

In an Age of Democracy, Report a Reminder of Brutality Across Globe, Among World Powers

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Jeff Fortenberry today commented on the release of the U.S. State Department 2010 Human Rights Report, which details to Congress human rights conditions over the past year in 194 countries:

"We recognize that responsible governance rests upon two pillars: a respect for human rights and respect for the rule of law. No society can flourish and prosper without these important transcendent principles as they are exercised in the form of religious liberty, freedom of speech, the right of assembly and peaceful protest, and free and fair commerce.

"While much attention has been given in recent weeks to the struggle for modernity in North Africa and the Middle East, violent repression continues in China and Russia even as both nations seek a more prominent position on the world stage. As President Hu enjoyed a lavish official state dinner in Washington last year, many Chinese citizens were suffering horrific tortures for attempting to employ basic human rights. Countless others disappeared into a vast network of gulags that no human being should ever have to see or experience. And in Russia, the killing of journalists and activists continued under flagrant dismissal of the rule of law and due process. In Iran, the country's leadership thwarts its people's desire for a more open society, and religious persecution abounds throughout many countries in the Middle East region. All in all, the State Department report provides a stark reminder of the great work ahead in protecting the essential human rights of vulnerable populations across the world."

Key countries of concern in the 2010 report include Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Burma, Cambodia, China, North Korea, Vietnam, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

Fortenberry is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He is the Vice Chairman of the Subcommittee with jurisdiction over international human rights.

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