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**PHILIPPINES**

Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Cecilia B. Rebong  
Permanent Representative of the Philippines  
to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva

Human Rights Council  
**18<sup>th</sup> Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**

**UPR of New Zealand**  
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Thank you Mister President. The Philippines welcomes to the Human Rights Council the delegation of New Zealand led by HE Ms. Judith Collins, Minister of Justice & Minister of Ethnic Affairs.

The Philippines also welcomes the presentation of the national report of New Zealand. We note that the report has undergone a transparent and participatory process involving stakeholders from the government and civil society. For the Philippines, this is a clear demonstration of New Zealand's strong commitment to the UPR process as an important mechanism to promote, protect, and fulfil human rights.

Mister President, the Philippines appreciates that protection of the rights of migrant workers is also a priority for New Zealand. We commend New Zealand's continuing efforts to amend its laws towards building a strong normative protective framework on the rights of migrant workers. We welcome New Zealand's efforts to put into place further measures to combat exploitation of migrant workers. The Philippines is particularly pleased with the changes in New Zealand's immigration operating policies that allow victims who come out with complaints to continue to stay in New Zealand, paving way for exploited migrants to have effective access to remedies. We march <sup>in step</sup> with New Zealand towards strengthening regional cooperation, such as the Bali Process, to combat people smuggling and trafficking in persons.

Mister President, it is in this light that that the Philippines **recommends** that New Zealand considers ratifying the International Convention of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families (ICRMW) and ILO Convention 189.

[On the matter of persons with disabilities (PWDs), Mister President, the Philippines welcomes the strong commitment of New Zealand towards the promotion and protection of the rights of PWDs. We appreciate the inclusive and participatory vision of the New Zealand's Disability Strategy. We also recognize the positive initiatives for the PWDs, particularly the establishment in New Zealand of a Ministerial Committee on Disability and the provision of funding to implement programs for the PWDs. The Philippines **recommends** that New Zealand to consider further enhancing its policies and programs for PWDs in implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.]

In conclusion, Mister President, my delegation is pleased that New Zealand <sup>has</sup> made significant progress in advancing the human rights of its people during the reporting period. The Philippines, as a fellow Asia Pacific nation, joins other delegations in this Council in wishing New Zealand well, as it implements its programs and policies to promote, protect and fulfil human rights. Thank you.

**END**