**Universal Periodic Review 17 – Belize**

**Intervention by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr. President,

The Netherlands welcomes the Belizean delegation and commends Belize for taking steps to enhance access to health care. We compliment Belize on the achieved decrease in maternal and infant mortality and the significant increase in the number of births attended by skilled personnel. We wish to underline two recommendations that Belize accepted in the UPR of 2009:

* To raise the minimum age of marriage from 16 to 18 years;
* To take the appropriate and timely legislative measures to ensure that no person can be subject to criminal sanctions for same-sex activity between consenting adults.

While appreciating these positive developments, the Kingdom of the Netherlands remains concerned about several aspects of sexual and reproductive rights and therefore recommends:

1. to take timely and concrete measures such as raising the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 years in order to prevent children from becoming victims of child marriage.
2. to ensure the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

I thank you, Mr. President.