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**Statement by Latvia on Maldives
22th Session of the UPR Working Group
6 May 2015**

Mr. President,

Latvia warmly welcomes the distinguished delegation of the Maldives to this UPR.

We congratulate the Maldives on progress made in recent decades towards the achievement of the MDGs and in advancing the rights and welfare of its people, despite the challenges posed by its small size, geographical dispersion and the negative effect of climate change. Latvia believes it is important that the Maldives continues to commit to the full realization of all human rights and welcomes efforts made since the last UPR review to address human rights concerns, in collaboration with mandate holders having visited the country. Nonetheless, numerous challenges lie ahead in particular as regards the independence of the judiciary, the full realization of women's and children's rights and the elimination of all forms of gender discrimination, and the creation of a safe and enabling environment, free from reprisals and attacks, for civil society and journalists.

Latvia would like to make the following recommendations to the Maldives:

1. To retain the moratorium on the death penalty in all circumstances, in particular for juvenile offenders, and work towards the de jure abolition of capital punishment;
2. To impose an immediate moratorium on flogging, with the view of abolishing it in law and prohibit all forms of corporal punishment in all settings, including in the home and as a criminal sentence;
3. Complete the enactment of the draft Child Protection Act in line with the country's obligations under the CRC, by including provisions to counter child, early and forced marriage; and
4. To develop and implement laws, policies and mechanisms that ensure full protection of all journalists, human rights defenders and those cooperating with UN human rights mechanisms against attacks and reprisals.

Let me conclude, Mr. President, by expressing Latvia's appreciation for the Maldives' active participation in the work of this Council.

Thank you.