

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 the Right to
Development
51st Session of the Human Rights Council
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Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives thanks the Special Rapporteur for the comprehensive report and his presentation today.

Mr. President,

Over the last few decades, the Maldives saw rapid and sustained development which has enabled us to graduate from LDC status to an upper middle-income country. The backbone of our development success has been and is the tourism sector. Tourism, both directly and indirectly, accounts for nearly 75% of our GDP. While we are determined to strengthen our tourism industry, we are also exploring ways to develop agriculture and fishing to diversify our economy and ensure greater national development.

Mr. President,

The Government of Maldives strongly believes in the right to development for all its people. Therefore, when we initiated our national vaccination programme, the aim of the programme was to provide vaccination to all our citizens and

migrant workers, regardless of their legal status or nationality, so that no one is left behind. Just as the COVID-19 pandemic affected everyone, the devastating effects of climate change also knows no borders. For the Maldives, climate action and development are inseparable and mutually dependent. To protect and realize our right to development, it is imperative that we address the triple crises of the environment namely; climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

In conclusion, I would like to ask the Special Rapporteur, what strategies should be adopted to ensure that negative externalities do not directly undermine the right to development?

I thank you.