NATIONS UNIES
LE HAUT-COMMISSAIRE
AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME

UNITED NATIONS
THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

PALAIS DES NATIONS – 1211, GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

17 June 2026

Madam,

I have the honour to refer to the fourth cycle review of Maldives by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group at its 50th session in November 2025. As the final outcome report on the review of Maldives was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 61st session, I have taken note of the efforts of Maldives to implement specific recommendations since the previous review.

A matrix of thematically clustered recommendations, starting with those supported by Maldives, is available at OHCHR's website (lhttps://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/mv-index) and should be considered as part of this letter. The matrix indicates the recommending State and links each recommendation to relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In annex, I have also attached my Office's observations in light of the outcome of the fourth cycle of the UPR. In line with previous practice, I will be sending similar observations to all Member States once their fourth cycle UPR outcome is adopted by the Human Rights Council, with a view to follow-up action in close cooperation with national entities and other stakeholders.

I take this opportunity to draw your attention to the support available through the Voluntary Fund for UPR Implementation, which may be activated at the request and with the consent of a concerned State, along with tools such as the "UPR practical guidance" and the "UN good practices" repository on how the UPR process supports sustainable development, available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/upr-main, with a view to facilitating efforts to implement UPR recommendations in line with the SDGs.

Please accept, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Volker Türk

Her Excellency
Ms. Iruthisham Adam
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives

Observations in light of the outcome of the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review

The efforts of Maldives to integrate its human rights commitments and the SDGs into its policies and plans, including the Strategic Action Plan 2025-2028, are welcome. The ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance following the third UPR cycle recommendations is positively noted.

The initiatives of Maldives in advancing climate change resilience through an inclusive, all-of-society approach, such as through the Climate Emergency Act, the SPRING project, and the Early Warning for All Roadmap (2023-2027), are to be commended.

As raised during the review, Maldives is invited to maintain the moratorium on the application of the death penalty, introduce a *de jure* moratorium on the death penalty, including for drug-related offences, and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. Maldives is further encouraged to ensure the independence and adequate funding of the Maldives Human Rights Commission.

Another important step would be to provide a safe environment for human rights defenders and journalists, allowing them to perform their activities with a view to strengthening freedom of expression and the freedom of the media. Removing legal provisions that restrict the right to freedom of religion or belief, guaranteeing the right to manifest one's religion or belief, and combating discrimination against and intolerance of religious minorities, would also bring legislation and practices in conformity with international human rights norms. Maldives is encouraged to continue promoting gender equality and ensuring the effective protection of women's rights, as well as to enhance protection mechanisms for children, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, ensuring their effective access to justice and essential services. The need to continue to improve the living conditions for the population and expand social security coverage was highlighted during the review.

Maldives is encouraged to develop an implementation plan in follow up to the UPR outcome, in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the parliament, the judiciary, the Human Rights Commission, local and regional governments, and civil society organizations. The matrix of thematically clustered recommendations may be of use in the development of such an implementation plan. Maldives is encouraged to explicitly link each UPR recommendation to corresponding recommendations from other international and regional human rights mechanisms and to the relevant SDG and its targets. This will, in turn, facilitate the creation of synergies between UPR implementation and SDG-related actions and reporting within the context of the Voluntary National Review (VNR).

Maldives is also encouraged to further strengthen the National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up, with the aim of ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to reporting to international human rights mechanisms, and to implementing the recommendations, in line with the guidance provided by OHCHR following regional consultations and the High Commissioner's report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/50/64).

Further, an important measure that could positively contribute to follow-up action is voluntary mid-term UPR reporting. All Member States are encouraged to submit a voluntary mid-term UPR report about two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome. In this regard, Maldives may wish to consider resuming the practice of submitting a mid-term report on follow-up to the fourth cycle UPR recommendations by 2028, detailing both implementation efforts as well as challenges to implementation, including the possible need for technical or capacity-building assistance.

OHCHR
June 2026