**U.S. Statement on Zimbabwe**

**at the Universal Periodic Review 40th Session**

**as delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Benjamin Moeling**

The United States recommends that Zimbabwe:

1. Establish an independent complaints mechanism to investigate and hold accountable members of the security forces who allegedly engaged in violations and abuses;
2. Enforce security and due process laws adopted under the 2013 constitution that prohibit arbitrary arrests and prolonged detentions;
3. Allow the practice of constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association for all; and
4. Respect and guarantee the separation of powers to ensure judicial independence and impartial decision-making, and also respect and guarantee independent and transparent processes for the appointment, dismissal, and extension of tenure for judges.

While Zimbabwe has attained a high COVID-19 vaccination rate, we are concerned that authorities have used COVID-19 regulations to justify severe restrictions on citizens’ rights to vote and on the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association.