

**UPR WORKING GROUP FIRST SESSION**

(7-18 April 2008)

**UPR of THE NETHERLANDS – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE**

(15 April 2008)

**INTERVENTION BY INDIA**

Mr. Chairman, Madam High Commissioner, Distinguished Members of the Delegation of The Netherlands!

My delegation would like to thank the delegation of The Netherlands for their informative presentation. We have been impressed by the frank and open approach adopted by The Netherlands in their National Report in discussing current issues related to human rights in the country. We also note with interest the debate engendered by an increasingly diverse and plural society where approximately 20% of the Dutch residents are of non-Dutch origin.

My delegation would encourage and recommend that the Netherlands continue to engage in a national dialogue with a view to promoting respect for diversity and tolerance and consider establishing an institutional mechanism to ensure this. We would also like to ask a question as to whether the freedom to freely profess, practice and propagate ones religion and faith is a fundamental right?

The Report also mentions signs of tension within society on account of heightened “individualization” and growing intolerance despite Netherlands achievements in the field of literacy and education as well as a high standard of living. It is against this backdrop of considerable socio-

economic achievements that we are intrigued by the figures regarding prevalence of domestic violence. These figures show that 40% of the Dutch population has experienced domestic violence at least once and that women are the victims of such violence in 80% of the cases. Would you help us understand this phenomenon better and trace the reasons underlying this reality? We would recommend that the Netherlands consider implementing the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and the CEDAW in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.