



World Council of Churches

General Secretariat

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His Holiness PORFIRIJE
Serbian Orthodox Church
Ulica Kralja Petra br. 5
P.O. Box 182
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Serbia

Geneva, 5 May 2023

Your Holiness,

We are deeply saddened and shocked by the news of the terrible tragedy that occurred at the Vladislav Ribnikar primary school in Belgrade yesterday. The senseless act of violence took the lives of eight innocent students and a security guard, and injured six other students and one teacher. We cannot imagine the pain and sorrow that their families and loved ones are going through.

We want to express our heartfelt condolences to you and the Serbian Orthodox Church and to the families that have lost their loved ones in this horrific tragedy. We pray that God may comfort all of you in your grief and give you the strength and resilience to overcome this difficult time.

We pray for the recovery and healing of the six wounded students and the teacher and their families. We ask God to touch them with His grace and mercy and to restore their health and wellbeing.

This tragedy reminds us of the need for greater attention to mental health issues and early intervention to prevent such tragedies from happening. But it also highlights the importance of spiritual and Christian nurturing in a world where many feel alienated and disconnected.

As believers, we are called to be the source of love, hope, and comfort to those around us. We are called to reach out to those who are struggling and to offer them the support and care they need. We pray that this tragedy will urge us to renew the focus on the importance of spiritual and emotional wellbeing as the community one lives in provides them.

We call upon believers everywhere to join us in prayer for the people of Belgrade and Serbia, especially those directly affected by this tragedy.

We stand with you in solidarity and pledge to continue our prayers and support in the days and weeks to come.

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pillay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'P' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay
General Secretary
World Council of Churches