**Universal Periodic Review 33 – Dominica**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 9 May 2019**

Thank you Mr President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of Dominica for the presentation of its national report.

The Netherlands recognizes the challenges Dominica has faced in dealing with the damages caused by the natural disasters that have affected the island in recent years. We commend Dominica for their adequate action to address the immediate needs of the Dominican people in the aftermath.

The Netherlands also welcomes the efforts made by the government to improve women’s rights, in particular the legal provisions on marital rape and stricter penalties for sexual offences.

However, the Netherlands is concerned about persisted discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons. We are also concerned about the high number of child abuse cases in Dominica, ranging from sexual and emotional abuse, to neglect and physical abuse. Procedures of reporting child abuse to the authorities are often complicated and not sufficiently victim-centred.

Therefore, The Netherlands **recommends** Dominica:

1. To protect LGBTI persons against violence and discrimination, in line with SDG 10, by amending section 14 and 16 of the *Sexual Offences Act* to decriminalize same-sex conduct.
2. To invest in the protection of children from abuse by facilitating the process of reporting child abuse to authorities and adopting a more victim-centred approach, in line with SDG 16.

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

Thank you Mr President