

Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 47th session

Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review

Adoption of the UPR outcome of Australia

8 July 2021

Delivered by Albert Hengelaar

The World Evangelical Alliance thanks the Government of Australia for engaging in the UPR.

We welcome the Government's support of State recommendations on the Freedom of Religion or Belief, countering discrimination against minorities and indigenous people and protecting the right to work and adequate living standard.

We regret that State recommendations related to raising the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years were not accepted. Nor did the government of Australia accept recommendations to ensure freedom of expression and protection of whistle-blowers in cases where breach of confidentiality is justified by the defense of a public interest.

Together with Ethos: Australian Evangelical Alliance's Centre for Christianity and Society, we stress the importance of respecting inalienable human rights and freedoms, including protection of minority rights and freedom of expression.

We call on the Government of Australia to abolish the practice of arresting and incarcerating children under 16 and raise the age of criminal liability to 14 at minimum.

We also appeal to the Australian government to repeal laws criminalizing public interest reporting and provide adequate legal protection to whistle-blowers, reporting on the matters of public interest.

Thank you.