

World Evangelical Alliance

Human Rights Council - 43rd Session

**Item 6: UPR outcome of Iraq
12 March 2020**

Speaker: Albert Hengelaar



Thank you Mr. / Madam President.

The World Evangelical Alliance thanks the Iraqi government on constructive engagement with the UPR process.

The government was recommended to *“undertake concrete measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination and persecution on the grounds of religion or belief.”*¹

WEA is concerned by the fact that since 2003, consecutive Iraqi governments have failed to grant legal recognition to the Evangelical churches as well as affiliation with the Endowment of the Christians, Yezidi, and Sabaeen-Mandaeen Religions. This constitutes a violation of the individual and collective rights of Iraqi Evangelicals to manifest their religion, and a discrimination against Evangelicals.

We recommend to the Iraqi government to officially recognize the Evangelical Churches in Iraq, and to grant them affiliation with the said endowment. We also recommend that current and future legal frameworks in Iraq fully promote and protect the equal and inalienable rights of all their citizens, irrespective of race, religion or other status.

In addition, we urge the Iraqi government to implement recommendations relating to the human rights of displaced persons. The government should ensure the dignified and continued improvement of living conditions for all citizens, but especially for returning refugees and the internally displaced – including through the provision of adequate housing, education and jobs. We also recommend the government to identify and equip religious leaders and faith-based organisations to play a constructive and central role in reconciling and rebuilding Iraqi society.

Thank you Mr. / Madam President.

¹ Recommendation 147.95 from Poland