



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

**Statement on the High Commissioner's Update under Item 2**

**23<sup>rd</sup> Session of Human Rights Council by  
H.E. Ms. Iruthisham Adam,  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Maldives**

**Geneva, 27 May 2013**

Mr President,

Let me first of all thank the High Commissioner for her comprehensive introductory remarks and updates on specific human rights situation and issues of importance to the Council. We fully support the work carried out by her Office in promoting and protecting human rights around the world, and remain fully committed to supporting the international human rights machinery in this regard.

Mr President,

The situation in Syria stands affront to the moral and ethical failure by the international community to stop unthinkable crimes being committed there by both sides. We regret that despite overwhelming efforts by a number of international actors to reach a political settlement, the situation on the ground is deteriorating with the threat of it escalating into a regional conflict thereby destabilising the region. The Maldives remains extremely concerned by the gross violation of human rights committed by both parties to the conflict and we have also been deeply disturbed by the indiscriminate attacks by Government forces against schools and hospitals. The Government of Maldives condemns the recent indiscriminate shelling of Al-Qusayr this month, and the loss of innocent lives. We urge both sides to show restraint and to participate in international dialogue to reach a political settlement to the conflict

Reminiscent of the great calamities of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the situation in Syria in our view continues to weigh down on our collective conscience. The casualties of the conflict in Syria are not only the soldiers and innocent civilians the images of which we see every day, but also the moral stamp of the

international community and its guiding principles. The Maldives continues to believe that the international community has a shared responsibility to protect civilian populations from war crimes and crimes against humanity. We are encouraged by the efforts being made by the international community for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and urge all parties to commit to a clear vision of post conflict reconciliation.

Mr President,

The Maldives also remains deeply concerned by the discriminatory and targeted attacks against the Rohingya Muslim minority and other Muslim communities in Myanmar. While welcoming the recent positive benchmarks achieved by Myanmar in its democratic transition, the persecution of the Muslim minority over an extended period of time could reverse the remarkable progress Myanmar has achieved so far. The Maldives continues to urge the Government of Myanmar to make all efforts to immediately stop the violence, and investigate all systematic violations of human rights, and to hold all those responsible accountable to these crimes. We believe that the Human Rights Council, without further delay should take urgent action on this issue.

Mr President, Madam High Commissioner,

The blatant violations of Palestinian rights continue to be a major obstacle to a lasting solution in the Middle East, especially their right to self-determination. The Maldives calls upon Israel to cease all illegal settlement activity in the occupied territories, and to ease the unacceptable suffering of all Palestinians in Gaza, especially women and children, by lifting its illegal blockade of the territory. The Maldives in this regard, calls upon Israel to respect its international humanitarian and human rights law, and to constructively engage with the Human Rights Council and its Universal Period Review.

We live in a world marred with violence, often spurred by misunderstanding and miscommunication. Profiling based on religion and religious beliefs add to this violence. The key to peace and harmony is tolerance and to constructively engage in inter-faith dialogue; they key is to respect human rights and respect each other as human beings. The Maldives calls on all countries to refrain from and address all cases of islamaphobia and strive for tolerance and understanding.

Domestically, the Maldives has been involved in wide-ranging institutional and democratic reforms as per its international obligations and commitments. We recently hosted the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, and also the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers as part of this on-going process. The Maldives remains committed to work with the international human rights mechanism in strengthening the

institutional structures of our young democracy. My Delegation reaffirms its open invitation extended to the mechanisms of the Council.

In conclusion, the Maldives would like to extend its sincere appreciation to the High Commissioner for maintaining a strong and constructive dialogue with the Government of Maldives on a number of important issues, both domestic and international. Let me assure you of our delegation's full cooperation to you and your office in all future endeavours.

Thank you Mr President.

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