



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

**Statement to be delivered by
H.E. Ms. Iruthisham Adam, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of
the Republic of Maldives to the 101st Session of the IOM Council
27 to 30 November 2012**

**IOM International Organization for Migration
101st Session**

Thank You Mr. Chairperson,

The Maldives Government is pleased to participate in the General Debate of the IOM for the country's second year of its membership.

Whilst the Maldives faces a range of challenging issues such as deplorable acts of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, the Government remains committed to addressing these issues. An estimate of over 100,000 migrant workers are in the Maldives that equates to about 1 in 4 of our total population. The rising numbers of undocumented foreign workers and many who overstay or disappear have become a serious issue.

The Constitution of the Maldives prohibits forced labour and slavery in the country, and the Employment Act prohibits most forms of forced labour. However, the geographical positioning of the country, the absence of appropriate counter trafficking legislation, lack of understanding of the issue and constraints of administrative mechanism to manage the migrant population makes it hard to control illegal migrant flows from international borders. As efforts to protect the rights of local populations and the migrants, the Government has launched a campaign to inform and increase the awareness of migration regulations using information technology.



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The Maldives believes that a comprehensive legislative framework is crucial for combating trafficking and implementing equal and just treatment of foreign workers. In this regard, on 8 October 2012, the Maldives Parliament has endorsed 8 ILO Conventions and are currently in the process of acceding them. It is important to join the battle on human trafficking, because all countries are affected in different ways by it.

Mr. Chairperson,

As a small vulnerable state, climate change and environment related issues pose existential threats to the Maldives. Science and demographic evidence has observed the impact of environmentally-induced or climate migration as one of the most pressing migration issues. Movement of millions of people within or across borders, statelessness of people and poverty caused by climate change requires political will and commitment from the international community.

Mr. Chairperson.

The Maldives reaffirms its commitment to address migration issues both nationally and internationally through its engagement with IOM.

Thank You Mr. Chairperson.