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Mr President,

New Zealand welcomes the participation of Egypt today.

New Zealand **recommends** that Egypt:

* Extends a standing invitation to all special procedure mandate holders.
* Fosters an environment conducive to an active civil society, including by unblocking news and social media websites.
* Ensures that all prisoners are provided with the minimum standards of humane treatment, including protection from all forms of torture.
* Ceases immediately the use of the death penalty, especially for those under the age of 18 years at the time of offending.
* Increase support for family planning and reproductive life skills.

We **commend** Egypt for its positive reforms in the field of gender equality, and the rights of persons with disabilities. In particular, we acknowledge the 2015 launch of national strategies to combat violence against women, female genital mutilation, and early marriage as well as substantive efforts to improve access by persons with disabilities to government services. We **encourage** further progress in these areas.

[New Zealand is **concerned** however by the restriction of freedom of expression in Egypt, including where this has impacted the work of political parties, journalists and NGOs. New Zealand is also **concerned** by reports of arbitrary arrests and detention.]

Thank you Mr President.