

Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 46th session
Agenda Item 4 – Human rights situations that require the Council’s attention
General Debate

11 March 2021

Delivered by Kateryna Shynkaruk

Madam President,

The World Evangelical Alliance, the World Council of Churches and Christian Solidarity Worldwide express grave concern at the ongoing closure of Protestant churches in Algeria.

Since 2018, Algerian authorities forcibly closed thirteen protestant churches. The administrative courts dismissed the churches’ appeals to reopen.

On 14 February, the government decided to allow all mosques to re-open after the COVID-19 lock-down. However, to our surprise, the authorities told the churches that they are excluded from the re-opening decision.

As a result, today, our member, the Protestant Church of Algeria, has all of its 47 churches effectively closed.

Moreover, the Algerian government has not issued a single permit to a Protestant church, despite several applications for legal status.

We call on the government of Algeria to bring its legal framework in line with its obligations under Article 18 of the ICCPR, and to allow re-opening of all Protestant churches.

It is our hope that the Algerian government sets a positive example in dealing with its religious minorities.

Thank you.