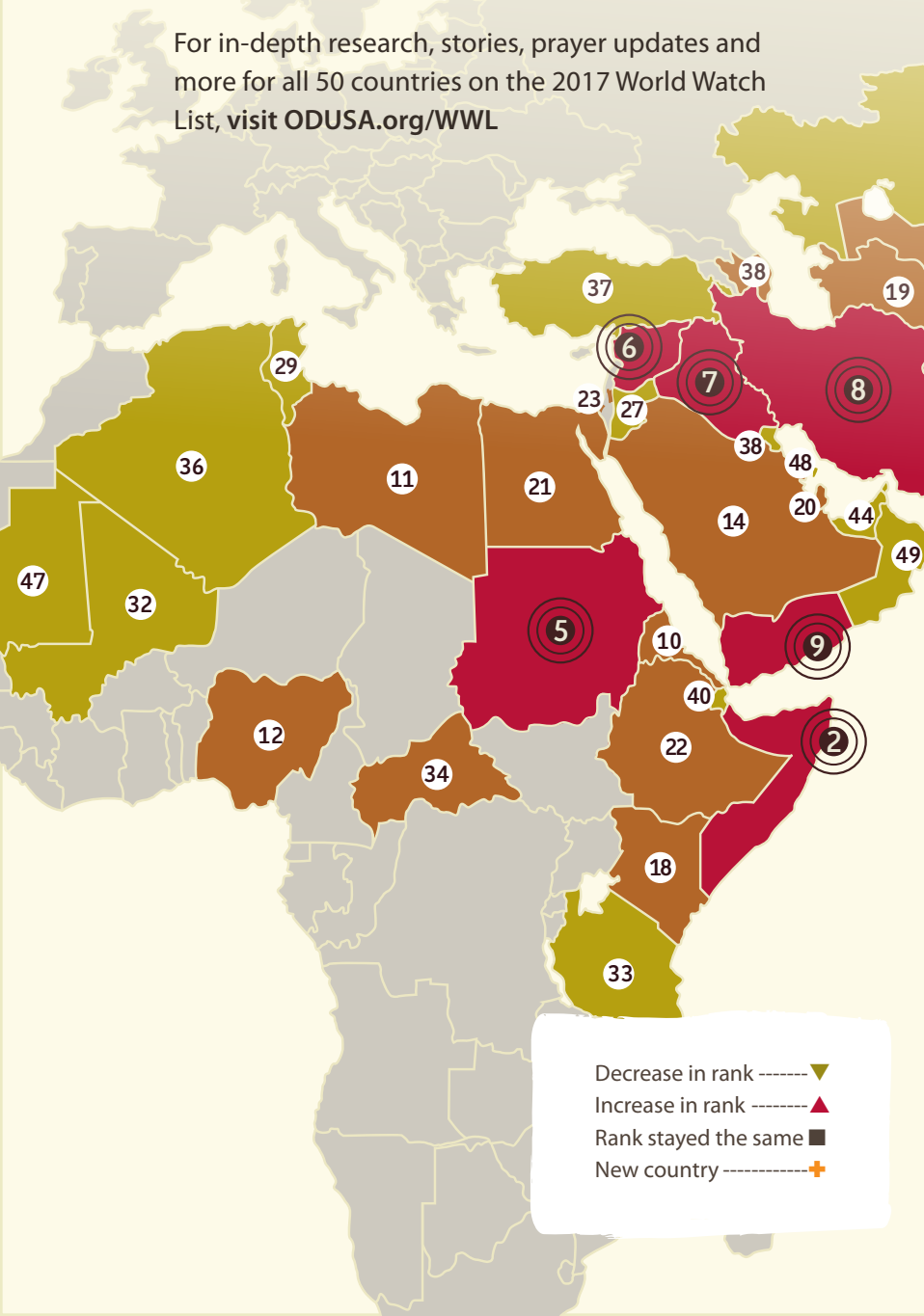


A RANKING OF THE TOP 50 COUNTRIES WHERE CHRISTIANS FACE THE MOST SEVERE PERSECUTION FOR THEIR FAITH.

Each year, Open Doors publishes the World Watch List to highlight the plight of persecuted Christians around the world. The list represents believers in Jesus Christ who are arrested, harassed, tortured — even killed — for their faith.

For in-depth research, stories, prayer updates and more for all 50 countries on the 2017 World Watch List, visit ODUSA.org/WWL



COUNTRY	2017 SCORE	2016
1. North Korea	92/100	92/100
2. Somalia	91/100	87/100
3. Afghanistan	89/100	88/100
4. Pakistan	88/100	87/100
5. Sudan	87/100	84/100
6. Syria	86/100	87/100
7. Iraq	86/100	89/100
8. Iran	85/100	83/100
9. Yemen	85/100	78/100
10. Eritrea	82/100	89/100
11. Libya	78/100	79/100
12. Nigeria	78/100	78/100
13. Maldives	76/100	76/100
14. Saudi Arabia	76/100	76/100
15. India	73/100	68/100
16. Uzbekistan	71/100	70/100
17. Vietnam	71/100	66/100
18. Kenya	68/100	68/100
19. Turkmenistan	66/100	66/100
20. Qatar	65/100	65/100
21. Egypt	65/100	64/100
22. Ethiopia	64/100	67/100
23. Palestinian Terr.	64/100	62/100
24. Laos	64/100	58/100
25. Brunei	64/100	61/100
26. Bangladesh	63/100	57/100
27. Jordan	63/100	59/100
28. Myanmar	62/100	62/100
29. Tunisia	61/100	58/100
30. Bhutan	61/100	56/100
31. Malaysia	60/100	58/100
32. Mali	59/100	55/100
33. Tanzania	59/100	57/100
34. Cen. Afr. Rep.	58/100	59/100
35. Tajikistan	58/100	58/100
36. Algeria	58/100	56/100
37. Turkey	57/100	55/100
38. Kuwait	57/100	56/100
39. China	57/100	57/100
40. Djibouti	57/100	58/100
41. Mexico	57/100	56/100
42. Comoros	56/100	56/100
43. Kazakhstan	56/100	55/100
44. United Arab Em.	55/100	55/100
45. Sri Lanka	55/100	New
46. Indonesia	55/100	55/100
47. Mauritania	55/100	New
48. Bahrain	54/100	54/100
49. Oman	53/100	53/100
50. Colombia	53/100	55/100

Decrease in rank ———— ▼
 Increase in rank ———— ▲
 Rank stayed the same ———— ■
 New country ———— +

RANKING THE COUNTRIES WHERE CHRISTIANS EXPERIENCE THE WORST PERSECUTION

The 2017 *World Watch List* uses data from Open Doors fieldworkers and independent experts to track the deep structures of Christian persecution.

It measures the degree of freedom a Christian has to live out their faith in five spheres of life — private, family, community, national and church — plus a sixth sphere measuring the degree of violence.

The data is translated into points, and countries are ranked accordingly, with the top 50 countries appearing on the list. The list is independently audited by the International Institute of Religious Freedom.



FOR A COMPLETE BREAKDOWN OF THE WORLD WATCH LIST RESEARCH
METHODOLOGY, VISIT **[ODUSA.ORG/WWLMETHODOLOGY](https://odusa.org/wwlm methodology)**

ABOUT *OPEN DOORS*

For over 60 years, *Open Doors* has worked in the world's most oppressive countries, empowering Christians who are persecuted for their beliefs.

Open Doors equips persecuted Christians in more than 60 countries through programs like:



Bible & Gospel Development—equipping believers with a Bible or other Christian resources.



Women & Children Advancement—providing life-changing programs such as safe houses, job training and literacy education.



Christian Community Restoration—giving assistance to rebuild or providing socioeconomic relief to refugees.





NORTH KOREA

92/100

EXTREME PERSECUTION



Leader: Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un

Population: 25,405,000 (300,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Atheism/traditional beliefs

Government: Dictatorial paranoia

Source of Persecution: Communist

Oppression, Dictatorial Paranoia

The Worst Place on Earth for Christians

For the sixteenth consecutive year, North Korea is ranked as the most oppressive place in the world for Christians, #1 on the World Watch List. In this totalitarian communist state, Christians are forced to hide their faith completely from government authorities, neighbors and often, even their own spouses and children. Due to ever-present surveillance, many pray with eyes open, and gathering for praise or fellowship is practically impossible.

Worship of the ruling Kim family is mandated for all citizens, and those who don't comply (including Christians) are arrested, imprisoned, tortured or killed. Entire Christian families are imprisoned in hard labor camps, where unknown numbers die each year from torture, beatings, overexertion and starvation. Those who attempt to flee to South Korea through China risk execution or life imprisonment, and those who stay behind often fare no better.

How You Can Help

Through local partners, Open Doors is serving Christians in North Korea by providing them with emergency relief aid, including food, medicine and clothes, as well as Bibles, books and other discipleship materials. Open Doors partners in China also provide shelter and aid for Christians who have fled the country and training for those who wish to return to North Korea for ministry.

How You Can Pray

Pray for North Korean believers who are languishing in prison camps, and for the proclamation of the gospel both in and outside the prison walls. Also, pray that Christians in the country would have access to Bibles and fellowship.

NORTH KOREA'S PRISON CAMPS



Kwanliso (for political prisoners)



Kyowahso (for "reeducation")



VISIT [ODUSA.ORG/NORTHKOREA](https://www.odusa.org/northkorea) TO LEARN, WATCH OR GIVE



SOMALIA

91/100

EXTREME PERSECUTION



Leader: President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud

Government: Federal Republic

Population: 11,392,000 (*hundreds of Christians*)

Main Religion: Islam

Source of Persecution:

Islamic Extremism, Ethnic Antagonism

Where Martyrdom is Commonplace

Somalia has been on the World Watch List since 1993. Islam was already firmly established in Somalia before the arrival of Christianity, and as a result, life for believers is defined by hostility. Somalia's tribal system — as an informal way of governing Somalia — is very resistant to modern government models, including democracy, which means that Christians have absolutely no voice in society.

Since the downfall of Ziad Barre in 1991, Somalia has become a safe-haven for Islamic militants. Christian converts from Islam in the country have been facing a great deal of persecution, and martyrdom is very common. The mere suspicion of one's having renounced Islam leads to a rushed public execution.

How You Can Help

To aid believers in Somalia, Open Doors works through local partners, providing underground Christians with discipleship training, Bibles and Christian books, along with community development programs and more, helping these believers to survive on the outskirts of society.

How You Can Pray

Pray for Christians in Somalia who risk martyrdom if their faith is discovered and struggle with keeping it to themselves. Pray that they would have wisdom and discernment in sharing the gospel with others, along with a quiet boldness and sense of God's presence with them.



AL-SHABAAB, AN ISLAMIC MILITANT GROUP BASED IN SOMALIA, HAS ALSO CARRIED OUT ATTACKS IN KENYA, ETHIOPIA, DJIBOUTI AND UGANDA, OFTEN TARGETING CHRISTIANS.



VISIT [ODUSA.ORG/SOMALIA](https://odusa.org/somalia) TO LEARN, WATCH OR GIVE



AFGHANISTAN

89/100

EXTREME PERSECUTION



Leader: President Ashraf Ghani

Government: Republic

Population: 34,169,000 (*thousands of Christians*)

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression,

Main Religion: Islam

Organized Corruption and Crime

When It Costs Everything to Follow Christ

Christians in Afghanistan experience extreme persecution. Severe pressure on believers, resulting from Islamic oppression, is exerted mostly by families, friends and community, but also by local religious leaders. The state authorities are weak, and Islam is viewed as a welcome unifying factor, especially as society agrees that conversion away from Islam cannot be tolerated.

Many in Afghanistan who convert from Islam to Christianity are murdered once their extended families learn of their new faith. In other families, Christian converts are delivered to mental hospitals under the premise that no one in their right mind would ever choose to leave Islam. In any case, converts usually lose their rights to personal property and possessions, effectively leaving them destitute. This can occur even upon the mere suspicion of conversion — a fear tactic that leads family members to react all the more harshly in curbing even the slightest hints of interest in Christianity.

How You Can Help

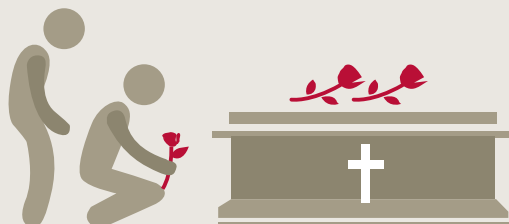
To help persecuted Christians in Afghanistan, Open Doors provides emergency aid, counseling, literacy training, radio programs, vocational projects, biblical and pastoral training courses and more.

How You Can Pray

Pray for believers in Afghanistan who lack fellowship, especially new converts who fear telling anyone about their faith in Christ. Also, pray for those who lose worldly possessions to persecution when they come to know Jesus. Pray that they would be able to forgive their persecutors, to the glory of God.



**CHRISTIANS IN AFGHANISTAN
OFTEN LOSE EVERYTHING,
INCLUDING THEIR LIVES,
FOR FOLLOWING CHRIST.**



VISIT [ODUSA.ORG/AFGHANISTAN](https://www.odusa.org/afghanistan) TO LEARN, WATCH OR GIVE