**Universal Periodic Review 40 – Venezuela**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands remains concerned about the dire human rights situation in Venezuela. We commend and support all actors who strive tirelessly to improve the human rights situation, including civil society organizations, human rights defenders and UN mechanisms.

A sustainable solution to the crisis in Venezuela can be found in a negotiated political solution.

We recommend the Venezuelan authorities the following:

1. Take appropriate action and measures to guarantee a safe working environment for civil society, including Human Rights Defenders, civil society organisations, educators, and healthcare and humanitarian aid workers, free from fear of threats, reprisal, persecution and arbitrary imprisonment and unwarranted limitations to the freedom of association.

2. Take effective measures to ensure freedom of expression, free access to information and press freedom, including by guaranteeing independent investigations in all allegations of crimes against journalists.

I thank you.