



Dear prayer friends in Europe,

What is this that is going on in the UK now? Looking across the channel from the mainland of Europe, this is a reasonable question. But in the middle of all the questioning I believe God is at work. So the Canopy is like a group of friends who are joining together in prayer for Europe like Daniel and his friends who were doing the same in Babylon. After they prayed Daniel received insight into the mystery of the king's dream and he "praised the God of heaven" (**Daniel 2:19**). Then Daniel goes on "He changes times and seasons; He deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning" (**2:21**). Let's now read a different view of what's been going on in the UK.

A momentous week in Westminster

The first week in July proved to be a momentous one, both for UK politics and global human rights.

On the Tuesday the annual UK National Prayer Breakfast was held in the Houses of Parliament with 700 attending (including the leaders of all four main political parties) and many more following online. The speakers included Fiona Bruce MP, the UK Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). She asked for prayer for the 4th International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief which would be starting nearby later that day. This conference was first held in Washington DC, hosted by the USA in 2018. At its core are now 36 member countries and five 'friends' who are pledged to work together in an alliance on this issue at the UN, but another 59 countries also sent delegates together with 70 NGOs. In all 1,000 people were accredited to attend the conference. On the same day, the 3-year review report was published into the progress in implementing the recommendations of the Bishop of Truro's report on UK support for persecuted Christians.

On the Wednesday a special prayer breakfast was held for those participating in the Ministerial Conference. It was jointly chaired by the Bishop of Truro and Archbishop Angaelos of the Coptic Church. At one point I and my colleagues who prepared the Bishop of Truro's report were asked to stand up and receive a resounding ovation. The remarkable result of this Conference was the adoption of a common statement agreed by thirty-three countries calling for the protection of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief and the right of individuals to freely change their beliefs, or not believe, without penalty or fear of violence. The countries also committed themselves to raise awareness of current challenges to FoRB; to speak out bilaterally and multilaterally against violations and abuses; to look for opportunities to work more closely together; to strengthen the voices and build the capacity of defenders of FoRB and to annually

mark the International Day Commemorating the Victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief (August 22nd).

However, publicity for this Ministerial Conference and its important statement was practically non-existent in the mainstream British media due to a number of ministerial resignations being reported from 10 Downing Street during the sitting of the Conference and the resignation of the UK Prime Minister the day after.

Stop Press

Sajid Javid former secretary of State for Health said to the BBC, about his time at the National Prayer Breakfast

"It might sound a bit strange, but I was listening to the sermon by this amazing man, Reverend Les Isaac - you know, he started Street Pastors."

"I was listening to him talking about the importance of integrity in public life and, just focusing on that, I made up my mind. I went straight back to my office and drafted my resignation letter and went to see the prime minister later in the day."

Mr Javid's resignation was the first of many resignations from Boris Johnson's government, causing him to announce that he would be standing down as Prime Minister.

Please pray that

- the turmoil in UK politics will not ultimately mask the work of this important conference
- that the member states of the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance will live up to their commitments at the Conference
- that the outcome will be greater freedom for persecuted Christians and other religious minorities and that the Christian Gospel will increase its global reach



News from Europeans United in Prayer, the sister ministry of Canopy of Prayer

Our next prayer gathering will be in Switzerland 15-20 September and you are warmly invited! Having met in all the EU countries, we are now going to the non-EU countries of Europe. In April we were in North Macedonia and in September we will gather in Switzerland. Join us to pray for this beautiful country and for Europe!

For more info: info@canopyofprayer.eu

Alternatively, if you cannot come, as Switzerland is an expensive country, could you help sponsor somebody who cannot afford the costs? We would love everyone to be able to come who wants to.

If you would like to help by donating here are the details below

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