

## UPR Intervention for Comoros, 18<sup>th</sup> Session, January 31, 2014

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

We commend Comoros's commitment to democratic principles by maintaining civilian control of government, arresting and trying alleged coup plotters, and implementing democratic reforms.

While we recognize the progress made by the Anti-Corruption Committee in investigating abuses, we remain concerned about pervasive official corruption, particularly bribery.

We note the continuing problem of ineffectiveness and corruption in the judicial system. Such problems are exemplified by the replacement of the Minister of Justice and Prosecutor three times within three years, lengthy trial delays, and the failure to prosecute high level corruption cases. The recurrence of these problems raises serious concerns regarding the competence, independence and impartiality of the judiciary. It also undermines Comoros's commitment to respect equal protection and the rule of law in conformity with Articles 14 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

We also remain concerned about poor prison conditions and encourage greater flexibility to allow human rights and humanitarian organizations access to prisons.

In addition, we are concerned about the absence of progress regarding the ability of workers to exercise collective bargaining rights in several sectors in Comoros. We are equally concerned about a trade union's allegations regarding the dismissals of trade union members and leaders in the para-public and port sectors.

Bearing in mind these concerns, we recommend that Comoros:

1. Take further steps to increase the independence of the Anti-Corruption Agency so that it may thoroughly investigate credible allegations of corruption, and increase the number of prosecutions of these cases within the judicial system;
2. Improve conditions of detention consistent with international obligations and afford greater flexibility in granting human rights and humanitarian organizations access to detention centers;