

**33rd session of the Human Rights Council
Item 6 – UPR Outcome Suriname**

**Statement by Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van
Homoseksualiteit - COC Nederland
Joined by International Lesbian and Gay Association**

Delivered by Joyce Hamilton

Dear Mr. President,

The following statement has been prepared in partnership with the LGBT Platform Suriname. We first of all wish to acknowledge the active participation of the states during this cycle of the UPR. We thank all states that have made recommendations to the Surinamese government specifically related to advancing the rights of the Surinamese LGBTI.

We applaud Suriname's demonstration of its commitment to the non-discrimination principle by passing legislation to prohibit discrimination against LGBTI people. The 2015 amendments in the Penal Code to specifically include sexual orientation are commendable, as well as the alignment of the age of consent for same sex sexual conduct and opposite sex sexual conduct. These amendments followed the specific recommendations from the first cycle of the UPR, proving its influence and effectiveness.

Still, significant advances in the rights of LGBTI people have yet to be made, not the least of which the inclusion of gender identity and sex characteristics. We therefore welcome new responses of our government which affirmed their commitment to universal enjoyment of all human rights by all, including its view that LGBTI rights are human rights and vice versa.

We strongly encourage the state to remain committed to the principles of equality, dignity and non-discrimination as set forth by our constitution and within international Human Rights standards. Specifically, establishing the proclaimed institute of human rights to also encompass a watchful eye over rights for LGBTI people. We call upon the State to act on all recommendations on sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics in the current cycle of the UPR by exercising an integrated approach involving all relevant levels of government. Furthermore, sustain and broaden its relationship with constituencies such as ours, from a "one government" perspective extending beyond a single ministerial level.

In this light we wish to commend our Ministry of Justice and Police for including and recognizing LGBTI activists in the recently established committee for Diversity and Inclusion. We emphasize and firmly express our willingness to cooperate and support any intervention leading to better human rights enjoyment for the Surinamese population as a whole and more specifically for the LGBTI population in Suriname.

Thank you.