**2**9th **Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review**

**15 - 26 January 2018, Geneva**

**Review of Tonga**

**15 January 2018**

Statement by:

Her Excellency Dr Hala Hameed, Ambassador |

Permanent Representative of Maldives to the United Nations Office at Geneva

*Check against delivery*

Thank you, Mr. President,

The Maldives extends a warm welcome to the delegation of Tonga to this review and thank the delegation for the presentation today.

We welcome the efforts of the Government of Tonga in protecting women and children with the adoption of the Family Protection Act 2013. The Maldives is encouraged by Tonga’s progress in ensuring universal and inclusive primary education with the adoption of the new Education Act of 2013, and its efforts to improve access to primary schooling for children especially from low-income households.

The Maldives presents two recommendations to Tonga:

1. Expedite the ongoing process to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as part of its ongoing efforts to promote and protect the rights of women.
2. Continue to strengthen healthcare and to especially improve services for maternal health, for newborns and for children.

We wish our fellow SIDS, Tonga every success at this review. Thank you.