

# THE OTHER SIDE OF PARADISE

A HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS  
IN THE MALDIVES

**AMNESTY**  
INTERNATIONAL



***“We were not doing anything, but they attacked me. They hit me on my head. I put my hands over my head and they hit me on my hands. The force they were using to hit me would have certainly broken my skull if I had not put my hands on my head.”***

A demonstrator who was beaten by police on 8 February in Malé. His fingertips were torn and his flesh was gouged to the bone in the attack.

To many, the Maldives are a paradise on earth – an archipelago of islands lying like a jewelled necklace in the Indian Ocean. Tourists arrive in their droves – at least two for every Maldivian in the country – escaping to the islands’ unspoilt beaches and temperate waters.

But a campaign of violent repression this year has shattered this idyllic image, exposing a human rights crisis that has gripped the country since President Mohamed Nasheed’s ousting in February 2012.

Just hours before his disputed resignation on 7 February, the police and military unleashed targeted attacks on Nasheed’s supporters. Protests were violently crushed – with the apparent approval of the incoming government. This campaign of violence effectively silenced government critics and any public debate about Nasheed’s ouster. Public spaces, once open to peaceful expressions of social or political dissent, became places of terror.

While these human rights violations unfolded, the new government initially

received tacit support from some members of the international community including the UN, the USA and India.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced his “strong hope that this handover of power, which has been announced as a constitutional step to avoid further violence and instability, will lead to the peaceful resolution of the political crisis that has polarized the country in recent months”. The USA, India and others followed suit.

When Amnesty International and media reports revealed the police and military attacks on Maldivian citizens, the international community modified its approach.

A US State Department spokesperson admitted to the media: “I got myself in a place yesterday that was not borne out by the facts... We will work with the government of the Maldives, but believe that the circumstances surrounding the transfer of power need to be clarified. And we also suggest that all parties agree to an independent mechanism to do that”.



The new authorities claimed that the transfer of state power on 7 February was to uphold constitutional rights. However, security forces have become increasingly politicized and unaccountable for the violence they have been using against opposition protesters – flouting constitutional protections.

Amnesty International has spoken with scores of Maldivians about the violence around 7 February, including during a three-week visit to the country in February and early March 2012. Among them are survivors of human rights violations and their families, lawyers, journalists, activists, medical professionals, security officials and senior politicians, including former President Nasheed and current President Mohamed Waheed. During many of these conversations, survivors told us that security forces used unnecessary force, and arbitrarily arrested and tortured them with impunity.

The picture they paint is completely at odds with the tranquility of the waters and scenic islands of this elegant archipelago.



© REUTERS/Dinuka L. Jayanawatte  
**Maldivian riot police officers stand guard as they block supporters of the ousted Maldivian president Mohamed Nasheed during a clash in Malé, 8 February 2012.**

It is also at odds with the pledges made directly to Amnesty International by the authorities in February and March 2012 that human rights violations committed during and after the transfer of power would be addressed.

## DISPUTED RESIGNATION

On 7 February, Mohamed Nasheed, former Amnesty International prisoner of conscience and the first democratically elected president of the Maldives, read out his own resignation letter to the nation. The event was broadcast live on state television networks.

Following the announcement, Nasheed disappeared. Some media reports claimed he was in protective custody. When he eventually re-surfaced, he told thousands of his supporters – who had gathered to meet him near his party's headquarters – that he had been forced to resign at gunpoint. He said that mutinying police and military forces had deposed him.

Mohamed Waheed, Nasheed's former deputy and now new President, countered

this, saying that Nasheed's resignation had been voluntary.

For the new government, his resignation was the desired outcome of months of anti-Nasheed campaigning by parties opposed to him. These parties, in one form or another, are allied to former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, whose 30-year rule (1978-2008) was marked by serious human rights violations for which no one has been brought to justice.

For more than 27 years of Gayoom's rule, there were no opposition parties. Following sustained international and national pressure, he agreed to some political reforms. He revised the Constitution in August 2008 and launched the first multi-party presidential elections two months later. Although Gayoom lost the presidency to Nasheed, his supporters won a majority of seats in Parliament in 2009.

What followed was a political impasse. Nasheed's government was unable to make key budgetary decisions, including on improving social welfare, because Parliament refused to endorse his proposals.

These developments highlighted a deep political and social division in the country.

Nasheed supporters say they are more open to social and political freedoms than their opponents. They support equal rights for minorities and religious tolerance in the country. Women supporters are active in pressing for political reform, and are determined to achieve political parity with men.

The governing camp under President Waheed is politically allied to Maumoon Abdul Gayoom; most of the current Cabinet ministers have, or have had, close ties with him.

In private conversations with Amnesty International, many supporters of this camp expressed bitterness about the democratic process that allowed Gayoom's main opponent, Mohamed Nasheed, to come to power in 2008. Some believe that Maldives' troubles began with the advent of a multi-party system. The Minister of Gender, Family and Human Rights has already called on Parliament to provide guidelines on how to dissolve some of the political parties.

Ismail Manik



The government continues to call for reconciliation between the two political camps. But without an end to – and accountability for – human rights violations, such reconciliation would be meaningless and may not last.

Government officials have frequently shrugged off their own responsibility to address human rights violations, saying it is the purview of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) and the Police Integrity Commission. However, both bodies have yet to conclude their investigations into all of the most serious human rights violations that have occurred this year in Malé and Addu. And any reliance on these bodies to deal with ongoing human rights violations does not absolve the government of its responsibility to exercise due diligence in guaranteeing the rule of law and protecting human rights.

## SWEEPING VIOLATIONS

Activists and supporters of Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) have described sustained beatings suffered at

the hands of security forces. Time and again, survivors have told Amnesty International how members of the police and military have used unnecessary force against peaceful demonstrators, striking them on the head with truncheons, pepper-spraying them in the eyes, and kicking and dragging them.

They have also told us that they have been targeted because of their political affiliation. Some have been arbitrarily detained and tortured.

The overall objective of these violent acts has been to silence peaceful government critics and stifle public debate about the current political situation.

## UNNECESSARY USE OF FORCE

As news of a police mutiny spread on 7 February, hundreds of MDP supporters began making their way peacefully to Republic Square, in Malé, the capital. Among them were MDP members of parliament (MPs).

Several demonstrators told Amnesty International that, suddenly, scores of police officers set upon them with batons, striking them on the head and kicking them on the legs, back and stomach. Dozens were injured.

"I was hit and fell down," said MP Eva Abdulla. "My husband came to me and helped me get up and we started running. One policeman in riot gear hit me once. Shortly after, he hit me repeatedly. When I fell on the ground, a plain-clothes officer in a T-shirt came and beat me. He and other police kicked me with their boots. They hit me on my head and shoulder and kicked me. A young man tried to stop them. I saw them going for him. I still get pains in my head. I think they would have killed me if it had not been for my husband who threw himself on me trying to take the blows. He was beaten badly and had a broken knee."

Ismail Manik, an MDP supporter, collapsed after police beat him on the head. Lying on the ground, semi-conscious, he was kicked in the ribs and beaten further by police. When he regained consciousness, they beat him again.



*Above left:* A group of activists, some of whom were attacked during a demonstration in Addu on 26 February 2012, sketch a map showing how the attack took place.

*Below from left to right:* A man shows marks from a beating by police during a raid against an MDP rally in Malé, early March 2012; Eva Abdulla.

On the afternoon of 8 February, thousands of supporters held a street rally in Malé, after attending the MDP National Congress earlier that day and listening to Mohamed Nasheed speak.

Protesters congregated in large numbers in the streets, chanting slogans condemning what they said had been a coup against former President Nasheed. According to demonstrators interviewed by Amnesty International, although the gathering was initially peaceful, police in riot gear aided by plain-clothes officers and a violent mob of counter-demonstrators attacked them.

Police used batons, wooden sticks and tear gas against demonstrators. Several protesters were critically injured.

“They came from behind me so I could not tell where the next blow was coming,” said Ahmed Shamah Rasheed, Deputy Mayor of Malé, who was among a group of demonstrators gathered in Boduthakurufaanu street in Malé that afternoon. “I placed my hands firmly on my head but they continued to hit my hands and fingers. I fell down.

“Police continued to beat me everywhere as I fell on my back. I pulled my knees up to protect my stomach and my face, but they continued beating me with their batons all over my body... I saw my wife collapse on the ground, surrounded by two police officers, sobbing and crying but I did not have the strength to go up to her... Someone from the crowd shouted: ‘Do not hit him. He is our deputy mayor’. The policeman who was beating me said: ‘I don’t care!’ They kept telling me they were going to kill me.”

### Targeted for political affiliation

Based on Amnesty International’s interviews with survivors of these violent attacks, it appears that many were targeted by security forces because they were MDP ministers, parliamentarians or supporters.

MP Mariya Ahmed Didi, a senior member of the MDP, was among the hundreds who had gathered on 7 February to show their concern for former President Nasheed. She told Amnesty International that while there, she noticed several police officers pointing at her, and one of them was telling the other to “hit her in the head, kill her”. Police then

charged at her and began to beat her, especially on her head.

She lost her balance and fell to the ground but the beating did not stop. Her husband and friends threw themselves on top of her, fearing for her life. Mariya Didi heard one policeman saying: “Don’t hit the ones on top, just hit Mariya”.

“I had bruises all over my body, my back, head, and legs,” she said. “I had a swollen black eye, and could not see much. I still [a month later] have blurred vision.”

Mohamed Shafeeg, a senior MDP member, businessman, and former nominee for the office of Vice-President, was at the rally in Malé on 8 February.

“I knew I was being targeted,” he said. “Police in plain clothes were watching me. Then for no reason, they began to hit me.”

He saw two plain-clothes officers giving signals to eight uniformed police in riot gear to hit some of the people in the crowd. One of the plain-clothes men pointed his finger at him.

*“As we were in the hospital I heard and saw uniformed policemen charging in. They were hitting people who had been injured, hitting them especially on their head. We left the hospital quietly, but I saw two police officers marching into the emergency room.”*

MP Mariya Didi, who was injured by police during a demonstration on 7 February 2012.



“One plain-clothes officer came to me and asked if I wanted to be the President,” he recalled. “I said, ‘No, why?’ He said I was lying and began to hit me himself. Then he showed me to the police officers who were hitting [other] people. They came and pepper-sprayed me.”

By targeting MDP members and supporters, the security forces – and by extension, the state – have displayed a deliberate intention to crush political opponents, reversing some of the political freedoms of the last three years.

### Attacked in hospital

Those interviewed by Amnesty International consistently stated that attacks by police continued beyond the streets. Some of the injured who were taken to hospital for treatment were arrested there and beaten or otherwise ill-treated on the way to detention centres. Many of the injured chose not to go to hospital for fear of arrest. Still others were attacked in their hospital beds.

Mohamed Amir, a demonstrator, had been beaten severely by police and military officers, and left bloody and battered on

the ground. “I went to hospital,” he said, “but saw police beating the injured, so I turned back and went home.”

After the attack on Ahmed Shamah Rasheed, Deputy Mayor of Malé, some of the demonstrators took him to hospital. “Even in that state, I could not stay in hospital,” he said. “Police were already beating patients who had been injured during the rally. They were only searching for MDP supporters. I was helped out of hospital unnoticed, by my family. Most injured people did the same. It was too dangerous to stay in hospital. I want to go to court but where can I go? Judges are on their side and will never give a verdict against the criminals who beat me.”

### ARBITRARY DETENTION AND TORTURE

Hundreds of people were arrested, most of them injured by the police, on 8 February. They were taken from the streets, their hospital beds and from their homes. Almost one third of the detainees were women. They were ill-treated at the time of their arrest and on their way to police stations.



Detainees were later taken to Dhoonidhoo detention centre on speed boats while handcuffed. They were not told the grounds for their arrest and were not allowed access to their lawyers. Many of the injured were not offered a medical check-up for several hours. When this was available, some agreed to be checked. Others refused as they did not trust the police doctors. Almost all of them were released within days of their arrest.

“They continued to beat me as they were handcuffing me and after I was handcuffed,” said Mohamed Shafeeg, who was detained at the 8 February rally. “My eyes were burning with the pepper spray they had sprayed directly into my eyes, but with the handcuffs I could not even touch my eyes. They kept me in that position for about an hour at the police station. There were many other people in handcuffs. They all looked injured. Then they took us to Dhoonidhoo detention centre.”

MP Mariya Ahmed Didi, still in pain from the police beating she received the day before, was also detained at the rally. “They... continued beating me with my



**Left: Police beating Mohamed Shafeeg in Malé, 8 February 2012. He was taking part in a peaceful rally to protest against the ousting of President Mohamed Nasheed.**

**Far left above: Mariya Ahmed Didi**

**Far left below: Mohamed Shafeeg**

handcuffs on," she said. "They were beating me with batons. Police and military officers then forcefully opened my eyelids. They went for the eye that had been injured the day before. They sprayed pepper spray directly into my eye. Then they did the same with my other eye. They then sprayed into my nose as they were also beating me. They then took me to a police station and continued to beat me there. I have bruises all over my body. At one point when they were beating me one of them shouted: 'Is she still not dead?'"

Violence by security forces spilled into Addu city on 9 February 2012, following a series of arson attacks allegedly by MDP supporters. Addu became an MDP stronghold during Mohamed Nasheed's presidency, when significant investment bolstered the city's development.

Part of the police headquarters and a court building were burnt down in the fires. A day later – before an official investigation into the cause of the attacks was ordered, police and military forces swept into the city, arresting at least 80 people. People were not told the reason for their arrest.

Witnesses and survivors told Amnesty International that officers arbitrarily detained people, beating them up and humiliating them. They crammed detainees onto military vehicles and left them in the blazing sun for more than an hour with the windows and doors closed. They denied detainees drinking water and threw them into cramped and filthy dog cages.

Article 238 of the Maldives Constitution specifies that security forces must act in accordance with the Constitution and the law, and on the basis of accountability. Under the 2008 Police Act, officers must not act "cruelly, in a degrading manner, inhumanely or mercilessly towards any person in any circumstance". Article 238 of the Constitution also requires the President to ensure that the police act according to the laws governing them.

The Maldives is also obliged under international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT), to protect everyone's

right to freedom of expression and right of peaceful assembly, and to prevent torture and other ill-treatment.

To comply with these treaties, Maldives law enforcement officials must respect the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms. They cannot resort to violent means until they have exhausted all non-violent ones. Where the use of force is unavoidable, they must minimize damage and injury, and ensure that anyone who is injured is given medical treatment without delay.

The ICCPR and the UNCAT require the Maldives authorities to prosecute those suspected of offences involving such violations, irrespective of rank or status, in proceedings which meet international standards of fairness.

Despite these safeguards, police and military officers consistently told detainees that what they were doing to them was not against the law, and that they deserved what they got. Officers showed utter disregard for human rights and the rule of law, and the government has failed to ensure accountability.



© IBRAHIM FAID/AFP/Getty Images

## TORTURED – MOHAMED SAEED

“I was not told why I was being arrested.

They drove me to a burnt down place which I think was Gan police station. On the way, the officers were insulting the MDP, saying that they wanted to wipe it out. There they pepper-sprayed my eyes again and put me in a cell.

It was very busy and I could hear screams and shouts of people being tortured outside. They would come and question me regularly about what I had seen, threatening to destroy me, to cut off my manhood and to make me handicapped on my release.

Later we were taken back to Gan police station and were put in the same cell. The next morning I requested to see a doctor as my leg was in pain. Around 10.30 to 11am they came to take me to the doctor, along with two other people. The cuffs were tightened to the extreme and I requested for them to be loosened up but the officer said he was deaf... In the hospital, they informed us that we did not have an appointment, and so we were taken straight out again. The police... drove us to another police station which was also burned down.

We were kept inside the jeep, which was left under the sun, and had to sit with our backs against each other. It was extremely hot and they had closed all of the windows. My sweat was stinging all over my body; my tongue was dry and I was very thirsty. The police were outside, drinking and eating...

I was detained [by the police]... for 15 days, without any contact from the outside world. Then police came in their riot gear and told all detainees to come out. They said they were going to send us out of the island.

About 22 of us were taken into a big van, and in groups of five to six people we were put in dog cages. The cages were 6x6 feet and had bones, and were dirty, making it very uncomfortable to sit in. It was difficult to use the toilet as we were cuffed and so could not take our pants off.”

Mohamed Saeed was arrested at his home on 9 February in Addu. Officers threatened to set his car and shop on fire, beat him, and pepper-sprayed him in the eyes.

Maldivian police officers stand guard as a protester shouts slogans during a rally in Malé, 1 March 2012.

***“We can bring your wife and kids and set them on fire in front of you”***

Mohamed Saeed's torturers, February 2012.





One of several tear gas grenades thrown by police at peaceful demonstrators inside the headquarters of the MDP in Addu, late February 2012. Tear gas and pepper spray have frequently been used by Maldives police against peaceful demonstrators. Police have forced detainees to open their eyes and then sprayed them. Arms-supplying states should deny the authorization to transfer weapons, munitions and other equipment where there is a substantial risk that they are likely to be used to commit or facilitate serious human rights violations.

## IMPUNITY

From 7-9 February police officers were effectively engaged in a violent campaign against members and supporters of the MDP. It appears that they were acting with the understanding that they would not be held accountable for their actions by the new government.

And this is in fact what has happened. No police officers involved in the February attacks or in violence against demonstrators in recent protests have been brought to justice. The government of Maldives has shrugged off its own responsibility for enforcing accountability, saying it is not its job to address human rights violations. Instead, it has attempted to offload responsibility onto institutions such as the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives or the Police Integrity Commission.

The fact remains that not a single criminal case has been filed before a court against any of the police officers for committing these human rights violations.

## THE MILITARY AND POLICE

Until recently, Maldives did not have a separate police force and the military was in charge of both policing and external security. A police force composed of former army officers was created in 2004.

However, the line between the responsibilities of the two remains blurred. The military is almost always engaged in policing and the police rarely distance themselves from the military. Their symbiotic relationship has enabled them to defer accountability.

Despite mounting evidence, especially in 2012, that officers belonging to both forces have committed human rights violations, none has been brought to justice.

At times, police officers have been injured, some seriously, by objects thrown during the protests. Police have said the force they have used against demonstrators has been in response to these attacks, and proportionate.

Amnesty International does not condone the use of violence by demonstrators. It does

also believe, however, that security officials have often used excessive force during those violent demonstrations, in addition to using force that was entirely unnecessary in the face of peaceful protests.

***“I have not complained because there is no guarantee that it would make a difference to those who beat me.”***

MP Mohamed Gasam, who was beaten and detained by police on 8 February in Malé.

Amnesty International visited this detention centre in Addu in late February 2012. Dozens of political detainees had been held for varying periods since the ousting of President Mohamed Nasheed.



## COMMISSION OF NATIONAL INQUIRY

Days after Mohamed Nasheed's resignation, the international community, including the Commonwealth, EU, India, UN and USA, called for an investigation into the events surrounding his ouster.

In response, President Waheed formed the Commission of National Inquiry (the Commission) on 22 February to investigate events during the period 14 January to 8 February.

In April 2012, the government reconstituted the Commission after the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) and others voiced dismay that the Commission's membership was not independent and impartial.

Huge challenges remain, including the protection of witnesses before the Commission. Crucially also, the Commission's efforts as of July 2012 suggest that this mechanism is unlikely to provide any redress for victims of human rights violations by Maldives security forces.

## BIAS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Maldives judicial system includes trial courts, a high court and a supreme court. There is no codified body of laws capable of providing justice equally to all. Most laws are remnants of an outdated judicial system inherited from the 30-year rule of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Others are regulations by ministries and acts that Parliament has passed in recent years.

Some laws are too vaguely formulated to prevent miscarriages of justice. Most judges have no formal training in law, yet exercise considerable discretion – often based on their own interpretation of Islamic law – in determining any offence and its appropriate punishment. Judges have discretionary powers to refer to articles of the Constitution in reaching a verdict but the extent to which this power is used cannot be established. A draft penal code intended to address these shortcomings remains dormant in Parliament.

Most judges are appointees of Gayoom, who had considerable power over the judicial system as president and head of the judiciary. All judges serving on 7 August

2008, when the new Constitution came into force, were to be evaluated by the Judicial Services Commission within two years and reappointed "in accordance with law".

Before such a law was passed, the Judicial Services Commission drew up its own regulations which enabled it to reappoint all judges without seriously scrutinizing their qualifications.

## BROKEN RECORDS – HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER TWO PRESIDENTS

While the scale of human rights violations during **Mohamed Nasheed's** tenure decreased significantly, at least two cases of arbitrary arrest and detention during his time remained unaddressed. There are also allegations that police used tear gas and other such force against some demonstrators on 6 February, the last day of his presidency.

Nasheed's government also failed to ensure justice to victims and survivors of human rights violations committed during Maumoon Abdul Gayoom's rule.



**Maumoon Abdul Gayoom** had considerable authority over state institutions in the Maldives. He was the president, head of the judiciary and the highest religious authority in the country. His government was able to evade accountability for many human rights violations during his time.

These included torture and other ill-treatment, unfair trials of political opponents, arbitrary arrests and months or years in detention, and frequent use of unnecessary or excessive force against pro-democracy activists.

The only known exception was an inquiry into the deaths of prisoners in Maafushi prison in 2003, which Gayoom announced after unprecedented civil protests in September that year. The inquiry concluded in December that the deaths were the result of an abuse of power by prison guards. Subsequently, charges were brought against a number of security personnel, the prison system was reorganized, and a prison oversight committee was established.

Other than that, human rights violators in all levels of government managed to evade justice.

### CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

The police and military have frequently attacked peaceful demonstrators since Nasheed's ouster. This includes the detention, beating and sexual harassment of four women participating in an anti-government rally on 28 March, and further beatings, pepper-spraying and arrests of protestors on 11 June.

Government leaders have not shown commitment to ensuring such human rights violations are investigated. On the contrary, the government has simply deferred responsibility to the Maldives police itself. And the police in turn have dismissed concerns raised repeatedly by Amnesty International.

Violence by security forces in the Maldives therefore continues unchecked.

In July, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights voiced concern at the violent

**A political detainee in Addu tells Amnesty International how he was severely beaten by three police officers, who repeatedly pepper-sprayed his eyes, February 2012.**

protests and excessive use of force by security forces: "These include the seemingly deliberate and uncalled-for use of some kind of spray on former President Nasheed, and the driving of police vehicles at high speed into crowds of protestors. Such actions deserve immediate investigation, and firm action should be taken by the authorities against those responsible for excessive use of force."

## HUMAN RIGHTS LOSSES

Since his ouster, Mohamed Nasheed and his supporters have been calling for early elections as a solution to the current political crisis in the country. CMAG has endorsed this call as have other international players, including the EU.

President Waheed has said early elections cannot be held without changing the Constitution, and the earliest they can be held is July 2013, just three months before they are actually due. Others in his cabinet have voiced different views. In April, during a visit to London, Dunya Maumoon, Foreign Affairs State Minister and Gayoom's daughter, told the BBC that there would be no elections in the Maldives for the "foreseeable future".

There is a real danger that the human rights gains of the recent past have been lost; there are already signs that the country is slipping back into the old pattern of repression and injustice. The government of the Maldives has a responsibility under the Constitution, as well as international human rights law, to prevent this from happening. So far it appears to be failing on these requirements.



**Above:** Supporters of former Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed cheer during a party meeting in the capital, Malé, 11 February 2012.

**Front cover:** Maldives beach  
© iStockphoto.com/Martin Strmko

The role of the international community is critical. It must ensure that the new government demonstrates a commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. If the Maldives now fails on its human rights path, it will be an indictment not just of its government, but also of major players who stood by and remained silent.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### To the Maldives authorities

- Instruct all security forces not to attack demonstrators. Any use of force must comply with international standards for the protection of the right to life and security of person.
- Ensure prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations into allegations of violence by officials. Those suspected of offences involving such violations, irrespective of rank or status, must be prosecuted in proceedings which meet international standards of fairness. Survivors must be ensured reparations.

- Train security forces to comply with international standards including the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.
- Remove any bias in the police force, so they act as officers of law without prejudice, and do not take sides politically.
- Reform the criminal justice system so that it develops into an independent and impartial power capable of providing justice to survivors of human rights violations regardless of their beliefs or political affiliation.

### To the UN, the Commonwealth of Nations, the EU and foreign governments

- Closely monitor the human rights situation in the Maldives, and press the government to ensure everyone is able to realize their rights to protest freely, access justice and be free from torture and other ill-treatment.
- Provide assistance to the Maldives authorities to carry out human rights training to judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials, as well as to revise its criminal justice system to ensure that it is in line with international human rights law and standards.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



**Amnesty International** is a global movement of more than 3 million supporters, members and activists in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

Index: ASA 29/005/2012  
English

September 2012

Amnesty International  
International Secretariat  
Peter Benenson House  
1 Easton Street  
London WC1X 0DW  
United Kingdom

[amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)