Thank you, Chair.

Concerning the 3rd revised draft, we strongly support the changes suggested by South Africa and Palestine for paragraph 6.3 c made in the 7th session of the Working Group. We also support the amendments offered by Cameroon and Palestine regarding paragraph 6.4 d bis., and 6.8 also made in the 7th session of the Working Group.

We certainly agree with comments made this morning that negotiating on two texts is counterproductive to our goal here. The revised text is the authoritative work product of this intergovernmental mechanism, made through a necessarily iterative and democratic process, and therefore the 3rd revised text should remain the sole concern of the ongoing negotiations. On this we support the position of Namibia, supported by many other states, on the methodological concerns of this process so far.

However, as US organization, we must state unequivocally our strong disagreement with the US Government’s recommendations concerning the removal of protections for various groups of people contained in the Chair’s recommendations. What use is a treaty of this kind that does not reflect international law’s long-standing acknowledgement of the importance of heightened protections for Indigenous peoples, women, marginalized groups and others at heightened risk of vulnerability?

Among other concerns, we are unable to reconcile this position of the US Government with its repeatedly stated desire to ensure protection for human rights defenders, many of whom belong to these categories of people. Indeed we note this position does in fact contravene the US’s existing and long-standing international obligations outlined by such instruments as ILO Convention 169.

Thank you.