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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

22nd Special Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
"On the human rights situation in Iraq in light of abuses committed by the Islamic State
in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups"
Geneva, 01 September 2014

Statement by Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, First Secretary
Permanent Mission of Maldives to the United Nations Offices at Geneva

Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Maldives

Thank you Mr. President,

The Maldives expresses its appreciation to the OHCHR and other UN bodies, for the information provided on the grave human rights situation in Iraq, and the Deputy High Commissioner Ms Flavia Panseiri, and other panelists for their statements this morning.

The Maldives joined the list of many countries calling to hold this special session, in light of the massive widespread and systematic human rights violations and abuses caused by the organization which identifies itself as the "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" and associated groups. The Maldives condemns in the strongest possible terms, the systematic violations and abuses of crimes committed by the ISIL.

The Maldives is deeply concerned by the killing of civilians in Iraq. It is alarming that between January and June 2014, an estimated 5500 individuals in Iraq have been killed and millions have been displaced. ISIL's persecution of minority groups and the executions, forced conversions, enslavement and abductions of ethnic, sectarian and religious minorities, especially Christians, Turkomen, Yezidi, Kaka'e, Sabaeans and Shabaks are direct violations of international law potentially constituting war crimes and crimes against humanity. Most importantly, the principles upon which Islam is premised on.

Mr. President,

The use of violence to achieve religious or political goals is not justifiable in any faith. ISIL's use of religion as a pretext for inflicting terror, and committing violations of human rights in Iraq is both un-Islamic and inhumane. Their philosophy blatantly violates the fundamental Islamic principles of peace, tolerance and unity. Islam is based on peace, the protection and preservation of life and unity, and promotes human rights. Islam condemns violence; it condemns suicide, unjust war and retribution by force.

Therefore, it is important that this Council and the world in large, view the events in Iraq not through a religious lens but from a human rights and humanitarian lens. The horrific persecutions, killings and ethnic cleansing of innocent civilians being committed by the ISIL should not be accepted by any person or State, and especially by this Council. We call on all parties to respect the right to freedom of information, freedom of speech and ensure the safety of journalists.

Mr President.

The Maldives joins the call on the need for humanitarian assistance and for the international community to work with the authorities to prevent a humanitarian and human rights tragedy in Iraq. The Maldives reaffirms its commitment on the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iraq, and calls on the Government to ensure that those responsible for human rights violations be held accountable and impunity avoided.

The International community has to work together, ever stronger than before, to address this tragic situation and combat terrorism. ISIL poses a serious threat to a lasting peace in Iraq, the region as well as to global security. The Maldives emphasizes the need for international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, and calls on all States to actively address this issue. Lastly, the Government of Maldives calls on the international community to support the Government of Iraq to restore peace and to bring about stability.

The Maldives also supports the resolution tabled by the delegation of Iraq, and calls on all parties to engage constructively for the implementation of the resolution.

I thank you, Mr President