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

**43nd Session, May 2, 2023**

**Delivered by U.S. Ambassador Michèle Taylor**

Thank you, Mr. President.

The United States welcomes the delegation of Mali led by H.E. Mr. Mamoudou Kassogue, Minister of Justice and Human Rights.

We appreciate Mali’s willingness to address hereditary slavery by prosecuting 46 individuals for killing or assaulting individuals who rejected the practice of slavery in the Kayes region and encourage increased accountability for perpetrators. We urge Mali’s return to democracy, civilian rule, and constitutional order.

We recommend that Mali:

1. Conduct a credible investigation into human rights violations and abuses committed during security operations conducted with Kremlin-backed Wagner forces in Moura in March 2022, as promised at the UN Security Council, and hold those responsible to account.
2. Conduct free and fair presidential elections by February 24, peacefully and consistent with Malian law and commitments Mali has made as a member state of the UN, ECOWAS, and the AU.
3. Enact legislation to make hereditary slavery a felony and increase penalties for trafficking in persons.

We wish you a successful UPR review. I thank you.