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PAKISTAN CSW calls for strong state response to anti-Ahmadiyya attacks during Friday prayers

CSW is deeply concerned by reports that over eighty people have been killed today in religiously-motivated attacks against the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Pakistan. According to Pakistani news outlets, two Ahmadi mosques in Lahore were targeted by militant groups in parallel incidents, while the buildings were filled with worshippers attending Friday prayers. Explosions and gunfire were heard at both locations, and armed police were brought in to confront the attackers.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community faces some of the worst state-sponsored discrimination and religiously-motivated violence in Pakistan. Pakistan is the only country in which Ahmadis have been declared non-Muslims by law, and six Ahmadis have already been killed for their faith this year.

CSW's National Director, Stuart Windsor, said, "We send our sincere condolences to the Ahmadiyya community in Lahore and around the world. The Government of Pakistan must ensure that those responsible for these atrocities are brought to justice. Impunity strengthens the forces of religious intolerance, which not only affect minority groups, but contribute to the spread of the dangerous and violent extremism that impacts the lives of Pakistanis of all faiths. CSW is working to promote freedom of religion for all in Pakistan and an end to the kind of religiously-motivated violence that took place today, and which has consistently affected Christians, including in the high-profile attacks which left eight dead in Gojra last year."