



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

**30th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
14 September– 2 October 2015, Geneva**

**Agenda Item 6: Universal Periodic Review - General debate
25 September 2015**

**Statement by Ms. Rishfa Rasheed,
Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the
Republic of Maldives to the United Nations Offices at Geneva**

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Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives fully appreciates the Universal Periodic Review, which enables interstate dialogue and constructive feedback for enhancement of human rights. Furthermore, the Maldives believes in the equality of all states under the Universal Periodic Review.

For the Maldives, the UPR has proven to be an efficient mechanism to promote and protect human rights. The Maldives encourage all states to embrace this mechanism, which is designed to preserve the sovereignty of states and advocate the legitimacy of this process, and work to implement the recommendations,.

The Maldives acknowledges that the UPR is not a standalone mechanism and thus welcomes further measures to increase participation of non-state actors in the UPR process to make it more transparent and objective. The Maldives recognise the work that is being done by the OHCHR to create awareness about the role that civil society can play in the UPR process, as well the strategies implemented to enhance wider participation.

Mr. President

As a small and newly democratic country, the Maldives recognises the challenges that similar countries face in integrating human rights nationally. The Maldives wish to emphasise not only the importance of international engagement, but also the benefits of utilizing a multiple stakeholder approach. The sincere support of the International community and the respect for the international commitments have helped the

Maldives, make positive changes which have brought our national efforts in line with the international standards.

Mr. President,

As we have just completed the second cycle of UPR in May this year and adopted the report yesterday, we acknowledge that there are important lessons learnt that must be understood and incorporated into future reviews. While we do understand that the UPR has evolved and continue to evolve, the Human Rights Council has a responsibility to ensure that the progress achieved so far is to the benefit of the states and its people.

The recommendations for developing countries with limited resources are often more challenging. It would be a futile process to impose demands on a state that they cannot fulfil to begin with, and then hold them accountable for not complying with those demands, or shame them for not accepting enough recommendations. In this regard, the Maldives recognise and commend the voluntary trust fund set up by the council for technical assistance and participation in the UPR process. More outreach needs to be conducted, in order to ensure that delegations interested in participating but might not have the means to do so, are able to engage actively. It has provided valuable opportunities for small island developing states such as the Maldives that are working to improve their human rights situation, to learn and benefit.

To conclude, the Government of Maldives reiterates its strong commitment to the UPR process and will continue to work on the process, and also work together to maintain the universality of it.

Thank you Mr. President.