**U.S. Statement at the Universal Periodic Review for Cote d’Ivoire,**

**33rd Session, May 7, 2019**

The United States welcomes the delegation from Cote d’Ivoire to the UPR Working Group.

We recommend that Cote d’Ivoire:

1. Investigate all allegations of human rights violations and abuses, including those that occurred from 2010-2011, and hold accountable those responsible.
2. Amend provisions in the Criminal Code and the Law on the Press that unduly restrict freedom of expression, such as criminal libel and penalties for insulting the head of state.
3. Investigate allegations of violence and serious levels of discrimination targeting LGBTI persons.

The United States commends the Government of Cote d’Ivoire for its efforts to enact penal reform and combat trafficking in persons and the worst forms of child labor. However, we are concerned about allegations of fraud, intimidation, harassment, vote buying, and violence in Cote d’Ivoire’s October 2018 elections. As Cote d’Ivoire prepares for elections in 2020, we underscore the importance of increasing protections for journalists, opposition leaders, and civil society, to ensure that they are free to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms without fear of reprisal. Such improvements are essential to promoting genuinely free, fair, and peaceful elections.