

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

Phone: +49 4106 804806 • Fax: +49 4106 804807
Email: info@bonn-profiles.net • <https://bonn-profiles.net/>

Released for free complete or partial reproduction.

BQ 753 – No. 10/2023

WEA and Partners Highlight Impact of Sanctions on Churches, Launch Impact Assessment Report in Geneva

(Bonn, 31.05.2023) The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) is concerned about the restrictions caused by unilateral sanctions on the ability of churches all over the world to partner with and support churches in sanctioned countries.

This message was communicated at an event held on March 10 in Geneva, Switzerland, in conjunction with the 52nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council where the WEA, Caritas Internationalis (CI), the World Council of Churches (WCC) and ACT Alliance launched their joint report 'Assessing the impact of sanctions on humanitarian work' in partnership with the Geneva Graduate Institute.



Wissam al-Saliby, Director of WEA's Office in Geneva, speaks on the impact of sanction on the work of churches that seek to provide humanitarian aid at grassroots. © Ivars Kupcis, WCC

"The humanitarian impact of sanctions is enormous," stated the United Nations' special rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures Prof. Alena Douhan at the meeting. "Humanitarian organizations should not be at risk of not being able to do their important work due to the secondary sanctions," said Douhan.

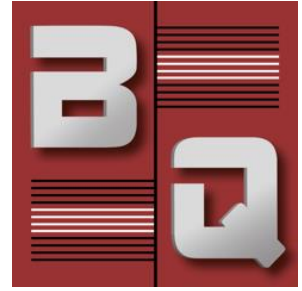
WEA Geneva Office Director Wissam al-Saliby provided examples of how sanctions hinder the ability of Evangelical ministries to channel funding to churches for the purpose of ministry as well as humanitarian work.

"We are not *against* sanctions but *for* human rights and humanitarian law. And what our constituency has been telling us is that sanctions, and bank over-compliance with sanctions, in relation to Syria and the broader Middle East have led to bank transfers blocked and bank accounts unjustly frozen," al-Saliby said.

Bonner Querschnitte Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

Text & Technology:

Titus Vogt (ViSdP)
Vorderer Kamp 52a, 25479 Ellerau
Tel.: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 06
Fax: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 07
E-Mail: info@bonn-profiles.net



A joint platform for the following Bonn organizations on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance:

Business Coalition of the World Evangelical Alliance (Bonn, Hamburg)
business.worldea.org

Evangelical Missiology, Journal of missiotop – Evangelical Forum for Missions, Cultures and Religions (German Evangelical Alliance)
missiotop.org

Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn)
theology.worldea.org/evangelical-review-of-theology/

Giving Hands – International Charity (Bonn)
gebende-haende.de

Global Theology Department of the World Evangelical Alliance
worldea.org/what-we-do/global-theology/

International Institute for Islamic Studies (IIIS) (Bonn)
islaminstute.net

International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) of the World Evangelical Alliance (International Headquarter, EU-Office Brüssel)
iirf.eu

International Journal for Religious Freedom (IJRF) (Bonn/Toronto)
journal.iirf.eu

Martin Bucer Seminary (Bonn, Zürich, Tirana, São Paulo, Helsinki, Istanbul, Delhi)
bucer.org

Office of Intrafaith and Interfaith Relations of the World Evangelical Alliance

SOS World (Brussels)
sosworld.be/page-daccueil

Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance
europeanea.org

Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance
worldevangelicals.org/tc/

Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft (VKW) (Culture and Science Publ.)
vkwonline.com

WEA Global Issues Series (Bonn, Manila, New York)
global-issues-series.iirf.eu

WEA Sustainability Center
wea-sc.org

World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)

Yearbook on Religious Freedom of the Commission for Religious Freedom of the German and the Austrian Evangelical Alliance
yearbooks.iirf.eu

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports



“When the earthquake in Syria happened, churches tried to provide support, but their immediate efforts were hindered by sanctions, and continue to be hindered despite the partial humanitarian exemptions,” he added.

The ‘Assessing the impact of sanctions on humanitarian work’ report identified two broad groups of challenges – administrative and operational – faced by CI, WEA, and WCC in providing humanitarian aid to affected populations in sanctioned countries. These include issues such as understanding sanction requirements, legal repercussions, applying for licenses, as well as operational obstacles, including challenges in transferring funds or goods and travel restrictions. The report then goes on to make recommendations on how to navigate some of those.

“Everything that increases rather than reduces tensions – including maximum pressure sanctions – or that prevents people-to-people encounters, is a conflict risk and an obstacle to peace,” said Marianne Ejdersten, communication director of the WCC. “And everything that prevents a compassionate humanitarian response to the suffering of others is contrary to Christian principles of love and care for one’s neighbour in need.”

Karam Yazbeck, Regional Coordinator, Caritas Middle East and North Africa, insists that while exemptions are a step forward, more is still needed to help those who are suffering in Syria. “Humanitarian exemptions alone are not sufficient to address the long-term negative effects of sanctions on the vulnerable population which is already suffering dramatic consequences of the civil war,” Yazbeck said.

Maja Liechti, member of the student research team of the Geneva Graduate Institute, presented key recommendations from the report, as well as the potential impact of intensifying advocacy for humanitarian sanction exemptions, coordinating advocacy efforts with other organizations, and developing a unified message, as well as collaborating with relevant UN bodies to coordinate advocacy measures.

The panel was moderated by Floriata Polito, Human rights and humanitarian policy advocacy officer of the Caritas Internationalis.

Downloads and Links:

- **Photo:** Wissam al-Saliby, Director of WEA’s Office in Geneva, speaks on the impact of sanction on the work of churches that seek to provide humanitarian aid at grassroots. © Ivars Kupcis, WCC
- The Report ‘Assessing the impact of sanctions on humanitarian work’:
https://un.worldea.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Final_Report_ARP_Sanctions_GI_WCC_CI_WEA_2022-12.pdf

Bonner Querschnitte Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

Text & Technology:

Titus Vogt (ViSdP)
Vorderer Kamp 52a, 25479 Ellerau
Tel.: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 06
Fax: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 07
E-Mail: info@bonn-profiles.net

A joint platform for the following Bonn organizations on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance:

Business Coalition of the World Evangelical Alliance (Bonn, Hamburg)
business.worldea.org

Evangelical Missiology, Journal of missiotop – Evangelical Forum for Missions, Cultures and Religions (German Evangelical Alliance)
missiotop.org

Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn)
theology.worldea.org/evangelical-review-of-theology

Giving Hands – International Charity (Bonn)
gebende-haende.de

Global Theology Department of the World Evangelical Alliance
worldea.org/what-we-do/global-theology/

International Institute for Islamic Studies (IIS) (Bonn)
islaminstute.net

International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) of the World Evangelical Alliance (International Headquarter, EU-Office Brüssel)
iirf.eu

International Journal for Religious Freedom (IJRF) (Bonn/Toronto)
journal.iirf.eu

Martin Bucer Seminary (Bonn, Zürich, Tirana, São Paulo, Helsinki, Istanbul, Delhi)
bucer.org

Office of Intrafaith and Interfaith Relations of the World Evangelical Alliance

SOS World (Brussels)
sosworld.be/page-daccueil

Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance
europeanea.org

Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance
worldevangelicals.org/tc/

Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft (VKW) (Culture and Science Publ.)
vkwonline.com

WEA Global Issues Series (Bonn, Manila, New York)
global-issues-series.iirf.eu

WEA Sustainability Center
wea-sc.org

World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)

Yearbook on Religious Freedom of the Commission for Religious Freedom of the German and the Austrian Evangelical Alliance
yearbooks.iirf.eu