**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE AT THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) OF NEW ZEALAND AT THE 32ND UPR WORKING GROUP, 21 JANUARY 2018**

Mr President,

Singapore welcomes the delegation of New Zealand to the 32nd UPR Working Group.

We commend the measures implemented by the New Zealand Government since its last UPR to better promote and protect the human rights of its people such as amending its Human Rights Act in 2016 and the establishment of an International Human Rights Governance Group in 2017.

We also acknowledge the New Zealand Government’s continuing efforts to improve the well-being of its indigenous peoples across all sectors and to safeguard their rights.

The New Zealand Government has identified family and sexual violence, in particular violence against women and children, as a major human rights challenge. We note that the Government is planning to create a dedicated agency to formulate a whole-of-government response to family violence and sexual violence.

**We recommend that this agency be set up as soon as possible, and that it is sufficiently resourced with adequate funding and expertise to ensure its effectiveness.**

We commend the sustained efforts of the Government in promoting gender equality. In particular, for encouraging women and girls to train and work in occupations where high growth is projected and where women are under-represented – in particular in science, technology, and engineering – and urging vulnerable groups of women to take up trades training.

**We recommend that the Government collaborate closer with the private sector and other relevant organisations and associations to find ways to remove structural or policy barriers that can impede women from contributing more in the workplace and in all sectors.**

Singapore and New Zealand have strong bilateral relations. We are working to conclude a broad Enhanced Partnership Agreement this year. New Zealand has been an active delegation at the Council and at the UN. As fellow small states, we hope that New Zealand will act sensitively in this regard, and take into account specific national circumstances and social contexts of its partners.

Thank you Mr President.

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