



## **Oral Statement**

Human Rights Council 60<sup>th</sup> Session

Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review

### **Adoption of the UPR outcome of Sweden**

26 September 2025

Delivered by Janet Epp Buckingham

Mr. President,

The World Evangelical Alliance thanks Sweden for its constructive participation in the UPR and the open dialogue with civil society.

We urge Sweden to respect parents' right to educate their children according to their religious traditions. We also call on Sweden to withdraw its proposed ban on faith-based private schools. Additionally, we ask Sweden to reconsider its ongoing review of such schools, which has disproportionately targeted independent Christian schools.

We request that Sweden allow public funding for religious denominations and associations affiliated with religious communities that contribute to the public good. This funding should be provided without discrimination or interference with their religious beliefs and doctrines, in line with Sweden's international human rights obligations. This issue also relates to many churches' deeply held beliefs on sexuality and gender, especially as the government reviews proposals to ban conversion therapy. While condemning all forms of coercion, violence, abuse, and torture against LGBTQ+ people, we believe there are significant concerns with the proposed law—particularly regarding its definitions and limits, as well as the rights to freedom of opinion and religion.

Mr. President, we also encourage Sweden to take stronger steps to protect asylum seekers' rights to leave their current religion or convert to another. This is especially important for those fleeing persecution in their home countries. This includes refraining from reintroducing new blasphemy laws or using existing laws to prevent blasphemy, and guarantee freedom of expression and religion both legally and in practice.

Thank you.