

Statement by
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Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations and
other International Organisations at Geneva

Item 8: General Debate
Follow-up and Implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme
of Action

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Thank you, Mr. President.

As we celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Maldives acknowledges the importance both these declarations and takes this opportunity to renew our commitment to the values enshrined in them. We strongly believe that upholding these values is essential for the full realization and enjoyment of human rights.

Mr. President,

The multitude of conflicts and crises facing today's world, including the climate emergency and other global challenges that come before this Council, underscore the urgency of meeting the commitments outlined in the VDPA. A noteworthy achievement resulting from the VDPA was the realization of the call for the creation of a High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Maldives recognizes that the role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has become ever more important as we tackle complex challenges of global development. We reaffirm our unwavering support for the High Commissioner

and his good offices in their dedicated efforts to uphold, promote and protect human rights globally.

Mr. President,

We appreciate the inclusive nature of the VDPA, which recognizes a broad range of human rights, including the right to development and the rights of women and girls. The Maldives has implemented several crucial initiatives to promote gender equality. Our Gender Equality Act sets out the roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders to ensure equality and non-discrimination towards women and girls, with a view to create an inclusive environment where women have equal opportunities in leadership roles and policymaking, both in the public and private sectors.

Mr. President,

For the Maldives, the right to development and the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. As a low-lying island nation, environmental catastrophes, such as climate change, directly impact our livelihood and development prospects. We take this opportunity to call on the international community to take collaborative measures to operationalize the right to development, ensuring a sustainable future for all.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me reiterate the unwavering determination of the Maldives to realize the shared vision of inalienable human rights enshrined in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, as we strive for a world where no one is left behind.

Thank you.