



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

**18th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
Geneva, 27 January – 7 February 2014
Review of the Vanuatu
30 January 2014**

**Statement by Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, First Secretary
Permanent Mission of Maldives to the United Nations Offices in Geneva**

Dr. Rishfa Rasheed

Thank you Mr President,

The Maldives welcomes the distinguished delegation of Vanuatu, a fellow member of AOSIS.

The Maldives further welcomes Vanuatu's membership in the Rome Statute of the ICC, and also commends the work of Vanuatu in being the first country in the South Pacific region to sign and ratify international instruments, such as the CRPD and CAT.

The Maldives takes note of the efforts the Government of Vanuatu had made in establishing a National Human Rights Institution, as we among others, had recommended in the first cycle. It urges Vanuatu to expedite this process as a priority by seeking technical assistance from the OHCHR and international partners.

Mr President,

The Maldives would like to make the following recommendations:

1. To take legal measures to provide free and compulsory education for all under the right to education, and implement the inclusive education policy
2. To adopt policies and take measures to ensure full realization of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, with special focus on rural areas

As noted in the National Report, Maldives agrees that Climate Change and Disasters have a disproportionately negative impact on women and children and hence encourages Vanuatu to continue and enhance efforts on raising awareness and providing platforms for community-level involvement in the newly expanded National Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy.

Maldives also takes positive note of the "No Drop" Policy adopted by the Public Prosecutor's Office in prosecuting cases concerning sexual offences and domestic violence. We further encourage Government of Vanuatu to continue its efforts in raising awareness on this and also to continue to train law enforcement officials and conduct community training programmes.

We look forward for implementation and progress in combating violence against women,

2017, which is being newly designed.

As a SIDS, Maldives is fully aware of the challenges faced by Vanuatu in the implementation of the recommendations made at UPR, and reiterates its call to member states and international community to continue and enhance assistance to states, especially small island developing states and least developed countries in fulfilling the obligations under international mechanisms, and encourages Vanuatu to fully utilize the available opportunities in this regard.

We wish the delegation of Vanuatu all the best.

I thank you Mr President.