

Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See

to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

at Human Rights Council – 28th Session of the Universal Periodical Review

**Sri Lanka**

Geneva, 15 November 2017

Mr. President,

The Holy See welcomes the Delegation of Sri Lanka during the presentation of its National Report for the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review.

My Delegation acknowledges the various efforts made by Sri Lanka in seeking solutions to national issues including the complex post-armed conflict challenges of peace and reconciliation. The Holy See appreciates Sri Lanka’s accomplishments and improvements in poverty reduction and prevention of violence, among others. However, additional efforts can be made and we encourage Sri Lanka to continue the reconciliation and peace process.

My Delegation would like to present the following recommendations:

1. To abolish capital punishment and to commute death sentences to prison terms;
2. To ensure, in law and in practice, that all detainees are afforded fundamental legal safeguards from the outset;
3. To continue to promote national reconciliation by preventing acts of violence and intimidation against religious and ethnic minorities, and by ensuring effective prosecution and punishment of perpetrators;
4. To reinforce its policies to provide asylum seekers and refugees access to education services that are available nationally;
5. To continue its efforts to ensure legal ownership and restitution to long-term internally displaced persons and refugees, as foreseen by international law standards.

Thank you, Mr. President.