**STATEMENT BY ZIMBABWE ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE REPUBLIC OF GABON: 7 NOVEMBER 2017**

Thank you Mr President,

My delegation welcomes and thanks the delegation of Gabon for their report, which outlines the steps taken to ensure the implementation of the recommendations arising from the country’s last review in 2012.

It is noted that a number of amendments to the law have been introduced aimed at bringing national legislation into line with several UN human rights instruments, including the Children’s Code which, when finally adopted, would close the legislative gaps related to the definition of the child, early marriage and violence.

In the area of economic, social and cultural rights, a number of initiatives have been undertaken, including: the development and adoption of a national health policy and establishment of a universal national health insurance scheme; the expansion of school infrastructure and supply of equipment and textbooks in order to increase enrolment rates, especially in higher education; the extension of social protection measures to the most disadvantaged populations, including persons with disabilities; and the setting of quotas on women’s access to senior civil posts.

It is recommended that Gabon should accelerate its efforts towards adopting the new law on the organisation and functioning of the National Human Rights Commission designed to make it more effective.

I thank you, Mr President.