



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

**17th Session of Universal Periodic Review Working Group  
Geneva, 21 October – 01 November 2013**

**Review of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
21 October 2013**

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

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Thank you Mr President.

The Maldives would like to welcome the distinguished delegation of Saudi Arabia, a fellow member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The Maldives appreciates the positive steps taken by Saudi Arabia to improving the situation of women. We note positively that since the last session, strides have been made to encourage women to participate fully in society, in particular the appointment of 30 women to the Shura Council. In addition, we look forward to the Municipal Council elections where women will be able to stand for election for the first time from the next session.

The Maldives further commends Saudi Arabia on the establishment of institutional mechanisms for the advancement and the protection of women from violence, more specifically the recent draft law criminalizing domestic abuse in addition to other initiatives taken to tackle violence against women.

Mr President,

Despite the progresses made in the promotion and protection of human rights, there remains some areas that need further improvements. In view of the above, the Maldives would like to make the following recommendations to the Government of Saudi Arabia:

- 1) To expedite ratification of the ICCPR and ICESCR as was accepted by the Government at the first UPR.
- 2) Urge the Government to enact and strengthen laws providing the right to education, and to take effective measures to protect the rights of the child.

We wish the delegation of Saudi Arabia all the success in its review.

Thank you Mr President.