

UN Human Rights Council 2008

H.E. Mr. Maxime Verhagen

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

“Human rights apply to all people, in all places and at all times. ... Human rights also apply to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. In 85 countries, homosexuality is still punishable by law and people can be prosecuted because of their sexual orientation. In five countries in the world – Afghanistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen – consensual sexual acts by people of the same sex are even capital crimes. There is no excuse for the humiliation and exclusion of homosexual people – let alone for imposing the death penalty on them. Decriminalising homosexuality and countering discrimination based on sexual orientation are priorities within Dutch human rights policy. The Dutch government subscribes to the *Yogyakarta Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity*. I call upon other States to embrace these principles as well.”