



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

**24th Session of United Nations Human Rights Council
Geneva, 9 – 27 September 2013**

**Agenda Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the
Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
9 September 2013**

**Statement by Mr. Amin Javed Faizal,
Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Maldives to the
United Nations Offices in Geneva**

Check Against Delivery

Thank you Mr. President.

Maldives would like to welcome the Special Representative Ms. Leila Zerrougui, and thank her for the pragmatic approach and humanitarian outlook taken in the undertaking of her mandate.

Maldives is pleased to learn that six armed groups, listed for the recruitment and use of children to making their armies, have signed action plans agreeing to stop the recruitment of children. Governments need to put in place national legislations, accountability mechanisms to end impunity and ensure those who violate regulations are held accountable and perpetrators be brought to justice.

Mr. President

Maldives applauds the work of the Special Representative to separate thousands of children from armed forces and armed groups. Protection and rehabilitation of these children must be at the core of the assistance provided to them now. Education and employment opportunities must be considered, along with security measures to ensure that they are not forced to be re-recruited into these armed groups. It is crucial to develop holistic reintegration programmes for these children and we encourage the United Nations and international community to assist in this important process.

Maldives remains deeply concerned by the deteriorating situations and increase in crises and conflicts in parts of the world. As always, children continue to be the main victims of all conflicts. More over, they continue to be recruited as child soldiers,

used as combatants, suicide bombers, support service providers, such as porters, sex slaves and even human shields.

Despite growing international efforts to reduce the number of children involved in hostilities, there are still those who have continued to remain in the Secretary-General's list of shame for years as "persistent perpetrators". We would like to ask the Special Representative if her office has been able to devise new and innovative means to address this issue and if so, to provide details of it.

Mr. President

Maldives remains highly concerned by the escalation of conflicts in Syria, which has resulted in more than a million children suffering, for whom access to humanitarian assistance is often denied, resulting in services and rights to education, health, water, becoming a secondary necessity. We take note of your recent visit to the region, which gave you the opportunity to experience first-hand the impact of the conflict, and its effects on the neighboring countries.

Before concluding, let me welcome the initiative by the Special Representative, to ensure that no children are associated with Government armed forces in armed conflict by 2016.

I thank you Mr. President.