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## U.S. Statement at the UPR of Bolivia, October 28, 2014

The United States welcomes the delegation from Bolivia to the UPR working group.

We note that high rates of impunity and immunity for government officials facing corruption charges, prolonged preventative detention, politically motivated prosecutions, and executive interference in the judiciary are the largest obstacles to the fair and equal application of justice in Bolivia.

We are also concerned by reports of government authorities misusing the legal system to persecute journalists and independent media outlets that investigate corruption or criticize government policies with lawsuits.

In addition, while mindful of Bolivia's difficult task in helping the neediest members of society, we are deeply concerned about Bolivia's new Code for Children and Adolescents, which sets a minimum age for work at 10 in cases where children are self-employed. This provision does not appear to be in line with Bolivia's international obligations and makes children in Bolivia more vulnerable to exploitation.

Bearing in mind these concerns, we recommend that Bolivia:

1. Respect and fortify the independence of the judiciary to ensure the fair and equal application of justice and the rule of law;
2. Recognize that independent and free media are an essential component of a functioning democracy, and allow all journalists and media outlets to operate without fear of harassment or legal action; and
3. Ensure that the Code for Children and Adolescents, and other relevant domestic legislation and practice are in full compliance with the requirements of ILO Convention 138.