**Universal Periodic Review 40 - South Sudan**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of South Sudan for the presentation of its national report. The peace agreement and government formation constitute important progress towards realizing sustainable peace for the people of South Sudan. However, drastic change is still needed to ensure their human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Government crackdown on activists and CSOs, following a call for peaceful protest by the People’s Coalition for Civilian Action, is exemplary of the hostile climate for civic activism in South Sudan.

The Netherlands recommends the government:

1. To guarantee, in all circumstances, that human rights defenders, in particular Woman Human Rights Defenders, are able to carry out their legitimate work, without fear of violence and reprisals, and free of restrictions, including judicial harassment.
2. To ensure independent investigation and prosecution of all perpetrators of (conflict-related) sexual and gender-based violence, irrespective of ranks, and guarantee survivors’ right to an effective remedy.

The Netherlands wishes South-Sudan success with the follow-up of all recommendations it receives during this UPR.

Thank you.