

Closing Statement
Universal Periodic Review, Geneva

Mr President

Distinguished Members of the Council

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of Mauritius, my delegation joins me in thanking and congratulating you as well as your team for your mastery in presiding the deliberations and for the smooth running of the proceedings of the Working Group of the Human Rights Council.

The Universal Periodic Review has provided an excellent opportunity for the Government of Mauritius to share with the members of the Human Rights Council and the international community, what Mauritius has been able to achieve for the enhancement of Human Rights and the challenges we are facing.

I, sincerely, hope that we have been able to provide some significant updates and clarifications on the various initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Mauritius in the fulfilment of its obligations under the various Conventions, and explain as to why a few recommendations have not been fully implemented yet.

I wish to place on record our gratitude to all esteemed members of the Human Rights Council for their participation and their constructive recommendations. We also value their appreciation of the progress achieved by Mauritius and their sincere wish to see Mauritius progress further. Our priorities will, as has

become apparent during the deliberations of the Council, include domestic violence, child protection, rights of LGBT community, socio-economic development, just to list a few. I will nevertheless expatiate later in my remarks on one additional priority on which, we submit, the Council should focus its attention in the immediate future.

With the setting up of the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow Up (NMRF), we have consolidated our approach of wide consultations on all human rights issues. We have, therefore expressed our wish to consider all recommendations with the stakeholders in Mauritius, and have a concerted approach prior to responding thereon. We believe this will ensure a holistic response to the recommendations made. We undertake to submit a written document prior to the Human Rights Council plenary session in next March 2019, indicating our views on the recommendations made.

We still have some challenges ahead and we hope that with the newly set up Ministry for Human Rights, we will be able to address them through intense Human Rights Education and consultations with all stakeholders through the National Mechanism For Reporting and Follow Up (NMRF).

Mr President,

I wish, on behalf of the Government of Mauritius at this stage to reiterate that Mauritius will also continue its efforts to complete the decolonization process so that it can fully exercise its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago.

“The Government of Mauritius reiterates that it does not recognize the so-called “British Indian Ocean Territory” which the United Kingdom purported to create by illegally excising the Chagos Archipelago from the territory of Mauritius prior to its accession to independence. The Chagos Archipelago, which has always formed an integral part of Mauritius, was excised in violation of international law and United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, 2066 (XX) of 16 December 1965, 2232 (XXI) of 20 December 1966 and 2357 (XXII) of 19 December 1967.”

Mr President,

With your permission I wish at this stage to draw the attention of the distinguished delegates in this august assembly to one priority which we believe should receive the attention of one and all. Mr President, as we all gather to commemorate 100 years of the Armistice this Sunday, we have to face a glaring reality – hate speech is rising exponentially and to make matters worse, hate speech is propagating like a virus within the anonymity of the internet and online platforms. Worse still Mr President, the anonymity of the internet promotes a culture of impunity. Hate speech, impersonation, molestation, bullying, stalking, intimidation and indeed terrorism take advantage of this anonymity over the internet and online platforms to create havoc in our societies and this once again in an environment which unfortunately is conducive to the further development of this culture of impunity. Combatting impunity in its new form should be on our common agenda. Impunity will otherwise lead to the collapse of the rule of law. These are the new forms of threats to world peace and security and also to the

peaceful enjoyment of human rights by the citizens of our respective societies. My submission is that State parties should face these glaring realities and come up with recommendations on how best to address these issues. On behalf of the Government of Mauritius, I look forward to working in the closest forms of collaboration with the OHCHR on these new and emerging issues and this with a view to ending this culture of impunity. We look forward to further collaboration with a view to establishing effective mechanisms for accountability. Such national accountability mechanisms will go a long way to reinforcing the rule of law. The sooner we address these new phenomenon, the better it will be for our respective societies.

Before concluding Mr President, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for the excellent arrangements they have made with a view to ensuring that our delegation have the best working conditions and to facilitating our consultations with the OHCHR. Also, we would like to thank the Troika members, namely, the United Kingdom, Mongolia and Togo for their professionalism and efficiency. Last but not least, I wish to thank the people of this beautiful canton de Geneve for their kind hospitality.

Mr President, I wish to reaffirm the commitment of Mauritius to continue working in close collaboration with the Human Rights Council and the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Thank you.