**Universal Periodic Review 24 – Latvia**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Netherlands thanks Latvia for its report [and for addressing our advance questions]. We appreciate the positive role Latvia plays in the field of human rights, both at home and abroad, and commend in particular Latvia’s track record when it comes to press freedom. We encourage Latvia to continue its ongoing efforts also in areas where there is still room for improvement, for example within the judicial system or when it comes to non-discrimination.

The Netherlands recommends Latvia:

1. To adopt a National Action Plan to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
2. To introduce legislation that recognises the diversity of forms of partnerships and that provides same sex couples with the same rights and social security as couples of the opposite sex, as previously recommended.

Mr President, these recommendations are based on the following considerations:

Firstly, the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights has recommended all countries to adopt National Action Plans for implementation of the Guiding Principles. The Netherlands would be willing to share our experiences with Latvia in this regard.

Secondly, the Netherlands attaches great importance to equal rights for LGBTI people, as part of the promotion of universal human rights for all. We recognize that tolerance towards the LGBTI community has considerably increased in Latvian society in recent years, and commend the Latvian government for successfully ensuring a safe and peaceful Europride in Riga in 2015. However, Latvia does not recognise any form of same-sex partnership.

Thank you, Mr. President.