

11. Panel Discussion on Ending Violence Against Children

**27th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
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**Panel discussion on “Ending violence against children: a global call to
make the invisible visible”
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to the United Nations Offices in Geneva**

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Thank you, Mr. President

The Maldives would like to thank the High Commissioner, the moderator and the panellists for the informative dialogue today. We are very grateful for your contributions, and we hope to see your findings invested in the development and implementation of mechanisms to significantly reduce and prevent all forms of violence against children, which sadly is a growing issue.

Mr President,

The Maldives is concerned by the global prevalence of the invisible violation of childrens rights. Our Government is proactively working towards strengthening child protection systems in the country. Under Government current legislative agenda a Juvenile Justice Bill is scheduled to be submitted to the Parliament for approval this year. Furthermore a new Child Rights Act providing much broader and detailed legal protection for the Children will also be submitted for Parliament approval this year. . We recognise there is still much work to be

done, and will continue to dedicate our efforts to the protection of children in the Maldives, especially for girls and young women.

Mr. President,

The Maldives believes that violence against children is both inexcusable and preventable. It is the duty of the international community to work together to protect children, who are so very vulnerable due to their dependency and inability to protect themselves. A great challenge in achieving this is the hidden nature of these violations, as they are disguised by accepted social practices, ignorance, and even cultural norms. Prevention can only come with awareness, and within smaller and isolated communities this can only be accomplished through the implementation of educational and social mobilisation programmes, and through the empowerment of children themselves. Child abuse, in all of its horrific guises, continues and remains undetected due the instilled barriers of stigma, humiliation and secrecy. We believe that a multi-faceted approach between a wide-range of actors, including governments, civil society and relevant stakeholders, is essential to the realization of effective laws, policies and prevention programmes worldwide.

Finally, the Maldives condemns in the strongest terms the callous targeting of children in conflict, be this deliberate or otherwise, and urges States to adopt the necessary measures to avoid this gross violation of human rights.

I thank you, Mr. President.