.