**Universal Periodic Review 22 – Guatemala**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Netherlands welcomes the efforts Guatemala has placed to promote human rights in the police and judiciary, in particular by empowering the human rights units in State institutions through coordination and institutional capacity-building. Among others, the existence of CICIG is important in order to strengthen national judicial institutions and to allow them to continue to confront illegal groups and [organized crime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organized_crime).

The Netherlands regrets the fact that the independence of the judiciary of Guatemala is still facing challenges. Human rights defenders, judges, journalists, women and LGBTIQ are also facing continuing threats, stigmatization, intimidation and attacks, including murder.

For this reason, The Netherlands would like to make two recommendations:

1. The Netherlands recommends Guatemala to take all necessary steps to work towards diminishing threats and violence against human rights defenders, especially women and journalists, and to implement an effective mechanism to protect them from these threats.
2. Furthermore, the Netherlands recommends Guatemala to increase efforts in the fight against impunity and corruption, through increasing the financial resources for the judiciary and through the implementation of judicial reforms aimed at fully ensuring the independence of the judiciary.

Thank you, Mr. President.