

## **Foreign service report: Persecution of Christians worldwide taking on dimensions of 'genocide'**



Persecution against Christians worldwide is taking on dimensions of a “genocide”, a recent report by the British government confirmed.

Echoing similar reports by international organizations and NGOs, the report by the foreign office noted that Christians are the most persecuted religious group in the world today, with acts of violence and intimidation against those professing the Christian faith on the rise.

On his part, British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said he was “shocked” over the fact that, the “...political correct West”, is turning a blind eye to this ominous trend.

According to the report, Christianity is disappearing from parts of the Middle East, the very region from where it emerged, and despite the fact that members of some ancient Christian communities continue to resist, risking their lives in the process.

In a related development, the US administration continues to reinforce its contacts with predominately Christian Orthodox countries, amid the global surge in persecution against Christians.

Amb. Sam Brownback, the US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, has begun a tour of Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova. He first stop

was Athens, where he was received by Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Markos Bolaris, and then by Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos.

After the Greek capital, the US diplomat will visit the semi-autonomous monastic community of Mt. Athos, in northern Greece.

On Wednesday, Brownback will travel to Sofia, Bulgaria, for meeting with the Bulgarian government and hierarchs of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.