

**Statement by**  
**Ms. Maryam Fathika Fayaz**  
**Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the UN and other**  
**International Organisations at Geneva**  
**Item 3: Interactive Dialogue on OHCHR Report on Economic, Social and**  
**Cultural Rights, and COVID-19 Recovery**  
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Thank you, Mr. President.

The Maldives extends its appreciation to the High Commissioner for his report and concurs with his views that economic, social and cultural rights have a great potential for directing Governments and societies towards fostering an inclusive and sustainable future for all. There is indeed an urgent need to protect and promote economic, social and cultural rights to ensure effective recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

The unprecedented shock from the global pandemic has significantly slowed down the pace of economic growth and the accomplishment of Sustainable Development Goals. The Maldives recognizes the importance of addressing disparities in access to medicines, therapeutics and vaccines, to overcome the developmental challenges posed by the pandemic. This is why we have raised our voices at multiple international platforms to call on countries to acknowledge vaccines as a global public good.

Mr. President,

As part of the Government's COVID-19 recovery efforts, the Government launched an economic relief package to provide small businesses with financial support. A loan scheme was also dedicated for the agricultural sector to boost agricultural growth that would contribute more to the economy. Additionally, the Government introduced salary increments for employees in the relevant health and education sectors this year to bring transformational improvements in these sectors.

Before concluding, let me renew our commitment to upholding the fundamental rights of all citizens and to leave no one behind in our efforts to sustainably recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

I thank you.