**Universal Periodic Review 35 – Republic of Turkey**

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands** **– 28 January 2020 2020**

Thank you, Mr President,

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

The Netherlands remains concerned about the broader human rights situation, and therefore **recommends** Turkey, as a democratic constitutional state, in line with SDG 16:

1. To strengthen its **separation of powers** by rolling back the Constitutional amendment of art. 159 in order to improve the independence of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors, and by introducing a vertical system of appeal for rulings of Peace Judges.
2. To improve **freedom of assembly**, by repealing bans on peaceful gatherings, including by the LGBTI community, as well as **freedom of expression** by implementating art 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Law, which states that “criticism” cannot be criminalized, and by decriminalizing articles 216, 299, and 301 of the Penal Code.

The Netherlands notes Turkey’s Judicial Reform Strategy, which contains first steps towards addressing concerns on rule of law and human rights.

The Netherlands wishes Turkey success with the follow-up of all recommendations.

Thank you, Mr President.