



Statement by the Maldives at the General Debate under Item 3
10th Session of the Human Rights Council

Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives delegation would like to comment on Report A/HRC/10/61 on the relationship between human rights and climate change.

Although the Report is rather conservative in its conclusions, it is nevertheless highly significant in that it provides definitive recognition that climate change has important negative implications for a wide-range of internationally-protected human rights. Moreover, the report demonstrates that the impacts of global warming fall heaviest on the rights of those people who are already vulnerable due to geography, poverty, age, or gender factors.

Mr. President,

This is more than just an academic point. Today, as of *this* day, States, especially industrialized States, continue to emit greenhouse gases knowing that the ultimate consequence of their actions is to undermine the human rights of millions of people around the world, especially those living in vulnerable countries. Today, as of *this* day, UNFCCC delegates sit down at the negotiating table knowing that failure to act will condemn millions of the

world's poor to a future of diminishing possibilities. Today, as of *this* day, national governments, especially in industrialized countries, understand that failure to abide by their international commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation will result, ultimately, in the withdrawal of the right of Maldivians to self-determination - the right to live and prosper in the country of their birth.

Mr. President,

As well as clarifying this new reality; the Report also points towards the need for a new debate on the implications of and necessary responses to the established relationship between climate change and human rights.

The Maldives has always held that the main aim of efforts to draw linkages between human rights and climate change must be to positively influence the Bali Process of climate change talks by providing a human perspective or human lens to negotiations which have traditionally been overly scientific or abstract in nature. The Report helpfully suggests ways in which human rights principles and laws can help redress this imbalance by, for example, highlighting the plight of individual people, giving voice to vulnerable groups, emphasizing accountability and, most importantly, showing that international cooperation to mitigate and adapt to climate change is not merely desirable, it is in fact a legal obligation under international human rights law.

The Maldives delegation hopes that the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC will take note of the human dimension, including the human rights dimension, of global warming. In order to help facilitate this "humanization" process, the Maldives will table at this session a follow-up resolution to Resolution 7/23 which will request the convening of a panel debate on human rights and climate change during the Council's 11th Session. The aim of the debate will be to send a strong political message to climate change negotiators that they must be aware-of and responsive-to the actual and potential human consequences of climate change, and climate change policy.

Thank you Mr. President.