



Joint Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 57th Session

Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review

Adoption of the UPR outcome of Eritrea

1 October 2024

Delivered by Markus Hofer

Mr. President,

The World Evangelical Alliance and the Anglican Consultative Council thank the Eritrean government for its commitment to the UPR process.

We welcome Eritrea's support for the recommendations to "repeal all discriminatory provisions of laws against certain religions"; to "Ensure the full enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and guarantee the freedoms of opinion and expression": and to "Redouble efforts to safeguard the freedom of religion, including by protecting the safety of all religious believers."

As noted in our stakeholders' report, the government recognizes only four officially registered religious groups: the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Sunni Islam, the Catholic Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Eritrea. In 2002, the government imposed a registration system for all other religious groups. However, after the churches and religious organizations submitted the required documents, the government did not register them. Thereafter, Church leaders from other Christian traditions, and anyone sharing their faith or religious literature from other Christian traditions, have been subject to being arrested and detained.

Numerous Christian leaders have been detained without charge for many years. Some of these are listed in our stakeholders' report.

We urge the government of Eritrea to allow religious communities to register in accordance with the law, to immediately release the prisoners currently detained for their religious beliefs and practices and to put an end to detention on the basis of religion.

Thank you.