

LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 8 : 8 August 2008

ISSN 1930-2940

Managing Editor: M. S. Thirumalai, Ph.D.

Editors: B. Mallikarjun, Ph.D.

Sam Mohanlal, Ph.D.

B. A. Sharada, Ph.D.

A. R. Fatihi, Ph.D.

Lakhan Gusain, Ph.D.

K. Karunakaran, Ph.D.

Jennifer Marie Bayer, Ph.D.

Fleeing Minorities

Heather A. Cayless, M.A.

Fleeing Minorities

Heather A. Cayless, M.A.

Minorities Fleeing from the Middle East Religion

Religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities are fleeing the Middle East region in mass numbers. Sectarian violence, persecution, arabization, a lack of legal status, and a lack of recognition regarding their rights have caused many to leave their home countries.

South Asian Situation

South Asia had gone through this situation in the second half of the 20th century. With the creation of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh as independent nations, religious and ethnic animosities created insecure living for the minorities, which has led to a hasty exodus of religious and ethnic minorities from these nations. For example, the Hindu Pandit community of Kashmir is pressured to flee their Kashmiri homeland to other parts of India because of their religious identities and loyalties in a Muslim dominant state of India, where there is persistent demand for liberation from India. In addition, open borders between India and Bangladesh and the paucity of means of livelihood for the poor in Bangladesh encourages even the members of the dominant Muslim community to enter India and merge themselves as part of the minority Indian Muslim community. This cross-border activity serves to further deepen religious tensions between the Hindus and Muslims. Another example is seen in the conflict raging in Sri Lanka. Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka has forced the Tamil minority to flee to other nations en masse in the last two decades.

Problems faced within a nation need to be understood carefully from the points of views of both the minorities and the dominant majority community. For example, recent statements made by pro-Marathi or pro-Maharashtra leaders in India's premier city Mumbai against the exodus of North Indians from the Hindi-dominant north Indian states go against the Indian constitutional guarantees of freedom of mobility and living in any part of India given to all the citizens of India. But at the same time, the Constitution also restricts freedom in several ways in specified regions such as the states of Nagaland and Jammu & Kashmir. Certain guarantees prohibit people from other states to buy land in these states. These guarantees may be interpreted as restrictions on minorities within these two states.

Sons of the Soil Policy in Southeast Asia

The policy often referred to as the sons of the soil policy followed in Malaysia and Indonesia put restrictions on the recent migrants who came to these nations a century ago or so. The Chinese minority in Indonesia and Malaysia, in fact, in most of the Southeast Asian countries, has been facing restrictions in one form or another, although their

contribution to the social and economic life in these nations is tremendous. Sometimes enthusiasm in protecting the majority interests who also claim to be the indigenous people groups place severe restriction upon the migrants who, because of these restrictions, are again forced to flee from their countries of adoption. Burma evicted the Indian minority in the second half of the 20th century.

Positive Contributions of Minority Groups

According to the UN working group on Minority rights, minority groups create political and social stability. This certainly is true of historical minorities settled in a nation for generations. The Parsi community, adherents of an ancient civilization and religion, namely, Zoroastrianism, landed in India from Iran as religious refugees many centuries ago. The contribution of this small Parsi community to India at large is tremendous in all fields: participation in and leadership of India's freedom struggle, industry, education, business, law, politics, literature, entertainment, and management, etc. They've contributed their personal and corporate wealth to noble causes including the care for the disabled.

The diversity brought in by the minorities contributes to dialogue between groups, which fosters reconciliation and stability. Their diversity also creates a cultural richness that is lacking in homogenous societies. The hasty flight of minority groups is greatly concerning. Their absence creates an ideological vacuum where there is no freedom of thought, expression, press, or belief; which will further destabilize the Middle East region.

Concerns Expressed by the United Nations

The loss of minority groups has been happening for years. It is so consistently a problem that the UN created a working group to address specifically the issues of minority issues. Unfortunately, over the years groups have been leaving this region and not returning. The Jews are a good example. They have slowly been migrating to other countries, mainly to Israel, leaving their home countries isolated and more homogenous in nature. This increased homogeneity perpetuates an isolated ideological doctrine.

In other countries where minorities flee due to persecution and violence, when the situation is stable they often return home. This is beginning to happen in Poso Indonesia since religious violence between Christians and Muslims has subsided in Central Sulawesi. This sets a good precedence for quelling the violence in Iraq so refugees, many of whom were religious minorities, can return to their homes. In countries like Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia minority groups lack legal and social protection. Unfortunately, there is little precedence in the Middle East of these minorities receiving enough protection and commitment from the government to return home.

We Need a Holistic Policy

A policy solution must be holistic. It needs to see the problems minorities face in light of greater social, religious, and political structures. Due to the tribal worldview held by many in this region, a policy solution can not simply create new inclusive legislation. It must work with local leaders in local communities to stimulate discussion, reconciliation, and appreciation for diversity. It also needs to have a plan for building infrastructure that will last for several generations. This is a long-term problem that requires a long-term solution.

The UN Declaration

The Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

General Assembly, December 18, 1992

The Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 18, 1992. The declaration affirms and establishes several international norms for the treatment of minorities. The General Assembly, by adopting this declaration, established that national or ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities contribute to the political and social stability of the nations in which they live. This contribution necessitates the protection and the promotion of human rights.

The Declaration is based on the Human Rights Charter, which established the mandate of the UN “to promote and encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction to race, sex, language, or religion.” Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights established the basic rights of minorities. This Declaration emphasizes the right of minorities to “enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language in private and public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination.” The Declaration notes the necessity of minorities to participate in “decisions on the national and, where appropriate, regional level.”

The Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities is the foundational document regarding the rights and protections offered to minorities. It highlights the universal rights of minorities, such as the right to participate in their local and national government, the right to worship and gather without fear of discrimination, the right to practice their own cultural and linguistic traditions, and the right to develop economically within their home country. This document is used and referred to by many NGO’s and national governments when dealing with minorities, and refugees in their countries. The rights enumerated in this document establish the foundation for most other discussions on the rights and protections of minorities.

Theoretical Framework

The question of the rights and role of minorities has been alluded to since the early 1990's since the adoption of the "Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities." Since that time the issues facing minority groups have become better understood through the work of the International Organization for Migration and their work regarding demographic changes, economic decline, and the movement of minorities. Also by the work of minority groups themselves. For example, the Mandaean Society for America writes an annual Human Rights Report, which gets sent to various government officials and addresses the abuses facing the Mandaeans in Iran and Iraq. In addition, the Jewish community has created various NGO's and resource centers, like the Jewish Virtual Library, which address issues facing the Jews in various countries. Experts like Ali R. Abootaliebi have begun researching and writing academic papers focusing on development strategies and economic barriers facing minority groups around the world.

Right to Participate in Decisions and Guarantees for Peaceful Living

The theme that consistently runs through these works is that minorities have "the right to participate effectively in decisions on the national and regional level." They also have the right to participate in all aspects of public life (i.e. religious, cultural, economic, and civil) and particularly to do so without persecution or discrimination. NGO's, academic leaders, regional experts and governments alike agree that the rights of religious freedom, freedom of assembly, and freedom of association are fundamental human rights. The continued degradation, persecution, and oppression of these minority groups is an infringement on their rights and a hindrance to their growth as an ethno, religious, social community.

Minority groups have a unique contribution to civil and political life. As Habib Malik has said, "Christians [and other minorities] bring about a 'dimension of universality' and 'openness towards other cultures.'" The U.N. Working Group on Minorities stated, "The diversity that minorities bring to the States in which they live contributes to cultural richness both nationally and internationally." This contribution brings about civil stability, and open, reasoned debate within society. It also broadens the economic capabilities of a country. Many minority groups have specialized vocations, in a wide spectrum of professions (i.e. gold smiths, doctors, carpenters, dentists, etc), minorities also provide a larger employment base, which is necessary to a growing dynamic economy. Civility and peace at the local level between various ethnic and religious groups has significant impact on the national stability, particularly in the Middle East. Fostering these types of relationships is vital to national and international stability.

The Process

We need to develop mechanisms which will stem the flow of minority groups from the Middle East, and in other regions, thereby assisting in the development of religious and ethnic diversity by promoting and protecting the Minority rights enumerate in the

Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities.

Constitutions of several nations, including India, have provided for the protection of the rights of the linguistic, ethnic and religious minorities. While political parties are very conscious of such rights and exploit the sentiments for electoral wins, and while the high courts are usually supportive of the rights of the minority enshrined in the Constitution, enforcement of such rights needs better co-ordination in India. Minorities seem to attach themselves to one political organization or another with the hope that their rights will be protected, if not expanded further. It is important for them as distinct communities to take social initiatives to enforce such rights through approved and peaceful means.

An Examination of the Middle Eastern Situation

A close examination and analysis of the current exodus of most minorities from the Middle Eastern region will help develop a system which would provide them with physical protection, rights and participation within the government, and acceptance by local majority leaders. These mechanisms will promote economic development, political stability, and reduce the growing ideological threat that is brewing in the Middle East. The steps taken in this region will also help develop programs in other parts of the world.

We need to look at what the causes are of minorities leaving the region; and more specifically what can be done to bring them back; establishing what is necessary to protect and promote their rights as individuals and as a community. This information may be collected through personal interviews with refugees and asylum seekers, high level meetings with governmental officials, and visits with local tribal and religious leaders. One key component will be to understand the unique situation facing minorities in each country. Various religious and cultural dynamics must be accounted for.

Methods of Research

I. Identification of countries of particular concern:

- a. Evaluation of:
 1. Numbers of minorities leaving
 2. Time frame of flight
 3. Current country situation

II. Identify key factors in flight of minorities:

- a. Working with locals and NGO's to resolve conflicts

III. Analysis of factors based on current country information, reports from migration & refugee groups, human rights reports, interviews with refugees, internally displaced persons, U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees.

IV. Based on research develop methods to combat persecution, terrorism, and general discrimination by creating and implementing:

- a. incentives for police to defend minorities.
- b. mechanisms for minorities to be self-sufficient: micro-loans, or small grants from foreign governments to establish hospitals, schools, and other civil infrastructure.
- c. Educational system:
 - 1. Education of local civil and religious leaders.
 - 2. Education of children in value of minorities, and diversity within society.
 - 3. Education of new generation of government officials on value of diversity (i.e. political and economic incentives, International standing etc.).
 - 4. Education of minorities to increase their standing and value in society.
- d. Promote the fundamental freedoms: Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Press, and Freedom of Assembly.
- e. Combat blasphemy laws, anti-vilification laws, and defamation laws which limit freedom of religion, and squelch diversity of opinion.

V. Evaluation

Evaluation

Building a self-sustaining, stable society requires working in phases and building blocks. In Phase I, it is essential to lay a solid foundation in rule of law and constitutional provisions. After laying a solid legal foundation, comes phase II in which there is now a basis to call into account the behavior of political officials, police officers, and religious leaders. By prosecuting those who perpetrate violence and oppression against minority groups, society is able to create a stable environment for minority groups for return to. This time of laying a solid foundation and creating a stable society is phase I and II. It is measured by the return of minorities (particularly those who fled as refugees) to their home countries.

Phase III begins with the return of minorities to their homes. Minorities need to be supported and sustained in their reintegration. This will involve supporting the education of minorities, encouraging and assisting with micro-loans, and larger governmental grants to create businesses, build hospitals, and schools, and re-establish places of worship. It should be stressed that most financial support should come in the form of small loans, and from private lenders. This will help minorities to have ownership and responsibility over their businesses. The success and growth of businesses, and the continued growth of minority groups will measure this phase. It is essential to ask the following questions- Are their children integrated and accepted into society? Are they permitted to attend national universities and can they get jobs in the national government?

The fourth, and final, phase will be marked by full participation of minorities in all aspects of society, government, civil life, religion, and education. This final phase will help ensure that minority rights are continued to be respected and promoted in the midst of society.

Implementation Structure

This process will take place across multiple generations. The education process will require training and re-training citizens in all levels of society. Implementation will require partnership, and co-ordination with other NGO's and government bodies to create and implement the various mechanisms. This research is the framework and a guiding document for the individuals who will monitor, and guide other participants. It is proposed that representative body be formed from a variety of organizations and specialties to come together to form a monitoring board. Each will have supervision over a specialized component of the work.

Final Results

The integration of minorities in local societies will assist in creating more stable counties in the Middle East and South Asia. This stability will promote economic and social development, furthering countries in the international sphere. Such growth has the potential to increase the standards of living for many of the countries citizens. It is also in the best interest of the international community to encourage and assist in the return of minorities to their home countries.

Bibliography

Report of the Secretary-General. (1999) For the Record. *Minorities: Commission on Human Rights*. Retrieved on February 20, 2007 from <http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord1999/vol1/minorities.htm>.

The Report addresses the current human rights statutes. It elaborates on current abuses and the impact those abuses have on minority populations and gives recommendations for future initiatives.

Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities. Adopted by General Assembly resolution 47/135 on December 18, 1992. retrieved on February 25, 2007 from http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm.

This Declaration enumerates the Rights of Ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. Some of these rights include: "right to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life," "the right to participate effectively in decisions on the national and, where appropriate, regional level," and "the right to establish and maintain, without any discrimination, free and peaceful contacts with other members of their group and with persons belonging to other [group]."

Chairman-Rapporteur: Mr. Asbjørn Eide. (Geneva, 25-31 May 1999). Commission on Human Rights: Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. *Report of the Working Group on Minorities*. Retrieved on February 24, 2007 from: <http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/3d1134784d618e28c1256991004b7950/f86cd6ab2abaea4ac1256c01005072c5?OpenDocument>.

This document serves to examine multiple aspects of issues related to minorities. It reviews the “promotion and practical realization of the declaration of rights”, examines “possible solutions to problems involving minorities”, and “recommends further measures to promote and protect these rights.”

High Commissioner van der Stoep. (1994). High Commissioner on National Minorities. *Keynote address at the opening of the OSCE Minorities Seminar in Warsaw*. Retrieved on February 2, 2007 from <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/13022.html>.

The High Commissioner gave a key note address at the OSCE Minorities Seminar in Warsaw. In this address he gives a clear definition of the 3 groups which minorities fall into and the work of minorities to save their unique cultural or linguistic characteristics.

High Commissioner van der Stoep. (1994). High Commissioner on National Minorities. *Mandate*. Retrieved on February 2, 2007 from <http://www.osce.org/hcnm/13022.html>.

“The High Commissioner's task is to provide "early warning" and, as appropriate, "early action" at the earliest possible stage "in regard to tensions involving national minority issues which have not yet developed beyond an early warning stage, but, in the judgment of the High Commissioner, have the potential to develop into a conflict within the OSCE area".

Ye'or, Bat. (2003). National Review Online. *Minorities in the Middle: Alive but Oppressed*. Retrieved on February 19, 2007 from <http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-bat-yeor030303.asp>.

Bat Ye'or reviews the book: *Minorities in the Middle: Alive but Oppressed* by Mordechai Nisan. Ye'or notes the voraciousness with which the Arabization process occurred. He wrote: “Nisan describes the rich history of each group and the inevitable tensions that accompany cultural, linguistic, and religious resistance to Islamization. Their histories include the difficulties entailed in maintaining the history and culture of the group, the processes of survival they adopted, the modalities of adaptation, and the compromises employed to save a modicum of freedom without disappearing.”

McKinley, Brunson. (n.d.). International Organization for Migration: Facts & Figures. *Migration in the twenty-first century* Retrieved on January 31, 2007 from <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/cache/offonce/pid/241>.

“IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.” The portion of the site I used was about Migration in the Twenty-first Century and how to help countries with high levels of migrants.

McKinley, Brunson. (n.d.). International Organization for Migration: About Migration. Retrieved on January 31, 2007 from <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/cache/offonce/pid/3>.

This portion of the IOM website describes the various factors that lead to people migrating from their home countries to other places and how this migration can best be managed. Movement factors include Economic liberalization, Economic decline, and demographic changes. Management issues involve managing “migrant networks” because these are intertwined with economic and trade between countries. Transnational migration is another factor to be included in the management process.

Vu, Michelle. (2006). Christian Post. *Loss of Mideast Christians Adversely Affects Islamic Moderation, Says Expert*. Retrieved on February 19, 2007 from http://www.christianpost.com/article/20060628/19502_Loss_of_Mideast_Christians_Adversely_Affects_Islamic_Moderation,_Says_Expert.htm.

Michelle Vu reports on Dr. Habib Malik’s talk on the loss of minorities in the Middle East. Dr. Malik says that Christians bring about a “dimension of universality” and “openness towards other cultures” and the loss of such assets will have negative repercussions on the whole society and region.

Briefing With United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, and Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees, and Migration Ellen Sauerbrey and Paula J. Dobriansky, Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs Washington, DC February 14, 2007 Retrieved on February 22, 2007 from <http://www.state.gov/g/rls/rm/80532.htm>.

The Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres and the Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs joined together to address the official state policies regarding refugees, and to share what is being done to fix the Material Support Bar language to relieve undue pressure that has been applied to victims of terrorism.

The Jewish Virtual Library: a division of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise: The Jews in Iran. Retrieved on February 27, 2007 from <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/anti-semitism/iranjews.html>.

This website gives an overview of the history of the Jews in Iran. It gives statistics of the population decline, issues of persecution that the population faces, and how they have coped with the Iranian revolution.

Alwaya, Semha. (2005). San Francisco Chronicle. *The Middle East's Forgotten Refugees* retrieved from: http://www.aish.com/jewishissues/middleeast/The_Middle_Easts_Forgotten_Refugees.asp on February 28, 2007.

Semha a Jewish Iraqi Refugee recounts the historical plight of Iraq's Jews. She also shares from her own personal family history and how they came to flee Iraq.

Abotaliebi, Ali R. (1999) Middle East Review of International Affairs: Journal Vol.3 No.3 Middle East Economies: a survey of current problems and issues. Retrieved from <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1999/issue3/jv3n3a6.html> on March 6, 2007.

“Editor's Summary: This article examines broad trends in Middle Eastern economies and development strategy, finding many problems and shortcomings. The author points to the lack of structural reform as well as effects in global economic developments as prime problems here. Despite the continued (though reduced) influx of oil money, regional development remains surprisingly weak.”

Pamphlet No. 2 (n.d.) Minorities and the United Nations: The UN working group on Minorities.

“Summary: The diversity that minorities bring to the States in which they live contributes to cultural richness both nationally and internationally. However, tensions between majority and minority groups have been frequent throughout history. Only recently has the United Nations formally addressed the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and interest has increased significantly since the adoption in 1992 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. This pamphlet discusses the Working Group on Minorities that was created to review implementation of the Declaration

Kirwin, Scott. (2005). Dean's World: Defending the liberal tradition in history, science, and philosophy. Persecution of Christians in Turkey. Retrieved on February 27, 2007 from <http://www.deanesmay.com/posts/1125666440.shtml>.

Scott Kirwin gives his analysis of the changing traditions in Turkey and how this will impact minority groups. Turkey is falling into what he calls the “intolerance trap.” He questions therefore if Turkey should be allowed membership in the EU.

Nisan, Mordechai. (2003). *Minorities in the Middle East: A History of Struggle and Self-Expression*, 2nd. Ed. McFarland & Company, Inc.: North Carolina Retrieved from <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1999/issue3/jv3n3a6.html> on February 26, 2007.

“Editor's Summary: This article examines broad trends in Middle Eastern economies and development strategy, finding many problems and shortcomings. The author points to the lack of structural reform as well as effects in global economic developments as prime problems here. Despite the continued (though reduced) influx of oil money, regional development remains surprisingly weak.”

Cromartie, Michael, et al eds. (2006). *United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Annual Report, 2006*. USCIRF: Washington, D.C.

The USCIRF report catalogues violations of religious freedom around the world. The information is gathered from State Department officials, foreign governments, representatives of the religious community, local human rights groups, academics, policy experts and other non-governmental organizations.

United States Department of State. (2005). *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*. Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Washington, D.C.

The Human Rights report says, “Across the globe, men and women are pushing for greater personal and political freedom and for the adoption of democratic institutions. They are striving to secure what President Bush calls “the non-negotiable demands of human dignity.” The report examines human rights abuses of countries around the world. It also identifies several “Countries of Particular Concern” and gives specific policy recommendations to the U.S. government.

Raphaeli, Dr. Nimrod. (2005). MEMRI: The Middle East Media Research Institute. *The Plight of Iraqi Christians*. Inquiry and Analysis Series No. 213.

The article gives a brief description of who the Iraqi Christians are: their history, their “homeland” and current persecution. They currently face violence against their churches, and businesses. The Muslim Iraqi population often accuses them of being collaborators with the occupation. These accusations often lead to further persecution.

Roderick, Fr. Keith. Speech made at Assyrian Demonstration on December 4, 2006.

Father Keith Roderick gave a speech at a local Assyrian Demonstration. He spoke of the abuse they face, children being executed, priests being dismembered, and businesses destroyed. He also reminded protesters of the economic backbone that the Christians provided and the loss their disappearance from Iraq would be.

Lamprecht, Peter (2006). Compass Direct News: News from the Frontlines of Persecution. *Iraqi Christians Debate Self-Autonomy to Halt Exodus*.

Compass Direct reported on the Christian communities initial discussions on the possibilities of making a Christian region along with the Kurds in Northern Iraq.

This autonomous region would provide protection, and safety that is currently lacking for Iraq's Christians.

Gaer, Felice D. and Charles J. Chaput. (2006). The Washington Times. *Protecting Iraq's Religious Minorities*. Retrieved from: http://www.uscirf.gov/mediaroom/opeds/opeds_archive/12222006IraqOpEd.html on March 12, 2007.

Religious Minorities in Iraq are suffering grave injustices because of their religious beliefs and their social status. They often cannot escape persecution, and suffer in silence. The U.S. government, to this point, has done very little to assist these refugees and Ms. Gaer, and Mr. Chaput demand that the U.S. begin making provisions for assisting these vulnerable people.

Testimony of Nina Shea delivered on December 21, 2006 before the US Congressional Committee on International Religious Relations, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights, and International Operations on behalf of Iraq's Assyrians and other Minorities.

Nina Shea testified before the Committee on International Religious Relations, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights, and International Operations. She focused specifically the issues facing minorities in Iraq. The Christian community, for example, according to UNHCR they are being "targeted for their religion by militants who are determined to establish an extreme shariah ruled state."

Testimony of Sami Al-Obiedy delivered on January 16, 2007 before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on the "Plight of Iraqi Refugees."

Sami is a 27 year old Sunni Arab, born and raised in Mosul, Iraq. In 2003 he became a translator for the U.S. troops. He assisted the forces, and provided support in civil and public affairs. He often feared for his life, and after several threats on his life he sought to leave Iraq and resettle in the U.S.

Testimony of "John" delivered on January 16, 2007 before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on the "Plight of Iraqi Refugees."

John is an Iraqi Christian. In November 2006 he and his family were granted asylum in the U.S. because John served the army unit. Due to his work with the U.S. government, John and his family suffered immense persecution. He testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Testimony of Assistant Secretary Ellen Sauerbrey of Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, U.S. Department of State delivered on January 16, 2007 before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on the "Plight of Iraqi Refugees."

Ellen Sauerbrey is the Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. In her testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee Ellen detailed the policy directives of the Administration and their plan to assist third countries with the burden of Iraqi refugees.

Testimony of Kenneth H. Bacon, President of Refugees International delivered on January 16, 2007 before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. “*Violence and Displacement in Iraq: The World’s Fastest Growing Refugee Crisis.*”

Kenneth Bacon is the President of Refugees International. He testified before the Senate Judiciary on the mass displacement of refugees from Iraq. He stated that Syria and Jordan are each hosting roughly 750,000 individuals. Those who are particularly vulnerable are those who work for the U.S. government and also the Palestinians who were generally in favor of Sadaam.

Testimony of Michel Gabaudan, Regional Representative for the United States of America and the Caribbean, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees delivered on January 16, 2007 before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on the “Plight of Iraqi Refugees.”

Michel Gabaudan from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees testified before the Senate Judiciary on the plight of Iraqi Refugees. He commented that “In the absence of a concerted effort by the international community that involves coordination among regional governments, donor governments (including the United States), UNHCR and its implementing partners, the situation will likely erode even further, bringing new levels of displacement and deepening protection problems.” This demands work from all parties to bring about swift resolution.

Frelick, Bill. (2006). Human Rights Watch. *Press Release: U.S., Jordan, Syria must open doors to Iraq Refugees: U.S. should fund Refugee Care in Neighboring States.* Retrieved from <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/01/16/usint15064.htm> on March 10, 2007

Jordan and Syria closed their doors to the influx of refugees from Iraq. “Human Rights Watch said that Jordan and Syria are violating on a daily basis the most fundamental principle of refugee protection – nonrefoulement, which prohibits the return of refugees to persecution or serious harm.”

Lewis, Bernard. (2006). Hillsdale College: Imprimis. *Freedom and Justice in Islam.*

Mr. Lewis looks at the Islamic political theology in the Middle East, and the values are perpetuated by this system. He then looks at the values that shape Western style democracy. He provides some analysis of how the western values like freedom and fundamental values work in Islam .

Kickasola, Joseph N. (2006). *Comparative Human Rights: Contrasting views of Christianity and Islam on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

This contrasts the views of Christianity and Islam regarding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He provides analysis and resources on subjects such as natural law, and the origin of human rights.

Abdullah, Sinan. (2006). The Mandaean Society of America. *The Mandaeans and their Beliefs: Brief Notes*.

This Human Rights Report highlights the history and current struggle of the Mandaeans. The Mandaeans are a ethno-religious minority from Iraq and Iran. They currently are facing total annihilation in Iraq due to the sectarian violence and specific targeting of their businesses, homes, and children.

Glazov, Jamie. (2007). FrontPageMagazine.com. The study of Political Islam. Retrieved on February 9, 2007 from <http://www.aina.org/news/20070205161335.html>.

In an interview with Frontpage Magazine and Bill Warner from the Center for the Study of Political Islam, Bill shares about Political Islam. What the Koran says, and doesn't say. The role of the Hadith and Sunnah in middle eastern politics. His insight into the inner workings of the Koran are very perceptive. He notes the differences in how Muslims are treated vs. their non-Muslim counterparts; he identifies this as a very dualistic mentality.

Mabardi, Roueida. (2007) Middle East Online. Iraqi Refugees Feel Hounded by Syria Crackdown. Retrieved on February 9, 2007 from <http://www.aina.org/news/20070203131634.htm>.

This article describes the desperate situation facing Iraqi refugees. Many of these men and women cannot return to their homes yet they are facing equally dire circumstances in 3rd countries like Syrian, Jordan, and Iran.

Khashan, Hilal. (2001). The Middle East Quarterly, Winter 2001, Vol. VII: Number 1. Arab Christians as Symbol: Disappearing Christians of the Middle East. Retrieved on January 27, 2007 from <http://www.meforum.org/article/4>.

“Arabic-speaking Christians have been one of the main casualties of the destabilizing events of the twentieth century, and especially of the Western-created system of modern Arab states. This religious community found itself deeply immersed in a series of global changes that it could not influence, let alone shape.” Khashan highlights each of the Christian groups in the Middle East and gives some information regarding what they are facing.

Ye'or, Bat. (1996). The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Lecture: November 11, 1996. *The Decline of Eastern Christian Communities in the Modern Middle East*. Retrieved on January 27, 2007 from <http://mypage.bluewin.ch/ameland/LectureE2.html>.

In his lecture Bat Ye'or expands on the concept of dhimmitude and how it came to be in Islam. In particular he addresses the issue of equal rights, and the rich tradition found in Western Christendom to foster these rights, compared with the lack of such tradition in Islam. As Ibn Khaldun says, "In the Muslim community, the holy war is a religious duty, because of the universalism of the (Muslim) mission and (the obligation) to convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force. Therefore, caliphate and royal authority are united (in Islam), so that the person in charge can devote the available strength to both of them (religion and politics) at the same time."

Shelby, David. (2006). Washington File Staff Writer. *U.S. Pledges Full Support for Middle East Democratization*. Retrieved on February 28, 2007 from http://mideastpolicy.blogspot.com/2006_08_01_archive.html.

The article reveals the tension held by the U.S. government to promote democracy and electoral freedom, and the right as a nation to refuse to work with an elected government that doesn't promote similar ideals. This is particularly true in our relations with the Middle East, and working with Islamic political parties.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2001). *Rights of Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities*. Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/55. Retrieved on February 3, 2007 from <http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/2848af408d01ec0ac1256609004e770b/f9584374d9192f12c1256a420034c309>.

This U.N. resolution focuses on what has been done since the previous gathering to promote minorities rights. It also urges various governing bodies to pursue various policies. It also promises the support of the Secretary-General to assist those nations who request it.

Minorities in the Middle East (n.d.) New York: NY: Columbia University Libraries: Middle East & Jewish Studies: Retrieved from: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/mideast/cuvm/minorities.html> on March 6 2007.

This website catalogues the various minorities in the middle east providing links to various related sites. Topics include massacres, historical information, recent persecution, and religious liberty.

Minority rights group international (2006) London: England Retrieved from: <http://www.minorityrights.org/> on March 3, 2007.

This website provides easy access to databases and various campaigns. The group itself has a large focus on Development and its relation minority groups. They focus on the Millenium Development goals and how they are not being fully accomplished and why.

There are two reports from this site that focus on the issues surrounding development and economics:

<http://www.minorityrights.org/admin/Download/pdf/IndiaMacro2006.pdf>

“Minority Rights and Conflict Prevention: Case study of Conflicts in Indian Jammu and Kashmire, Punjab and Nagaland.”

http://www.minorityrights.org/admin/Download/pdf/IP_Development_Riddell.pdf

f

“Minorities, Minority Rights and Development.”

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2007)
Retreived from: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/> on March 3, 2007.

This website is for the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It highlights current abuses, statements made by the High Commissioner, access to all the U.N. declarations, and a schedule for the Fourth Session of the Human Rights Council.

Report of the independent expert on minority issues (2007) Economic & Social Council, Commission on Human Rights: Specific Groups and Individuals: Minorities:
Retrieved from: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/minorities/expert/annual.htm>
on March 4, 2007.

The Independent Expert on Minorities Issues, Gay McDougall, focuses mainly on the ideological and theoretical need for minority rights. It is very rights intenseive, and not so politically, outward looking. Her annual report focuses on the mandate and scope of the Experts work.

World Summit Outcome (2005) United Nations General Assembly retrieved from:
<http://www.un-ngls.org/un-summit-FINAL-DOC.pdf> on February 27, 2007.

The World Summit Outcome reaffirms the U.N.’s commitment to the promotion of Human Rights, and in particular the necessity of development. It touches on many of the aspects of development, financing, debt, employment, agricultural development etc.

University of Minnesota (n.d.) Human Rights Library: Study Guide: The Rights of Indigenous

Peoples Retrieved from:
<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/studyguides/indigenous.html> on
February 3, 2007.

This website is a resource for promotion and protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It defines who Indigenous People's are, what their rights are, and what UN organs further the protection and promotion of these rights.

Human Rights Education Associates (n.d.) Study Guides: Refugees Retrieved from: <http://www.hrea.org/learn/guides/refugees.html> on February 24, 2007.

This website is devoted to issues related to refugees. It defines refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and internally displaced peoples. It gives statistics from 2001, where the bulk of the world refugees came from and where they fled to. It gives a brief synopsis of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. At the end of the document it gives a full listing of resources for refugees and about refugees.

Human Rights Library (n.d.) University of Minnesota Retrieved from: <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html> on March 7, 2007.

The Human Rights Library is a resource page offering links to a variety of human rights issues such as refugee and asylum Resources, U.S. Human Rights Documents, and Regional Materials.

Minorities at Risk Project (2005) College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management. Retrieved from <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/> on: March 7, 2007.

The Minorities at Risk Project is sponsored by the University of Maryland and their purpose is to track "284 politically-active ethnic groups throughout the world from 1945 to the present -- identifying where they are, what they do, and what happens to them." They provide data of persecution based on region and country as well as data on mobilization, protests and rebellions.

Scott E. Page and Lu Hong (2007) Problem Solving by Heterogeneous Agents Retrieved from: <http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~spage/jet.pdf> on February 27, 2007.

This academic paper addresses the benefits of diversity in the economic sector. Diversity is essential to coming to the most favorable solution to a difficult problem. The paper sets out to show that "collections of agents outperform individuals partially because people see and think about the problems differently. This diversity creates more potential solutions to a problem." (pps7-8)

Searching for Solutions: Background Papers for the Executive Committee of the UNHCR Programme Annual Meeting 2002. Retrieved from: <http://www.crr.unsw.edu.au/documents/Excom%20Papers.pdf> on March 13, 2007.

This background paper examines the root causes of refugee movements. It attempts to find policy solutions to relieve the burden of refugees on host countries and explores the role of the international community.

Heather A. Cayless, M.A.
Bethany International
6820 Auto Club Road
Bloomington, MN 55438
USA
heather.cayless@bethanyinternational.org