**42nd Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Republic of Gabon**

**24 January 2023**

Statement by:

Mr. Hassan Hussain Shihab

Counsellor

*Check against delivery*

Thank you, Mr. President,

At the outset, we would like to offer our sincere condolences to the Government and people of Gabon on the tragic passing of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Michael Moussa-Adamo. Minister Moussa was a visionary leader, and a great friend of the Maldives.

The Maldives also warmly welcomes the high-level delegation from the Republic of Gabon to this fourth cycle review and thanks the delegation for their presentation today.

The Maldives commends Gabon for the efforts made during the review period to improve the human rights situation. In this regard, we welcome the implementation of the National Strategy to Promote Women’s Rights which in turn strengthened the regulatory framework in place to ensure gender equality and combat violence against women.

In constructive spirit, the Maldives makes the following two recommendations:

1. Consider allocating funding to provide school supplies for children in vulnerable groups to fulfil their right to education.

2. Intensify efforts to increase equitable access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene through the ongoing projects.

We wish Gabon a successful review.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Link to statement: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/ga-index>