

1. High Commissioner's Update and General Debate under Agenda Item 2

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

**Agenda Item 2: Update by the High Commissioner and General Debate
8 September 2014**

**Statement by
Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, First Secretary / Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of Maldives to the United Nations Offices at Geneva**

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Thank you Madame Vice President.

Mr. High Commissioner

The Maldives would like to echo the voices of previous delegations in expressing our heartfelt congratulations and warm welcome to Your Royal Highness, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, on your appointment as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Maldives is confident that under your able leadership and guidance, the Office will accelerate the efforts to promote and protect human rights across the globe, with renewed dynamism.

Madame President,

The Maldives believes that institutional frameworks are not enough to cultivate the values of human rights; we need to cultivate a culture of respect for human rights within communities. This is especially important in emerging democracies, in the aftermath of human rights violations, as they seek to rebuild their societies. The Maldives requests the High Commissioner and this Council, to focus on cultivating values, norms, and a culture of respect for human rights within communities, in addition to strengthening the compliance of States to the institutional frameworks.

As the High Commissioner has noted, conflicts across various regions, especially the Middle-East has seen an exponential increase. The plight of the Palestinians and their efforts for self-determination, remain a priority to the Government and the people of Maldives. The Maldives condemns in the strongest terms the atrocities committed by Israel in Gaza. The Maldives once again call on Israel to stop the incursion, forced displacement of Palestinian people and illegal settlement in Palestine and respect the right of the Palestinian people.

The Maldives remains deeply concerned by the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in Syria. The international community needs to step up its efforts to find a meaningful solution to Syria and ease the suffering of the Syrian people. The Maldives also remains deeply alarmed by the level of atrocities committed by IS in Iraq. The Maldives strongly condemns the crimes, the brutal violence against women and children, ethnic and religious groups, which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. As we stated at the Special Session last week, stronger action needs to be taken by the international community to address and combat terrorism.

Madame President, Mr. High Commissioner,

The Maldives applauds the High Commissioner's resolve to strengthen constructive engagement with member states to address international human rights issues. We consider HRC mechanisms, especially the UPR to be one of the most effective mechanisms to strengthen human rights situation on the ground. However, given the difficulties some small States face at implementation level, the Maldives requests the High Commissioner to ensure continued technical cooperation to SIDS to assist in abiding with their international obligations and achieve sustainable progress. Similarly, on the post-2015 development agenda, the Maldives urges the High Commissioner to take special note of the particular challenges faced by SIDS and urge this Council to take effective action on challenges relating to the environment and climate change which disproportionately affect SIDS, and that poses obstacles to the full realisation of human rights.

Before concluding, I would like to once again reaffirm the commitment of the Maldives to work closely with the High Commissioner, and stand ready to assist the Office of the High

Commissioner, which despite the limited resources, always assist in the promotion and protection of human rights across the world.

I thank you Madame Vice President