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

**43rd Session, May 10, 2023**

**Delivered by Ambassador Michèle Taylor**

Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

The United States welcomes the delegation from Serbia led by His Excellency Mr. Tomislav Žigmanov.

I join my colleagues in extending the condolences of my Mission to all of those grieving and suffering in the wake of the recent school shooting in Belgrade, a scourge with which the United States is regrettably all too familiar.

In the spirit of constructive engagement, the United States recommends that Serbia:

1. Ensure the independence of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media Council and encourage its application of existing guidelines, and the institutional and editorial independence of broadcasters and telecommunications operators.
2. Improve judicial independence by addressing reports of political interference in credible investigations, prosecutions, and court proceedings, including the work of the High Judicial Council and State Prosecutorial Council.  Transparently investigate and hold accountable those who seek to unduly influence the judiciary.
3. Investigate and prosecute crimes involving gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, and crimes targeting LGBTQI+ individuals.
4. Legalize same-sex unions as part of efforts to guarantee equal protection under the law for members of same-sex couples.

We remain concerned about impunity for attacks against journalists but commend progress in the prosecution of the arson attack on Milan Jovanovic.

I thank you.