



Joint Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 57th Session

Agenda Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences

12 September 2024

Delivered by Janet Epp Buckingham

Mister President,

The World Evangelical Alliance and the Salvation Army welcome the Special Rapporteur's report on the exploitation of incarcerated individuals.

Human beings should not be exploited for their labour by states or private industries regardless of their incarceration status. Incarcerated workers must receive the same protections as other workers—fair wages, dignity, and safe conditions.

Fair wages prevent exploitation for families of incarcerated workers. When a worker is able to meet the family's basic needs, family members are less likely to become vulnerable to exploitative work themselves. Fair wages allow incarcerated labourers to save for, and plan for, the future. Fair wages and relevant skills training allow formerly incarcerated people to return to society as contributing members. Without these, exploitation continues, trapping individuals in cycles of poverty and crime.

We echo the Rapporteur's call to prohibit compulsory labour before a conviction, including in immigration detention. We offer the example of Thailand, where labourers charged with immigration offenses may be compelled to work in the country's fishing industry. These practices are linked to global supply chains, highlighting the need for international scrutiny to ensure that human rights are protected and labour exploitation is eliminated.

We urge States to extend full protections and fair wages to incarcerated workers.

Thank you.