



Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 46th session

Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review

Adoption of the UPR outcome of Libya

15 March 2021

Delivered by Albert Hengelaar

Madam President,

We thank the Government of Libya for engaging in the UPR.

We regret that none of the recommendations related to Freedom of Religion or Belief were accepted.

The World Evangelical Alliance stresses the importance of respecting inalienable human rights and freedoms, including the freedom of conscience and of religion or belief. We call on the Government of Libya to recognize the right to freedom of religion or belief in line with Article 18 of the ICCPR.

This includes amending the 2017 draft Constitution with respective provisions amending article 7 to include religion as a basis for discrimination.

We also call on the Government of Libya to repeal article 291 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes “public attacks on the official religion of the State” in unspecific terms. This leaves significant room for arbitrary interpretation. The article is often misused against Libyan converts to Christianity.

We appeal to the Libyan government to ensure the freedom of conscience for all, which is a precondition for human development and flourishing societies.

Thank you.