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

**23rd Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review
2 - 13 November 2015, Geneva**

**Review of Saint Lucia
5 November 2015**

**Statement by Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Counsellor,
Permanent Mission of Maldives to the United Nations Office at Geneva**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives expresses a warm welcome to the fellow member of AOSIS, the distinguished delegation of Saint Lucia led by Permanent Representative / Ambassador Her Excellency Ms. Menissa Rambally, and would like to express its appreciation for its national report and its engagement in the Universal Periodic Review process.

The Maldives recommends Saint Lucia to:

1. Adopt and implement the National Policy for persons with disabilities
2. Enhance efforts to provide access to quality education for all

The Maldives understands the challenges and constraints faced by Saint Lucia, another small Island Developing State like the Maldives, in the full promotion and protection of human rights. However, the Maldives applauds Saint Lucia for making commendable progress in promoting and protecting basic human rights of its people.

The Maldives view gender equality as a crucial aspect necessary for development, and we are pleased to see Saint Lucia has addressed this issue, through numerous initiatives and most notably through education, to ensure women in Saint Lucia achieve higher levels of empowerment.

The Maldives would also like to congratulate Saint Lucia for its work in ameliorating its health sector, in which the Government has introduced policies and initiatives to address the healthcare needs of all Saint Lucians, such as through establishment of the National Action Child Protection Committee (NACPC) in 2012. The Maldives further commends the introduction of the Single Mothers in Life Enhancement Skills (SMILES) programme in 2012, National Social Protection Policy in 2015 towards inclusive and equitable sustainable development

Lastly, as a long-time proponent of education and its value in a country, the Maldives appreciates Saint Lucia's efforts to address the issues faced by children in this regard.

The Maldives wishes the delegation of Saint Lucia every success in this review.

Thank you Mr. President.