**Universal Periodic Review 42 – Pakistan**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands commends Pakistan with the passing of the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Bill in November 2021 and we urge for its proper implementation.

However, we remain concerned about the violence and discrimination against minority groups, including religious, ethnic and sexual and gender based minorities.

The Netherlands **recommends** Pakistan to:

1. Adopt legal and practical measures for effective safeguards in order to prevent the misuse of blasphemy laws and address religious intolerance.
2. Amend articles 25 to 27 of Pakistan’s Constitution, to recognize belonging to a sexual and gender based minority as protected grounds, on the basis of which discrimination is prohibited and enact a comprehensive anti-discrimination law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of protected grounds, including sexual and gender based minorities, and providing effective redress mechanisms.

We wish you a succesful review.