

United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland National Statement

Universal Periodic Review – Netherlands

Thank you Madam President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the Netherlands delegation, and applauds their obvious commitment to human rights and the improvements made since the last UPR cycle.

In particular, the formation of a comprehensive new national human rights institution is an achievement which will contribute to an even higher profile of human rights in the Netherlands.

We also welcome the measures enacted since the previous review to speed up the determination of asylum claims, reducing the potential psychological risks to asylum seekers and their children and wider families. We note however, in the report of the Ombudsman for Children, that some claimants still have to wait several years before determination of their status. Does the Dutch Government intend to take further action to ensure that all claimants receive a timely hearing?

Access to the legal system is a lynchpin of human rights provision. We commend the Netherlands for their strong legal framework, but we note from the report of the National Ombudsman that the Government planned to significantly increase court fees. If this measure comes into force, how will the Government ensure that all citizens still have ready access to the legal system to protect their rights when necessary?

We also note reports of discrimination against non-Dutch nationals in the labour market. Is the Government planning to take additional, concrete steps to ensure that migrants and ethnic minorities receive equal treatment in the workplace?

We have 2 **recommendations**:

- That the Government consider additional measures to ensure that the interests of children are properly taken into account in provisions for asylum seeking families, since they are especially impacted by long delays and uncertainty.

- That they consider additional steps to ensure that any potential changes in court fees are proportionate and affordable, and that they do not prejudice access to the legal system.

Thank you Madam President.