

**Statement by**

**Ms. Maryam Fathika Fayaz**

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

**Item 6: General Debate**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

I am pleased to note that the Maldives has made significant progress in realising the democratic aspirations of our people. The Maldives highly values the UPR mechanism of the Human Rights Council, as it has provided an important platform to review and assess our progress in the field of human rights and identify areas for further improvement. This mechanism not only helps to strengthen our nation's commitment to human rights but also ensures compliance with our international obligations.

Mr. President,

The Maldives has completed three cycles of the UPR. Most recently in November 2020. During this review, the Maldives accepted 198 out of 258 recommendations. Since then, we have worked towards implementing these recommendations, achieving notable milestones, including:

1. Ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons against Enforced Disappearance on 31 July 2023.

2. Addressing budgetary challenges faced by the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives by significantly increasing their financial support, with a total budget support of over USD 2 million provided in 2023.
3. Establishing a National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up.
4. Criminalization of marital rape without exceptions.
5. Criminalization of hate speech.
6. Maintaining the informal moratorium on the use of death penalty.
7. Conducting gender sensitization training programmes for judges.
8. Adopting the Gender Equality Action Plan.
9. Enacting the Evidence Act.

Furthermore, I wish to underscore the importance of continuing the hybrid modalities during the UPR review process. These modalities promote inclusivity and cost-effectiveness, especially for SIDS such as the Maldives, allowing relevant national authorities to participate actively and take ownership of the commitments made during the review. We also stress the need for technical assistance and capacity building support throughout the UPR process to enhance the meaningful engagement with this important mechanism.

I thank you.