



Committee on International Justice and Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160

WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

October 26, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I commend your decision in summer 2019 to create the Commission on Unalienable Rights for the purpose of reviewing America's approach to human rights from the time of our founding fathers to today and of advising on how U.S. founding principles and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can apply to the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. Ambassador Mary Ann Glendon, whom you appointed to head this Commission, is also a consultant to United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace which I chair. Earlier in October, Ambassador Glendon kindly provided a summary of the Commission's final report to our Committee.

The members of our Committee support the goals and concluding observations of the Commission's final report as it drew attention to the erosion of fundamental human rights. In particular, my fellow bishops concurred with the report that the prodigious expansion of human rights has weakened rather than strengthened the overall concept and acceptance of human rights, as more rights have not necessarily resulted in more justice. On the right of freedom of religion, as evidenced by *Dignitatus Humanae*, the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Religious Freedom, the Catholic Church fully supports the Commission's view of this universal, moral, pre-political human right.

The bishops commended the Commission on Unalienable Rights' final report that aligns generally with much of Catholic teaching and urged the State Department as well as the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom to prioritize and integrate its findings and observations into their work. Thank you again for your leadership in the promotion of human rights. My brother bishops and I look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff on advancing this common goal.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace

cc: Gayle Manchin, Chair, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom
Ambassador Mary Ann Glendon