**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE AT THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) OF LEBANON AT THE 37TH UPR WORKING GROUP, 18 JANUARY 2021**

Mdm President,

Singapore welcomes Lebanon’s participation in the UPR process and recognises the country’s progress since its last review to promote and protect the human rights of its population despite many challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to recover from the humanitarian impact of the August 2020 explosion in the port of Beirut.

We commend Lebanon’s substantial efforts to advance the rights of women, such as the adoption of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2017 – 2030 as well as special measures during the pandemic to address the increase in domestic violence from quarantine restrictions. **Singapore recommends that, to increase community buy-in and implementation, Lebanon enhances its awareness-raising activities, at all levels of society on the key aspects of its National Strategy for Gender Equality, working with international partners on these goals as appropriate.**

We note Lebanon’s ongoing focus on eradicating poverty as well as the consistent support that has been provided to those in vulnerable socio-economic situations, including longer-term policies with the aim to lift groups out of poverty through the provision of technical and skills training. Recognising that work has already started on a social protection plan, **Singapore recommends that Lebanon continues to work with the relevant stakeholders to finalise a social protection plan, considering especially the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on those living in poverty**.

 As a fellow small state, we wish Lebanon every success in achieving its development goals and improving the lives of its people. We are confident that Lebanon will be able to overcome its challenges to achieve these objectives.

Thank you.

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