**Universal Periodic Review 41 – Poland**

***Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands***

Thank you Mr. Vice-President,

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

The Netherlands commends the Government of Poland on the efforts made to reform its judicial system, such as the abolishment of the disciplinary chamber of the Supreme Court.

At the same time, certain concerns remain regarding the independence of the judicial system, which is a fundamental pillar of the Rule of Law.

We are also concerned about the increased use of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) against journalists, which undermine freedom of speech and independent journalism at large.

The Netherlands **recommends** the Polish Government to:

1. Ensure the independence of the judiciary by addressing concerns regarding the procedure for appointing judges and the composition of the National Council for the Judiciary. In this light, the Netherlands also calls on the Polish Government to fully adhere to rulings of the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights.
2. Take active measures to guarantee equal rights for all, including LGBTIQ+ persons, and ensure adequate protection of minorities from discrimination and hate crimes, including based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Netherlands wishes the Government of Poland every success with the follow-up and implementation of all accepted recommendations it receives during this fourth UPR cycle.

Thank you, Mister President.