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ETHIOPIA | Christians Killed By Daesh

A video released April 19 purports to show the killing of a group of Ethiopian Christians by Daesh (Islamic State) in Libya. Their murders echo the deaths of 21 Egyptian Christians in Libya, as portrayed in a video released by Daesh on Feb. 15.

The exact number of victims in the latest incident cannot be confirmed. The video of the executions, entitled “Until there came to them clear evidence”, switches between a scene on a beach in eastern Libya, where an estimated 15 men in orange boiler suits are beheaded by masked militants in camouflage, and a scene in a desert area in southern Libya where similarly dressed Daesh members execute a similar number of men in black boiler suits by shooting them in the head. A subtitle refers to both groups of victims as “worshippers of the cross belonging to the hostile Ethiopian church”.

The video also includes scenes depicting the destruction of churches in Syria and Iraq and condemns the doctrine of the Trinity as a form of apostasy. Prior to the executions an English-speaking masked narrator dressed in black warns that “the nation of the cross” must embrace Islam, pay the jizya tax or face death.

The Ethiopian government, which is still attempting to verify whether the victims were Ethiopian citizens, has condemned “the atrocious act” and says it will assist any of its citizens who wish to leave Libya.

In a statement released today, His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom, said: “The confirmation of the murder of Ethiopian Christians by Daesh (IS) in Libya has been received with deep sadness. These executions that unnecessarily and unjustifiably claim the lives of innocent people, wholly undeserving of this brutality, have unfortunately become far too familiar. Once again we see innocent Christians murdered purely for refusing to renounce their Faith.”

“As people of faith and none who respect humanity and life, we must continue to speak out against such appalling and senseless violence. As Christians, we remain committed to our initial instinct following the murder of our 21 Coptic brothers in Libya, that it is not only for our own good, but indeed our duty to ourselves, the world, and even those who see themselves as our enemies, to forgive and pray for the perpetrators of this and similar crimes. We pray for these men and women, self-confessed religious people, that they may be reminded of the sacred and precious nature of every life created by God,” he said.

CSW’s Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, “We mourn with the communities in Ethiopia who have lost loved ones in this senseless act and we pray for their families and loved ones. We

also pray that the perpetrators of these atrocities would recognize the sanctity of human life and the damage this and other acts of brutality cause to so many, including to their own humanity.”