**Universal Periodic Review 29 – Montenegro**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks Montenegro for its comprehensive report.

We welcome the amendments that have been introduced last year to bring the criminal provision on torture in accordance with international standards. Furthermore, we are encouraged by investigations and proceedings of cases of war crimes that have been initiated since 2015.

In the spirit of further building on steps undertaken to address these human rights challenges,

1. The Netherlands recommends to ensure that all prosecutions of attacks against journalists, high-level corruption and crimes under international law are conducted effectively and impartially and in accordance with international fair trial standards.
2. We also recommend to amend the national Criminal Code by incorporating a definition of torture that contains all the elements provided for in article 1 of CAT, in particular ensuring penalties are in line with the gravity of the crime.

A strong, accessible and independent judiciary is essential for the protection of human rights. Therefore, further measures should be taken to ensure that allegations of torture, high level corruption and attacks against journalists are adequately investigated.

The Netherlands would like to wish Montenegro every success in the implementation of the recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. President.