

For your kind attention:

Maldives Hails “New Reality” in Understanding Climate Change

18 March 2009, Geneva; The Maldives delegation to the 10th Session of the Human Rights Council today welcomed the publication of a new report by the United Nations of the relationship between climate change and human rights, and stated that the report points towards a “new reality” in how the world perceives and thus should respond to climate change.

Speaking to assembled governments, Ms. Shazra Abdul Sattar, Chargé d’Affaires, said that the report is “highly significant in that it provides definitive recognition that climate change has important negative implications for a wide-range of internationally-protected human rights. Moreover, the report demonstrates that the impacts of global warming fall heaviest on the rights of those people who are already vulnerable due to geography, poverty, age, or gender factors”.

She then went on to underscore the importance of this new understanding: “Today, as of *this* day, States, especially industrialized States, continue to emit greenhouse gases knowing that the ultimate consequence of their actions is to undermine the human rights of millions of people around the world, especially those living in vulnerable countries. Today, as of *this* day, UNFCCC delegates sit down at the negotiating table knowing that failure to act will condemn millions of the world’s poor to a future of diminishing possibilities. Today, as of *this* day, national governments, especially in industrialized countries, understand that failure to abide by their international commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation will result, ultimately, in the withdrawal of the right of Maldivians to self-determination - the right to live and prosper in the country of their birth”.

Also speaking during the debate were China, Bhutan, Canada, Costa Rica, Switzerland and the World Bank.

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