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Speaker: Rev Dr Sivin Kit



Mr President

The Lutheran World Federation and its ecumenical partner the World Communion of Reformed Churches, thank the Special Rapporteur for his comprehensive report.¹

We remain deeply concerned by legislation and socio-cultural movements that hinder peaceful coexistence among people of different religions and beliefs influenced by majority and minority dynamics in countries such as Denmark, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, and the United States of America.

We have also observed increasing public rhetoric especially on social media by ethnoreligious centric voices articulating exclusionary interpretations of the right to freedom of religion or belief that perpetrate discrimination against sexual minorities, attack on human right defenders, and downplay the urgency of addressing the climate crises especially from the voices of marginalized indigenous peoples.

We therefore call on member states to recognize that the freedom of religion or belief is located in justice and to safeguard civic space for safe, constructive, and courageous dialogue among religious leaders and youth leaders as well as policy makers.

We encourage the Special Rapporteur to continue his efforts and to facilitate further multi-stakeholder consultations with a stronger youth leadership component. This will ensure that the right to religious freedom or belief is not instrumentalized in ways that undermine the safety and security of minorities.

Thank you.

¹ The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 75 million Christians in 99 countries. The LWF acts on behalf of its member churches in areas of ecumenical and interfaith relations, theology, human rights, ecological justice, humanitarian assistance, communication and the various aspects of mission and development.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches is comprised of 100 million Christians in Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed, United, Uniting and Waldensian churches. The WCRC, working with its 233 member churches, is active in supporting theology, justice, church unity and mission in over 108 countries.