

**Statement made by Pakistan during the review of the Netherlands  
during the 13<sup>th</sup> session of the UPR Working Group, 31 May 2012, Geneva**

I thank you Madam President

We wish to welcome the Dutch delegation to its UPR and thank ..... for his/her comprehensive update on the situation of human rights in the Kingdom of Netherlands. We have read the report and two compilations with interest and note a number of positive steps taken by the Dutch government in the domain of human rights since April 2008. The Netherlands has an impressive record of timely reporting to the treaty bodies.

Madam President,

Dutch society has been known for its "individual freedoms"; however, as rightly reflected in the report, absolute freedoms can impinge on the rights and freedoms of others. The report also says that freedom of expression in the Netherlands does not protect utterances that are insulting, incite hatred or discrimination, or propagate violence.

Despite this clear pronouncement and in presence of an elaborate framework to combat racism and xenophobia, the reality is very different. We note with concern that the situation on the ground is not conducive to promote multiculturalism in a diverse society. The CERD raised its concerns at the incidence of racist and xenophobic speech emanating from extremist Dutch political parties. We also regret the choice of the government not to appeal the verdict made by the Amsterdam District Court in the case of Geert Wilders on the charges of incitement to hatred and discrimination by producing a controversial documentary film - FITNA. We are further shocked to learn that Wilders has recently authored a book to demonize Islam and to incite hatred and violence. We would like to know how the Government intends to stop propagation of his hateful campaign of Islamophobia which amounts to incitement to violence and hatred and is a clear example of discrimination..

In conclusion, we would like to make the following recommendations to the Dutch delegation for its consideration;

- i. appeal the verdict made by the Amsterdam District Court in the case of Geert Wilders on the charges of incitement to hatred and discrimination,
- ii. adopt measures to criminalize incitement to hatred and imminent violence based on religion or belief;
- iii. strengthen legal and institutional measures to prevent and suppress manifestations of racism, xenophobia and intolerance,
- iv. contribute effectively in the operationalization of the right to development at the international level.

I thank you.

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Speaking Time: 2:00

Speaking Slot: 18