**Universal Periodic Review 32 – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 24 January 2019**

Thank you, Mr President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the presentation of its national report.

The Netherlands commends the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the establishment of a special parliamentary advocacy group for LGBTI issues. However, discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation remains a concern, as new anti-discrimination legislation presented to parliament in July last year, has not been adopted yet.

The Netherlands also commends the recent adoption of the media law. Still, concerns on freedom of expression remain present. Mechanisms to ensure a functioning and transparent media market, as well as to improve safety of journalists have yet to be developed.

Therefore, the Kingdom of the Netherlands **recommends** the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:

1. To swiftly and without further delay adopt the new anti-discrimination legislation, aimed at protecting against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
2. To protect freedom of expression, by ensuring a successful implementation of the new media law, providing a secure, fair and functioning media market.

The Netherlands wishes the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia success with the follow-up of all recommendations it receives during this third UPR cycle.

Thank you, Mr President.