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Mr President,

New Zealand welcomes the delegation from South Sudan to the Human Rights Council.

New Zealand condemns the gross violations of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law during the conflict in South Sudan, including targeted attacks on civilians, rape and sexual and gender-based violence, and arbitrary detention and abduction.

New Zealand **recommends** that the Government of South Sudan and all parties to the conflict immediately end these violations, and commit to and implement a political solution to the conflict.

The 2015 peace agreement envisaged a range of transitional justice, accountability and reconciliation institutions, which are essential for long-term peace in South Sudan. New Zealand **recommends** that South Sudan take action to implement these arrangements.

New Zealand furthermore **recommends** that South Sudan ensure protection for freedom of expression and association, and take action to protect journalists.

Thank you Mr President.