Good Morning/Afternoon,

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

It is an honor to be here at the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

I represent a small island nation, in the middle of the Indian Ocean. A nation with little over 340,000 people, a nation of Sun, Sand and Sea, a nation known to some of us as a paradise, with pristine white sandy beaches and crystal clear waters.

However, the story of the Maldives doesn’t end there. Today we are being challenged by a wave of crime. A wave of crime fuelled by drug abuse.

The government of Maldives is taking a two sided approach in the fight against crime and for criminal justice. While catching criminals and prosecuting them takes place, we now place a wider emphasis on stopping crime before it occurs. We are engaging and seeking active support from the community leaders such as teachers, shop owners, religious scholars, youth organizations and parents of children requiring additional support. Thus we have opened up an additional front in the fight against crime and drugs.

It is aimed at breaking the cycle of crime at it most critical point, amongst our youth, inside and outside schools. And it takes the fight against crime to the grass roots.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

We are also reviving with modern taste and changes, an old community based crime prevention and a justice system that has kept the people of the Maldives safer for hundreds of years without uniformed Police officer and full-time sitting Judges. A system that comes with the consent of the community, implemented by the community for the community.

Small island communities, if engaged properly, can maintain a fair and an effective system of crime prevention and a cheap criminal justice system all supported by the senior citizens of that island community.

The population of Maldives, divided across 188 islands, each island separated from the other by deep ocean, poses a challenge to the government in providing modern-day law enforcement and a justice system. But this geographical setting has its crime prevention advantages as well.

Remoteness, disconnection from urban centres, resulting in strong family ties, a heirachy of community leaders, the Maldives has maintained a cheap and a quick criminal justice system, that prevented crime and kept island communinities safer for hundreds of years.

By rebranding and re-introduction of this old system, we believe, will add strength to our efforts to change the culture of violence that pervades our society today.
Of course we live in the 21st century and we need solutions from this century, but we must not leave the advantages that has kept us safe for so long.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Today recruitment for terrorism activities abroad is a growing concern for all the nations. Internet, among other methods, being used as a popular recruiting tool for these activities. The governments must unite and act against recruitment for terrorism activities. Governments must also make it a criminal offence for any person to leave the country with the intention to participate and fight along terrorist organizations. Proper legal mechanisms must be enacted to apprehend citizens returning home after fighting along terrorists organizations.

The government of Maldives is working on legal frameworks to criminalize recruitment for terrorism activities, departure with intention to fight alongside terrorists organizations and participate in another countries war.

The government of Maldives is also making it a priority to address human trafficking, child exploitation and human rights abuses with positive actionable partnership with international partners.

With the financial aid from the UNICEF, we are currently running a pilot project, Safe Island Model for selected two islands. This Safe Island Model, includes, camps, programs, awareness sessions and workshops focusing on individual levels, family levels and community levels.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the UNICEF, UNODC, UNDP and other agencies under UN who had given their professional and financial support in building Maldives a safer place for all.

Before I conclude I would like to convey my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the government of Qatar for the excellent arrangement they have made for this 13th congress.

I wish all the delegates success.

Thank you.