*Introduction*

Madam President,

First I would like to thank minister… for his presentation of the national report.

*substance*

Since early 2011 government repression has been very visible in Bahrain.

To secure respect for human rights major policy changes are needed in the field of freedom of speech, including online (I refer to the recent case of twitter activity by mr Nabil Rajab); freedom of assembly; preventive detention and the treatment of detainees (I recall the case of Mr Mahdi ‘Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb).

*recommendations*

Therefore the Netherlands recommends:

1. the abolition of legal provisions unduly restricting peaceful demonstrations, to remove restrictions on freedom of expression contained in law 32 of 2006, and to allow the opposition greater access to television broadcasts, radio broadcasts and print media (para 1724 CIBI).
2. to entrench in the standard procedures that every person arrested be given a copy of the arrest warrant and no person should be held incommunicado. In any event, all detention should be subject to effective monitoring by an independent body (para 1722 d CIBI).

Thank you madam President.

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Questions

**Universal Periodic Review (May- June 2012) – Questions from the Netherlands**

**Bahrain**

1. According to several human rights organizations there is strong evidence that human rights defenders like former president of the Bahrain Teachers’ Association (BTA) Mahdi ‘Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb have recently been tortured in detention in Bahrain (A/HRC/WG.6/13/BHR/3, par.25) . To what extent does the government of Bahrain intend to follow up on its acceptance of the recommendation regarding the conduct of an independent, impartial and thorough inquiry into the source of threats, ill-treatment, torture and all forms of intimidation and harassment as well as unfair trial and initial arbitrary detention?

2. Will the government of Bahrain ensure that all allegations of unlawful killings and excessive force against protesters are independently, promptly and thoroughly investigated; that those responsible are brought to justice; and that appropriate reparation are provided to victims?

3. What measures have been taken to ensure that journalists and human rights defenders (A/HRC/WG.6/13/BHR/3, par.40) perform their work without intimidation, hindrance, or harassment?