**U.S. Statement at the Universal Periodic Review of Eritrea,**

**46th Session, May 6, 2024**

**Delivered by Kelly Billingsley**

Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

The United States welcomes the delegation from Eritrea.

We reiterate our call for accountability for Eritrean Defense Force members responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ethiopia. Although the prevalence of female genital mutilation and cutting remains high, we recognize Eritrea’s efforts to eliminate it.

In the spirit of constructive engagement, we recommend that Eritrea:

1. Allow country visits by the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Eritrea and cooperate with international human rights mechanisms.
2. Release individuals who are arbitrarily detained, including those detained indefinitely, for exercising freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, or religion or belief, including the inability to conscientiously object to Eritrea’s compulsory, indefinite national service.
3. Allow independent civil society organizations to operate starting with youth, women’s, persons with disabilities, and sports organizations.

I thank you.