



Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 52nd Session

Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review - Adoption of the UPR outcome of India
24-28 March 2023 - Delivered by Wissam AL SALIBY

** Check against delivery **

The World Evangelical Alliance, speaking on behalf of a multi-faith coalition of Christians, Muslims and Hindus¹, would like to express our grave concern at the ongoing violence and threat of violence against minority groups in India.

In recent months, over 2,500 Adivasi Christians from over 35 villages in Chhattisgarh have been forcibly displaced due to mob violence perpetrated by right-wing extremists. We call on local authorities to promptly and effectively restore law and order in this situation, and on the Central government of India to publicly condemn such acts of violence against vulnerable minorities. We also call on the Central government to commit to guarantee the safety of all Dalit and Adivasi Indians, who suffer from intersecting vulnerabilities such as Caste, religion and gender.

We regret that India did not accept most recommendations related to the protection of minorities, and no recommendation related to the FCRA and to the so-called “anti-conversion” laws.

However, we look forward to India implementing the accepted recommendations including to hold accountable public officials who advocate religious hatred, and to investigate all cases of religious violence and discrimination on religious grounds and to condemn these cases.

Our coalition is gravely concerned by the continued harassment, intimidation and incarceration of human rights defenders and journalists who exercise their constitutional right to freedom of expression.

We urge India to refrain from enacting a national anti-conversion law, and to advise states to repeal their anti-conversion laws. These laws are in violation of India's constitutional guarantees.

Finally, we call on India to repeal religious references in the ‘Scheduled Caste’ Constitutional Order of 1950 which exclude Christian and Muslim Dalits from accessing affirmative action benefits.

1 The coalition includes Open Doors International, Hindus for Human Rights, Indian American Muslim Council, Justice for All, and International Commission for Dalit Rights.