**STATEMENT BY ZIMBABWE ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN: 15 MAY 2018**

Thank you Mr President,

My delegation welcomes and thanks the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan for their national report, which details the efforts taken to implement the recommendations from the country’s second cycle review as well as recent developments in the area of the promotion and protection of human rights.

Under the auspices of the National Plan of Action for More Effective Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms, improvements have been made to the legislative and regulatory frameworks. A number of measures have also been introduced aimed at guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of different categories of the population, such as the rights of prisoners, refugees and IDPs, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, children and women.

Regarding its international obligations, Azerbaijan has extended a standing invitation to all the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council and also fulfilled its reporting obligations to the UN Treaty Bodies in a timely manner.

It is recommended that Azerbaijan:

* Strengthens existing measures to raise awareness of and combat discrimination against women; and
* Accelerates its legislative reform process aimed at protecting the rights of the child.

I thank you, Mr President.