

Statement by

Ms. Mizna Waheed

**Third Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations
and other International Organisations at Geneva**

**Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on Arbitrary
Detention**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives extends its appreciation to the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention for the presentation of their insightful report. We concur with the Working Group that states must balance the imperative of responding to public health emergencies with their obligation to uphold the human rights of all without discrimination.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maldives remained committed to upholding the rule of law and protecting the fundamental rights of all citizens. As such, since February 2020, the Supreme Court has introduced live court hearings, ensuring the uninterrupted provision of the constitutional rights of individuals. These court hearings are archived online for future reference, which is another good measure taken during the pandemic. Further the introduction of video calls at prisons, increased the duration and number of phone calls that detainees can make.

Mr. President,

Last year, the Working Group presented their report to this Council after concluding its visit to the Maldives from 29 November to 9 December 2021.

Taking note of their recommendations, the Maldives Correctional Service has been continuing its efforts to rehabilitate offenders and teach them – practical skills that can help them earn a living upon their release from prison. The Maldives National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF) has also been restructured last year as the Maldives National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMIRF), which enables the mechanism to now track implementation of recommendations by the Working Group.

Before concluding, I would like to reiterate our commitment to implementing the Working Group's recommendations and eliminating arbitrary detention in all its forms and manifestations.

I thank you.