



Human Rights Council – 30<sup>th</sup> session

Agenda Item: Panel discussion on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, including the issue of international abductions, enforced disappearances and related matters

Speaker: Albert Hengelaar

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Mr. President,

The World Evangelical Alliance considers that the work of the Commission of Inquiry and the Independent Expert clearly illustrate, there is not much to be proud of in the case of the DPRK. The leadership of North Korea is notorious for the neglect of its own people and for its severe violations of human rights.

The United Nations reported earlier this year that about 70 percent of North Koreans are food insecure and almost one third of the children under five are stunted. The UN called on the international community for generous funding. The World Evangelical Alliance fully support this call, but we urge that through monitoring of the distribution this aid gets to the right people.

There are only four churches in North Korea. They are all in the capital and strictly monitored. The possession of a bible is strictly forbidden. Those who are caught with one in their possession are likely to be send to prison or labour camp, or to be executed. The same goes for their families, through the guilt-by-association system.

Thousands of people try to flee the country. We are seriously concerned about reports of China repatriating North Koreans captured on Chinese territory. We call on China to reconsider its policy of refoulement.

North Korea’s engagement in the UPR process is a glimmer of hope. We call on North Korea and the international community to ensure that many recommendations will be implemented by the next review. The country and its people deserve this!

Thank you Mr. President.