

**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 Discussion on Women's Rights**  
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Thank you, Mr. President,

Let me take this opportunity to thank the esteemed panellists for their presentations and valuable contributions to this important topic of addressing current gaps in social security for women.

The Government of Maldives has taken substantial steps to promote gender equality and address gender discrimination faced by women and girls. The Maldives Gender Equality Act outlines the roles and actions that should be taken by the Government, business entities, non-governmental organizations and other employers to ensure equality and non-discrimination towards women and girls. It also requires the Government and political parties to ensure that equal opportunities exist for women to participate at all levels of political life.

Similarly, the Employment Act of the Maldives ensures that women are guaranteed equal access to employment and equal pay for equal work. It guarantees paid maternity leave for women and makes it illegal, to use gender or marital status as a basis for taking action against an employee. In addition, the Decentralisation Act allocates one-third of all local council seats for women. These laws and regulations are creating an enabling environment for active participation of women and girls in decision making processes and political life.

Mr. President,

In February 2022, the Government approved the Gender Equality Action Plan for 2022-2026, with the aim of increasing women's participation in all sectors and to disrupt the systematic assignment of roles influenced by gender stereotypes. We are proud to note that the Maldives has achieved gender parity amongst the heads of diplomatic missions.

Mr. President,

Gender equality is a crucial element for the achievement of sustainable development. The Maldives has made great strides in promoting women's empowerment and gender equality, and we will continue to strengthen efforts to create an inclusive environment where women have equal opportunities in leadership roles and as policymakers, both in the public and private sectors.

I thank you.