



## Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 25<sup>th</sup> session  
Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review  
UPR Outcome of Sweden  
28 September 2020  
Delivered by Michael Mutzner

Mr President,

We would like to thank Sweden for its constructive participation in the UPR and the open dialogue with civil society.

As per the recommendations, we call on Sweden to take more effective measures to protect the rights of asylum-seekers to leave their current religion or to change their religion for another, and who run from the significant risks of persecution in their countries of origin.<sup>1</sup> As highlighted in our report, studies have shown that Christian converts had faced politicized and arbitrary procedures in Sweden and that the personnel of the Migration Agency lacks the necessary expertise and does not sufficiently collaborate with civil society when it verifies the genuineness of a conversion claim. We also call on Sweden to extend its National Plan against racism and hate crimes to include specific measures to combat all categories of hate crimes, including specific affirmative measures to combat harassment of Christian refugees in asylum centers.

Mr. President, the World Evangelical Alliance regrets that Sweden is one of the rare countries where the right to conscientious objection for medical personnel unable to participate in abortions due to their convictions, is not respected. No one should be discriminated against because of a refusal to participate in an abortion procedure, and reasonable accommodation should be discussed in order to find compromises that respond both to the imperative of a person's conscience and to the requirement of public health services. It is unfortunate that Sweden takes a hard line in this matter and refuses a more pragmatic approach that would respect the freedom of conscience of its medical personnel. We call on Sweden to reconsider its position.

Finally, we call on Sweden to renounce its proposed legislative ban on faith-based private schools.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you Mr. President.

<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/44/12, Recommendation 156.290

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, Recommendation 156.209