**Universal Periodic Review 39 – Eswatini**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of Eswatini for the presentation of its national report.

The Netherlands commends the efforts undertaken by the Government of Eswatini to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls.

We are alarmed by the amendment in August 2017 of the Public Order Act, which imposes restrictions on organizers of public gatherings, and that curtail the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly. The Act also lacks mechanisms to hold accountable all those who use unnecessary or excessive force directed against protesters or public gatherings.

The Netherlands **recommends** the Government of Eswatini:

1. To amend the Public Order Act of 2017 so that it fully protects the rights to freedom of expression and to peaceful association and assembly, and allow all people to express their views without fear of reprisals;

2. To decriminalise abortion and guarantee the provision of, and access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and goods, including safe abortion and post-abortion care, and modern contraceptives.

The Netherlands wishes the Government of Eswatini success with the follow-up of all recommendations it receives during this third UPR cycle.