

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



PRESIDENT  
REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

Malé  
15 October 2012

Dear [REDACTED]

I am personally writing to you to shed light on the many accusations that have been leveled against both myself and my nation. I apologize for the length of this letter, but I need to provide you and others who have been misinformed about me so that my position is clear. I do not have the media mechanisms that my predecessor has, though the accusations he's made against me personally are extremely saddening given our long history.

I have known Mohamed Nasheed for most of his life and during his initial venturing into politics, I was there. The first time he was arrested was because he spoke out about the harassment and intimidation I faced in my Parliamentary campaign in 1989, a campaign I won with the highest majority recorded then. Once he was detained, I used my popularity and my seat in Parliament, to introduce the first Human Rights bill into the country's parliament banning the detention of prisoners of conscience and led a successful "Black Ribbon Campaign" to have Nasheed released from his arbitrary detention. For this action, my brothers, my extended family, and my campaign supporters were arrested, tortured, and some remained in detention for almost a decade. Being forced to leave the Maldives, the then regime lamented that I had not been a team player, and the majority of those detained were released. I spent 16 years working in UNICEF, building my reputation and dedicating myself to human development. Any of the hundreds of international civil servants who've worked side by side with me can provide testimony to my character and my commitment to democracy and development.

Today, Nasheed has accused me of plotting his assassination, as well as the multitudes of abuses that I have stood against my entire life. Let our records and our actions speak for themselves. He accuses me of being a puppet to the former President. However, it was when Nasheed resigned and I had ascended to the

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Presidency by invitation of our Speaker of Parliament, with an oath administered by the Chief Justice, and under the guidelines set forth by our democratically praised constitution – it was then that I invited all political parties to join the Government in an effort to bring our nation back from the brink of chaos, the edge of devastation that Nasheed had led us to. It was after my invitation to all political parties including MDP, a full day after the resignation of President Nasheed, that a story of a Coup D'état was spread. They claimed that Nasheed was held hostage by the military, forced to sign a resignation letter at gun point, and that his life and family was threatened, when in fact his wife is a second cousin's to mine. Because of the seriousness of this allegation, I initiated a process of inquiry under the powers vested in me by Article 115 of the constitution.

Attached to this letter is the report by a Commission of National Inquiry I established to investigate these claims. It was co-chaired by a Commonwealth chosen Singaporean Judge and overseen by both a Commonwealth Legal Expert and a United Nations Legal Expert. On the insistence of Mr Nasheed, I appointed his nominee Mr. Gaha Saeed to join the Commission. Mr. Saeed who participated in the entire investigation and concluding procedures, resigned the day before the report was published. His unprofessionalism is commented upon by the Legal Experts' observations (also attached). This report and the recognition of the international community establishes my administration's legitimacy beyond question.

Nasheed accuses me of being a puppet of the former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. This is an accusation I reject. I will work with the leaders of my nation to help overcome the current malaise and reach a safer and a more stable condition. And in spite of his many accusations, the majority of which have been proven outright fabrications, I am left to deal with situations that were not of my own making, and to clean the disorder resulting from both my predecessors; one who ruined my family, another whom I once mentored and has now ruined my reputation. I will work with them and every other political leader who is willing to work with me because I believe my nation should flourish and that democracy should be sustained and new mature democratic traditions should be engendered.

Free elections can be determined by our independent, constitutionally created Elections Commission. I have requested Elections Commission to speed up



the process and make it as early as possible under the constitution, which will be July of 2013. We have 5 year terms, and as the former Vice President, I was sworn in to become president when my predecessor resigned. My new Vice President and my cabinet including a coalition of every other significant political party in the country was approved by the Parliament.

The day after Nasheed resigned, he led protesters out onto the street under accusations proven false by the Commission of National Inquiry's report, and confronted the police. There was no command when the entire civilian command structure was forced to resign, as a result of the events which led to Nasheed's resignation. There was a gap between the police commanders and myself and I had no way to issue orders or control the riot police. When the police saw Nasheed's protesters about to attack them, having been charged by his slanderous statements, and receiving reports of arson attacks against policemen across the country by Nasheed's supporters, the resulting confrontation saw some excessive use of police power which I condemned from day one. Though no life was lost, nor long term damage inflicted, it was not a happy moment in our history. No one could have expected the outgoing head of state to fabricate such a slanderous story, especially after his eloquent resignation, claiming that he was stepping down for the good of the nation.

The policemen who used excessive force will be brought to justice. But I will not use unilateral executive authority, including our security forces to arbitrarily detain anyone. The independent, constitutionally created Police Integrity Commission has only concluded its report and based on it several officers are under investigation, and some of them will be asked to leave the service if found guilty.

But, note that since February 2012, though Nasheed's people have often employed violence and attempted arson, no one has been hospitalized for more than 24 hours. Those who have been detained have flagrantly broken laws and no one is detained for more than 24 hours without appearing before a judge. On the contrary, several police officers have suffered serious injury and some of them had to be evacuated to Sri Lanka for treatment. The security forces in my country, often being abused and attacked both physically and verbally, with their families targeted by activists, have shown a degree of restraint and professionalism I had not expected. And though both of my predecessors have used them for political



purposes violating laws as well as principles of human decency, I will not allow that tradition to continue. The police force is still maturing, and through guidance, training and perseverance, they will become a pillar of just and equitable stability. I have recently set a police training college with the assistance of the Scottish Police Academy and the Australian Police.

I mentioned how before Nasheed's resignation, he had brought our nation to a precipice. But that was not the first sheer fall he faced. We won on the same ballot in 2008 through the support of six other parties. When he first expressed his notion to disband that coalition, I told him it was a bad idea. When he locked up Members of Parliament, who were also the leaders of their respective Political Parties arbitrarily, I protested privately and insisted them to be released. When he put a padlock on the Supreme Court and refused to let our courts function, I pleaded with him to see reason. When he arrested opposition political leaders for criticizing him, though we had successfully fought for the decriminalization of defamation, I expressed my dissatisfaction. And finally when he used the military to abduct a sitting Judge for releasing those same political opponents, I publicly voiced my opposition to it. Though Nasheed used a flurry of alleged past abuses attributed to this Justice to arrest him, the true reason was clear. He had gone so far past the edge of reason or sense that even three weeks of consecutive protesting and the entire legal community banded against him would not persuade him.

President Nasheed had drafted a Presidential decree to abolish the lower courts and was planning on substituting those judges with his own. This would have happened if the events of February 6 proceeded in a manner that allowed him to exercise emergency rule. But, the incidence of him personally ordering the riot police to abandon the scene of a protest, in an attempt to have his thugs brutalize the anti-government protesters got out of control. After the police refused what was clearly an illegal and dangerous order, Nasheed turned on the police as well, thereby starting the cascading events that ultimately led to his own resignation.

The independent, constitutionally created Prosecutor General, who was nominated by Nasheed himself, initiated charges against President Nasheed in the week before his resignation, before anyone would have guessed at the outcome of this national crisis. Do our Judges need greater acclimation with our constitution



with regards to its human rights provisions? Yes. Do we need to have our penal code passed in Parliament, along with an evidence act? Yes. Does this mean that these jurists are unable to function or perform their duty? No. Further, I will not violate our constitutionally created separation of powers. I will do whatever I can to accommodate Nasheed within the law, and should he be convicted for his past action, I will grant him clemency according to the law, purely because of the vision that we once shared for our nation.

The vision for a nation that is moderate, democratic and supportive of its people is one I would give my last measure for. Nasheed, ever the activist, believed that any cost, any action, any principle sacrificed was justified in attaining that goal. Yet he never understood that the journey was just as important as the destination. He never understood that clawing through corruption, violence, lies and lives torn would sully the vision we had. He called for global change on environment, but did nothing to actualize that vision here at home. He called for justice and democracy, but sabotaged it at home – systematically undermining both the separation of power and our independent institutions. And now he has used his fame to spread the most atrocious lies about me, muddling my reputation, ignoring our history and mutual ties, all for the pursuit of power.

Finally, I request you to kindly check with independent sources of information. As for the autonomy of the CoNI and the validity of its findings, I urge you to call one or both observers appointed by the United Nations and the Commonwealth to the Commission. I know that Nasheed has tried to undermine CoNI and its findings and continues to question the legitimacy of my government. I urge you to kindly check the facts before you accept the stories of MDP. My government is too small and poor to initiate expensive inquiry processes every time someone makes an accusation. We are already spending far too much time and resources on trying to undo the lies and distortions created by the MDP propaganda machine. As friends of Maldives, please pay more attention to the well-being of our people over the self-interest of one or two individuals.

I would also like to assure you that free and fair elections will be held in Maldives in 2013, the exact date would be set by the independent Election Commission. I have already initiated the process of inviting foreign election observers and monitors. The United Nations will be sending a mission shortly to do



a needs assessment in order to determine what actions are needed before the elections. In addition, I am initiating a national conference on how to make democracy work for Maldives with participation from civil society, private sector, students, experts and other key stakeholders. I will share details of this shortly. We have already drawn up a draft action plan for strengthening democracy, which includes institutional capacity development.

I will stand by my word. I kindly invite you to come, to see, to advice, and to continue to be part of the development of our beautiful country. I have tried my best since February to maintain stability and peace in the Maldives. You may not know that, despite a very difficult time, we did not have to close a single school or shop, and our government and airport have been fully functional. My priority has been to uphold the constitution and the rule of law. I will not violate the law, tolerate corruption, or act on petty interests. If you truly care for a vision for democracy, for sustainability, and for tangible action on development in Maldives, then please help me by visiting Maldives and by hearing our side of the story.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mohamed Waheed'.

Mohamed Waheed

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