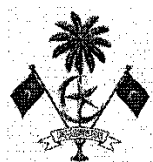


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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

**Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Peaceful
Assembly and of Association**

**At the 23rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
Mr. Javed Faizal, Counsellor**

Geneva, 31 May 2013

Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and of association, Mr. Maina Kiai. We agree with the Special Rapporteur's conclusion that it is the responsibility of states to maintain in law and in practice, an enabling environment for the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

We believe that financing of civil society organizations is a good subject to touch upon, at a time when due to the financial crisis, funds available for civil society organizations are becoming lesser, and access to available funds are becoming more difficult. We are also concerned that a large portion of that reduced funding are those previously intended for civil society organizations in the developing countries.

While civil societies should have access to financing for effective operation within the human rights framework, it is of equal importance that the organizations must also ensure that they work with utmost integrity and in an ethical and responsible manner. We also agree that donors should respect the autonomy of civil society organizations, so that they can chose to address the needs of the local populations as they see fit, while also understanding donors need for transparency from the NGOs.

Mr. President,

As in previous years, the Special Rapporteur has provided excellent opinions and recommendations on the right to peaceful assembly as well, on areas such as presumption in favour of holding of peaceful assemblies, notification procedure and decision-making, access to public space, pre-event planning, new communication technologies and responsibilities of the organizers. We believe that these recommendations, in addition to those in his previous reports, should be seriously considered by all states and incorporated into relevant national policies.

Mr. President,

In the Maldives, freedom of peaceful assembly is guaranteed by Article 32 of the Constitution. To reinforce this right, the President ratified this year historic legislation on the freedom of peaceful assembly. For countries in transition and for young democracies, such as the Maldives, we believe that codifying freedom of peaceful assembly is important, as this would replace the administrative measures and regulations which were used to govern the freedom of assembly since and before its democratic transition

Another major milestone in terms of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association is ratification of ILO's core conventions, including ILO's Convention on the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and the Convention on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining.

In conclusion, as member of the Core-Group of countries that created this mandate, let me also assure my Government's continued cooperation and support for the Special Rapporteur.

I thank you.
