



Oral Statement - Human Rights Council 53rd Session

Urgent debate on public acts of religious hatred as manifested by recurrent desecration of the Holy Qur'an

11 July 2023 - Delivered by Wissam Al Saliby

Mr. President,

The World Evangelical Alliance, the World Council of Churches and Caritas Internationalis condemn all desecration, destruction or disrespect of sacred texts, as well as religious objects or places of worship.

The recent burning of the Qur'an and any act of incitement to violence, discrimination or hostility against Muslims or other religious communities are incompatible with our Christian values.

We are strong proponents of the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom of religion or belief for everyone, and of the international legal framework to counter hate speech.

We appeal to our respective constituencies, to Muslim leaders and to all those who want to protect freedom of expression as well as freedom of religion, to engage in dialogue across religions and beliefs. We need to continue to work together to promote a shared understanding of how our increasingly pluralistic societies can be inclusive, tolerant, welcoming and flourishing.

Human rights are the responsibility of the State. Freedom and inclusive pluralistic societies are the responsibility of all of us.