

Newly Appointed Representatives to Strengthen WEA's Engagement with WHO and United Nations in New York

The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) is pleased to announce the appointments of Mr. John Girgis as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and Dr. David Boan as Permanent Representative to the World Health Organization (WHO). The two leaders will build on more than two decades of high-level engagement with the UN and further strengthen the WEA's advocacy teams in New York, Geneva and Bonn.

“It is critically important for evangelicals to have a presence and a voice where global decisions are being made. The UN in New York is where world leaders meet and global policy is determined. Through this office, the WEA has opportunities to speak on issues of peace and reconciliation and to advocate for those under pressure for their faith,” said Dr. Janet Epp Buckingham, WEA's Director Designate for Global Advocacy.

While the WEA has been active at the UN in New York for years, the global pandemic has highlighted the critical role of churches in responding to health issues as well as some of the difficulties Christians and others face in contexts where they are under pressure for their faith.

“It has become clear over the last year how important the WHO is when dealing with health crises. The WEA presence at the WHO can highlight the challenges of minority faith communities,” Dr. Buckingham added.

Bp. Dr. Thomas Schirmmacher, Secretary General of the WEA, commented:

“The WEA comes to these global bodies with two men, whose lives and characters represent well what our faith stands for. At the same time, they are also top level professionals knowledgeable in their field and experienced in global diplomacy.”

Girgis, who was born and raised in Egypt but lived most of his life in the United States as well as in Indonesia, brings to his new role a diverse experience in church, business and cultures that allow him to speak authentically on behalf of believers at grassroots when engaging with the UN and government leaders from different parts of the world. He will also work together with the leaders of various WEA ministries, members and partners that are active in New York, seeking opportunities for synergies and closer collaboration on issues of common concern.



“I consider my serving with WEA as one of the greatest honors and privileges that the Lord has

prepared me all my life for; from growing up in a strong Christian family in the Middle East, to opportunities to serve in many churches of different traditions and cultures to my international career working in every major continent,” Girgis said upon his appointment, adding: “To work with all nations for the good of mankind and the glory of God is the greatest calling that I could have imagined. I look forward to my work in the UN with gifted women and men from all over the globe and hope we accomplish great things together for the good of humanity and our planet for generations to come.”

Dr. Boan has served with the WEA in humanitarian and relief capacities since 2016 and brings decades of experience in the area of mental health, trauma counseling and building resilience, among others. As part of his engagement with the WHO on behalf of evangelicals, Dr. Boan will work together with Christian health professionals to guide church groups on health issues, including mental health, public health and spiritual health.



In addition to his new role, he will also continue to serve as WEA’s Director for the Relief & Development Coordination Center seeking to build capacity and facilitate coordination between Evangelical Alliances and relief and development organizations and government agencies. The potential that lies in identifying collaboration opportunities and building synergies between global agencies and churches at grassroots came to the forefront in the last twelve months, in which Dr. Boan has led WEA’s Covid-19 Task Force.

“The important role the local church plays in our personal, mental, spiritual and public health was on full display this past year with the pandemic. Historically, the church has had a central role in the health of the community, but that has been all but lost in recent decades,” Dr. Boan commented, but added: “This new role with WHO provides a focal point for speaking out about the necessary role of the Church and spiritual well-being in the health of the community and bringing together health professionals to guide and equip local churches. This is a mission that is a blessing and I am honored to serve WEA in this capacity.”