**Universal Periodic Review 28 – Gabon**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Netherlands would like to thank Gabon for its comprehensive report. We welcome measures taken by the government of Gabon to enforce and coordinate national legislation and policies to combat the trafficking of persons, especially women and children. The Netherlands also appreciates the steps taken in raising public awareness on the issue of trafficking in persons.

We have, however, concerns about the post-election violence that occurred in Gabon in 2016.

1. The Netherlands therefore recommends that the government of Gabon opens a formal, independent and objective inquiry into the election-related violence and the allegations of serious violations of human rights.
2. We also recommend that Gabon abides by its international obligations with regard to the procedures for arrest and detention, to guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and to exercise the task of governing with due respect for the rule of law.

The Netherlands strongly regrets that the political opposition in Gabon is experiencing pressure and intimidation and wishes to underline the fundamental role the opposition plays in a democratic society.

We wish Gabon every success in its efforts to promote and protect human rights.

Thank you, Mr. President.