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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

March 2, 2010

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The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
2201 C St NW Ste 7276
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Dear Secretary Clinton:

A spate of killings targeting Iraqi Christians has led me to write to urge that immediate action be taken to preserve and protect this ancient faith community. I know this is something that you are concerned about.

This long-endangered minority is facing increasing pressure and bloodshed in the lead up to the parliamentary elections on March 7. Scores of families are reportedly, and understandably, fleeing Mosul and surrounding areas fearing for their very lives. In fact, just days ago, Chaldean Bishop Emil Shimoun Nona warned ominously that Mosul is experiencing a "humanitarian emergency" and could be "emptied completely of Christians." Were that to happen, we will have literally witnessed, in the words of professor and author Philip Jenkins writing in *Christianity Today*, "...the death of one of the world's greatest Christian enterprises."

Ambassador Chris Hill has indicated that the protection of this community is one of his "paramount concerns" and I know he cares. While I have greatly appreciated his commitment as well as some of the limited steps the Government of Iraq has reportedly taken to strengthen security at Christian places of worship, the recent killings are evidence that far more must be done. The non-governmental organization, Human Rights Watch, echoed these sentiments recently saying that, "Iraq's government should bolster security to protect the lives of Christians in Mosul."

Even as the U.S. presence in Iraq is drawing down, and the burden for protecting these ancient faith communities rests increasingly with Iraqi forces and the Iraqi government, the U.S. still has a significant presence and influence in the country and we cannot, we must not, simply wash our hands of the situation. Rather, we must make it clear to the Iraqi government, at every possible juncture, that we will not accept the utter destruction of this ancient faith community.

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Archbishop Louis Sako of Kirkuk reportedly said last week, "In the past, some might have wanted to protect Christians but now we have the impression of being isolated and forgotten by all."

Please do all that you can to ensure that this community is not forgotten.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

cc: Ambassador Chris Hill
General Raymond Odierno
General David Petraeus

I really appreciate you seeing how to protect the Christians in Iraq. They are helpless.

Again thank you