**Durban Review Conference: U.S. Position**

Press Statement

Robert Wood
Acting Department Spokesman, Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of the Spokesman

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The United States welcomes the recent progress that has been made through the efforts of many delegations, governments and officials in the formulation of the draft outcome document for the Durban Review Conference on April 20. As the United States noted on February 27, the previous draft text contained objectionable language in several areas. Since then, substantial improvements have been made, including shortening the document, removing all language that singled out any one country or conflict, and removing language that embraced the concept of “defamation of religion” and that demanded reparations for slavery. We commend those who have worked to effect these changes.

There remain, however, elements of the current draft text that continue to pose significant concerns. The U.S. believes any viable text for the Review Conference must be shortened and not reaffirm *in toto* the flawed 2001 Durban Declaration and Program of Action (DDPA). In addition, while references to “defamation of religion” have been removed from the current draft text, we cannot support restrictions on freedom of expression that could result from some of the document's language related to “incitement” to religious hatred -- a concept that the United States believes should be narrow and clearly defined and made consistent with human rights obligations ensuring freedom of expression.

We appreciate that many delegations continue to work hard in good will to improve the current text. We hope that these remaining concerns will be addressed, so that the United States can re-engage the conference process with the hope of arriving at a Conference document that we can support.