

September 18, 2001: President Bush Appoints Three Distinguished Leaders to Commission; Panel Complete

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President George W. Bush yesterday appointed Dr. Richard D. Land of Nashville, Tennessee, the Most Reverend William Francis Murphy of Rockville Centre, New York, and Dr. Shirin Raziuddin Tahir-Kheli of Bala-Cynwyd, Pennsylvania, to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. All nine voting Commissioners have now been appointed and will serve until May 14, 2003. Dr. Richard D. Land is currently the President and the Chief Executive Officer of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. Prior to joining the Southern Baptist Convention, Dr. Land was the Vice President for Academic Affairs at The Criswell College in Dallas, Texas. Land received his undergraduate degree from Princeton University, a Doctor of Philosophy from Oxford University in Oxford, England, and a Master's of Theology from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. The Most Reverend William Francis Murphy is currently Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York. Bishop Murphy was the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for the Archdiocese of Boston. He served as the Director of the Office of Social Justice and the Secretary of Community Relations for the Archdiocese of Boston from 1987 to 1993, and from 1980 to 1987 he was the Under Secretary of the Pontifical Commission *Justitia et Pax*. Bishop Murphy is a graduate of St. John's Seminary and the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Shirin Raziuddin Tahir-Kheli is the Director, South Asia Program of the Foreign Policy Institute, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. She headed the United States delegation in 2001 to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. From 1992 to 1993, she was a member of the National Advisory Council on the Public Service, and from 1990 to 1993, she was the Alternate U.S. Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations. From 1984 to 1989, Dr. Tahir-Kheli was a member of the National Security Council, first as the Director of Political-Military Affairs and then as Director of Near East and South Asian Affairs. She is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, and received a Master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. The Commission consists of nine voting Commissioners and the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, who is a non-voting member. Three Commissioners are selected by the President, two by the leaders of the President's party in Congress, and four by the congressional leaders of the other party. Commissioners serve for a two-year term and are eligible for reappointment. Dr. Land, Bishop Murphy, and Dr. Tahir-Kheli join Felice Gaer, Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Leila Nadya Sadat, Nina Shea, Ambassador Charles Stith, and Dean Michael Young. The President has yet to nominate an Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, a position that has been vacant for a year.

Michael K. Young, Chair

- Felice D. Gaer Firuz Kazemzadeh Richard D. Land Bishop William Francis Murphy Leila Nadya Sadat Nina Shea The Hon. Charles R. Stith The Hon. Shirin Tahir-Kheli Steven T. McFarland, Executive Director