**U.S. Statement at the UPR of Armenia, 21th Session, January 22, 2015**

The United States welcomes the Armenian delegation.

We commend Armenia for improvements in respecting freedom of expression, as manifested in the Human Rights Defender’s December 2013 special report on obstacles to a fair trial, although more remains to be done.

We remain seriously concerned by systemic corruption and by the absence of an independent judiciary and democratic electoral processes. The widespread lack of accountability for abuses committed by security forces, as well as insufficient (legal and other) protections against violence for women, children, and other members of vulnerable populations is also troubling.

Finally, we are watching draft legislation on NGO activities, and urge the Government of Armenia to continue to engage with civil society and listen to their concerns going forward.

Bearing in mind these concerns, we recommend that Armenia:

1. Strengthen institutional integrity and accountability by fostering an independent judiciary and democratic electoral processes by working closely with the OSCE/ODIHR and local stakeholders;
2. When human rights violations occur, hold security forces and other government officials accountable, and provide appropriate remedies for victims of abuses and discrimination, including against members of vulnerable populations.
3. Encourage the National Assembly to pass legislation that would enable Armenia to more fully comply with its international human rights obligations, including expanding the definition of torture in its domestic law to include crimes committed by public officials in their official capacities, and criminalizing domestic violence.