**UPR 29 – The Republic of Botswana**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the Republic of Botswana for its comprehensive report.

We commend Botswana for its active and leading role as a member of the Human Rights Council. Equally, the Netherlands acknowledges Botswana’s support to the International Criminal Court. We also welcome Botwana’s willingness to create a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles.

We do regret, however, that Botswana did not accept any recommendation related to decriminalization of same-sex activities and marriages during the previous UPR-cycle.

In that context, the Netherlands recommends:

1. To adopt specific legislation to protect victims of violence and other human rights violations committed against persons on the basis of their real or imputed sexual orientation or gender identity, in line with resolution 275 of the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights; and
2. To refrain from using criminal charges to obstruct freedom of information and expression, including for journalists who receive information from whistle-blowers.

We wish Botswana every success during the third cycle of the UPR.

Thank you, Mr. President.