

Open Doors World Watch 2026

“Belfast City Council notes with profound concern that more than 388 million Christians around the world face high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith.

The Council further notes the findings of the Open Doors World Watch List 2026, including that 4,849 Christians were killed worldwide during the reporting period because of their Christian identity, of whom 3,490 were killed in Nigeria.

The Council expresses particular concern at the extreme levels of violence, persecution and displacement faced by Christians in Nigeria and recognises that these events will also be of particular concern to members of Belfast's Christian and Nigerian communities, including those with family and community connections to Nigeria.

The Council further notes the recent European Parliament resolution condemning the ongoing persecution of Christians in Nigeria and calling for greater protection and accountability.

Therefore, this Council notes the Open Doors World Watch List 2026 Advocacy Report and commits to:

- Condemning the persecution, discrimination and violence faced by Christians around the world;
- Writing to the UK Government urging it to continue to promote and protect freedom of religion or belief as a leading priority in foreign policy and diplomatic engagement;
- Urging the UK Government, through its engagement with Nigeria, to press the Nigerian Government to take effective action to protect vulnerable communities, tackle the culture of impunity surrounding attacks, and ensure that those responsible for violence against Christians and other civilians are brought to justice; and
- Highlighting the findings of the World Watch List 2026 and the plight of persecuted Christians on the Council's social media channels.”

Proposer: Alderman McCullough

Seconded: Councillor Ferguson