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

Statement at the Panel Discussion on Democracy and Rule of Law

**23rd Session of Human Rights Council by
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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives**

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Mr President,

Let me take this opportunity to welcome the panellists and the moderator to this discussion, and thank them for their comprehensive presentations on the common challenges facing states in promoting democracy and rule of law from a human rights perspective. We view this panel discussion as both timely and pertinent to the wider global debate on how States, especially those in transition and in the midst of democratic consolidation embrace the emulsion of rule of law, as a fundamental pillar in promoting the principles of democratic governance, and respect for human rights.

We believe in the notion that, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and democracy are inter-linked and mutually reinforcing. While there have been a number of international treaties and instruments on human rights, all legally binding on States, there has not been a parallel movement towards the implementation of these enshrined rights domestically especially in the developing world. Furthermore, the Rule of Law, at the national level is synonymous with the implementation of human rights obligations, specifically in the legal and judicial sectors.

We would emphasize that capacity-building in domestic mechanisms such as independent human rights institutions, judicial bodies and human rights protection systems in countries merit sustained focus as an effective avenue to promote the rule of law, and respect for human rights. In addition to this, raising awareness and education amongst the general

populace also remain important components in most national strategies. While States might have the political will to enact these changes and support continued strengthening of institutional capacity, they are often hampered by resource constraints and a lack of technical expertise.

The Maldives faces a number of common challenges in its democratic consolidation and the rule of law. While capacity and lack of awareness are a few of the important components, we feel that domestic democratic political processes must take its own indigenous course of action. From an international viewpoint, what's important to countries like the Maldives is that adequate tools be provided to it, to guide the domestic process to concentrate on the effective implementation of human rights obligations, that could subsequently feed into the domestic judicial process.

Once again, I thank the panellists for the valuable contributions to this important discussion.

I thank you Mr. President
