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1 March 2011

Statement by the Republic of Maldives on the suspension of Libya's membership rights in the Human Rights Council

Mr. President,

On February 25th 2011, the Human Rights Council took a historic step and recommended to suspend Libya's membership because of its gross and systematic violations of human rights. A day later the Security Council built on this with their own resolution and today, the General Assembly has taken action on the same. These decisions, while important steps, are not enough to save the many lives that are being lost as we speak right here. Firm decisions need to be made and firm actions need to be taken against these violations of the rights of innocent citizens.

The Maldives strongly condemns the violence unleashed by the Libyan authorities against their own people – people who are merely trying to assert their universal rights to freedom of expression and association, and the freedom to democratically choose their own government. It is clear that uncivilized and systematic violations of human rights have been perpetrated in Libya and that these, in all likelihood constitute crimes against humanity.

It is evident that the Libyan Dictatorship has no intention of upholding its principal responsibility to protect its people. It is therefore the duty of the international community to intervene. We, the community of nations, have a clear and unambiguous responsibility - to protect innocent men, women and children in Libya; to remove Muammar Gaddafi and his allies from power and hold them accountable for their crimes; and to help build a new democratic country.

Mr. President,

The Maldives, a fellow Muslim country responding to the calls of our brothers and sisters in Libya, commend all Member States of this august body for adopting a consensual outcome.