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**Review of Benin**

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Statement by:

Ms Aishath Shahula

First Secretary/ Permanent Mission of Maldives to the United Nations Office at Geneva

*Check against delivery*

Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives welcomes the delegation from Benin to this review. We express our appreciation for today’s presentation, and take positive note of the national report.

The Maldives is encouraged by Benin’s continuous efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights. We welcome the Government’s Programme of Action for 2016-2021 consisting of 45 flagship projects, 95 sectorial projects and 19 institutional reforms. The Maldives welcomes the free education policy extended to higher education and the positive steps taken to provide access to drinking water for the entire population of Benin by 2021.

The Maldives further commends Benin on the measures taken to promote and protect children’s rights including the adoption of the Children’s Code, the National Child Protection Policy and the National Action Plan incorporating the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In constructive spirit, the Maldives recommends Benin to :

1. Continue its efforts in promoting women’s rights by increasing the representation of women in both public service and private sector.

We wish Benin every success in this Review.

Thank you, Mr. President.