**Universal Periodic Review 35 – Guinea-Bissau**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 24 January 2020**

Thank you Madam Vice-President,

The Kingdom of the Netherlands thanks the delegation of Guinea-Bissau for the presentation of its national report.

The Netherlands commends the government of Guinea-Bissau with important steps taken since the previous UPR cycle, including the establishment of the National Network of Human Rights Defenders and the significant efforts and accomplishments in the field of gender parity.

We remain concerned about the high level of impunity for human rights violations, including violence against women and girls.

The Netherlands **recommends** Guinea-Bissau to:

1. Tackle the high level of impunity by strengthening the capacity and independence of the judiciary, including by allocating sufficient financial resources and by appointing qualified and independent staff.
2. Safeguard the right to freedom of expression by refraining from interfering in peaceful assemblies and ensuring that cases of excessive use of force by law enforcement officials are appropriately investigated.

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

Thank you Madam Vice-President.