



Statement by

His Excellency Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Mohamed

**Permanent Representative,
Republic of Maldives**

at the

Ninth Session

of the

**Human Rights Council of the
United Nations**

*in response to the statement by the
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
to the Human Rights Council*

8th September 2008



Thank you, Mr. President,

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor since your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Human Rights Council, I would like to convey our sincere congratulations to you and express our full confidence in your wisdom and leadership to guide the Council to new successes.

The Maldives delegation is equally pleased to warmly welcome the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navanetham Pillay, to the Council and extend our heartfelt congratulations on her assumption of the high office. An ardent defender of human rights throughout her life, with wide and varied experiences in the field of human rights, Ms. Pillay is admirably qualified to lead the Office of the High Commissioner with dynamism and compassion in these challenging times.

The Maldives Government is appreciative of the valuable assistance that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has been extending to the Maldives in recent times, as we have journeyed towards establishing a more robust liberal democracy in our country through an ambitious reform programme that began in 2004. We are heartened by the new High Commissioner's reiterated commitment to extend assistance to countries to strengthen national human rights mechanisms, and look forward to further cooperation between the Maldives and the Office of the High Commissioner in the future as we strive to implement fully our Reform Agenda.



The Maldives also looks forward to continuing its strong cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner, in the context of the resolution 7/23 on human rights and climate change. Resolution 7/23 calls on OHCHR to conduct an analytical study on the relationship between climate change and human rights ahead of a debate on the issue at the tenth session.

Mr. President,

I am pleased to inform the Council that the Maldives ratified its new Constitution on 7 August 2008. The document marks a milestone in the country's political history as it incorporates for the first time a bill of rights that is fully in line with the international human rights instruments to which we have ascribed. The newly ratified Constitution also allows for clear separation of powers between the executive, legislature and the judiciary and calls for the establishment of a number of independent bodies and commissions. It is envisaged that the country will hold its first ever multi party elections by 4th October 2008.

Mr. President,

As the Council commences its Ninth session today, we are delighted by the happy coincidence of having new and fresh leadership at the helm of promoting and protecting the United Nations human rights agenda throughout the world. We are confident that it bodes well for a positive and constructive cooperation and engagement between the Council and the Office of the High Commissioner. We look forward to working closely with both the new High



Commissioner and the Human Rights Council as we endeavour to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in the Maldives and pledge our fullest support and cooperation.

Thank you Mr. President.