



Brussels, 1 July 2010

STATEMENT

by Ms Jean Lambert (Greens/EFA, UK) on recent political developments in the Maldives

Ms Jean Lambert (Greens/EFA, UK), Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with South Asia, issued the following statement today:

The European Parliament has, over the previous years, expressed its constant support to the Maldives in their democratic reform process and welcomed, following the adoption of a new constitution in August 2008, the first multiparty presidential election in October the same year. This election was assessed by an EU Election Expert Mission and considered “free and fair” by international observers; some months later, in May 2009, the first multi-party parliamentary elections took place.

On behalf of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with South Asia, and taking into account the history of our engagement with the Maldives as well as our hope that the reforms which are being undertaken will be successful, we are therefore particularly concerned at the recent events that have led to the resignation of the Cabinet. We believe that such political instability could have a crucial impact on the social, economic and tourism development of the country, which needs stability in order to capitalise on its location.

We therefore call on all political forces in the Maldives to work constructively and in good faith, as well as to respect both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution, taking the measures which are necessary in order to promote good governance and allow the country to tackle the challenges it faces.

In view of the developments in the Maldives, and at the request of several Members, the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with South Asia intends to discuss the situation in the Maldives at its next meeting, to take place in Brussels on July 15th.

THE HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES IN UK AND NORTHERN IRELAND



Her Excellency Dr. Farahanaz Faizal was appointed High Commissioner of the Republic of Maldives to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in March 2009, after having served as advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since December 2008. Her extensive career and devotion to International Relations and Foreign Affairs have given her a lot of experience and insights into the field.

Starting out as a Research Officer in 1989 in the Foreign Relations Section within the President's Office in Malé, Maldives, she quickly advanced to the position as Senior Research Officer. Between 1996 and 1998 she worked as a National Programme Officer for the United Nations Population Fund where she was in charge of the Field Office in the Maldives and responsible for the day-to-day administration, management and project implementation. Between 1998 and 2008 she worked as an independent analyst and consultant with the research speciality of security problems of small island states, gender and international relations. She joined the Maldivian Democratic Party in 2006 and has been working for the party since then. She is actively involved in liaising with Human Rights Organisations such as Amnesty International, in order to secure the release of party activists arrested on several occasions by the previous Maldivian regime.

H.E. Dr. Farahanaz Faizal graduated from University of Keele in 1989, Staffordshire, UK, with a Bachelor's degree in International Relations (principal subject) and Computer Science (subsidiary subject), and in 1991 she completed her M. Phil in International Relations at the University of Cambridge. In 1996 H.E. Dr. Faizal obtained a PhD in Politics from the University of Hull, UK on the thesis "Security Problems of Small, Island Developing States (SIDS) with particular reference to the SIDS of the Indian Ocean". H.E. Dr. Faizal is the first woman in the Maldives to have obtained a PhD.

H.E. Dr. Farahanaz Faizal is married with one daughter.

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Cabinet Resigns; Protests Opposition MPs' "Power Grab" of Executive Authority

Patrick McMullan

Mission of the Republic of Maldives to the European Union

- Cabinet ministers accuse opposition parliament members of subverting constitution by "hijacking" executive powers -

The cabinet resigned this afternoon, protesting the behaviour of opposition MPs who they said were "hijacking" the powers of the executive and making it impossible for the cabinet Ministers to discharge their constitutional duties and deliver the government's election manifesto.

At a press conference held at the President's Office shortly after the end of the weekly cabinet meeting, the President, flanked by the Vice President and the cabinet, announced the Ministers' decision to resign.

"The Majlis is preventing the cabinet ministers from performing their legal obligations. Majlis members are behaving against the spirit and the letter of the Constitution," said the President.

The President added that he would investigate the reasons why the Majlis is preventing cabinet ministers from performing their duties.

The President and the Vice President have *not* resigned from office.

Speaking after the press conference, cabinet members said that the People's Majlis, in which opposition parties hold a small majority of seats, was becoming increasingly "dictatorial," issuing numerous edicts to prevent ministers from carrying out their duties.

"Every passing week, there is another attempt by opposition MPs to wrestle more control from the executive. They are making the country ungovernable," said Attorney General Husnu Suood.

"Opposition MPs are obstructing the business of government. They have awarded themselves powers to appoint members to independent institutions, when this is clearly a prerogative of the President. They have declared that the government cannot raise any loans from abroad or rent any government or state asset without their say-so. And they are threatening Ministers with no confidence motions on spurious grounds," said Finance Minister Ali Hashim.

"The opposition MPs are operating a 'scorched Earth' policy, trying to stop the government from doing any work to help the people. We have told the President that we cannot continue to work like this," stated Foreign Minister Dr Ahmed Shaheed.

The Maldives has a Presidential system of government, with a separation of powers between the executive, the legislative and the judiciary, guaranteed under a Constitution that was enacted in 2008.

The President and Vice President are elected directly by the people in a popular vote. President Nasheed and Vice President Waheed were elected in October 2008. They are due for re-election in 2013.

The Majlis, or parliament, has 77 directly elected members. The new parliament was sworn into office in May 2009. The opposition Dhivehi Rayyithunge Party, which is aligned to the People's Alliance party, have 34 seats in the Majlis and the support of a number of independent MPs.

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President of Sri Lanka concludes his visit to the Maldives

President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa has concluded his State visit to the Maldives, this morning. President Rajapaksa arrived in the Maldives at the invitation of President Mohamed Nasheed.

Before departure, President Nasheed and President Rajapaksa issued a joint press statement. The joint press statement reads as follows:

His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka made a goodwill visit to the Maldives on Wednesday 7th July 2010. During his visit, the President of Sri Lanka met with His Excellency Mohamed Nasheed, President of the Maldives and Hon Ahmed Thasmeen Ali, Leader of the Opposition, the Chief Justice, the Hon Speaker of the Majlis and Former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and a delegation of the MDP and delegation of the opposition consisting of the DRP, Qaumeer Party, Jumhooree Party and the People's Alliance. He also met with some leading members of the business community in the Maldives.

President Rajapaksa engaged in this initiative as a friend and a neighbour of the Maldives who offered his assistance, in accordance with the wishes of the Government and the Opposition of the Maldives in initiating a dialogue to resolve the current crisis.

The government and the opposition agreed, in the presence of President Rajapaksa, to constitute a committee of six members of the Majlis, comprising three members from the government and three from the opposition to commence and to carry forward a dialogue addressing such pressing issues as the appointment of the Cabinet of ministers and the smooth functioning of the legislative process.

President Nasheed and senior government officials bade farewell to President Rajapaksa, at the Male' International Airport.