**U.S. Statement at the Universal Periodic Review of Belize**

**31st Session, November 12, 2018**

The United States welcomes the delegation of Belize to the UPR Working Group.

We recommend that Belize:

1. Address human trafficking challenges with a focus on investigating and prosecuting suspected traffickers, including complicit officials;
2. Invest in legal and social services for [trafficking and gender-based violence] victims with an emphasis on accountability mechanisms that ensure legal protections, prevent abuses by security officials, and provide human rights training for front line officials;
3. Ensure legal protections are enforced to address violence against LGBTI individuals as well as discrimination such as in housing, employment, and government services.

We remain seriously concerned by the human trafficking situation in Belize; particularly official complicity in human trafficking-related offenses. We also remain concerned about high rates of gender-based violence, forced labor by migrant workers and child laborers, and limited services for the victims of all these crimes. We also remain concerned about reports of abuses by security forces amidst growing levels of crime and violence.

We are encouraged by Belize’s decriminalization of same-sex sexual conduct among consenting adults, but urge action against violence and discrimination.