

Rome, 29 March 2023.

Updated 30 March: For immediate release

**Statement from Cardinal Sean O' Malley OFM Cap., President of the
Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors**

“The Commission has been informed that Father Hans Zollner SJ, has asked to be relieved of his duties as a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. Fr. Hans told me that he came to this decision after reflecting on his recent appointment as consultant for Safeguarding to the Diocese of Rome. In light of this and all his other responsibilities, he has asked to be excused from his place on the Commission and the Holy Father has accepted his request with the deepest of thanks for his many years of service.

As one remaining member of the founding group, Fr. Hans has been an abiding presence over the years as we have seen our Commission grow and find its way as the center for safeguarding throughout the Church. He has helped to shape and implement many of the projects and programs that found their origin in the Commission’s deliberations, most especially the Global Summit in February 2019.

Through the many trainings he has done of Bishops and religious leaders over the years, traveling all of the world, he has become an ambassador for safeguarding and will continue to be a constant presence in this important work through his roles as director of the Institute for Anthropology of the Gregorian University and consultant to the Diocese of Rome for safeguarding. We look forward to continuing our cooperation with Father Hans in our common commitment to making the Church a safe home for all.”

UPDATED WITH THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH:

“Supplementing my earlier sentiments regarding Fr. Zollner’s resignation, I am surprised, disappointed and strongly disagree with his publicly-issued assertions challenging the Commission’s effectiveness. We do both share the view that the protection of children and

vulnerable persons remains at the heart of the Church's mission and the Commission will continue to manifest that conviction. The Commission has a plenary meeting scheduled in the next few weeks during which we can address these and other matters more fully as a group."

ENDS