



U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Hearing

Religious Freedom in Tajikistan: Policy Options for a Country of Particular Concern

Panel I



Nazila Ghanea assumed her mandate as Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief on 1 August 2022. Ms. Ghanea is Professor of International Human Rights Law and Director of the MSc in International Human Rights Law at the University of Oxford. Prior to that, she was Senior Lecturer at the University of London (2000-2006), and she has also previously taught in the People's Republic of China (1993-1994). She has researched and published widely in international human rights law and served as consultant to numerous agencies.

Though her nearly 30-year career has been rooted in academia, Ms. Ghanea's academic work has often connected with multilateral practice in international human rights law. She has contributed actively to networks interested in freedom of religion or belief and its interrelationship with other human rights, and advised states and other stakeholders. In her professional activities, she has taken every opportunity to support the promotion and application of principled understandings of human rights, including freedom of religion or belief. She has supervised well over 100 master's dissertations and doctorates and served on doctoral panels internationally. She has also co-authored a 700-page publication by Oxford University Press that addresses freedom of religion or belief and is focused on the UN record.

Panel II

Felix Corley is editor of [Forum 18 News Service](#), which provides monitoring and analysis of freedom of thought, conscience, and belief violations in Central Asia, Russia, South Caucasus, Belarus, and Occupied Ukraine.



Bakhtiyor Safarov is a passionate advocate for human rights, dedicated to making a difference in the lives of individuals and communities. With extensive experience in the global business and real estate sectors, he brings a unique perspective and expertise to his pro bono work. His commitment to promoting human rights and his unwavering belief in the importance of upholding fundamental freedoms have shaped his professional and personal endeavors. Bakhtiyor strives to create a more just and equitable world, where every individual's rights are respected and protected.



Edward Lemon is President of the Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs and Research Assistant Professor at The Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University, Washington D.C. Teaching Site. He is a Global Fellow at the Wilson Center. He was previously a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Political Science at Columbia University. He earned a Ph.D. in Politics and International Relations at the University of Exeter in 2016. Dr. Lemon's research focuses on authoritarianism and security issues in Central Asia. He has spent over three years conducting fieldwork in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. He is editor of the book *Critical Approaches to Security in Central Asia* (Routledge, 2018). His research has been published in

Democratization, *Central Asian Affairs*, *Caucasus Survey*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Central Asian Survey*, *the Review of Middle Eastern Studies* and *The RUSI Journal*.