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**Republic of the Marshall Islands**

**STATEMENT by Mr. Samuel L. Lanwi Jr., Deputy Permanent Representative**

**39th Session, Universal Periodic Review**

**8 November 2021**

**Geneva**

**Antigua and Barbuda**

*Check against delivery*

Thank you, Madam President,

The Marshall Islands warmly welcomes the Delegation of Antigua and Barbuda to this UPR cycle and thanks them for their report.

We commend Antigua and Barbuda on the adoption of several international human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic and Equal Opportunities Act among others.

However, we remain concerned about the human trafficking taking place in Antigua and Barbuda and the related sexual exploitation as well as the lack of legal policies to promote and protect women’s rights and human rights in general.

With a view to further improve the human rights situation in the country and in the spirit of constructive engagement, we offer the following recommendations for Antigua and Barbuda’s consideration:

1. Strengthen the local Trafficking in Persons Prevention Committee in order to completely halt any form of human trafficking;
2. Establish a mandate to promote and protect women’s rights to provide an independent alternative to the Office of the Ombudsman to address sexual harassment and discrimination against women as they still remain in a special position of vulnerability prone to violence, rape and sexual harassment; and
3. Officially repeal capital punishment as a legal sentence from national legislation as well as provisions authorizing judicial corporal punishment for persons under 18.

In closing, we wish the Delegation of Antigua and Barbuda all success during this UPR cycle.

Kommol tata and thank you.