**Universal Periodic Review 16 – Uzbekistan**

**Intervention by the Netherlands**

Mr. President,

The Netherlands would like to thank the government of Uzbekistan for its national report and the detailed explanation of the national human rights situation in Uzbekistan by Mr/Ms ………………...

The Netherlands notes that some encouraging steps have been taken since the last UPR. I would like to highlight the decrease in the use of child labour in the 2012 cotton harvest. Child labour has long been a matter of serious concern to the international community, including my country. I would also mention the introduction of a number of reforms that are serving to deepen the process of democratic reform and establish civil society in the country.

While encouraging Uzbekistan to take other meaningful steps to implement its international human rights obligations, I would like to single out three issues requiring urgent attention.

First, Uzbekistan has agreed in principle to receive a visit by the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders. The Netherlands recommends that Uzbekistan extend standing invitations to this and other UN Special Rapporteurs on human rights issues, in particular those who have made visit requests.

Second, the government is obliged to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people, especially when their situation is precarious owing to national traditions that reject such orientations. The Netherlands therefore recommends that Uzbekistan decriminalise consensual homosexual activity in compliance with its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and prohibit discrimination and harassment of LGBT’s on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

Lastly, the Netherlands is gravely concerned about reports on forced sterilization as a means of forced contraception and would like to remind the government of Uzbekistan of its obligations to respect the human rights of women.

I thank you, Mr. President.