**STATEMENT BY BOTSWANA DURING THE 3RD REVIEW OF REPUBLIC OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA AT THE 37TH SESSION OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR)**

(19th January 2021, Geneva)

**Your Excellency,**

1. Botswana warmly welcomes the delegation of the Islamic republic of Mauritania to the third cycle of the UPR process and thanks them for a comprehensive national report, including further updates provided today.
2. We welcome the implementation of many recommendations of the second cycle, including one of ours. In line with our recommendation, we note the adoption of legislation on prevention and punishment of trafficking in persons. Mauritania has also approved a law combating violence against women and girls. We urge Mauritania to ensure this law is adopted by the National Assembly, and to ensure its implementation.
3. We commend Mauritania for its reforms and setting up of new institutions, including the establishment of courts specializing in the fight against slavery and slavery-like practices, the constitutional reform of 2017 as well as anti-corruption measures.
4. To augment progress made, Botswana makes the following two recommendations to address remaining challenges:
5. Adopt a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach to combat female genital mutilation, including through adopting a law criminalising FGM and embarking on training and awareness raising campaigns.
6. Intensify efforts to prohibit all forms of slavery, including providing enough financial and human resources to the specialised courts to ensure investigated cases lead to convictions in order to send a strong message to all perpetrators.

We wish Mauritania a successful review outcome.

**I thank you.**