**Universal Periodic Review 23 – Saint Lucia**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. Vice President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands warmly welcomes the delegation of Saint Lucia and would like to thank them for the comprehensive report.

We thank Ambassador Rambally for her excellent presentation and for elaborating on the issue of the death penalty and the ongoing debate in parliament.

We are concerned however, about some politicians calling for the retention of the death penalty in light of rising crime rates.

The Netherlands therefore recommends Saint Lucia to take all necessary steps to formally abolish the death penalty.

We welcome the importance Saint Lucia attaches to women’s rights. However, we are concerned that same-sex sexual activities between adults continue to be discriminated and criminalised.

The Netherlands recommends Saint Lucia to engage with civil society organisations representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons to implement education on human rights and anti-discrimination awareness-raising programmes. As well as reviewing legislation that is discriminatory to LGBTI and arbitrarily interferes with the right to privacy, as it encourages stigmatisation of LGBTI persons.

We wish Saint Lucia every success for this current UPR.

Thank you, Mr. Vice President