

Dear Friend,

I'm writing to you to let you know of a petition to the Scottish Parliament that is currently registering signatures and may be of interest to you and your congregation.

The petition, which closes on 23 June, seeks to introduce legislation in Scotland that would protect places of religious worship and spiritual significance from the effects of artillery and firearms, by way of a 5 mile exclusion zone.

This petition has come about following the seemingly unlikely event where two commercial firing ranges have been created on each side of the Samye Ling Buddhist Monastery and retreat centre in Dumfries and Galloway. These ranges use American style, 50 calibre, military grade weapons that shoot a distance of two miles. In addition, one of the range operators uses the fields surrounding the monastery to hold duck shoots.

The monastery itself is primarily a place of study, contemplation and meditation for the monks, nuns and laypeople who live here and those who visit. It has been a haven for residents, visitors and wildlife alike for over 50 years, and is a safe space for those suffering trauma, including veterans coping with PTSD.

The firing ranges have been operating since 2017 and 2018 respectively, without public consultation or planning permissions. Sadly, attempts by the local community to resolve the resulting difficulties have not been successful.

There is currently no legislation in Scotland to protect places of worship, sanctuary, pilgrimage or peace from the intrusion of surrounding gunfire. It's our firm belief that these places are worth preserving for all those who find benefit from them now and in the future.

The arrival of high velocity shooting ranges in our peaceful valley has galvanised the community here into action, with the wish to prevent this happening to other communities and places of faith. We hope you'll join us in this interfaith call to protect our precious pockets of peace in Scotland, by signing the petition and sharing it amongst your networks.

The petition can be viewed and signed, here:

<https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1874>

Feel free to contact me on this email if you have any questions.

I'd be happy to hear from you.

Yours faithfully,

Ani Sonam
Kagyü Samye Ling Monastery

--

Ask the Scottish Parliament to **Protect our Peace** by signing the petition below

<https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1874>