

Highlights from International Religious Freedom Summit 2024 in Washington DC

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In the heart of Washington DC, a landmark event unfolded on January 30 and 31, 2024. The International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2024 was held in Washington, D.C., from January 30-31, drawing a record attendance of 1,500 people. Representatives from the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), The Washington Times Foundation, and various religious and academic leaders from across the country participated. As title partners of the summit, UPF and The Washington Times Foundation organized a luncheon on January 31st.



The two-day summit unfolded in three meticulously planned sessions. It began with an inaugural ceremony, setting a reflective tone for the event and offering an insightful overview of the summit's aims and objectives. The following day delved into critical issues surrounding religious freedom, featuring sessions that explored the challenges faced by religious minorities, the impact of wars and conflicts on religious liberties, and the intricate relationship between law and religion.

The discussions progressed with a focus on the broader implications of religious freedom in the context of national security, contemporary culture, and human rights. The second day's sessions also examined the intersectionality of religious freedom, the unique challenges in surveillance states, and innovative strategies for promoting religious freedom globally.

The summit was further enriched by the virtual contributions of renowned personalities. Former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, through a video message, acknowledged the leadership and dedication of the True Parents in fostering peace and highlighted the critical importance of standing against threats to religious freedom. He emphasized the concept that religious freedom is a core value shared universally.



Similarly, former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich during the January 31 luncheon organized by UPF and the Times Foundation, in his video address, expressed his honor in participating in the event. He underscored the urgency of recognizing and combating the threats to religious freedom worldwide, particularly highlighting the situations in Africa, India, and China. Gingrich conveyed his and his wife Callista's commitment to the cause of religious freedom as a fundamental aspect of human dignity.

The International Religious Freedom Summit 2024 served as a powerful platform for leaders and attendees from various backgrounds to unite in their commitment to religious freedom. The event highlighted the global consensus on the importance of religious liberty and set the stage for future collaborative efforts to uphold and protect this fundamental human right.