**Human Rights Council**

**Universal Periodic Review 28 –Ghana**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Netherlands thanks Ghana for its comprehensive report

We welcome the great importance Ghana attaches to the respect for human rights, the strong democratic credentials your country is known for - proven again by the last elections - and Ghana’s attachment to the principle of the rule of law. We also appreciate that Ghana strongly promotes these universal values on the international stage, for example through the vocal support for the ICC.

Furthermore, we commend Ghana for its clear stand against corruption, including the envisaged installation of the Special Prosecutor.

However, with a view to further improvement, we offer the following recommendations:

1. Firstly, the living conditions in and overcrowding of prisons remains worrying. We appreciate that Ghana has introduced the Justice for All Program, which intends to decongest prisons by organizing in-prison court sittings. In addition, the Netherlands recommends Ghana to consider the introduction of alternative punishments for minor crimes, to alleviate overcrowding.
2. Secondly, the Constitution Review Commission of Ghana recommended in its 2011 report to abolish the death penalty for all crimes. This was never implemented. Taking into account that the death penalty has not been carried out since 1993, the Netherlands strongly recommends Ghana to formally abolish the death penalty.

Thank you, Mr President.