

Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 49th Session

Agenda Item 2: Interactive Dialogue on OHCHR written update on Sri Lanka

4 March 2022

Delivered by Matthieu Volet

The World Evangelical Alliance welcomes the written update of the High Commissioner.

Violence against religious minorities continues in Sri Lanka with impunity. We call on the Government of Sri Lanka to hold accountable those who commit violence against religious minorities.

We also call on the Government to repeal bans on full-face covering and cattle slaughter.

We also urge the Government of Sri Lanka to desist from mandating any form of registration of places of worship, and to rescind the 2008 Circular on prior permission for construction and registration of places of worship. This Circular is currently misused to intimidate members of religious minorities.

Finally, we are gravely concerned by the lack of political will to achieve justice for the victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings, which killed 270 people including at the Evangelical Zion Church on the island of Batticaloa and at Catholic churches.

We echo the call of the High Commissioner to the Government of Sri Lanka to publish the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into the Easter Sunday bombings, and to pursue further independent investigations.

And we ask the High Commissioner what additional and immediate steps she recommends that the Government of Sri Lanka takes, to ensure that justice is served for the Easter Bombing victims?

Thank you.