

63rd Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 2: General Debate
7 September 2026

Delivered by: Sister Mary Sithija Jayamanne
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Mr. President,

I am Sister Mary Sithija Jayamanne, a Good Shepherd sister and a Human Rights Defender advocating for justice and accountability for the victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday Attacks. I call upon the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure truth, justice, and accountability for all victims and their families.

The reports of committees and the commission appointed to uncover the truth have suggested that this attack was not merely an act by Zahran Hashim's group but that it has characteristics of an organised conspiracy that goes beyond that.¹

Nearly two years into Mr. Anura Dissanayake's presidency:

- Information concerning allegations raised in the Channel 4 documentary is before the Colombo Magistrate's Court in Case No. B 35882/24. Investigations are reportedly progressing into alleged links to former Director of State Intelligence Services, Suresh Sallay, who has been detained, and into a former State Minister.
- A complaint was lodged regarding alleged attempts to influence the Easter Sunday investigation through public statements intimidating complainants, witnesses, and prosecuting officials by a lawyer who met the third suspect while in detention in relation to case B 35882/24.

Franciscans International and the Centre for Society and Religion urge the Sri Lankan government to effectively protect victims, witnesses, investigators, human rights defenders, lawyers, church leaders and others who face risks for seeking truth, justice, and accountability.

Thank you.

¹ Centre for Society and Religion, Memory, Pain: Seeking Justice After 07 Years, April 2026, <https://easterattack.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/CSR-report-on-Easter-Attacks-Memory-Pain-Seeking-Justice-After-07-Years-17Apr2026-Eng-summary.pdf>