

2. Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

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**Agenda Item 3:  
Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur  
on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation  
9 September 2014**

**Statement by Ms. Shiuneen Rasheed,  
First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives  
to the United Nations Offices in Geneva**

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Thank you, Mr President,

The Maldives welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur, and wishes to thank her for her recommendations to ensure the realization of these rights for present and future generations.

The Maldives fully believes that the violation of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation incriminates on living a life in dignity and on the enjoyment of human rights. As the world's lowest-lying nation, access to safe water and sanitation has continued to be a critical issue for the Maldives. The vulnerability of our islands and increasing population, compounded by our susceptibility to climate change, mean that we may no longer depend on groundwater supplies and on the collection of rainwater.

These issues have had negative implications for the development of our country, and over the past few years as we have often relied on the National Disaster Management Centre to transport and supply water to the islands during the dry period.

Mr President,

This year the Maldives has taken strong steps to surmount the complex hydrogeological challenges we face. Our Government, along with aid from the UNDP, the Adaption Fund and other local and international donors, has funded the development and implementation of integrated water resources management in an effort to provide reliable, safe and equitable access to water for our island

communities. We have welcomed the successful installation of a new desalination plant which runs by utilising waste heat; a technology which allows us to approach the challenge of access to safe water with our fervent commitment to the environment in mind. We recognise that the issue of water is intertwined with that of sanitation, and this year we have provided 25% of our inhabited islands with waste management equipment to improve sanitation conditions nationally. The Government, with the aid of the UNDP, has sponsored demonstration projects to provide the requisite training, awareness and facilities assure long-lasting management strategies and to elevate the quality of waste management across the country.

Mr President,

Maldives commits itself fully to the realization of universal, equitable and sustainable access to water and sanitation, but also recognises the challenge of the affordability of the mechanisms required for small, developing states. We encourage multi-lateral initiatives to eradicate these issues, such as last week's SIDS conference in Samoa, which sought to build on existing partnerships and to launch new ones to advance sustainable development across SIDS.

We urge the international community to continue to raise awareness on the right to clean drinking water and sanitation, and hope to see the development of innovate and environmentally solicitous methods to prevent the common violations of the human right to water and sanitation.

I thank you Mr President.