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25/2/13

Dear Sponsors and Participants in the Human Rights Council side event on human rights and climate change.

It is with great surprise that Friends of Maldives, a UK-based NGO that focuses on bringing human rights abuse and poor governance in the Maldives to the attention of the international community has learnt that your esteemed organizations have agreed to sponsor an event featuring the Human Rights Minister of a regime which has perpetrated widespread human rights violations over the past year.

These violations have included attempted arbitrary killing, torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, state-sponsored sexual violence, suppression of peaceful protest, violent attacks against journalists and human rights defenders, the reintroduction of the death penalty contrary to the Maldives international obligations, and attempts to block President Nasheed from standing in this year's election. A wide-range of international human rights mechanisms and NGOs have catalogued and expressed concern at these human rights violations, including the UN Human Rights Committee, Amnesty International, the International Federation for Human Rights, and Reporters without Borders.

It is particularly surprising that the World Council of Churches and Franciscans International would welcome the representative of a government which includes a Home Minister (Mohamed Jameel) and a Special Advisor to the President (Hassan Saeed) who have published pamphlets attacking Christians and Jews and inciting violence against non-Muslims.

<http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6123.htm>

On behalf of democrats and human rights defenders, I would urge you and your organizations to reconsider supporting or attending this event.

I am copying in human rights NGOs and representatives of the press to alert them to this development.

Yours sincerely,

David Hardingham

Founder Friends of Maldives

www.friendsofmaldives.org