



**Statement by H.E. Ms. Iruthisham Adam  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Maldives  
During Interactive Dialogue with UN Independent Expert  
on Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation  
Geneva, 15 September 2010**

Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives aligns itself with the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the OIC.

The Constitution of the Maldives recognizes the right of all citizens to clean drinking water and sanitation. We were therefore delighted that GA Resolution 64/292 of 28 July this year, which the Maldives cosponsored, took the step of recognizing those crucial components of the right to an adequate standard of living at multilateral level, and are pleased to continue our conversation with the Independent Expert today.

The Maldives would like to thank Ms. De Albuquerque for her well-timed and well-considered report on the role of the private sector in the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation.

This subject is very relevant to the Maldives which, because of its unique geography and environmental vulnerability, faces particular difficulties in providing clean water to its people. The subject is also relevant because privatization and boosting the role of the private sector in service provision, is one of the priorities of the current Government.

The Maldives agrees with the Independent Expert that involving the private sector in the provision of water and sanitation services does not in any way reduce the responsibility of the State as the primary guarantor of the human rights of the people. We therefore welcome the suggestions that States should adopt strong rights-based regulatory frameworks to govern the actions of private service providers, that contracts with such providers should be human rights-sensitive, and that human rights impact assessments should be conducted throughout.

Indeed, we believe that such principles and recommendations are not only applicable to the private provision of water services, but also other services such as health and education.

With this in mind, the Maldives would welcome the Independent Expert's views on concrete steps that States can take, especially developing countries facing capacity constraints, to ensure that privatization programmes comply with the very highest human rights standards.

Thank you.