

**U.S. Statement at the Universal Periodic Review of Seychelles,
24th Session, January 25, 2016**

The United States welcomes the Government of Seychelles to the UPR Working Group.

We note the recent presidential election, which led to an historic runoff, and welcomed the participation of both international and local election observers. Nevertheless, we are concerned by reports that some opposition candidates were not able to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and association in the lead-up to the election.

We commend the Constitutional Court's decision to strike down the Public Order Act as unconstitutional, thereby better protecting and promoting the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

We remain concerned about the ongoing problem of domestic violence despite laws that specify that rape, spousal rape, and domestic abuse are criminal offenses punishable by a maximum of 20 years' imprisonment.

We recommend that the Government of Seychelles:

1. Fully investigate alleged election irregularities and ensure proper due process is followed in all court challenges.
2. Take measures to ensure that existing laws criminalizing rape and domestic violence are fully enforced, and cases are fully investigated and prosecuted consistent with these laws.
3. Enforce Seychelles' international human rights obligations and constitutional guarantees regarding the rights to freedom of religion, association and expression.