**Universal Periodic Review 48 – The Gambia**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Mr Vice-President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands extends its gratitude to the delegation of the Gambia for presenting its national report. We commend the Gambia for its efforts in establishing the Prosecutor's Office and the passed bill on the prevention and Prohibition of Torture.

We remain concerned however about the state of freedom of expression in the country. Therefore, the Netherlands offers the following recommendations to the Gambia:

1. While the Netherlands acknowledges the Gambia’s ongoing commitment to the vital role of civil society, we recommend that the Gambia aligns its national legal provisions with international standards on freedom of expression as outlined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Specifically, we recommend repealing section 173A of the Information and Communications Amendment Act (2013) and amending sections 25(4) and 209 of the Constitution.
2. The Netherlands commends the Gambia on its work towards establishing a hybrid court and recommends that it continues collaboration in the implementation of this initiative.

The Netherlands wishes the Gambia success with its follow-up actions.

Thank you, Mr Vice-President.