

**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 2: Commission of Inquiry on Occupied Palestinian Territory,**  
**including East Jerusalem and in Israel**  
**53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**  
**20 June 2023**

Thank you, Madam Vice President,

The Maldives welcomes the comprehensive report by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on OPT and thanks the commission for their presentation today. We are deeply concerned by the commission's finding that the silencing of civil society voices is intrinsically linked to the permanent occupation of Palestine at the expense of the rights of the Palestinian people.

The international community must ensure that the human rights of the Palestinian people are respected and protected, including their rights to freedom of expression and opinion and their right to peaceful assembly.

Madam Vice President,

The Government and the people of Maldives stand in solidarity with the Government and the people of Palestine and assure our unwavering support for their legitimate and just struggle to achieve a free, independent, and sovereign State of Palestine. A lasting, peaceful resolution to the conflict can only be realized through a two-State solution, with an independent and sovereign State of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

I thank you.