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**49 HRC – Oral statement, item 2, ID on OHCHR written update on Sri Lanka**  
**Delivered by Andrzej Owca**  
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VIVAT International welcomes the report of the High Commissioner on Sri Lanka and expresses her concern about the human rights situation, especially the lack of independent and democratic institutions, militarization of the country, reprisals against families of disappeared persons and persecution of the human rights defenders. We also share our concern regarding the lack of adequate policy towards reconciliation, alienation of ethnic and religious minorities and lack of accountability for past crimes.

We draw special attention to the Easter Sunday attacks that took place in 2019 on several hotels and churches. This was the biggest post-war massacre that cost the lives of 269 persons including 47 foreigners. 21 of the 22 volumes of the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry have not yet been made public and the government has not taken all necessary steps to implement the significant recommendations that come from the only volume made public.

A prominent Catholic youth who campaigned for truth and justice related to the easter attacks was arrested and held overnight. A senior Catholic priest has been interrogated for several days. A church worker was arrested for nearly a month and tortured by the police, after a bomb was placed in a Catholic Church earlier this year. Some Catholics now fear going to church.

In last few months, many Sri Lankans are struggling for justice and fair life, including farmers, fisherfolk, estate workers, students, prisoners, and their families, those protesting against environmental destruction and harmful development projects. Nearly thirteen years after the end of the war, the perpetrators there have not been brought to justice for war crimes.

We support the High Commissioner recommendations and urge all member states of the Human Right Council to support the continuation of gathering of evidence of such crimes and abuses initiated by the Council last year, use universal jurisdiction for crimes committed in Sri Lanka and establish an international, independent tribunal for Sri Lanka, including the Easter Sunday attacks.

