**United States Election to the Human Rights Council**

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Press Statement

John Kerry
Secretary of State

Washington, DC

http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2016/10/263798.htm

I am pleased the United States has been reelected by the United Nations General Assembly to a new term on the UN Human Rights Council. We thank the General Assembly for its support and pledge to continue to work closely with the international community to address urgent and serious human rights concerns worldwide and to strengthen the Council as an institution.

U.S. engagement has helped transform the Council into a more balanced and credible organization and has helped focus the global spotlight on grave violations and abuses of human rights around the world. Since we joined the Council in 2009, it has created Commissions of Inquiry for Syria, North Korea, and Burundi; adopted country-specific resolutions on Sri Lanka, Iran, and Burma; passed groundbreaking resolutions promoting and protecting the rights of freedom of assembly and association; and created an independent expert on violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

As with all fora, the Human Rights Council is only as strong as its members, and I encourage all countries that respect human rights to be steadfast in their pursuit of a seat on this body.

While important challenges remain, including ending the Council’s excessive and biased focus on Israel, we look forward to cooperating with other Council members to address human rights concerns, advance human rights around the world, and ensure the Council fully realizes its purpose.