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President,

New Zealand welcomes this opportunity for dialogue with Mauritania.

New Zealand **recommends** that Mauritania take further steps towards the formal abolition of the death penalty, including through legislative changes to remove capital punishment from its penal code, and ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

We **recommend** that Mauritania intensify its efforts to eliminate slavery, and strengthen the capacity of courts to ensure that all crimes of slavery are subject to prosecution.

New Zealand also **recommends** that Mauritania provide a constructive and safe environment for peaceful assembly and freedom of expression to enable civil society, non- governmental organisations and human rights defenders to conduct their activities.

We also **recommend** that Mauritania address the discriminatory impact on women of its existing laws on divorce, child custody and inheritance.

Finally, we **recommend** that Mauritania act to enforce its 2017 law recognising reproductive health as a universal right as well as the country’s criminalisation of female genital mutilation and to fully implement its general code on children’s protection.

Thank you President.