**Universal Periodic Review 27 – India**

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**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr. President,

The Netherlands thanks India for its comprehensive report (and for addressing our advance questions).

The Netherlands warmly welcomes the approval of ratification of ILO conventions 138 and 182. We also praise India for the many steps taken since the last review to promote and protect the rights of women. We welcome as well the initiative to enhance compensation to victims of communal violence.

Mr President,

1. The Netherlands recommends the enactment of the *Women Reservation Bill* providing for reservation of seats for women in the parliament and legislative assemblies, in order to enhance political participation of women.
2. The Netherlands also recommends that India take all necessary measures to protect the rights of persons belonging to religious minorities, and repeal laws which restrict religious conversion.

This recommendation is in line with recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The Netherlands regrets that anti-conversion laws are sometimes misused and fuel violence against persons belonging to religious minorities.

Thank you, Mr. President