**U.S. Statement at the UPR of Croatia**

**22nd Session, May 12, 2015**

The United States warmly welcomes the Croatian delegation to the UPR Working Group.

We commend Croatia’s commitment to the promotion of human rights. With Croatia’s accession to the EU, we hope that Croatia will continue to serve as a model showing that ensuring respect for human rights is key to democratic development and long term economic growth.

We commend Croatia for assuming leadership on women’s issues as the next chair of the multilateral Equal Futures Partnership to advance women’s economic and political participation. However, we remain concerned about societal discrimination and violence directed against women and girls, LGBT persons, and members of ethnic minorities, particularly ethnic Serbs and Roma.

We further commend Croatia’s robust structure for addressing human trafficking. However, further implementation efforts are necessary.

We recommend that Croatia:

1. Eliminate discrimination in employment, particularly for women and members of the Roma population, pursuant to recommendations of International Labor Organization (ILO) supervisory bodies;
2. Strengthen human rights protections for LGBT persons, in line with Croatia’s international obligations and commitments as well as with domestic legislation; and
3. Enhance training methods for collecting evidence against suspected human traffickers to increase successful prosecutions, and ensure convicted trafficking offenders are punished with sentences commensurate with the gravity of the crime.