

Intervention by the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Mr. President,

The Netherlands would like to thank the Republic of The Gambia for the national report on the human rights situation. The Netherlands remains concerned about the human rights situation in The Gambia and the lack of progress in many areas since the last UPR.

Persecution and intimidation of human rights defenders and journalists in The Gambia continues to be wide-spread. The Government of The Gambia should take adequate measures to guarantee the safety of human rights defenders and journalists, and their freedom to carry out their invaluable work, in line with its international human rights obligations.

Furthermore, the Netherlands is concerned about the Bill approved by Parliament amending section 144a of the Criminal Code which severely restricts the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBT persons.

In this regard, the Netherlands would like to make the following recommendations:

1. The Netherlands recommends that the President of The Gambia will use his executive power by refraining from signing the said Bill into law and that the Government of The Gambia eliminates all existing legislation penalizing sexual orientation or gender identity.
2. The Netherlands recommends that The Gambia implements swiftly and without preconditions the verdict of the ECOWAS court of 10 June 2014 on the need for a thorough investigation into the disappearances of journalists “Chief” Manneh and Hydera.

Thank you, Mr. President
