**STATEMENT BY ZIMBABWE ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA: 17 JANUARY 2018\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Thank you Mr President,

My delegation welcomes and thanks the delegation of Botswana for their report, which highlights progress made in the implementation of the recommendations from the country’s 2nd cycle review.

The adoption in 2016 of the Vision 2036 blueprint with an overarching theme of “Achieving Prosperity for All” and the Eleventh National Development Plan (NDP11) as the first in a series to implement the former, has provided a strong foundation for Botswana to expand its economy and empower its citizens.

It is noted that the Government of Botswana continues to implement Poverty Eradication initiatives which include the Youth Empowerment Scheme, Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme and Destitute Persons’ Programme. In addition, the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) facilitates access to tertiary education for graduated OVCs and learners with special needs, and provides psychosocial support and early childhood development.

Another noteworthy development is that human rights education has been streamlined in the school curriculum at the primary and secondary levels, while human rights has been included in the training curriculum of the defence and security services.

Regarding its international obligations, Botswana continues to cooperate with the UN Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies by facilitating their visits and submitting its reports, respectively.

My delegation makes the following recommendations:

* That Botswana finalises its plans to develop a National Human Rights Strategy and National Action Plan; and
* Accelerates ongoing efforts to domesticate the provisions of the international human rights treaties to which it is a party.

I thank you, Mr President.