

GoFoSIDS Joint Statement for the 38th Session

General Debate on Item 10

4 July 2018

Statement Delivered by:
Mr Jeffrey Salim Waheed,
Minister | Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations and other International Organisations at Geneva

Mr President,

It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of 18 members of the cross-regional Group of Friends of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and with the support of 33 countries, the list of which is annexed to this statement.

Upon the 12-year anniversary of the Human Rights Council, we find ourselves at a crossroad. With the aim of ensuring the ongoing utility, efficacy and universality of the Council, it is for us to determine where our priorities lie and how to best safeguard the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The mandate of the Council to promote and protect human rights is inherently interlinked to both sustainable development and the maintenance of international peace and security. This mandate, while primarily exercised through its 47 elected members, allows every representative to give voice to human rights challenges in this chamber.

The representatives of Small States, in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) also play an important role in this chamber. As voices imbued by the needs of those who are most vulnerable, their active participation embodies the adage that ‘no one is left behind.’ Towards the realization of this principle, ‘*the Voluntary Trust Fund for Technical Cooperation and Assistance for LDCs and SIDS in the Work of the Council*’ has provided support to 105 delegates and fellows, over 60% of them women, representing 69 of the 72 eligible LDCs and SIDS. This session marks the participation of the 100th beneficiary delegate. Over the four years of its operation, the Trust Fund has been able to reach all SIDS/LDCs from CARICOM and the Asia-Pacific region.

Through greater representation and the enhanced substantive participation of Small Islands and SIDS, the universality of this Council is reinforced. The recognition of the inter-connected reality of the global community, where every population is tied to every other, is a fundamental component of the evolving development and security paradigm in the United Nations. It remains our objective to increase the effective participation of all nations in the work of this Council, with a view to creating the safeguards that realise global stability and prosperity.

With 17 SIDS without permanent representation in Geneva, we encourage all nations to continue their support to the fund and we encourage new donors to contribute not only to the Trust Fund and to support universality and its place in global governance institutions.

Thank you, Mr President.

Annex: List of Co-Sponsors of this Statement:

1. Commonwealth of Australia
2. Republic of Azerbaijan
3. Canada
4. Republic of Chile

5. Republic of Cyprus
6. Kingdom of Denmark
7. Arab Republic of Egypt
8. Hellenic Republic - Greece
9. Federal Republic of Germany
10. Republic of Guyana
11. Republic of Haiti
12. Republic of Iceland
13. Ireland
14. Republic of Italy
15. Republic of Malawi
16. Republic of Malaysia
17. Republic of Maldives
18. Republic of Malta
19. Republic of Mauritius
20. Montenegro
21. Kingdom of Morocco
22. Kingdom of the Netherlands
23. New Zealand
24. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
25. Republic of Philippines
26. Republic of Poland
27. Kingdom of Spain
28. Switzerland
29. Kingdom of Thailand
30. Republic of Tonga
31. Republic of Turkey
32. Ukraine
33. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland