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Mr President,

New Zealand welcomes the participation of Nicaragua today.

New Zealand **recommends** that Nicaragua immediately cease the repression of public protests, particularly the unlawful arrests and arbitrary detentions of those involved in public protests. We recommend that Nicaragua guarantee the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens, especially their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly without fear of reprisals, threats, attacks, harassment or unjust prosecution.

New Zealand **recommends** that Nicaragua ensure that all security forces act in accordance with the principles of legitimate, proportionate and necessary use of force in the context of protests. We recommend that the government ensures that the National Police refrain from carrying out acts that constitute torture or other ill treatment against detainees and demonstrators.

We also **recommend** that Nicaragua repeal any law, policy or practice that places obstacles to legitimate activities to promote and defend human rights. This includes the misuse of legislation and administrative measures by the government to close down, raid or silence civil society organisations.

Thank you Mr President.