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Madame President

New Zealand welcomes Belarus’ participation in this process, and the opportunity for dialogue on human rights issues.

New Zealand **remains concerned** about the human rights situation in Belarus, following the elections in August 2020.

New Zealand **recommends** that Belarus acts immediately to provide a safe environment for peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, for the Belarussian people, NGOs and civil society.

New Zealand **recommends** that Belarus ceases repressive tactics against the media, including harassment and imprisonment of journalists, revocation of accreditation, and the blocking of independent media, opposition websites, and internet access.

New Zealand is particularly concerned about credible reports of arbitrary detention and torture of peaceful demonstrators by security forces. New Zealand **recommends** that Belarus undertakes effective and impartial investigations into these allegations, and takes action to implement its obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Finally, New Zealand **recommends** that Belarus immediately implement a formal moratorium on executions, and takes steps toward total abolition of the death penalty.

Thank you, Madame President.