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Mr President,

New Zealand welcomes China’s participation in the 31st session of the Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council and we wish to make the following recommendations.

New Zealand wishes to **commend** China’s acceptance of our previous recommendation during the 2013 Universal Periodic Review to move towards ratification of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights at the earliest possible date. In that regard, New Zealand **requests** that China provide an update on ratification and **recommends** that China continues to work towards ratification by the earliest possible date.

New Zealand **recommends** China respect, protect and fulfil the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, in accordance with General Comment 22 of Human Rights Committee, including the exercise of these rights by ethnic minorities including ethnic Uighurs and Tibetans. To this end, New Zealand **recommends** that China resume the two-way dialogue on Tibet.

New Zealand also **recommends** that China implement the recommendations of Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the combined fourteenth to seventeenth periodic reports of China, including to respond to concerns about detention of individuals who have not been lawfully charged, tried and convicted for a criminal offence.

Finally, New Zealand **commends** China on reducing the number of crimes punishable by death from 68 to 46. We **recommend** that China continues reform towards eventual abolition of the death penalty, including greater transparency about its use while also commuting all death sentences of prisoners on death row, and ensure that the ECOSOC minimum-standards are observed.

Thank you Mr President.