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WEA Appoints New Director for Geneva Office

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On September 1, Prof. Dr. Janet Epp Buckingham, former Director of Global Advocacy, began her new role as Director of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) Office in Geneva, representing the WEA at the United Nations. Buckingham will continue her advocacy on behalf of WEA's global constituency, focusing on human rights.

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Buckingham, a respected scholar from Ottawa, Canada, served as WEA's Director of Global Advocacy from July 2021 to August 2024. She previously taught political studies at Trinity Western University (TWU) and directed the Laurentian Leadership Centre in Ottawa from 2006 to 2022.

Buckingham has published extensively on religious freedom in Canada and internationally. Prior to TWU, she served with the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, a WEA member body, as general legal counsel and later as Director for Law and Public Policy. She also serves as managing editor of the *International Journal for Religious Freedom*, published by WEA's International Institute of Religious Freedom (IIRF).

"We are thrilled to have Janet lead our Geneva office. Her expertise and passion for advocacy will greatly enhance WEA's impact at the United Nations," said Goodwill Shana, Executive Chair and Chair of the International Council.

Gaetan Roy, WEA's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, noted, "Janet's appointment is pivotal for our multi-faceted advocacy at the UN in Geneva. With her extensive experience addressing human rights violations and defending religious freedom, she significantly strengthens our office's mission to support our Evangelical constituency facing growing challenges worldwide."

Reflecting on her new role, Buckingham stated, "During my time as Director of Global Advocacy, I saw firsthand how critical our work at the UN in Geneva is. Our constituency cares deeply about human rights, especially religious freedom. It's an honor to build on the outstanding work of Michael Mutzner and Wissam al-Saliby, amplifying the voices of the global evangelical Christian community."

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Established in 2012, the WEA Geneva office serves as a liaison for WEA's global constituency, enabling Regional and National Evangelical Alliances to participate in and be represented at the United Nations. The office focuses on advocating for justice and human rights, with special attention to the Human Rights Council. One of its key areas of engagement is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a mechanism that monitors and evaluates the human rights records of UN member states.

Buckingham further emphasized WEA's collaborative approach, stating, "We work closely with national alliances who understand the specific issues in their countries. A recent example is our joint UPR submission with the Korean Evangelical Fellowship for North Korea, highlighting the abduction and detention of South Korean Christians by North Korean authorities." This submission, available on the WEA website, elevates national advocacy to the global stage.

The WEA, founded in 1846, represents more than 600 million evangelicals in 143 national alliances. It unites evangelicals worldwide for prayer, mission, and human rights advocacy. Visit worlddea.org for more information.

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