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The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

RE: Second Urgent Appeal for U.S. Action Against Algeria's Repression of Christian Kabyles

Dear Secretary Rubio:

On behalf of the Christian Kabyle Coalition, I write with grave concern regarding the U.S. Department of State's continuing [designation](#) of Algeria as merely a Special Watch List (SWL) country under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).

The Religious Freedom Designations process mandated by IRFA is designed to hold governments accountable for egregious violations of religious liberty. The framework includes:

- **Countries of Particular Concern (CPCs)** – for “systematic, ongoing, and egregious” violations;
- **Special Watch List (SWL)** – for serious violations falling short of CPC status;
- **Entities of Particular Concern (EPCs)** – for non-state actors engaging in severe abuses.

Not merely symbolic, as you know these designations can trigger sanctions, shape U.S. foreign policy, and are meant to drive reform.

The Department's Office of International Religious Freedom (OIRF) [states](#) that its mission is to “promote the right of every person in the world” to believe—or not—and to act on those beliefs without fear. Yet despite this commitment, the U.S. has maintained Algeria's status as SWL since 2020, even as persecution by Algeria against Christians, particularly in Kabylia, has intensified in both frequency and cruelty.

The US Commission for Religious Freedom's [2025 Annual Report](#) released in March once again recommends that Algeria remain on the Special Watch List. This recommendation underplays the severity of the campaign of religious repression against Christians—as well as Jews—by the Algerian military regime. The report itself notes the “*ongoing* and *systematic* persecution of Christians” and confirms that every church in Kabylia has been closed, the one remaining open church in the entire country being in Algiers, a token accommodation for foreigners. The report makes only passing mention of the egregious case of Slimane Bouhafs, abducted from Tunisia by Algerian agents, imprisoned for three years, released a broken man, and now hounded daily.

The Christian Kabyle Coalition detailed that case and others in a letter dated February 26, 2025, to White House Faith Office Director Pastor Paula White-Cain. A copy of the redacted version is enclosed herewith.

Beyond the closures of all their churches and places of worship, Christian Kabyles have experienced:

- Arbitrary arrests, detentions, and criminal charges for their Christian worship;
- State-sponsored surveillance and harassment; and
- A chilling effect on their freedom of conscience and expression.

www.FreedomforKabylia.org

The repression in Kabylia is increasing—not stabilizing. Reports released last month by human rights groups [Amnesty International](#) and [Riposte Internationale](#) documented *widespread, systematic* violations in Kabylia, many of which fall squarely within the IRFA’s CPC criteria.

The Christian Kabyle Coalition respectfully urges you to commit to a full and immediate reassessment of Algeria’s designation. U.S. law requires that these classifications reflect conditions on the ground, and while the U.S. government has repeatedly affirmed its support for religious liberty, that commitment must be reflected in action.

The Christian Coalition therefore calls upon the Department of State to elevate Algeria’s designation to a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) and to pursue appropriate consequences under IRFA, including the consideration of sanctions and other diplomatic measures.

The Coalition anxiously awaits your assurance that the Department will act in accordance with U.S. law and American values to protect the religious freedom of Kabyle Christians.

Sincerely,

THE CHRISTIAN KABYLE COALITION



By Elisabeth R. Myers

On behalf of The Christian Kabyle Coalition

NGOs

The Kabyle League for Human Rights (LKDH) (in exile in Paris)
Kabylie, Racines et Ailes (“Kabylia, Roots and Wings”) (KRA) association (France)
The Red Aza (Kabyle equivalent to the Red Cross)

Christian Pastors, Missionaries, and Congregants

Identifying information has been OMITTED here to protect the safety of the individuals involved and their families.

Enclosure

Cc: Mark Walker, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom (nominee)
Patrick Harvey (acting Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom)
Stephen Schneck, Chair, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom
Senator Tim Kaine
Senator Ben Cardin
Senator Cory Booker
Senator Thom Tillis
Representative Maria Elvira Salazar
Representative Carlos Jimenez
Representative Mario Diaz Balard

*This material is distributed by Elisabeth R. Myers on behalf of
The Movement for Self-Determination of Kabylia.
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

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