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**STATEMENT BY MAURITIUS AT THE 19TH SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP-
CONSIDERATION OF THE UPR REPORT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
29 APRIL 2014**

Mr President

My delegation thanks H.E. *Ms. Mumba Matipa Wivine, Minister of Justice & Human Rights* for the detailed presentation of the National UPR report of The Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mauritius welcomes the inclusive nature of the consultations held in the preparation of the report, with the assistance of the UN Joint Human Rights Office.

The decision of the Government of DRC to strengthen its normative and institutional framework for human rights since its first review is commendable, in particular the establishment of the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the National Agency to Combat Violence Against Women and Girls.

We welcome the promulgation of the legislation of March 2013 to establish the National Human Rights Commission in accordance with the Paris Principles. We consider it an essential tool in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr President,

The adoption of the National Strategy to combat sexual and gender-based violence and its relevant Plan of Action are positive steps that will no doubt provide consolation to victims of sexual violence. We also note with satisfaction the establishment of special police units in the east of DRC to protect women and children from violence. The Joint Statement signed in March 2013 between the Prime Minister of the DRC and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Sexual Violence clearly demonstrates the Government's commitment to step up efforts in this regard.

Mauritius commends the Government of DRC for introducing progressively free primary education in the country and the development of a National Education Strategy despite challenges faced in its implementation. We encourage the Government to seek the assistance of the relevant UN agencies to further its goal of providing free and accessible education to all.

We also wish to thank the Delegation of the DRC for its continued engagement with the UPR Process of the Human Rights Council.

I thank you, President.