



Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 58th Session

Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

4 March 2025

Delivered by Carina Rieger

Mister President,

The World Evangelical Alliance thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Torture. In countries around the world, people face torture for practicing their faith.

In our submission to the Special Rapporteur, we expressed concern regarding the forced disappearance of the leader of the Eritrea Evangelical Alliance, who has been imprisoned without charge for over 20 years in Eritrea.

In countries that criminalize apostasy, individuals who convert from Islam to Christianity are frequently subjected to torture in order to coerce them to recant their new faith. Several countries impose the death penalty for apostasy from Islam.

We note with concern that Christians in certain areas of India, particularly in Chhattisgarh, have been prevented from burying their dead in their communities on the basis of their religion.

Torture and coercion related to matters of faith is unacceptable and clearly violates international human rights law.

Thank you to the Special Rapporteur for raising these concerns. We call on this esteemed Council to call for the implementation of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations, and to guarantee the absolute prohibition of coercion against people who decide to change from one religion to another.

Thank you.