

6. General Debate under Agenda item 6

**27<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council  
Geneva, 8<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

**Agenda Item 6: General debate  
19 September 2014**

**Statement by  
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*Check Against Delivery*

Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives welcomes the solidarity demonstrated by states in voluntarily complying with the UPR as it exhibits the level of conviction they have towards the process. We would invite and encourage all states to embrace this unique mechanism, which is designed to preserve the sovereignty of states; but at the same time enables interstate dialogue and constructive feedback for enhancement of human rights. The purpose of the UPR is not to name and shame, but to obtain an accurate picture of periodic progress in the implementation of each State's international human rights obligations, and facilitating further development of these rights. Therefore we warmly accept and advocate the legitimacy of this process.

Interstate and interregional politics are proving to be an inherent flaw in the UPR mechanism which should ideally be unbiased and objective. The Maldives accepts the reality that politics is not something that can be isolated from a global forum. However, we would like to remind all states that the purpose of this council is to protect universal human rights. Therefore it is these rights that should take priority in the council, and not underlying political agendas.

The Maldives also welcomes further measures to increase participation of non-state actors in the UPR process to make it more transparent and objective. Although the process already does accommodate civil society, these actors often lack the resources and necessary guidance to contribute to the process constructively. We recognise the work that is being done by the OHCHR to create awareness about the role that civil society can play in the UPR process, as well the strategies implemented to enhance wider participation.

As a small and newly democratic country, the Maldives recognises the challenges that similar countries face in integrating human rights nationally. We wish to emphasise not only the importance of international engagement, but also the benefits of utilizing a multiple stakeholder approach. Our experience shows that there is a positive relationship between the international engagement in promoting human rights and our progress in key human rights areas nationally. The support of the International community and the respect for our international commitments have helped the Maldives, make positive changes which have brought our national human rights mechanism more in line with the international standards.

Mr. President,

The Maldives would also like to underline the importance of providing technical and financial assistance to states in complying with their accepted recommendations. The recommendations for developing countries with limited resources are often more extensive. It would be a futile process to impose demands on a state that they cannot fulfil to begin with, and then hold them accountable for not complying with those demands. In this regard, we recognise and commend the voluntary trust fund set up by the council for technical assistance and participation in the UPR process. It has provided valuable opportunities for small island developing states such as the Maldives, that are working to improve their human rights situation, to learn and benefit.

We look forward to sharing our UPR report at the Working Group in 2015, and we welcome constructive feedback from the Council.

Thank you Mr. President.