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Madame President,

New Zealand welcomes this opportunity for dialogue on the human rights situation in Mozambique. We also wish to offer our condolences to the victims of the recent insurgency in Cabo Delgado.

New Zealand notes with concern the credible reports of an increase in gender-based and domestic violence in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. We **recommend** that Mozambique continue to strengthen measures to combat sexual and gender-based violence.

New Zealand is also concerned by credible reports of the persecution of journalists, human rights defenders, activists, and academics. This includes allegations of killings, disappearances and general harassment. New Zealand **recommends** that Mozambique take all necessary steps to protect and fulfil the rights to freedom of expression and association, access to information and media freedoms. We also **recommend** that Mozambique undertake full independent and impartial investigations into these alleged killings, disappearances and persecutions, and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

Thank you.