

Statement by

Ms. Fathika Fayaz

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

**Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner on Access to
COVID-19 Vaccines**

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Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives would like to thank the High Commissioner for the report on access to COVID-19 vaccines and for the presentation today.

We concur with the views expressed by the High Commissioner in his report that the world has paid a high price for the failure to ensure universal and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, with serious negative consequences for the enjoyment of human rights, including the right to life, health, equality and non-discrimination. The report by the High Commissioner also highlights that approximately 600,000 deaths could have been prevented globally if all countries had reached 40 percent primary series vaccination coverage by the end of 2021.

Mr. President,

The Maldives believes that a multilateral solution is the way forward to address inequalities related to access to medicines and vaccines. In this regard, an exceptional waiver on the intellectual properties of therapeutics and diagnostics,

including vaccines against the COVID-19 pandemic, will ensure equitable, affordable, timely and universal access of COVID-19 vaccines, medicines and treatments for all countries. Therefore, we urge states to engage in constructive dialogue in all multilateral fora to ensure universal access to COVID-19 vaccines and medicines to protect the most affected and to leave no-one behind. Such multilateral cooperation will also be essential in preparing for future pandemics.

To conclude, we would like to ask the High Commissioner, what more can be done by the international community to advance universal and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, medicines, and therapeutics.

I thank you.