



Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 61st Session

Item 2: General debate on the oral update by the High Commissioner

2 March 2026

Delivered by Benjamin Daniel

Mr. President,

The World Evangelical Alliance welcomes the High Commissioner's reports and reaffirms its strong support for the multilateral system and the essential work of international human rights mechanisms. In this time of deep uncertainty, these institutions remain vital safeguards of human dignity and accountability.

Our world is increasingly marked by division, polarization, and armed conflict. We are troubled by the steady growth in military spending at the expense of peacebuilding, development, and social cohesion.

Amid these tensions, the poor and marginalized, racial and religious minorities, women and children, and persons with disabilities suffer most. Their rights are too often neglected and their voices unheard.

We are especially concerned by the targeting and imprisonment of religious leaders who speak out against injustice and corruption. In several countries, those serving their communities and promoting peace face harassment, detention and death. In Colombia alone, more than 50 Christian leaders have been killed, detained, or forcibly disappeared by illegal armed groups in the past two years for defending human rights. Such actions violate fundamental freedoms.

We urge all States to renew their commitment to human rights and to protect religious leaders and faith actors as vital contributors to resilient communities.

Thank you.