

**SIDS Joint Statement by**

**His Excellency Dr. Asim Ahmed**

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

**Annual High-Level Mainstreaming Panel**

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Thank you. Mr. President,

My delegation is making this statement on behalf of a group of Small Island Developing States the list of which will be available in the extranet.

At the outset, we would like to thank the President of the General Assembly, Secretary General of UN, and High Commissioner for Human Rights for their enlightening remarks. We would also like to thank the esteemed panellists for their contributions to the important topic of universal participation to the mainstreaming of human rights throughout the UN system.

Mr. President,

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have great value to contribute to the Human Rights Council. Unfortunately, financial and capacity constraints create obstacles for the universal participation of SIDS in the Council. As the work of the Council evolves and grows, so do the accompanying resource challenges faced by SIDS. Thus, we applaud the establishment and management of the Voluntary Trust Fund

for LDCs and SIDS over the past decade. The Trust Fund acknowledges the obstacles faced by SIDS and takes meaningful measures to remedy these resource constraints. We believe that the LDC/SIDS Trust Fund has immensely contributed to enhancing the participation and engagement of the SIDS in the Human Rights Council.

The enhanced engagement of SIDS in the Council sessions enables us to better protect and promote human rights issues in our respective countries, and contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights across the globe. We are happy to note that discussions on climate change has assumed increasing importance within the debates of the Human Rights Council. The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States recognized the serious threats posed by global warming and sea level rise to the efforts of SIDS to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We hope the international community would accelerate efforts to meet the targets for climate finance. The COVID-19 crisis has further exacerbated the environmental and development challenges faced by SIDS, exacting a heavy toll on the lives and livelihoods of those living in Small Island Developing States.

Mr. President,

We are pleased to note that the Trust Fund has expanded the resources available for SIDS to meaningfully engage in the work of the Human Rights Council. Therefore, we extend our deepest appreciation to the Office of the High Commissioner, and acknowledge the generous contribution made by the donors of the Trust Fund and for their efforts to strengthen our capacities to promote human rights at the national and international levels. In conclusion, we would like to ask the panel: what further steps can the Council take to ensure that SIDS are able to meaningfully participate

in the work of promotion of human rights both at home and abroad over the long term and in a sustainable manner?

I thank you.