**U.S. Statement at the UPR of Dominica, 19th Session, May 1, 2014**

The United States welcomes the Dominican **[PRON: Dah-mih-NEE-kan]** delegation to the UPR Working Group.

We commend Dominica **[PRON: Dah-mih-NEE-ka]** for engaging with civil society in preparation of the UPR presentation and for accepting previous recommendations to work toward the establishment of an independent human rights institution.

We are encouraged by Dominica’s efforts to combat domestic violence, including through close coordination with civil society to provide services to survivors. Despite these efforts, domestic violence remains a serious problem and support systems for survivors and resources to enforcement agencies are insufficient.

While Dominica has several programs in place to encourage children to remain in school, we are concerned that critical gaps exist in the legal framework to keep children away from the worst forms of child labor.

We remain concerned about the continued existence of colonial-era laws that criminalize consensual same-sex activity between adults, and that LGBT victims of violence or harassment often avoid reporting the abuse.

The United States would like to recommend that Dominica:

1. Ensure relevant agencies have sufficient resources and staff to enforce existing domestic violence laws;
2. Adopt a comprehensive list of hazardous work prohibited to children and amend its laws to raise the minimum age for employment to at least 15 and to expressly prohibit the use, procuring, or offering of a child for pornography;
3. Modify existing sections of the criminal code that apply to buggery and indecency so that same-sex sexual activity between consenting adults is not criminalized and adopt legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.