Mr. President,

The World Evangelical Alliance draws attention to the wellbeing of minorities in nations at every Human Rights Council session, which we consider to be the litmus test for SDG16.

One country situation that we would like to highlight is India.

In the new cabinet of India, Pratap Chandra Sarangi became a minister. In 1999, Mr. Sarangi was the State Unit President of the Bajrang Dal in Odisha, a hardline rightwing group, when a Hindu mob affiliated with this group brutally killed an Australian Christian missionary and his two children.

In the new parliament in India, Pragya Singh Thakur was elected a member. However, she is charged with helping to orchestrate a bombing that killed six Muslims in 2008, and is currently free on bail.

In Uttar Pradesh, a new law will force universities to disallow any alleged anti-national activities on their campuses, thus possibly undermining the rights and freedoms of minority groups on campus, especially as the so called anti-national activities are not defined.

Last month, a mob in the eastern state of Jharkhand brutally murdered a Muslim man. They forced him to say Hindu chants as they beat him for hours.

A democracy where minorities are scapegoated is not a democracy. We call on the authorities of India to cease their incitement against religious minorities, and to hold accountable those who commit violence and incite violence against religious minorities.

Thank you Mr. President.