



Government of Maldives

Stakeholder Note

17 September 2008, Male'

First Multi-Party Presidential Elections Confirmed for 8 October 2008

Introduction

The Independent Elections Commission has confirmed that the first multi-party Presidential Elections will take place on 8 October 2008. This formal announcement was made at a press conference held last night at *Fansavees* press room. This follows the press briefing which took place early on in the month, addressing the challenges that still remained on way towards the Presidential elections.

Elections Legislation Passed

Two key legislations required to be in place ahead of the Presidential Elections are the *Presidential Elections Bill* and the *General Elections Bill*.

The *Presidential Elections Bill* was passed by Parliament yesterday and ratified by the President last night. The *Presidential Elections Act* details the procedures and specifies the time periods required to complete each stage in the lead up to the Presidential elections.

Adopted by Parliament on..... the *General Elections Bill* ratified by the President yesterday. This *Act* outlines the rules and regulations of elections to be conducted under the Elections Commission. Provisions under the *Act* cover all aspects with regards to voting.

Judicial Nominees to the Supreme Court

The remaining component necessary to complete the legal infrastructure ahead of the Elections is the establishment of the Supreme Court. In consultation with the Judicial Services Commission

as per Article 284(a) of the Constitution, the President has proposed five nominees to Parliament. The nominees will have to be confirmed by Parliament by a two thirds majority vote. The issue is due to be put to vote tomorrow.

The process of appointing judges to the Supreme Court was established following the ratification of the Judicial Service Commission Act on 4 September 2008. The Judicial Services Commission acts as an advisory body to the President regarding the appointment of the Supreme Court Judges Chief Justice and other judges.

Registration of Presidential Candidates

While the Presidential candidates have already begun campaigning, the Interim Elections Commission announced today that official nominations for candidates are now open with the closing date confirmed for 21 September 2008. According to the Commission Presidential candidate nominees will be accepted only if the nominee fulfills the criteria under Chapter VI Article 109 Section (a) to (b) of the Constitution.

The Commission will then officially announce the Presidential candidates ten days before the election date, as well as the specific positions of ballot boxes (and polling booths). Decisions of the Elections Commission can be appealed through the Supreme Court once it is established.

Voting Procedures

According to the Commission, voting will take place across the two hundred inhabited islands, and tourist resorts, and four neighbouring locations abroad. These stations include Colombo, Trivandrum, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. The Elections Commission also specified that the counting of votes will commence the same night, and the final results will be announced the following day.
