



General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 August 2026

English only

Human Rights Council

Sixty-third session

7 September–9 October 2026

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement submitted by Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status*

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 August 2026]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.

Situation of the Refugees from The Church of Almighty God

CAP-LC submits this written statement to call attention to the situation of refugees belonging to The Church of Almighty God (CAG). This religious movement has been heavily persecuted in China for decades. CAP-LC has monitored this persecution for some ten years and has examined hundreds of cases concerning CAG members. These cases demonstrate both that those identified as CAG members are sentenced to heavy jail terms and that China monitors, both legally and illegally, asylum applications filed abroad by its citizens and their related activities. Seeking asylum based on religious persecution is treated as a crime and a form of treason, as it is said to “slander” the image of China. The same applies to participation in public demonstrations critical of the Chinese regime. Repatriated asylum seekers have been sentenced not only for their religious activities but also for having applied for asylum or criticized China abroad, with aggravated penalties and the risk of being charged with high treason. This crime may even carry the death penalty.

Added to this is the risk of torture, widely documented by scholars of the CAG and international bodies. The United Nations Committee Against Torture, in a decision of 27 July 2021, established that CAG believers deported to China face a concrete risk of torture or inhuman treatment.

CAP-LC also wishes to draw the Council’s attention to the activity of two websites—Anti-Almighty God Alliance (fqnsln.com) and Da Ai Wang (www.daaixq.com)—which publish photographs and personal information of CAG refugees in several countries, including Italy, and even of refugees who are not CAG members. CAP-LC is persuaded that these websites are connected to Chinese intelligence and propaganda structures. This conclusion is based on stylistic analysis, on verbal patterns identical to those used by Chinese state sources, and on the fact that the sites have access to information on asylum applications that private non-state actors cannot obtain. Although Da Ai Wang has published personal data of a smaller number of asylum seekers only, the information disclosed is highly sensitive. It could only have been obtained through unofficial channels or illicit means. The presence of personal data and images on these platforms demonstrates that identification by Chinese authorities has already occurred and that the Chinese state is fully aware that these individuals have committed, under Chinese criminal law, the “crime” defined in Article 300 of the Criminal Code, namely “using” a banned religious organization classified as a “xie jiao.”

A further concern relates to the argument sometimes used to deny asylum, namely that facial recognition systems at Chinese airports make it impossible for genuinely persecuted individuals under surveillance to leave China. This theory incorrectly portrays border controls as infallible. China’s surveillance systems—facial recognition, artificial intelligence, and public security databases—were introduced gradually and do not yet include complete or real-time information on all individuals once convicted or suspected of dissent. Databases exist at city, county, provincial, and national levels, and information does not travel automatically or immediately between them. Many CAG believers are initially sought only by local police and manage to avoid arrest by relocating to other regions. Only later, once identified again, does the case escalate to an interregional or interprovincial investigation.

From the asylum cases examined by CAP-LC, it emerges that numerous applicants had already been identified or investigated by local public security authorities before departure, yet their information had not been entered into national exit-control systems. To obtain a passport and leave China, many were forced to rely on personal connections and pay bribes to have information about their religious affiliation or exit restrictions deleted or concealed. A smaller number of applicants who had previously been arrested or detained reported that they were able to leave China only after having those records removed through similar informal and corrupt channels.

Specialized sources agree that corruption in China is widespread and massive. Millions of officers take bribes. This includes a flourishing market for passports and the alteration of police records, which explains why not only dissidents but also corrupt businesspeople and organized crime leaders regularly leave China with seemingly regular documents. European intelligence services have confirmed to CAP-LC that Chinese border controls can be bypassed and indeed are regularly bypassed by Chinese organized crime figures who manage to reach Europe without being intercepted at airports. This confirms that the system is not infallible and that individuals the police should theoretically intercept may succeed in leaving China.

Additionally, since 2015, Chinese authorities have continued to identify and monitor CAG members residing abroad, collecting information through exit-record verification, investigations of relatives remaining in China, and inquiries into the destination country. In some cases, relatives have been pressured to contact believers abroad to persuade them to return to China. The fact that an applicant managed to leave China legally does not mean that they have escaped the attention of Chinese authorities. If they return, they will still face investigation, detention, or other forms of persecution.

For these reasons, the mere fact that an applicant left China with valid documents or passed airport border controls is not sufficient to exclude past persecution or the risk of future persecution. Nor does it accurately reflect, in the experience of CAP-LC, the concrete functioning of China's public security and border-control systems.

CAP-LC respectfully urges democratic states to dismiss ill-founded objections and recognize the seriousness of the risks faced by members of The Church of Almighty God. Granting asylum to those who have managed to escape China is essential to upholding human dignity, freedom of religion or belief, and the fundamental values on which the Human Rights Council is founded.
