**AFRICAN GROUP STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED AT THE INTERSESSIONAL SEMINAR ON THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE NON-REPATRIATION OF IILLICIT FUNDS ON THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, 8TH FEBRUARY 2022 AT 11.00AM**

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**Mr. President,**

Allow me first of all to thank Mrs. Michelle Bachelet, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and all the panellists for their exhaustive interventions.

The African Group has been presenting its resolution on “The negative impact of the non-repatriation of illicit funds on the enjoyment of human rights” for the past 10 years.

Flows of funds of illicit origin deprive African countries of resources required to realize human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, and in particular the right to development, and pose significant obstacles to the mobilization of domestic resources to finance sustainable development goals.

Moreover, this phenomenon threatens the stability and sustainable development of States, undermines the values of democracy and the rule of law and jeopardizes social, economic and political development.

This was reflected in numerous resolutions by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, and it is unfortunate that this topic has been on the table for a long time with little progress.

There is an urgent need to return assets of illicit origin derived from corruption, in particular to countries from which they originated, in consistent with the principles of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, so as to enable countries to design and fund development projects in accordance with their national priorities.

To date, African countries receive almost nothing during the past decade, and despite the fact that 187 states have joined the UN convention against corruption. The lack of concrete achievement in this regard, sends negative signals and hinders the fight against corruption within the continent.

This seminar sheds light once more on this important topic, and we ask all the members of the council to support this important African endeavour and to help the continent mitigate the human rights repercussions of this phenomenon.

**I thank you Mr. President**