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**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE**

**AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AT GENEVA**

**35th Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review**

**20 -31 January 2020, Geneva**

**Review of Spain**

**22 January 2020**

Statement by:

Ambassador Hala Hameed / Permanent Representative

*Check against delivery*

Thank you, Madam President,

The Maldives extends a warm welcome to the high-level delegation of Spain to the UPR process and thanks them for their presentation today.

The Maldives commends the strategic interventions made by Spain to integrate women into the public, political and economic spheres of life and its impressive legal and institutional infrastructure for gender equality, which had brought significant gains for women. We also welcome the establishment of the National Human Rights Bureau of the National Police, fostering the commitment of Spain in the defense of human rights.

In constructive spirit, the Maldives presents the following two recommendations to Spain:

1. To decriminalize defamation and place it within the civil code, in accordance with international standards of necessity and proportionality concerning restrictions on freedom of expression.

2. To expedite the adoption of the legislation guaranteeing comprehensive protection of children against violence and ensuring its application at all levels.

My delegation wishes Spain every success at this third cycle review.

Thank you, Madam President.