

GRENADA 2012 INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT

Executive Summary

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally respected religious freedom. The trend in the government's respect for religious freedom did not change significantly during the year.

There were no reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice.

The U.S. charge d'affaires and embassy staff regularly discussed social trends and issues with members of the country's religious communities. Embassy officials engaged in frequent public events and services with members of various religious groups as a part of the embassy's community outreach.

Section I. Religious Demography

The 2011 census reports the population to be approximately 103,000. According to the 2001 census, the last census for which religious affiliation data is available, 44 percent is Roman Catholic, 12 percent Anglican, 11 percent Pentecostal, and 11 percent Seventh-day Adventist. Religious groups whose adherents number at least 2 percent of the population include Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and members of the Church of God and evangelical groups. Smaller groups include Jehovah's Witnesses, Brethren, Bahais, Hindus, Moravians, Muslims, Rastafarians, Mennonites, and members of the Salvation Army and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). Approximately 4 percent describe themselves as nonbelievers. There are two mosques. There is no organized Jewish community. Saint George's University hosts Christian, Jewish, and Muslim student organizations; the government does not count its 3,700 foreign students in the census data.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom.

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The government does not interfere with an individual's right to worship. Religion is not listed on national identity documents. Certain types of religious headdress are permissible on photographs for national identity documents provided the face is visible and not shadowed. The law does not prohibit spoken blasphemy but the Criminal Code prohibits written blasphemous vulgar language. Conviction for such an act carries up to two years of imprisonment, although this section of law is rarely, if ever, enforced.

The government funds secular schools and public schools administered by "traditional" Christian denominations. Students at government-funded schools are not obliged to attend religion classes.

To qualify for customs tax exemptions and other privileges, religious groups must register with the Home Affairs Department, which issues licenses for religious groups, buildings, and events. There were no reports that the department denied any registrations.

Foreign missionaries require either a worker's permit or a waiver from the minister of labor. Foreign missionaries must demonstrate prior experience and have the sponsorship of a registered religious group. There were no reports that the government denied any foreign missionary's application during the year.

The government observes the following religious holidays as national holidays: Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, Corpus Christi, and Christmas.

Government Practices

There were no reports of abuses of religious freedom.

Section III. Status of Societal Respect for Religious Freedom

There were no reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice.

The Conference of Churches in Grenada facilitated closer relations among various religious groups.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

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The U.S. charge d'affaires and embassy staff regularly met with members of the Grenada Conference of Churches to discuss social trends and issues. In January the embassy facilitated a U.S. nongovernmental organization-organized flight to support the social work of Catholic and non-Catholic charities.