



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

**24th Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review
18 – 29 January 2016, Geneva**

**Review of Sierra Leone
27 January 2016**

**Statement by Her Excellency Dr. Hala Hameed, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations Office at Geneva**

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Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives warmly welcomes the distinguished delegation of Sierra Leone to this review, led by His Excellency Mr. Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara, Attorney General and Minister of Justice. We express our appreciation for the national report and the constructive engagement in this process.

The Maldives welcomes the adoption of a number of legislations, including the Sierra Leone Correctional Service Act, 2014, Right to Access Information Act 2013, Legal Aid Act 2012, the Sexual Offences Act 2012,

The Maldives wishes to make the following recommendations:

1. Take temporary special measures to address gender equality and consider reintroducing the gender equality bill to the parliament.
2. Step up the efforts to combat female genital mutilation (FGM).

The Maldives notes that the Government of Sierra Leone has developed a National Gender Strategic Plan (NGSP) and the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. The Maldives remains concerned by the prevailing high rates of child, early and forced marriages in Sierra Leone, and encourage the State to address this issue as a matter of priority.

Before concluding, Maldives notes the difficulties that the Government of Sierra Leone has faced during the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak and the many challenges during the aftermath, especially in protecting human rights. The Maldives encourages the Government to reach out to its international partners, including OHCHR, to strengthen its efforts towards promotion and protection of human rights.

We wish the delegation of Sierra Leone all the success during this review.

Thank you Mr. President.