**Universal Periodic Review 43 – Eritrea**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the delegation of the State of Eritrea.

We are alarmed by the continuation of the indefinite and involuntary conscription for the national service.

In addition, measures would be welcomed to ensure the release of all imprisoned journalists and Human Rights Defenders.

The Netherlands therefore recommends to:

1. End the practice of national service beyond the statutory 18 months and begin a phased demobilization;

2. Unconditionally release all journalists – such as Dawit Isaak - and human rights defenders who have been arbitrarily detained, including incommunicado, for expressing opinions that are not in line with the Government’s views and ensure they can exercise their rights to freedom of expression, opinion and association.

The Netherlands wishes the state of Eritrea every success in its review.

Thank you, President.