



Thank you Mr. President,

As lead sponsor of Resolutions 7/23 and 10/4, the Maldives delegation would like to use this opportunity to reflect on the panel debate on human rights and climate change, held during the 11<sup>th</sup> Session, and to present our initial thoughts on next steps.

Mr. President,

The Maldives delegation found the June panel debate an extremely worthwhile and productive exercise. We were particularly delighted by the range of detailed views and comments presented by States, experts and NGOs.

After listening carefully to those views and comments, the Maldives believes that the June panel debate raised five key questions pertaining to the interface between climate change and human rights.

First: is there a relationship between climate change and human rights and if so, what is the nature of that relationship?

On this question, the Maldives was heartened by the clear consensus around the view that climate change undermines a range of internationally-protected human rights and that the impacts are felt most acutely by those sections of the population who are already in vulnerable situations. What is more, States clearly placed this understanding within a climate justice framework by noting the inverse relationship between responsibility for climate change and vulnerability to its effects.



While there was clear convergence on this first point, there was less agreement on the other four key questions thrown-up by the June debate, namely: (1) can the physical impacts of climate change be classified as human rights violations; (2) what *national-level* human rights obligations are applicable to the issue of climate change; (3) what *extraterritorial* human rights obligations exist in the case of global warming - in particular is there an legal obligation not to interfere with the enjoyment of human rights in another country and to take action through international cooperation to support the enjoyment of human rights elsewhere; and (4) what is the correct balance, in the case of climate change, between national and extraterritorial human rights obligations?

Mr. President,

The Maldives' intent with resolutions 7/23 and 10/4 was to show that climate change undermines the human rights of millions of people around the world, especially those living on the climate "front-line", and to demonstrate that Parties to the UNFCCC have a clear moral as well as legal obligation to protect and promote those rights by reaching an ambitious and effective agreement at COP15 in Copenhagen this December.

With this in mind, we are pleased with the bold and far-sighted actions taken by the Human Rights Council so-far and we now look forward to a successful outcome in Copenhagen, an outcome that effectively promotes the full enjoyment of human rights. The Maldives intends to carefully study that outcome, as well as further work on the human rights-climate nexus done by existing Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies, before deciding on any next steps here in Geneva, especially in the context of those unanswered questions to which I referred earlier.