**Universal Periodic Review 34 – Iran**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 8 November 2019**

Thank you, Mr President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the presentation of its national report.

The Netherlands welcomes the recent reform of the Citizenship Law, and the recent release of detained labor rights activists.

At the same time, the Netherlands remains seriously concerned about the human rights situation in Iran. In particular about the continued executions of juveniles, the lack of independence of the judicial system and the suppression of journalists and Human Rights Defenders.

Out of many areas of concern, The Netherlands will choose to **recommend** Iran to:

Repeal or amend Articles 186, 498, 610, 638 and 639 of the Islamic Penal Code, which criminalize rights regarding freedom of expression and which broad and vague definitions are arbitrarily misused to silence human rights defenders, including through imprisonment and corporal punishment.

1. Amend Article 13 of the Iranian Constitution to ensure that all religious minorities (including Muslims, Christians, Christian converts, Jews, non-believers, Zoroastrians and the Baha’i) in the country are recognized and able to fully enjoy the right to Freedom of Religion and Belief.

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

Thank you, Mr President.