|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Description: Description: Description: C:\Users\amessent\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Outlook\MN1HAVZZ\Brand NZ-no agency High Res.jpg | **Human Rights Council** **22nd session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group** **Maldives****Delivered by DPR Carl Reaich****6 May 2015** |

Mr President,

New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to engage with Maldives on its human rights situation, and recognises the commitments undertaken by small island developing states in engaging on these processes.

We have concerns about recent trends in the Maldives regarding the promotion and protection for Civil and Political rights, specifically in relation to freedom of expression, fair trial rights, and the independence of the judiciary.

New Zealand **recommends** the Maldives accept a follow up visit by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers and accept the outstanding request of a visit by the Special Rapporteur on the situations of human rights defenders. We **recommend** also that the Maldives provide meaningful access to specialised training on international human rights law and mechanisms to its judges, magistrates, prosecutors and lawyers.

New Zealand **recommends** an absolute ban on death sentences against persons below the age of 18 at the time when the offence was committed.

New Zealand **recommends** that the Maldives move promptly to accede to the *Protocol to the Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime*

Thank you Mr President.