



European Union

Colombo, 30 September 2014

Joint Local Statement on Threats to Civil Society and Human Rights in the Maldives

The European Union (EU) Delegation in agreement with the Embassies of EU Member States, as well as the Embassies of Norway and Switzerland, in Colombo accredited to the Maldives issue the following statement:

The EU Heads of Mission, the Ambassador of Norway and the Charge d'Affaires a.i. of Switzerland are very concerned about the recent reports of attacks, intimidation and death threats faced by journalists, politicians, human rights campaigners and representatives of civil society, and by the mounting gang related violence and signs of increasing religious intolerance, which are all contributing to a climate of growing fear in the Maldives and reducing the space for public discussion.

The Supreme Court's initiation of a suo moto court case against members of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM), following the publication of its report to the UN ahead of the 2015 Maldives Periodic review, risks undermining the independence of the HRCM, a key democratic institution.

In the interests of both the Maldives and the many visitors to the country, we call upon the Maldivian authorities to create a safe and enabling environment in which citizens and institutions can operate freely in full respect of their constitutional rights.

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