



f the recommendations of the Independent Review into Foreign and

The Bishop of Truro has welcomed the Government's commitment to accepting all of the recommendations of the Independent Review into Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Support for Persecuted Christians.

The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, who chaired the review, said he hopes it will now become a significant catalyst for change.

Foreign Office Minister Sir Alan Duncan told the House of Commons that the Government had decided to accept every recommendation in full and outlined how they would take them forward. Sir Alan also said that a bold, whole-government response was needed.

Bishop Philip said: "I am of course very pleased to hear that the Government has decided to accept all of the recommendations in full, and delighted that Sir Alan has formally recognised the need for a response across the rest of Government.

"Our review was restricted to looking at the support from the FCO, but there was a feeling from the outset that this needs a cross-governmental approach, as this crucial issue traverses many boundaries and is not something that can be neatly compartmentalised.

"Accepting the recommendations in full is a measure of how seriously the Government is taking this issue and, I hope, a recognition at the highest level that Freedom of Religion or Belief is a fundamental human right - and one that is inextricably interconnected with other basic human rights, as well as issues such as security. For wherever we see this right compromised we can be confident there are other, darker forces at work.

"I hope that over the coming months and years the implementation of these recommendations will have a significant impact in the role the UK is able to play, and that the report will become a catalyst for change and enable Britain to pursue an aspiration to be the global leader in championing this right."

Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark, said: 'I am delighted that Alan Duncan has announced that the Government has accepted in full the recommendations of the Bishop of Truro's report into Foreign Office support for persecuted Christians.

"We look forward to working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as they seek to put into place the recommendations and take practical steps to safeguard those who are vulnerable to persecution because of their faith. We trust that this will help to ensure that all can worship in freedom and without fear.'

The Bishop of Coventry, Christopher Cocksworth, said: "We welcome the Government's announcement that they are accepting the recommendations of the Bishop of Truro's report into the Foreign Office's support for persecuted Christians. We hope that this issue will made a priority across other Government departments.

"The plight of Christians around the world is all too often overlooked and we congratulate the Foreign Secretary on addressing this deficit. Attacks

on Christians are often indicative of a broader disregard of the human rights of people of other faiths and none. We now expect this important report to provide renewed impetus for the Government to rise to the challenges so clearly identified and for the UK to become, as the report recommends, ‘the global leader in championing Freedom of Religion and Belief for all’.”

Notes for editors

- The full report can be [read here](#).
- To read the full Hansard debate in which Sir Alan accepted the recommendations of the review, [click here](#).

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