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## UPR Intervention for the Netherlands, 13<sup>th</sup> Session May 31, 2012

The United States welcomes [head of delegation] and the Dutch delegation.

We commend the Netherlands for its implementation of recommendations from its 2008 review; for example, the Municipal Antidiscrimination Services Act of July 2009 has improved the Netherlands' ability to combat discrimination against members of religious and other minority groups.

We remain concerned about enforcement of laws designed to counteract societal animosity toward racial and religious minorities, including Muslims. The Dutch Equal Opportunities Commission found that 76 percent of temporary employment agencies accept employers' requests to be sent only native Dutch job seekers, despite the Dutch Constitution's and Criminal Code's prohibitions of discrimination in the economic sphere.

In the area of asylum, we note with concern that the National Ombudsman for Children has reported that over 3,000 undocumented children of families who seek asylum have been waiting for 4 years or more for a decision, and 80 percent of asylum requests made by children outside the country who want to join their parents in the Netherlands are turned down.

Finally, women in the labor market remain vulnerable to unequal pay, lower rates of promotion than their male peers, and discrimination in case of pregnancy, despite existing legal protections. Additionally, there are a minimum of 118,000 child abuse cases registered with the government and many others unreported, indicating a need for further intensification of law enforcement and investigation of such cases.

The United States makes the following recommendations:

1. Enact public programs to improve integration of Muslim and other immigrants into Dutch society, and build bridges between communities;
2. Review asylum procedures with a view to expediting the decisions in the cases of children asylum seekers as quickly as possible and facilitating family reunion of vulnerable children in an efficient and appropriate manner; and

3. 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.