**Universal Periodic Review 28 – Sri Lanka**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks Sri Lanka for its comprehensive report. We welcome the progress that has been made in the promotion and protection of human rights since the current government took office in 2015, specifically with regards to freedom of expression and media. However, we note with concern that progress in the constitutional reform and transitional justice process is slowing down.

With a view to improving the human rights situation, the Netherlands recommends Sri Lanka to:

1. Amend the penal Code, particularly Sections 365, 365A to decriminalize consensual same-sex conduct and displays of affection, and
2. To condemn all acts of intimidation of, or violence against, members of religious minorities, and bring all perpetrators to justice without delay, and
3. To actively encourage dialogue between the various religious groups to enhance interfaith solidarity, to prevent potential violence and spread of religious hatred.

Lastly, we welcome the 25% quota for appointment of women in local and provincial elections. We note with regret the absence of women’s voices at decision-making level in the constitutional amendment and transitional justice process.

We wish Sri Lanka every success in its UPR.

Thank you Mr. President.