**Universal Periodic Review 44 – Turkmenistan**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of Turkmenistan for the presentation of its national report.

We commend the Turkmen Government for inviting the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural rights.

Building on obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, further measures would be welcomed to combat violence and discrimination on all grounds, including on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Netherlands recommends:

1. Decriminalize consensual same sex relations in compliance with its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
2. Extend a standing invitation to all United Nations Special Procedure mandate holders working on human rights issues and invite in particular the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, and others who have made visit requests.

The Netherlands wishes Turkmenistan every success with the follow-up of all recommendations it receives during this fourth UPR cycle.

Thank you, President.