**Universal Periodic Review – Republic of Tunisia**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr. President,

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

We compliment Tunisia with its 2014 constitution, which includes provisions on equal rights for women, freedom of expression and press freedom.

1. The Netherlands recommends Tunisia to abolish article 230 of the penal code that criminalizes homosexuality.
2. We also recommend Tunisia to ensure accountability for all acts of torture that occur within the framework of the fight against terrorism.

Mr President,

Article 230 of the penal code is in violation of article 21 of the constitution and international treaties to which Tunisia is party. In this regard we also feel the need to express concern on forced body cavity searches during the arrest of LGBTI persons, and the absence of a law criminalizing all forms of discrimination, incitement to hatred and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Aware of the challenge caused by international terrorism, we call on Tunisia to wage this battle with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the prohibition of torture. We applaud the gains regarding freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, and encourage Tunisia to continue on this path.

Thank you.