

## 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Agenda Item 6, UPR Outcomes: Mexico

Organisation: Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Speaker: Claire Denman



Thank you Mr President,

Despite accepting recommendations relating to freedom of religion or belief during its previous UPR reviews, CSW continues to report FoRB violations in Mexico.

In the most recent review over 30 recommendations were issued in support of human rights defenders. While CSW welcomes these and those made to protect journalists from attacks, we regret the lack of recommendations affording protection to religious leaders.

In 2018, ten religious leaders were killed in Mexico. Each killing is believed to have been committed by organised criminal groups. We remain deeply concerned by the pervading climate of impunity towards such crimes.

As such, CSW welcomes the recommendation made by Poland, calling on the Mexican government to undertake necessary measures to effectively combat impunity following attacks against religious leaders. We also welcome the recommendation made by Canada calling on the Mexican government to adopt comprehensive policies for the protection of religious leaders, and ensure that existing mechanisms are adequately funded and staffed with trained personnel. We call on the new government to follow through on these calls to ensure that religious leaders are afforded protection along with other human rights defenders.

We also note with regret the lack of recommendations made by States regarding the right to freedom of religion or belief for religious minorities.

Local authorities continue to use a range of measures to impede the right to FoRB in the states of Hidalgo, Oaxaca, Chiapas and Guerrero, among others. Those who convert away from the majority religion continue to face discrimination from their local communities; through the use of arbitrary detention, threats, fines and forced displacement, many communities are pressured to renounce their faith. We call on the Mexican government to investigate these violations and ensure that criminals are brought to justice.

In some states, children have been denied the right to an education because of their religious beliefs or those of their parents. CSW welcomes the recommendation by Portugal calling on the Mexican government to grant education effectively to all children. We strongly advise that this include children from religious minorities.

Thank you