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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(14.10.2026)

The mandate of the Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU is based on the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief¹ which provides that the right to freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is a fundamental right of every human being. The mandate of the Envoy is to establish a regular dialogue with national authorities and other stakeholders, in particular faith-based actors. She will also support, where applicable, intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The Envoy will coordinate her work with the EU Special Representative on Human Rights and other international partners.

The work of the Envoy will be based on the definition of clear and realistic objectives to fulfil her mandate, in particular when it comes to addressing country situations. The Envoy will draw on the expertise and support from the relevant services in the European External Action Service, the Commission and EU Delegations, in particular ahead of country visits. The Envoy will continue engaging with religious and non-confessional actors, including in the context of the dialogue with churches, religious and non-confessional associations under Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The Envoy will also engage with civil society organisations which are focusing their work on FoRB and provide useful data on instances of violations of FoRB. Furthermore, the Envoy's work will build on the FoRB projects at country and regional levels (Sahel region, Asia), under the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme.

¹ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11491-2013-INIT/en/pdf>.