



MUSLIMS FOR  
PROGRESSIVE VALUES  
NEDERLAND

**Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV)  
Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Submission  
for The Kingdom of the Netherlands, April-May 2017**

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**About MPV**

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Los Angeles, California, MPV is a faith-based human rights organization that advocates for inclusive and egalitarian narratives of Islam, gender equality and women's empowerment, the human rights of LGBTI demographics, freedom of expression, and freedom of and from religion or belief. MPV operationalizes its advocacy campaigns by creating inclusive spaces for critical analysis of religious discourses and scripture, engaging policy processes at the national and global levels, facilitating expression through the arts, and grassroots social activism. MPV acquired Department of Public Information Consultative Status at the UN in 2013. This submission was authored by affiliate staff in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, however headquarter contact information is listed.

## Executive Summary

In consideration of current political sentiments regarding refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants, particularly from Muslim-majority countries (MMCs), it is deduced that polarisation of popular public opinions have exacerbated racist, Islamophobic, and xenophobic attitudes in the Kingdom of the Netherlands (hereby referred to as the State). Such attitudes have facilitated civil, political, economic, social, and cultural discrimination against actual or perceived Muslims, refugees and asylum seekers, and non-Western immigrant demographics. Women and sexual and gender nonconforming individuals belonging to these groups experience compound and intersecting forms of discrimination on these grounds and on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression (SOGIE).

This submission will reference legal frameworks for the provision of fundamental rights as prescribed by the State's Constitution and the relevant international human rights instruments it has ratified. Though the Constitution affirms that "all persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances", and that "discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race or sex or on any other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted"<sup>1</sup> this submission will conclude that it is the responsibility of the State to exercise greater due diligence in respecting, protecting, and fulfilling its Constitutional and international human rights obligations.<sup>2</sup>

This submission will delineate failures on behalf of the State to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights pertinent to the following thematic areas between June 2012 and September 2016: discrimination on the basis of religion, nationality, ethnicity, and race), women's rights and gender equality, and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) demographics. These failures will be presented in a compound and intersecting manner.

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1 [The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands](#), Article 1. p.5

2 The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights concluded that: "The central government however, remains aloof, despite obligations under human rights treaties -in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) to actively combat discrimination and ethnic stereotyping." Prime Minister Mark Rutte remarked on discrimination on the labour market that "non-native Dutch have to fight a way in", and that when discrimination occurs in popular folk traditions such as "Black Pete", it is not the State's responsibility to prevent such racially charged discrimination, despite UN recommendations to do so. See: Joop. *Overheid kijkt weg bij discriminatie*. Joop. Nederlandse Publieke Omroep, 12 May 2015.

<http://www.joop.nl/nieuws/overheid-kijkt-weg-bij-discriminatie>, Yesilgoz - Zegerius, Dilan. *Met zijn opmerking over 'invechten' legde Rutte de vinger op de zere plek*. Republiek Allochtonie. 9 June 2015. <http://www.republiekallochtonie.nl/met-zijn-opmerking-over-invechten-legde-rutte-de-vinger-op-de-zere-plek>, and NOS. *Rutte: Zwarte Piet Geen Staatsaangelegenheid*. NOS, 28 Aug. 2015. <http://nos.nl/artikel/2054617-rutte-zwarte-piet-geen-staatsaangelegenheid.html>.

# **1. Discrimination on the basis of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion**

The State is Constitutionally and internationally obligated to prevent discrimination on the basis of race<sup>3</sup>, ethnicity, and religion, as such discrimination may inhibit its responsibility to respect, protect, and fulfil fundamental human rights pertinent to the exercise and enjoyment of access to education, decent employment, access to justice, and freedom of and from religion or belief, including freedom to publicly and privately assemble, express, and practice thought, conscience, and religion in community or individually.<sup>4</sup>

Ostensive Muslims, including those equipped with Dutch citizenship, experienced an increase in discrimination and persecution in the public sphere on the basis of religion and ostensible religious attire: 71% of Muslim-identifying youth have reported experiencing some form of discrimination or bullying<sup>5</sup>, and recent cases of Muslim women wearing headscarves targeted in public have been reported.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, Muslim women who wear headscarves are more susceptible to discriminatory employment and recruitment processes. Prominent media outlets<sup>7</sup> have documented such trends. Due to such discriminatory practice, Muslim women are disenfranchised with the public and private employers, and often do not express a desire to seek employment outside of the domestic sphere.<sup>8</sup>

Access to education, educational institutions, and the labour market<sup>9</sup> is unequally enjoyed by non-Western immigrants, especially those of actual or perceived Middle Eastern or North African descent, and women who don ostensive Islamic clothing. Furthermore, Dutch companies are 60% less inclined to invite someone with an Arabic name for employment opportunities than someone with a Dutch name<sup>10</sup>, and educational institutions have been reported to deny access to children on the basis of ethnicity.<sup>11</sup>

Several cases of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, and religion have been heard by the College voor de Rechten van de Mens (CvdRM), yet public and private employers continue to discriminate against applicants on the basis of ostensive Islamic religious expression. Similarly, Male youth of Moroccan and Antillean descent are often

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3 [International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), Article 1(1)

4 [The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands](#), Article 6(1) p.5; [European Convention on Human Rights](#), Article 9(1) p.10; [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#), Article 18(1)

5 Van der Valk, Ineke. *Monitor Moslim Discriminatie*. Universiteit van Amsterdam, IMES report series, 2015. Print.

6 See: [www.meldislamofobie.org](http://www.meldislamofobie.org), for more information on discrimination against Muslims, including an interactive map of reported cases of Islamophobia.

7 Start, Reinalda. *Stagiaire met hoofddoek niet gewenst*. NOS. 21 March 2016. <http://nos.nl/artikel/2094155-stagiaire-met-hoofddoek-niet-gewenst.html>.

8 Huijnk, Willem; Dagevos, Jaco; Gijsberts, Mérove; Dagevo, Iris Andriessen. 2015. *Werelden van Verschil*. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

9 Eurostat-Statistics Explained. "Migrant integration statistics - employment." *Eurostat*. Apr. 2016. Web.

10 Blommaert, Elisabeth. *Are Joris and Renske More Employable than Rashid and Samira?: A Study on the Prevalence and Sources of Ethnic Discrimination in Recruitment in the Netherlands Using Experimental and Survey Data*. Thesis. Utrecht: Universiteit Van Utrecht, 2013. Print

11 See: Weeda, Frederiek. *Wie Mag Naar de Blanke School?* NRC.nl, NRC Media, <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2015/04/25/wie-mag-naar-de-blanke-school-1487628-a892679> 25 Apr. 2015.

racially and ethnically profiled by law enforcement officials with no cause for reasonable doubt.<sup>12</sup> These demographics constitute racial and ethnic minorities that are more likely to be targeted for “preventive checks”, resulting in distrust of law enforcement officials.<sup>13</sup>

When cases of such discrimination are reported to local law enforcement authorities, declarants’ experiences are reported to be trivialized and they are, in some cases, advised to not file formal police reports. In other cases, declarants are barred or inhibited from making statements at all. As such, willingness to report incidents of discrimination is low, and several victims of such discrimination share the belief that local law enforcement will not assist with or process their claims them:<sup>14</sup>

- 1.1 One prominent Dutch Journalist was subjected to such “preventively checks” by authorities four times over the course of 18 months based on his ethnic appearance. He has not filed any complaints of discrimination.<sup>15</sup>
- 1.2 One plainclothes officer in an attempt to assist his brother report a case of fraud in July 2016 was insulted and detained for one night by fellow officers on duty who refused process his brother’s claim. The officials apparently detained the victim as they perceived him to be falsely representing law enforcement. They claimed that he could not be a police officer as “he didn’t look like one”, and that “he was probably a cleaner working for the police, like his father.” The victim had filed a case for insult, threats, abuse, and deprivation of liberty and abuse of office, which is currently being investigated.<sup>16</sup>
- 1.3 One individual a Muslim name was denied employment at one logistics company in light of the fact vacancies were open at the company. He applied again under a Dutch name, changing his resume to reflect one year less work experience and subsequently received a call back within hours despite the lack of work experience. In his attempt to report the case to law enforcement, officers refused to file his case as he was told he was responsible for “triggering” in the incident.<sup>17</sup>

The State's Criminal Code does prescribe penalties for publicly disseminating insulting remarks or remarks made to incite hatred and discrimination on the basis of race or religion<sup>18</sup>, however it is not uniformly applied under the auspice of due process in all cases of public and ostensive racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination:

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12 See: <https://www.amnesty.nl/etnischprofileren>. For more information on ethnic profiling in the Netherlands: Bovenkerk, Frank. Twee Marokkanen op een scooter? Die houd ik aan. In M. Davidovic & A. Terlouw (Eds.), *Diversiteit en discriminatie, onderzoek naar processen van in- en uitsluiting* (pp. 203-222). Amsterdam University Press. 2015

13 Klos, Gerbrig, and Delsol, Rebekah. *Gelijkheid Onder Druk: Stelling Nemen Tegen Etnisch Profileren Door de Nederlandse Politie*. Open Society, Open Society Foundations, 28 Nov. 2013 <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/gelijkheid-onder-druk-stelling-nemen-tegen-etnisch-profileren-door-de-nederlandse-politie>

14 See: Abaaziz, Ibtisam. *Jaarrapport 2015*. Meldislamofobie.org, <https://www.meldislamofobie.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Meld-Islamofobie-jaarrapport-2015-definitief.pdf>

15 El-Fassi, Abdelkarim. *Weer Twee Wandelende Marokkaanse Jongens Aangehouden Omdat. Ja Waarom Eigenlijk?* Wij Blijven Hier!, <http://wijblijvenhier.nl>, 14 June 2013. <https://wijblijvenhier.nl/19947/weer-marokkaanse-jongens-aangehouden-omdat-ja-waarom-eigenlijk/>

16 Rueb, Thomas. *Jij ziet er helemaal niet uit als een politieman!* NRC.NL, NRC. 27 July 2016. <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/07/27/jij-ziet-er-helemaal-niet-uit-als-een-politieman-3422838-a1513613>

17 Redactie Joop.nl, *Politie weigert aangifte gediscrimineerde Yassine*. Joop.nl. 30 Apr. 2015. <http://www.joop.nl/nieuws/politie-weigert-aangifte-gediscrimineerde-yassine>: Rotterdam police have since announced an internal investigation regarding the handling of this case.

18 *Criminal Code of the Kingdom of the Netherlands*, Sections 137c(1), 137d(1). p.82

**1.4** In December 2014, after an investigation of purportedly anti-Moroccan remarks issued by a prominent right wing politician during the March 2014 campaign rally, prosecutors said he would be charged under the Criminal Code with “insulting a specific group based on race and inciting discrimination and hatred.”<sup>19</sup> The investigation is still ongoing. Furthermore, in the August 2016 concept proposal for the Party for Freedom, Muslims, racial and ethnic minorities, and immigrants were clearly targeted and discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion.

Furthermore, the State is less inclined to proactively halt or support campaigns to counter narratives of discrimination or incitement to hatred and violence that certain religious officials propagate, even if such religious officials bear Dutch nationality. Furthermore, in few municipalities have such religious officials been held accountable for their hate-speech and ostensive affiliation with extremist groups under the Criminal Code:

**1.5** Certain Muslim religious leaders consistently incite hatred, violence, and discrimination against apostates from Islam, atheists, Jewish demographics, and sexual and gender minorities,<sup>20</sup> yet only 15 identified “hate-imams” have been successfully barred from entering the State in 2015.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, only few municipalities have banned the use of the official flag of Da’esh in public,<sup>22</sup> highlighting that no State-wide prohibition is in place despite the hateful and discriminatory basis of Da’esh’s ideology which the State is obliged combat under its Criminal Code.

## **Recommendations:**

The State must take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, or religion in all State and public institutions, in accordance with its Constitutional and international human rights obligations, to ensure that the full respect for, protection, and fulfilment of the rights to freedom of and from religion and belief and freedom of expression are achieved. To this end, MPV recommends the State:

1. Eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, or religion from all State and public institutions and platforms, and uniformly enforce the penal code in cases of incitement to hatred and discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, or religion.
2. Further pursuant to articles 137c and 137d, hold accountable religious officials who incite hatred and discrimination on the basis of religion, gender, and SOGIE.
3. Eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, or religion from all private institutions, including within private hiring and recruiting processes, pursuant to Constitutional and international human rights obligations.

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<sup>19</sup> See: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/netherlands>, for more information on detriment to the enjoyment of freedom of expression and freedom of and from religion and belief caused by Geert Wilder’s remarks.

<sup>20</sup> Ellian, Afshin. *Waarom ik aangifte doe tegen Shabir Burhani*. Elsevier.nl, Reed Business Information. 7 Apr. 2015. <http://www.elsevier.nl/nederland/blog/2015/04/waarom-ik-aangifte-doe-tegen-shabir-burhani-1741985W/>.

<sup>21</sup> Redactie Volkskrant.nl, *23 Haatimams met Succes uit Nederland* geweerd, De Volkskrant, De Persgroep Nederland. 26 Jan. 2016. <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/-23-haatimams-met-succes-uit-nederland-geweerd-a4232339/>.

<sup>22</sup> Hogeling, Thomas. *Wat zegt de wet: een vlag verbieden, kan dat zomaar?* De Volkskrant, De Persgroep Nederland. 12 Aug. 2014. <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/wat-zegt-de-wet-een-vlag-verbieden-kan-dat-zomaar-a3717250/>.

4. Sponsor and endorse State or non-governmental and civil society racial, ethnic, and religious minority sensitization campaigns for local law enforcement agencies and officials pursuant to the promotion of non-discrimination, facilitation of access to justice, and preservation of the rule of law.
5. Sponsor and endorse non-governmental and civil society advocacy campaigns that combat discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, or religion in local communities to foster a culture of acceptance and affirmation in which all citizens may exercise and enjoy the rights to freedom of and from religion and belief and freedom of expression without fear of persecution or discrimination, pursuant to Constitutional and international human rights obligations.

## 2. Women's Rights and Gender Equality

The State is responsible to respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of women, including those belonging to racial, ethnic, and religious minority groups, and those living with disabilities under its Constitutional and international obligations, especially those provisioned by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). However, gender disparity and misogyny persist in both public *and* private spheres.

Religious or cultural relativism may never be invoked by any community to justify any form of discrimination against women. However, in some Muslim communities, misogyny and the denial of certain rights are justified by patriarchal interpretations of Qur'anic scripture. Such interpretations exacerbate gender based violence (GBV) in these communities and enable harmful cultural practices to persist.<sup>23</sup> Local law enforcement officials are not always apt at handling GBV and domestic violence in Muslims communities for this very reason, and often refer abused Muslim women to shelters where they may be coerced into sex work to pay for rent.<sup>24</sup>

Additionally, Muslim women, including adolescent girls and children, are denied equality during religiously officiated marriage and after its dissolution, and are sometimes forced into marriage via illegal religious ceremonies.<sup>25</sup> In some instances, Muslim women are denied the right to alimony, including housing and other material benefits if they are divorced by their husband, and imams often do not grant religious divorce requests to women without permission from the husband.<sup>26</sup>

Because State courts are unable to dissolve religious marriages, some Muslim women experience marital captivity and are subject to marital inequalities in their countries of origin. This ultimately affects women's child custodial rights, possibilities for new relationships and marriages, and the possibility of free and safe travel to MMCs of origin:

**2.1** One Muslim woman sought dissolution of a religious marriage, by which two children were born, through a State court in October 2015. Because there was no civil marriage or partnership registered, the court concluded that "the woman was free to uphold the requirements of Islamic family law" and referred her case to a British Sharia Council, which refused her claims.<sup>27</sup> The civil and political rights of the woman and her children were not considered as factors in this conclusion.

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23 Almost 4 out of 10 women from countries like Somalia and Egypt who reside in the State have experienced female genital mutilation and cutting. See: Exterkate, Marja. *Vrouwelijke Genitale Verminking in Nederland*. Pharos, Jan. 2013. <http://www.pharos.nl/documents/doc/vrouwelijkegenitaleverminkinginnederland.pdf>.

24 See: *Dossier Vrouwenopvang* by Femmes for Freedom.

25 See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2016/02/12/jaarijks-ongeveer-250-kindhuwelijken-in-nederland>

26 See: <http://www.femmesforfreedom.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/gewoon-getrouwd-onderzoek-naar-kindhuwelijken-en-religieuze-huwelijken-in-nederland.pdf>

27 In practise, a British Sharia Council is often male-dominated with patriarchal and misogynistic perspectives, and hardly grant religious divorces to women without the consent of the husband. See: Zee, Machteld. *Choosing Sharia? Multiculturalism, Islamic Fundamentalism and British Sharia Councils* (PhD thesis, Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid, Universiteit Leiden) Meijers-reeks. 1 Dec. 2015, for more information. See also: <http://uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl/inziendocument?id=ECLI:NL:RBROT:2016:8>, for the court order.



Lastly, women living with disabilities may experience difficulty in accessing places of worship and other religious institutions, which is often exacerbated by gender segregation in such spaces. This is also the case in State facilities such as hospitals and universities.<sup>28</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

The State must take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and misogyny against women in both the public and private spheres as per its obligations under the CEDAW. To this end, MPV recommends the State:

1. Sponsor and endorse educational programs and sensitization trainings for local and federal judiciary and law enforcement agencies on gender inequalities in Muslim communities and best practices learned on how to assist Muslim women in cases of domestic violence and during divorce proceedings.
2. Sponsor and endorse non-governmental and civil society advocacy campaigns that combat discrimination and misogyny against women in local communities, especially progressive faith-based organizations that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
3. Take measures to ensure that the human rights of women living with disabilities, including those rights associated with freedom of religion and belief, are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

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<sup>28</sup> Bennekom, Dirkje van. *Islamitische gebedsruimte VU Amsterdam scheidt de vrouwen van de mannen*. 18 August 2014. <http://powervrouwen.blog.nl/religie/2014/08/18/islamitische-gebedsruimte-vu-amsterdam-scheidt-de-vrouwen-van-de-mannen>



### 3. The Rights of LGBTQ People:

The State is responsible under its international human rights obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of LGBTQ people and to mitigate public discrimination or incitement to hatred on the basis of SOGIE in all communities. Though the State has codified legal protections for sexual and gender nonconforming (SGN) people and penalizes discrimination on the basis of SOGIE, SGN refugees and asylum seekers, particularly those from MMCs, face compound and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization.<sup>29</sup> Though reporting mechanisms are in place, reporting discrimination on the basis of SOGIE is scarce<sup>30</sup>, and sometimes law enforcement agencies advise against filing reports altogether.<sup>31</sup>

SGN refugees and asylum seekers face particular discrimination in refugee centers:<sup>32</sup>

**3.1** One Syrian refugee was effectively bullied out of a refugee center in Ter Apel and transferred to another center, Zandaam, in October 2015, where harassment and persecution only became worse. The Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers (COA) was essentially unable to provide for his safety at either of the refugee centers.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) predicate assumptions of same-sex desires on the basis of typecast expressions of homosexuality, i.e. if an SGN asylum seeker is too “masculine” his claim may not be accepted. Cultural factors that may have influenced such decisions to conceal sexual orientation are not taken into account. Such typecasting protocol is detrimental to the processing of asylum claims for SGN asylum seekers, and increases the harm and persecution they may face in their communities and privately.<sup>34</sup>

Religiously and/or culturally justified discrimination often exacerbates marginalization and persecution of SGN individuals, and some Muslim faith leaders and actors incite hatred on the basis of SOGIE by instrumentalizing and bastardizing certain Islamic texts. Though there exist organizations responsible for handling cases of discrimination on the basis of

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29 Baas, Danielle. *Taboe heerst nog rond roze migranten*. Stadsblad Utrecht, 14 May 2014.

[http://files.webklik.nl/user\\_files/2014\\_05/549010/Jezelf\\_kunnen\\_zijn\\_in\\_Utrecht.pdf](http://files.webklik.nl/user_files/2014_05/549010/Jezelf_kunnen_zijn_in_Utrecht.pdf).

30 See: Boots, Romee. *Toenemende agressie tegen transgenders baart COC zorgen*. Het Parool,

<http://www.parool.nl/amsterdam/toenemende-agressie-tegen-transgenders-baart-coc-zorgen~a4137975/>. 8 September 2015. Web, and ANP, *Helpt homo's durft niet hand in hand over straat*. Het Parool, De Persgroep, 31 Jul. 2016.

<http://www.parool.nl/binnenland/-helpt-homo-s-durft-niet-hand-in-hand-over-sstraat~a4111332/>

31 Redactie Asscher Courant. *Vluchteling mishandeld en bedreigd in AZC's, nu eindelijk veilig in Assen: "COA verbood mij aangifte te doen"*. Asscher Courant, 28 January 2016. <http://www.assercourant.nl/achtergrond/450809/vluchteling-mishandeld-en-bedreigd-in-azc-s-nu-eindelijk-veilig-in-assen-coa-verbood-mij-aangifte-te-doen.html>.

32 See: Redactie COC, *LHBT-asielzoekers vaak slecht behandeld*. COC.nl, COC Nederland. 2 May 2013.

<http://www.coc.nl/algemeen/lhbt-asielzoekers-vaak-slecht-behandeld>.

33 See: Kragtwijk, Pippi. *De homoseksuele vluchteling Omar werd weggepest uit de noodopvang in Nederland*. Vice, Vice Media LLC. 9 November 2015. <http://www.vice.com/nl/read/de-homoseksuele-syrische-vluchteling-omar-werd-weggepest-uit-de-noodopvang-in-nederland-232>. Accessed 16 September 2016, and Westra, Pimm. *Waarom een Syrische homoseksueel in Nederland onveilig is*. HP/De Tijd, 2 February 2016. <http://www.hpdetijd.nl/2016-02-12/waarom-een-syrische-homoseksueel-in-nederland-onveilig-is/>

34 Working Instructions (Werkinstructies) of the IND are accessible through their webpage <https://ind.nl/organisatie/ketenpartners/werkinstructies>. The working instruction ‘horen en beslissen in zaken waarin LHBT-gerichtheid als asielmotief wordt aangevoerd’, WI 2015/9, specifies the allowance of typecasting questions.

SOGIE in the State, personnel are typically unable to issue statements regarding religiously/culturally justified discrimination.<sup>35</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

The State must take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of SOGIE, including such discrimination justified by religious and/or cultural rhetoric, under its international human rights obligations. Furthermore, the State must respect, protect, and fulfil the rights of SGN refugees and asylum seekers. To this end, MPV recommends the State:

1. Sponsor and endorse educational programs and sensitization trainings for IND, COA, and front line workers on the unique cultural nuances SGN refugees and asylum experience, and on the compound forms of discrimination they face to establish effective mechanisms of protection for SGN refugees and asylum seekers in refugee centers.
2. Pursuant to articles 137c and 137d, hold accountable religious officials who incite hatred and discrimination on the basis of SOGIE, whether specifically targeting any LGBTQ individual or community.

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<sup>35</sup> De Wit, Marina. *Bureau Discriminatiezaken zet zich in tegen ongelijkheid*. 5 Feb. 2014.

<http://www.dichtbij.nl/haarlemmermeer/kiesdichtbij/artikel/3363548/bureau-discriminatiezaken-zet-zich-in-tegen-ongelijkheid.aspx>.

## 4. Conclusion:

Despite commendable legal and political efforts<sup>36</sup> made by the State to respect, protect, and fulfill all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, SOGIE, or other status, discrimination on these grounds still persists within public and private spheres. This sort of discrimination affects the State's ability to fulfill its Constitutional and international human rights obligations. As such, MPV further proposes the following recommendations to the State:

1. Take effective legal and practical measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and children, particularly women and children belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, including Muslim women who still face multiple forms of discrimination with respect to education, employment and social and political participation.
2. Ensure that existing statutes prohibiting gender discrimination are properly implemented and enforced, and increase through effective implementation and enforcement efforts to address violence against women and children in both public and private spheres.
3. Exercise greater measure to prevent and suppress manifestation of racism, xenophobia and intolerance against minority groups in the country, in particular Muslims of all sexualities and genders.
4. Take all necessary measures to prevent and eliminate all manifestations of racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and religious intolerance during national and local electoral campaigns.
5. Intensify efforts to combat the dissemination of ideas based on religious, racial or ethnic superiority through Internet as well as other media.
6. Ratify and make operational the Optional Protocol of the ICESCR.

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<sup>36</sup> See: “Zet een streep door Discriminatie”: [www.discriminatie.nl](http://www.discriminatie.nl)