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## Item 2 – High Commissioner's Report on Sri Lanka

Canada shares many of the concerns expressed in the High Commissioner's report. There is a lot of work that remains to be done to ensure any semblance of sustainable post-conflict reconciliation, justice, and accountability for all Sri Lankans, as well as to protect human rights and hard-won economic development.

We are greatly concerned by continuing reports of efforts to stifle civil society, including lawyers, journalists, families of the disappeared, and members of minority communities. In June, we saw a disturbing outbreak of communal violence against Muslims, which resulted in the tragic loss of lives and extensive damage to property in the south of the country. We continue to see a troubling pattern of impunity, as perpetrators are not brought to justice. Repeated incidents of interference with freedoms of speech and assembly must be investigated; the Government of Sri Lanka should demonstrate a commitment to enforcing the rule of law and protecting the rights of all Sri Lankans.

We thank the High Commissioner and the distinguished OHCHR investigation team for their important work. The Council's request in March for a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties is proof of the Council's serious concern and commitment to sustainable peace and prosperity in Sri Lanka.

We deeply regret the Sri Lankan government's unwillingness to cooperate with this mechanism of the Council and are dismayed by recent statements that the investigation team will be denied access. Canada welcomes the High Commissioner's assurances that a credible and effective investigation will take place irrespective of its location.

Canada once again calls on Sri Lanka to engage constructively and guarantee the investigation team access to the country and all relevant documentation.

We further urge the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that any Sri Lankan who chooses to present testimony, evidence or statements before the investigation team be able to do so with all due protections and without fear of reprisals.