**UPR Intervention for Morocco, 13th Session May 22, 2012**

**(as drafted)**

The United States warmly welcomes **[head of delegation]** and the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco to the UPR Working Group.

We commend the Government of Morocco’s rapid action in early 2011 in response to its citizens’ calls for reform, creating a special committee to draft a new constitution based on input from all sectors of civil society. The new constitution sets high standards for individual liberties, gender equality, and cultural diversity. We congratulate the government for holding credible fair parliamentary elections in November 2011, and for establishing several institutions to uphold and increase respect for human rights. These include the National Council of Human Rights, the Inter-ministerial Delegation on Human Rights, and the Mediator Institution. We also welcome Morocco’s efforts to promote justice sector reform and provide greater respect for the rule of law.  
  
Despite these positive efforts, we are concerned by recent arrests of journalists, bloggers, and artists, which demonstrate restrictions on the freedoms of opinion and expression, despite new legal measures to uphold these freedoms. We urge the government to refrain from arresting those who peacefully voice their opinions, and to release those currently detained for doing so.

We are also concerned about continuing allegations of police brutality against peaceful demonstrators, and torture of prisoners and detainees at the hands of police and security forces.

Finally, we are concerned that despite several attempts to obtain government licenses to operate, some civil society organizations advocating on behalf of minority populations, including Sahrawis [Sah ROUW ees], have not yet been registered. We have also seen continued monitoring of religious groups, restrictions on conversion and proselytizing, and discrimination against members of religious minority groups on personal status issues such as marriage, inheritance, and adoption.

Bearing in mind these concerns, the United States makes the following recommendations:

1. Investigate all allegations of police brutality and torture and prosecute all security force officials accused of harsh treatment.
2. Finalize, in collaboration with press associations and rights groups, a legal framework that ensures full freedom of expression.
3. Promptly approve the license applications of all civil society organizations that meet legal requirements, including those organizations advocating for minority populations.

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