

**Universal Periodic Review 19 – Albania
Intervention by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr. President,

The Netherlands welcomes Albania's concrete steps in advancing equal rights for LGBT persons, enabling a better environment and preventing discrimination, and acknowledge the commitment of its Government, public officials and other important stakeholders in this regard. This commitment will hopefully lead to the further improvement of the position of LGBT persons, in particular by the adoption of legal amendments regarding gender identity, gender expression and hate speech.

However, the Netherlands is concerned about the impartiality of and access to the judicial system and about prevailing attitudes towards gender, which can lead to harmful practices such as prenatal sex selection.

Mr. President, the Kingdom of the Netherlands recommends Albania:

1. To guarantee the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms of its citizens by guaranteeing the independence of the judicial bodies, impartiality in decision making, respecting defendants' right to fair trial, ensuring access to free legal aid and restoring citizens' trust in the justice system by fighting impunity.
2. To develop programs and policies that foster norms and attitudes of zero tolerance for harmful and discriminatory attitudes towards gender, including son preference, which can result in harmful and unethical practices such as prenatal sex selection.

Thank you.