

1

**UN Watch Oral Statement
UPR of Marshall Islands
Agenda Item 6
30th Session, Human Rights Council
24 September 2015**

Delivered by Leon Salties

Thank you Mr. President.

UN Watch welcomes the delegation of the Marshall Islands. According to the annual human rights survey by Freedom House, the Marshall Islands received the highest possible rankings on the measure of Freedom, on Civil Liberties, and also on Political Rights. This is worthy of sincere congratulations.

At the same time, UN Watch encourages the government to take further actions, to strengthen human rights protection, in particular in the fields of women and children's rights, and non-discrimination related to sexual orientation and gender identity, and persons with disabilities.

In addition, we would like to encourage the government of the Marshall Islands to take measures to increase the participation and representation of women in political life.

Respect for human rights and the founding principles of the United Nations Charter are manifest not only by a government's domestic policy and practice, but also by the degree to which it supports the promotion and protection of human rights in the international arena.

In this regard, the Marshall Islands have an exemplary record in its voting at the General Assembly. Where others might go along to get along, the Marshall Islands has taken firm and principled positions in support of peace, human rights, and the equality principles of the United Nations Charter, and in noble opposition to selectivity, polarization, demonization, politicization and double-standards.

Due to its small size and budget, the Marshall Islands has only a delegation in New York but none in Geneva. We are concerned that a UN member state is effectively denied the right to participate in the vital day-to-day mechanisms of the UN human rights system, including this Council and the treaty bodies.

On this, the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Charter, we invite the host country, Switzerland, and the UN as a whole, to find ways and means to ensure the full participation of all UN member states, fulfilling the Charter's promise of equality for all nations, large and small.

Thank you, Mr. President.