**Universal Periodic Review 34 – Iraq**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 11 November 2019**

Thank you, Mr President,

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

The Netherlands remains concerned about the human rights situation in Iraq. The use of tear gas canisters and live ammunition by Iraqi security forces to intentionally maim and kill demonstrators has been unlawful, indiscriminate, and excessive. We urge the Iraqi government to take immediate steps to prevent further loss of life.

While the Netherlands recognizes steps taken by the Government of Iraq to protect freedom of expression, such as the establishment of a National Committee of Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, much still remains to be done to ensure freedom of expression is protected.

The Netherlands **recommends** Iraq to:

1. Put an immediate halt to intimidation and violence targeting journalists, especially during protests.

2. Take action to investigate all instances of disappearance and death of human rights activists, and to bring perpetrators to justice.

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

Thank you, Mr President.