**Universal Periodic Review 26 – Togo**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you, Mr President,

The Netherlands thanks Togo for its comprehensive report. We commend Togo on its accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, its abolition of the death penalty and its commitments made for a universal moratorium on executions.

However, the Netherlands recommends Togo to:

1. address the arbitrary and excessive use of force by law enforcement agencies, in particular the military, by providing effective human rights-sensitive training and additional resources, and setting up accountability mechanisms.
2. carry out immediate, impartial and exhaustive investigations into all allegations of torture, ill-treatment and other human rights violations, in particular in detention centers as recommended previously, and prosecute those responsible.

We note continuous restrictions on free exercise of the right to peaceful assembly, especially for women and those advocating for equal rights for LGBTI persons. Incidences of demonstrations controlled by excessive use of force have been documented. Security forces should develop and apply crowd control techniques which minimize the need for the use of force.

We welcome the 2011 Law on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly as an improved legal framework. However, we are concerned that the new draft law on association may result in restrictions to the right to peaceful assembly and association. We call on Togo to prevent this from happening.

The Netherlands is also concerned about the fact that impunity remains prevalent despite the recommendations made during the previous UPR cycle.

Nonetheless, we hope that this UPR will bring the government and civil society closer together like it did during the process of 2011)

Thank you, Mr President.