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

(18th January 2021, Geneva)

**Your Excellency**,

1. Botswana warmly welcomes the delegation of the Lebanese Republic to the third cycle of the UPR process. We thank the delegation for their comprehensive national report.

1. At the onset, let me take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt condolences to the victims of the devastating explosion in the port of Beirut last August. We hope that the victims are making a steady recovery from the injuries and loss they suffered, and that the efforts to rebuild are progressing well despite the circumstances.
2. We commend Lebanon’s continued cooperation with the UN human rights protection mechanisms and monitoring bodies, including welcoming visits by the Special Procedure Mandate holders.
3. As a form of encouragement to Lebanon to protect the rights of Women and Children, Botswana recommends that Lebanon:
   1. Intensify efforts towards the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, with set timelines
   2. Ratifies the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
4. We wish Lebanon a successful review outcome.

**I thank you.**