Security Council open Arria-formula meeting
“The role of Climate Change as a threat multiplier for Global Security”

Intervention by:
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At the outset, let me thank Spain and Malaysia for convening this discussion at such a critical time in the international response to climate change. I would also like to recognise leaders from SIDS here today. They understand the threats posed by climate change better than most, particularly when it comes to matters of security. I can tell you from the perspective of the Maldives, where we are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, we have been forced to respond to a variety of challenges with no simple solutions.

For us, and so many other vulnerable communities, climate change challenges our basic duty to protect the wellbeing and prosperity of our people: The fish we depend on for food and income are growing scarce; our ground water has been contaminated by salt water intrusion; and our productive marine environment is under threat.

These impacts cut across the whole of our societies and demand a holistic response from the international community. Undoubtedly, the UNFCCC, where small countries like ours all have equal voices, is and must remain the primary forum for negotiating a climate treaty, but the Security Council also has a role to play in planning for the biggest environmental and humanitarian challenge of our generation.

A holistic response to the crisis demands input from this important body. For example, we should start by updating the 2009 Secretary General Report “Climate Change and its possible Security Implications,”
including an assessment of the capacity of the U.N. system to respond. We need to ensure that the UN system is up to the task and fill in gaps where they exist.

The challenge of climate change is enormous, and will put unprecedented demands on our multilateral institutions. We have a responsibility to be prepared. Thank you.