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"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

Dear Friends,

Religious liberty is under attack across the globe and followers of Jesus continue to see unprecedented challenges. No doubt you heard about the Easter bombing in Lahore, Pakistan that killed over 70, injuring several hundred more. In Nigeria, Boko Haram continues to terrorize. ISIS is still targeting believers in Iraq and Syria. Anti-conversion laws in India remain problematic. These are but a few.

The latest news coming from our Advocates in Nepal is what Sam Ericsson would have referred to as "other news." Please pray with us for God's grace and mercy as we help our colleagues in Nepal to successfully challenge a proposed law that would essentially criminalize Christianity.

In September 2015, Nepal adopted a new constitution, replacing its 2007 version. Human rights activists were rightly worried about the changes. One worry being the limitations on religious rights for minority faiths in a new "secular" state. Specifically, the right to religious freedom does not include conversion. Now the Parliament is looking at a new law which could add jail sentences for those who speak about their faith in Jesus. The deadline for comments to the new law is April 12 and we are working together with colleagues across the AI network to submit comments in support of our Christian brothers and sisters in Nepal.

As we continue to celebrate our 25th anniversary, there is good news, too. On the back, you can read our latest report from Roger Sherrard of what God is doing through Advocates in Albania. For over 20 years, AI's work in Albania remains strong, despite the ongoing challenges for the judiciary. We are greatly encouraged to see how God is working amongst the legal profession in this small Balkan nation.

Please continue to pray with us for our ongoing work in Albania, Nepal, and many other places through the network of Advocates around the globe. No matter how difficult things appear, we are convinced that nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Your prayers and financial support allow us to continue encouraging and equipping Advocates to do justice with compassion around the globe.

May the Lord bless and keep you in His perfect . . .

Grace and Peace,



Brent McBurney
President and CEO

Albania Report: December 2015

I visited Albania in December at the invitation of the Chief Justice to participate in the Annual Judicial Conference. This report summarizes that visit, goals for 2016 and expresses our needs. There were many "coincidences" which confirmed the prior preparation of our Lord. It is a privilege to serve Him.

Albania is a small but strategic country. It is 70% Muslim but has a history of exemplary religious tolerance. In 1991 in Albania's second largest city, Shkodër, when under communist law it was a criminal offense to practice any religion, underground Muslim, Orthodox and Christians joined together to rebuild one another's places of worship. They did just that and in so doing established a foundational attitude of religious freedom which is beyond tolerance. In the March for Freedom in Paris last year the Albanian Prime Minister marched arm in arm with Muslim, Orthodox and Catholic leaders from Albania. Albania is a friendly Muslim country at several crossroads where there has been no religious strife in the past 25 years.

The visit and judicial focus centered on reforms the government is considering. A parliamentary committee, with whom I met for nearly two hours, is drafting a comprehensive program to make it easier to bring charges for corrupt activities. Unfortunately, every sector of Albanian society is facing challenges with corruption and there are some in power who don't want to end it. Although the efforts are being made, they need an element of reconciliation our friends in South Africa were able to implement. Please pray for these efforts to improve the government.

I met with the Chief Justice several times, former justices and spoke at the Judicial Conference. Scheduled to speak last in the opening session, the earlier speakers covered many of my planned remarks, so I covered the essential elements of an independent judiciary, professional compensation, and encouraged the judges to participate with Parliament to end with viable changes. (Many believe that the legislative/executive branches of government want to control the judiciary by keeping it weak, denying reasonable salaries, and underfunding staff and facilities).

A highlight of the trip was time with young Christian lawyers, law professors, and politicians. They are making a difference. We need to pass the torch, develop meaningful projects, and work with to equip, network and support the Christians in the Albanian legal community.

Also, while there I interviewed a second person who is a candidate to produce a documentary to tell the story of the rebuilding of places of worship, mentioned above. We've received a donation to help with that project. I hope to select a producer in the next two months.

Our goals for the 2016 are to:

- (1) select a producer for the documentary on rebuilding the places of worship in Shkodër;
- (2) develop meaningful programs to send legal interns to Albania to fulfill Advocates' Mission;
- (3) continue to advise Albanian government officials to maintain and enhance the judiciary, so that it will continue to enforce the principles of religious freedom which exist in Albania.

Your brother in Christ,

