**Universal Periodic Review 45 – Belize**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

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

We commend the Government of Belize with the adoption of the People’s Constitution Commission Act by the National Assembly ensuring an inclusive and participatory drafting process of a new Constitution for the country.

We further welcome steps taken by the Government to enhance women’s rights in the country, including through the tabling of the Domestic Violence in Belize Motion.

Notwithstanding Belize’s human rights progress in these areas, we remain concerned by the continued existence of the death penalty on the country’s statute books. Furthermore, we regret the lack of a fully empowered and resourced Ombudsman and the lack of progress made to transform the Office of the Ombudsman into a National Human Rights Institution, in compliance with the Paris Principles.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands, therefore, recommends the following:

1. Sign and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on the abolition of the death penalty.
2. Adopt legislation promoting equal opportunities for LGBTIQ+ people and protecting them from discrimination, stigma and violence.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands wishes Belize every success with the implementation and follow-up of all accepted recommendations it receives during this fourth UPR cycle.

Thank you, President.