**Universal Periodic Review 33 – Côte d’Ivoire**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 7 May 2019**

Mr President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of Côte d’Ivoire for the presentation of its national report.

The Netherlands welcomes the increased efforts of Côte d’Ivoire to promote human rights and gender equality, such as by the inclusion of several articles on the promotion and protection of women’s rights in the 2016 Constitution, and by the alignment of the National Commission on Human Rights with the Paris Principles.

We also note positive steps to implement the 2014 Bill on the protection of human rights defenders. Nevertheless, the Netherlands expresses concern about ongoing human rights violations and abuses, intimidation and harassment of human rights defenders, journalists and critics, and LGBTI persons in Côte d’Ivoire.

The Netherlands therefore recommends Côte d’Ivoire:

1. To amend Article 360 of the Criminal Code and other provisions of its legislation which discriminate against persons on the grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation, in line with SDG 5 and 10;
2. To align all provisions in the Criminal Code and the Law on the Press that currently restrict the right to freedom of expression with international and regional human rights law, in line with SDG 16;

The Netherlands wishes Côte d’Ivoire success with the follow-up of all recommendations it receives during this third UPR cycle.

Thank you, Mr President.