

Statement by

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Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Disabilities

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Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for his comprehensive and insightful report. We welcome the Special Rapporteur's view of moving towards a new philosophy of support, by transforming services to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise their right to be autonomous and create inclusive pathways to communal life.

Mr. President,

In his annual address to Parliament this year, President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih affirmed his commitment to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities and announced that the disability allowance will be increased in June 2023. Furthermore, the Gender Equality Plan (2022-2026) consists of strategies to establish career pathways and entrepreneurship opportunities for women with disabilities.

Mr. President,

The Maldives concurs with the Special Rapporteur's opinion that the business sector should become a partner for change and embrace their human rights responsibilities.

In this regard, we have seen Maldivian businesses engaging with national civil society organisations to provide inclusive opportunities to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Further, in the tourism sector, a private-owned Maldivian resort became the world's first accessibility and inclusion certified establishment, which is a noteworthy initiative from the corporate sector.

Mr. President,

The Maldives is committed to removing barriers faced by persons with disabilities and would like to request the Special Rapporteur, to elaborate on effective approaches for States with limited resources to incentivize innovative person-centred new providers to enter the market.

I thank you.