**“10 years anniversary of the establishment of the Working Group on**

**Discrimination against women and girls”**

**30 November 2020. 14:00-15:30**

**Opening remarks by Amb. Socorro Flores (3:30 minutes)**

I would like to thank the Working Group for the invitation to participate in this event to commemorate the 10th anniversary of its creation. More than 10 years ago, Mexico together with other States, civil society organizations and women human rights defenders, started the journey that led to the creation of the Working Group.

At that time, we were convinced of the need of a special procedure dealing exclusively with the issue of discrimination against women and girls. Now we reaffirm this conviction because there are no doubts that women and girls rights need to be mainstreamed in the work of the United Nations. When we advance gender equality, we also advance sustainable development, global justice and equality, peace and security and the fight against climate change.

However, despite this progress, most of the countries in the world, if not all of them, are still far from reaching substantive gender equality. Even worst: we are witnessing attempts to undermine the progress made at the international, regional and national level, and the resurgence of regressive trends that threaten gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and contravene international human rights norms.

For these reasons, Mexico deeply appreciates the work that this Group has conducted throughout these 10 years. The expertise and diversity of its members, former and current, have contributed to progress on gender equality and has guided the discussions of the Human Rights Council and other fora.

The Working Group has helped us to understand or to reaffirm that gender discrimination is a structural problem in many societies, and that women and girls are subject to multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination, which obstruct their full participation in social, economic and political life. It is therefore essential to combat gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes, wherever they occurs.

In addition to this, the COVID-19 pandemichas exacerbated gender inequality. Women and girls have faced a disproportionate workload, due to cultural stereotypes on gender roles within the family and have suffered restrictions in the enjoyment of their rights because of the measures implemented to contain the spread of the pandemic.

In these challenging times, it is crucial that States, civil society organizations and feminist movements continue to make concerted efforts to address patriarchal stereotypes and other root causes of discrimination.

Mexico is highly committed to eradicate all forms of discrimination against women and girls. This subject is without any doubt one of our top priorities at the Human Rights Council. This commitment is reflected in our Feminist Foreign Policy,whichis directed to promote women and girls rights, and to eliminate patriarchal stereotypes that are still present in our societies.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our support to the work of this Group. It has been a pleasure to be a partner of the Group during the last 10 years, and it will be an honor to continue advocating alongside the five experts for the rights, justice and dignity of all women and girls around the world.

Thank you.