

**Statement by the head of delegation of the Maldives
At the Eleventh Conference of State Parties
Atlanta, Georgia, 11 December 2023**

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

We would like to congratulate Mr. Richard Nephew on your election as the president of the conference. Also, we express our gratitude to the Republic of Egypt for its effective role as the previous presidency of the conference. We would also like to show our gratitude to the people of Atlanta for the warm hospitality, and the secretariat for the pleasing arrangements made.

Mr. President.

I represent a very small island nation, normally known as the sunny side of life, Maldives. Like any other country, Maldives is not immune to corruption and its detrimental impact. We are experiencing the effect of corruption on rule of law, sustainable development, democratic government, social and criminal justice systems and human rights.

Maldives acceded to the UNCAC in 2007. And the year followed we adopted a new constitution. This democratic transform turned the Anti-Corruption Board, which was established in the year 1991, into a constitutional independent Anti-Corruption body.

Following that, The Maldives has achieved progressive success on its fight against corruption by bringing positive normative transformations. And today we have effective collaborations with various counterpart agencies in many countries, including Malaysia, China, Indonesia, Kuwait, Singapore, India, and Saudi Arabia as anticipated by the Chapter IV of the Convention. Also, notably this year we became a member of Globe E-Network.

Mr. President.

During the past ten years, Maldives has brought a huge positive change to the criminal justice system both in terms of substantive and procedural laws. These remarkable achievements made criminalization of all offenses of corruption as stated in the convention including illicit enrichment and trading in influence.

The Anti-Corruption Commission has prioritized its effort in having a comprehensive asset recovery regime in the country. Thus, the commission has conducted comprehensive research on the topic in a local context and has developed a five-year programme and has drafted a model law on Asset Recovery. Also, the research on asset declaration was followed by recommendations for a broad bill on asset declaration to amend the current regime, is in parliament.

Furthermore, ACC has had profound success in drawing up a National Anti-Corruption Policy, and a National Integrity Plan. Also, the Commission has Conducted a national level corruption perception research and recommendation have disseminated to the stakeholders.

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Likewise, the Commission has provided guidelines to the state actors on mitigating corruption in service delivery and procurement process in the fight against the pandemic. Also, a community led- Social Audit tool kit was developed, and Civil Service Organizations were trained to conduct such in societies. The commission has successfully provided political parties and candidates with a comprehensive guideline on campaign financing and electoral integrity during the last presidential election.

Furthermore, the Commission has identified corruption risks in Political Party financing, Health Care procurement and recruitment, Customs and immigration services, Procurement in SOEs, Public Administration and Service Delivery, Infrastructure Development Projects, Beneficial ownership, Government's out of court financial settlements, Infrastructure Development Projects, Financial management in political parties, registration of land and building, Pilgrim management services.

The commission has facilitated the government offices and state agencies with a Corruption self - Risk Assessment Tool kit with that identifies and provide recommendations to take corrective measures.

This year Maldives Anti-Corruption Commission launched the Maldives National Anti-Corruption Academy with the strategic objective to train human equipped with the anti-corruption knowledge and know-how, which aspires becoming a regional training center on ethics and integrity.

In Addition to that, the Maldives Anti-Corruption Trust Fund was established in June 2023 to overcome the fiscal challenges that the commission face frequently due to budget cut and other financial issues. The beneficiaries to this trust are corruption prevention and enforcement activities and to develop its capacity in terms of skills and systems.

Mr. President,

This October, as we bid farewell to the country review mission, we are keen to follow up on the recommendations provided by the first review cycle which focused on chapter III and chapter IV.

As a small island nation, Maldives is facing a huge impact of climate change such as global warming and sea level rise.

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

For the survival of small island nations like us, we strongly believe that the crucial global generous effort on mitigation and adaptation of climate change and its funds should be closely scrutinized by independent anti-corruption agencies.

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For such efficiency, Maldives needs your substantial assistance in terms of finance, and technical capacity building, so that we can have a more comprehensive and robust climate integrity programme in place.

The Maldives believes that as we commemorate 20 years of UNCAC, the way forward should not only focus on strengthening systems but should also focus on understanding human behavior related to crime.

Mr. President.

Also, we believe that anti-corruption policies and programmes should be based more on empirical evidence and more data analysis should be used in designing and executing programmes against transnational organized crimes contextually.

Additionally, to identify criminal trends and behavior, more analysis should be conducted on the data that local, regional and global institutions have. And mutual assistance should be extended to adopt smart technologies, such as artificial intelligence including machines and deep learning.

Also, Maldives strongly believes that South Asia should be given more opportunity to represent its people globally to showcase their fight against corruption and the challenges they face daily.

To Conclude, we sincerely express our deepest gratitude towards UNODC and the conference secretariat for your kindness. Thank you, dear corruption fighters, for your consideration and generosity for being with us today here to show our collective belief against corruption.

Thank you.

Head of Delegation (Maldives)

Mr. Adam Shamil

President

Anti-Corruption Commission