

EOV by the United States on Traditional Values

Resolution: Strengthening Respect for Human Rights (“Traditional Values”) Delivered by **Chargé Douglas Griffiths** UN Human Rights Council – **12th Session** Geneva, October 2, 2009

Thank you, Mr. President.

The United States approached this resolution on traditional values with an open mind and listened carefully to the concerns of others during the course of the negotiations, including the various arguments for and against such a resolution. We, along with others, worked with the Russian delegation to provide language in an effort to help improve the text and anchor it to international human rights law and the animating principles of this Council. We thank Russia for conducting an open and transparent negotiation on this draft resolution.

In the end, however, we are unable to support this resolution as we still have concerns that the concept of traditional values, unmoored to human rights law, could undermine the universal principles enshrined in international human rights instruments, such as women’s rights, and the rights of minorities and other vulnerable groups.

We are also concerned that the term “traditional values” has not been clearly defined or understood and is thus so vague and open-ended that it could be used to legitimize human rights abuses.

For these reasons, we must vote no.

Thank you, Mr. President.