



Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group welcomes Maldives' Commitment on strengthening of Commission of National Inquiry

20 June 2012

Statement by Chair, Dr Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Communications of Trinidad and Tobago.

Members of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) conferred by teleconference today to discuss the situation in Maldives.

The Group welcomed the 'Commitment' agreed to by the Government of Maldives on the strengthening of the country's Commission of National Inquiry. This had been negotiated and witnessed by the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Maldives, Sir Donald McKinnon, on 15 May 2012.

The Commission of National Inquiry was established to undertake an investigation into the circumstances that led to the transfer of power in Maldives on 7 February 2012. This was to enable an independent and impartial investigation to be conducted that would be credible, rigorous and provide confidence to the Maldivian people. CMAG commended the Government of Maldives and former President Mohamed Nasheed on the spirit of compromise demonstrated in reaching this outcome.

The Group noted that the reformed Commission had been formally established on 17 June 2012 and was now operational. It expressed hope that the Commission would be fully able to carry out its work in its own best judgement, and urged all concerned to extend their full co-operation to the Commission.

CMAG emphasised that no action should be taken by any party or authority that would negatively affect the functioning of the Commission of National Inquiry or the ability of individuals to provide testimony to the Commission.

The Group welcomed and encouraged efforts underway to establish a Maldivian-led dialogue process among key political leaders, which could

promote high-level discussions on issues of national concern, including those identified in the Political Party Talks agenda.

It also encouraged the more effective use of the Majlis for political debate and consensus-building.

The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group stressed the need for a peaceful and stable public environment for achieving political consensus. It urged all concerned to act in good faith and in a responsible manner, to respect the law and due process, and to demonstrate restraint.

The Group also reaffirmed its support for the strengthening of democratic processes, institutions and culture in Maldives, and for continued Commonwealth technical assistance in this regard, particularly in strengthening the capacity of the judiciary.

CMAG expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for his ongoing efforts and support for Sir Donald's continued engagement.

The Group agreed to continue to monitor the situation in Maldives and to review progress at its next regular meeting in September, or earlier if required.

ENDS

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