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UPR Intervention for Belize, 17th Session October 28, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

The United States warmly welcomes the delegation of Belize to the UPR Working Group and congratulates Belize on the completion of its national report and presentation today.

We commend the progress Belize has made in addressing discrimination against women, and particularly the Cabinet's approval of the Revised National Gender Policy. We encourage the government of Belize to reform existing laws which can be used to discriminate against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons.

We recall Belize's commitment to improve its capacity at the technical and policy levels during its first UPR. However, the second report indicates the same needs in terms of human rights training and institution building.

Bearing in mind these concerns, we would like to recommend that Belize:

1. Reform existing laws that can be used to discriminate against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, including the provision of "unnatural crime" laws prohibiting "carnal intercourse against the order of nature."
2. Provide state authorities, including law enforcement and judicial officials, with human rights training for the protection of women and members of minority groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons.
3. Increase the capacity of the Ombudsman's Office, the Belize Police Department's Professional Standards Board, and other human rights-related institutions through internal efforts and by seeking assistance in these areas from international development partners.

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.