Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

The World Evangelical Alliance welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

Aware of the tensions between people and communities of different religious convictions, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, the World Council of Churches, and the World Evangelical Alliance, met during a period of 5 years to reflect and produce a document called “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World.” We invite the Special Rapporteur to look into this document which serves as a set of recommendations for conduct on Christian witness around the world.

And we would like to ask the Special Rapporteur Mr. Ahmad Shaheed two questions.

Question One: In your report, you describe the relationship between Freedom of Religion or Belief and Freedom of Expression as being mutually reinforcing, rather than as one of tension or hierarchy. In an era of increasing diversity, however, in an attempt to maintain religious harmony or religious peace, authorities increasingly feel the need to limit either Freedom of Religion or Belief or Freedom of Expression, or even both. The Global Charter of Conscience of 2011 calls for a civil public square with room for a wide diversity of voices. Are you aware of governmental programmes to increase the acceptance and appreciation of diversity rather than to stifle expressions of religious diversity?

Question Two: In your report, you say “the Beirut Declaration on ‘Faith for Rights’ provides important guidance and inspiration for action.” Would you have case studies describing the use of the Faith For Rights framework at the local level, by local leaders and clergy, that we can share with our member alliances?

Thank you.