**U.S. Statement at the UPR of the Marshall Islands,**

**22nd Session, May 11, 2015**

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

We acknowledge the Republic of the Marshall Islands’ continued commitment to human rights and to strengthening laws protecting human rights.

We note that in recent public addresses Attorney General Natan Brechtefeld has acknowledged the need to stop human trafficking in the Marshall Islands, and the government has approved the formation of a National Task Force on Human Trafficking. Despite these positive signs, the government has not demonstrated efforts to prosecute alleged traffickers, protect victims, or prevent trafficking.

Additional government efforts are also needed to raise awareness and enforce laws prohibiting employment discrimination in the Marshall Islands, particularly with regard to persons with disabilities.

Bearing in mind these concerns, we recommend that the Marshall Islands:

1. More actively conduct education and awareness campaigns on the issue of trafficking in persons and make efforts to study human trafficking in the country, adopt proactive procedures to identify victims of trafficking among vulnerable groups, such as foreign workers and women in prostitution, and investigate trafficking cases; and
2. Provide legal protections for equality of opportunity in employment for all of its citizens, particularly for persons with disabilities.