

**Statement by**

**His Excellency Dr. Asim Ahmed**

**Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations and other International Organizations at Geneva**

**Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Food**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives would like to thank the Special Rapporteur on Food for his comprehensive report on the centrality of biodiverse seed systems to the full realization of the rights to life and food.

Mr. President,

As a country that heavily relies on imports for food supplies, the Maldives has acutely felt the disruption of the global supply chains caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to this disruption, President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih inaugurated a food security programme and fertigation system to accelerate national plans to revive the agricultural sector. This programme aims to make available locally grown healthy food items, enhance agricultural revenues and ensure food security.

In alignment with the Special Rapporteur's emphasis on farmers' rights as human rights, President Solih declared, in 2020, that Maldives will celebrate National

Farmers Day on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October every year. In this regard, last year's event was focused on promoting local agricultural products and recognizing the immense contribution that farmers have made and continue to make by increasing food security and promoting sustainable agriculture in the Maldives.

Mr. President,

We take note of the recommendations provided by the Special Rapporteur on measures that can be taken to build and maintain sustainable farmers' seed systems, and would like to ask the Special Rapporteur, how can we utilize international cooperation to prioritize the full realization of farmer's rights?

I thank you.