**Universal Periodic Review 24 – Mozambique**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Netherlands thanks Mozambique for its comprehensive report [and for addressing our advance questions].

The Netherlands commends Mozambique for the significant steps made with respect to the rights of women, children and LGBTI people.

In this respect we particularly compliment Mozambique on the approval of the new penal code which de-criminalizes abortion, *in effect* de-criminalizes homosexuality and criminalizes various forms of sexual violence and abuse.

The Netherlands would like to give the following recommendations to the government of Mozambique:

1. The Netherlands recommends Mozambique to take all necessary steps to ensure that the availability of safe abortion services can be guaranteed, and to sensitize communities to the problems of unsafe abortion;

2. We also recommend Mozambique to revisit the legal framework governing the civil society sector, particularly with a view to reducing bureaucratic restrictions to freedom of association and the registration of national and foreign organizations.

The Netherlands is concerned that abortions will continue to occur outside hospitals under unsafe conditions, unless safe abortion services are made available and accessible countrywide.

Moreover, The Netherlands is concerned that the current legal framework, governing civil society organizations’ rights to registration and to peaceful assembly and association, poses unnecessary restrictions on the stakeholders.

Thank you, Mr. President.