



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

Statement on the High Commissioner's Update under Item 2

**24th Session of Human Rights Council by
H.E. Ms. Iruthisham Adam,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Maldives**

Geneva, 9 September 2013

Check Against Delivery

Mr President,

Let me first of all thank the High Commissioner for her introductory remarks and updates on specific human rights situations and issues of importance put before the Council. We wish to reiterate our full support to her, and the OHCHR in carrying out its mandate.

The serious situation in the Syrian Arab Republic has for far too long, eluded a comprehensive and adequate response from the international community. The Maldives condemns in the strongest possible terms, the indiscriminate use of chemical weapons by the Syrian authorities. We remain deeply appalled by the images we, along with millions of people around world have seen in the past few weeks, and calls on the international community to respond appropriately, within the framework of international law, to the gross atrocities that have continued to take place in Syria committed by both parties to the conflict.

The consequences of inaction could be deeply alarming for the credibility of the United Nations and a threat to the maintenance of peace and security around the world. The Syrian authorities must be held accountable for their actions. Inaction at

this stage by the international community is unacceptable and could portray that obstacles due to political differences at the international level could be insurmountable.

The civil war in Syria has already created a major humanitarian crisis in the region, with a large influx of refugees and displaced persons escaping the horrors of war to neighbouring countries. However, the situation cannot be fully addressed without a comprehensive solution towards a political settlement agreed by all concerned parties. In this regard, we urge all concerned international partners to undertake all necessary efforts to stop the violence in Syria, which have now contributed to over 100'000 casualties, and almost 2 million refugees.

Mr President,

The Maldives is deeply concerned by the escalation of violence and the loss of life in Egypt, and call on all parties to show maximum restraint and respect for the fundamental human rights of all Egyptians. While we fully understand that the path to democratic consolidation could be rocky and perilous at times, national dialogue and reconciliation should be undertaken as a necessity bearing in mind the full spectrum of Egyptian national interests at stake. The Maldives further welcomes the engagement by the Minister of Transitional Justice and National Reconciliation with the members of the Council, and looks forward to establishment of an OHCHR regional office in Cairo which could play a constructive role in the region. My Government hopes that stability will return to the country at the earliest possible opportunity, and the Egyptian people will be able to fully participate in their own national discourse.

Mr President,

On the 7th of this month, the Maldives successfully held its Presidential Elections, which was conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner, fully in line with democratic principles and international standards. The Election Day itself was one of the most peaceful days Maldivians have experienced in recent memory, and the process itself has been commended by both civil society and participating international observers to be open and inclusive. The enthusiasm of Maldivians to exercise their right to vote was overwhelming, with a turn out of around 88% of

eligible voters. Although no candidate garnered the constitutionally required majority of 50%, a second round run-off has now been scheduled for the 28th of this month, which we expect to be smooth, and without incident.

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. Let me assure you of our delegation's full cooperation to you and your office in all future endeavours.

Thank you Mr President.
