بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

MALDIVES

Statement delivered by

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On the Status of the Protocols additional to the Geneva conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims in armed conflicts

at the Sixth Committee

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Status of the Protocols additional to the Geneva conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims in armed conflicts

- A/79/174 — Report of the Secretary-General

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Thank you, Chair,

1. At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his Report A/79/174 and take this opportunity to express our support once more for the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas.

2. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. The Maldives takes this opportunity to appreciate the universality of the Conventions and recognize the significance of the wide acceptance of the Additional Protocols underpinning our shared commitment to limit the suffering brought on by war and to protect those who are most vulnerable.

3. These legal instruments enshrine our common belief that even in conflict, there are lines that must never be crossed. Dignity, respect and compassion for persons prevails in peace and in conflict.

4. Yet, as underscored in the Secretary-General's report, persistent gaps in compliance remind us that words alone will not suffice. We see the grim evidence in the violations that persist—systematic attacks on civilians and grave breaches that tear at the fabric of our shared values.

5. Urban warfare has also changed the landscape of modern conflicts, raising the stakes for civilians caught in the crossfire. The imperative to safeguard their lives and dignity is clear, and it demands our collective action.

6. This calls for a renewed resolve to ensure the universal acceptance of the principles embodied in the Additional Protocols. Legal instruments that seek to establish minimum standards of humane treatment should always enjoy universal acceptance.

7. For the Maldives, the violations of international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remain a grave concern. The reports of attacks on civilians, destruction of essential infrastructure, and restrictions that impede humanitarian aid are stark reminders that these principles are not being honoured. We urge Israel to meet its obligations under international law and to take steps that end the suffering of the Palestinian people. Accountability must not be an abstract ideal; it must be a reality, reinforced by the international community's demand for justice.

8. The principles of distinction and proportionality are fundamental to maintaining the humanitarian underpinnings of armed conflict regulation. The principle of distinction mandates the clear separation between combatants and non-combatants, while the principle of proportionality seeks to limit collateral damage during military operations.

9. But the efficacy of the implementation of these legal provisions often hinges on the interplay between national legislative adaptations and international oversight mechanisms, including those of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Maldives underscores the need for enhancing these oversight structures and fostering cooperation among member states to bridge enforcement deficits.

10. In this spirit, the Maldives reiterates its unwavering support for the ICC as a cornerstone of accountability and justice. We call on all Member States for the universal acceptance of the Rome Statute and extend full cooperation to the ICC. Especially in cases of severe violations of international humanitarian law. The integrity of our humanitarian framework hinges on our shared resolve to end impunity.

11. The Maldives remains committed to advancing the principles enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. As the Secretary-General's report highlights, effective implementation requires more than adherence to legal texts—it requires the will to uphold these principles in both letter and spirit.

12. In the face of conflict, our shared duty is to stand as guardians of human dignity and life. We must not waver in our commitment to uphold the principles that protect those in the unforgiving theatre of war, where the boundaries of humanity are most severely tested.

I thank you.