



## **Oral Statement**

Human Rights Council 57<sup>th</sup> Session

Item 2: General debate on the oral update by the High Commissioner

11 September 2024

Delivered by Janet Epp Buckingham

Mr. President,

Religious minorities continue to be threatened in situations of conflict.

We are grateful for the OHCHR report on Afghanistan and the coverage of the policies on propagation of virtue and prevention of vice.

We are concerned about the impact of these policies on the basic rights of religious minorities. They exacerbate the fears of thousands of Afghans who espoused the Christian faith and are either hiding in fear or were forced to leave their homes.

In Sudan, we are deeply concerned about the destruction of houses of worship during the conflict. Religious communities are essential to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need. In the face of millions of internally displaced persons, it is crucial that these places are preserved.

In our recent joint report on Nigeria, with our affiliates Open Doors and the International Institute for Religious Freedom, we note that that Christians and Muslims are both victims of extremist violence and the deaths are in the tens of thousands in northern Nigeria.

Therefore, we encourage the OHCHR and relevant special procedures to keep monitoring closely the situation of religious minorities in situations of conflict.

Thank you.