



THE EUROPEAN UNION



Brussels, 14 March 2013  
7543/13  
PRESSE 117

**Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on behalf of the European Union on developments in the Maldives in view of the forthcoming presidential elections**

The EU is following closely developments in the Maldives and in particular the progress of the court case against ex-President Mohamed Nasheed. It recalls that the Maldivian authorities are committed to ensuring his personal safety and security. The EU takes note of the acceptance by the prosecution of a defence request to defer the trial until after the upcoming presidential elections in September and hopes that this would offer the means to ensure that ex-President Nasheed is able to participate in the electoral campaign, under the same conditions as other candidates.

The EU reiterates its view that the participation of the preferred candidates from all political formations in the Maldives is essential to ensuring the success of the forthcoming elections; it would be difficult to consider them credible and inclusive if Mr Nasheed and his party were to be prevented from standing or campaigning. The EU encourages all parties to exercise restraint, to act responsibly, and to work together to ensure that the outcome of these elections fully reflects the wishes of the Maldivian people, so safeguarding the Maldives' democratic institutions and enabling its next government to confront the serious economic, social and environmental challenges which the country faces.

---

**P R E S S**