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FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

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PUBLIC STATEMENT ON RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION AND MARGINALIZATION OF AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

The LWF Council, meeting in Geneva, Switzerland from 13 to 18 June 2019, under the theme “Because we know God’s voice” (John 10:4), deliberated and adopted the following public statement:

The Council recognizes the on-going problem of persecution of people of different faiths in many national contexts. The Council also expresses concerns about the misuse of religion by extremists from all sides. The Council also notes the risk of misuse of the freedom of religion or belief legitimizing oppressive structures and preventing work for justice, especially gender justice. It recalls [Article 18](#) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights concerning freedom of religion or belief and commends the work of successive [UN Special Rapporteurs on freedom of religion or belief](#) over the years. To this end, the Council calls upon:

Its member churches to:

- Advocate for freedom of religion or belief
- Speak out against the alleged abuses of these freedoms
- Observe “The International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief” (August 22) recently adopted by the UN General Assembly.

International community to:

- Protect freedom of religion or belief without any discrimination and hold perpetrators accountable.
- Take action to prevent or reverse the marginalization of any religious community.

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed ...” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)