**Universal Periodic Review 27 – Morocco**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr President,

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

The Netherlands welcomes the continuous efforts to improve the human rights situation. With the 2011 constitution and legislation that followed, many positive steps have been taken.

Looking back at the second UPR cycle, the Netherlands welcomes specifically the change in legislation with regard to perpetrators of sexual violence against minors.

To continue progress, the Netherlands recommends Morocco:

1. To review penal code provisions regarding freedom of expression, in conformity with article 19 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights.
2. To decriminalize consensual sexual relations, including by repealing Penal Code provisions prohibiting same-sex sexual relations (Article 489), sexual relations outside marriage (Article 490) and adultery (Articles 491, 492, 493).

Mr President,

The Netherlands continues to stand ready to cooperate with Morocco by exchanging expertise, dialogue and working with its national human rights institute *CNDH* and its vibrant civil society.

Thank you.