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Plenary sitting

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<Date>{04/10/2017}4.10.2017</Date>

<TitreType>JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION</TitreType>

<TitreRecueil>pursuant to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of the Rules of Procedure</TitreRecueil>

replacing the motions by the following groups:

ALDE (B8‑0549/2017)

ECR (B8‑0550/2017)

GUE/NGL (B8‑0555/2017)

EFDD (B8‑0556/2017)

PPE (B8‑0558/2017)

S&D (B8‑0560/2017)

Verts/ALE (B8‑0561/2017)

<Titre>on the situation in the Maldives</Titre>

<DocRef>(2017/2870(RSP))</DocRef>

<RepeatBlock-By><Depute>Cristian Dan Preda, Tomáš Zdechovský, Sandra Kalniete, Elmar Brok, Dubravka Šuica, Sven Schulze, Tunne Kelam, Lefteris Christoforou, Ivan Štefanec, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, David McAllister, Marijana Petir, Mairead McGuinness, Pavel Svoboda, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Elisabetta Gardini, Claude Rolin, Jaromír Štětina, Milan Zver, Csaba Sógor, József Nagy, Adam Szejnfeld, Brian Hayes, Luděk Niedermayer, Patricija Šulin, Anna Záborská, Andrey Kovatchev, Seán Kelly, Deirdre Clune, Roberta Metsola, Krzysztof Hetman, Stanislav Polčák, Ivana Maletić, Željana Zovko, László Tőkés, Jiří Pospíšil</Depute>

<Commission>{PPE}on behalf of the PPE Group</Commission>

<Depute>Victor Boştinaru, Elena Valenciano, Soraya Post, Wajid Khan</Depute>

<Commission>{S&D}on behalf of the S&D Group</Commission>

<Depute>Ruža Tomašić, Raffaele Fitto, Urszula Krupa, Jan Zahradil, Jana Žitňanská, Notis Marias, Ryszard Czarnecki, Monica Macovei, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Charles Tannock, Karol Karski, Branislav Škripek</Depute>

<Commission>{ECR}on behalf of the ECR Group</Commission>

<Depute>Javier Nart, Hilde Vautmans, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Petras Auštrevičius, Marietje Schaake, Urmas Paet, Pavel Telička, Louis Michel, Frédérique Ries, Nathalie Griesbeck, Jasenko Selimovic, Gérard Deprez, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Marian Harkin, Cecilia Wikström, Ivan Jakovčić, Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Robert Rochefort, Martina Dlabajová, Nedzhmi Ali, Patricia Lalonde, Ivo Vajgl, Paavo Väyrynen, Filiz Hyusmenova, Valentinas Mazuronis, Norica Nicolai, Carolina Punset, Jozo Radoš</Depute>

<Commission>{ALDE}on behalf of the ALDE Group</Commission>

<Depute>Marie-Christine Vergiat, Merja Kyllönen, Patrick Le Hyaric, Barbara Spinelli, Younous Omarjee, Kateřina Konečná, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Tania González Peñas, Estefanía Torres Martínez, Xabier Benito Ziluaga, Miguel Urbán Crespo</Depute>

<Commission>{GUE/NGL}on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group</Commission>

<Depute>Jean Lambert, Barbara Lochbihler, Judith Sargentini, Michèle Rivasi, Bodil Valero, Heidi Hautala, Igor Šoltes, Davor Škrlec, Ernest Urtasun, Jordi Solé, Michel Reimon</Depute>

<Commission>{Verts/ALE}on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group</Commission>

<Depute>Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Ignazio Corrao, Isabella Adinolfi, Piernicola Pedicini, Laura Agea</Depute>

<Commission>{EFDD}on behalf of the EFDD Group</Commission></RepeatBlock-By>

European Parliament resolution on the situation in the Maldives

(2017/2870(RSP))

*The European Parliament*,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on the Maldives, particularly those of 16 September 2004[[1]](#footnote-1), 30 April 2015[[2]](#footnote-2) and 17 December 2015[[3]](#footnote-3),

– having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which the Maldives is a party,

– having regard to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion and Belief of 1981,

– having regard to the EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty,

– having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, in particular Articles 2, 7 and 19 thereof,

– having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989,

– having regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

– having regard to the statement of the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, of 27 July 2017,

– having regard to the mission report of the 5th EU-Maldives Interparliamentary Meeting of 8 and 9 February 2016,

– having regard to the statement issued on 25 July 2017 by the EU Delegation to the Maldives, together with the Embassies of EU Member States and the Embassies of Canada, Norway, Switzerland and the United States accredited to the Maldives, on the situation in the Maldives,

– having regard to the statement of 14 March 2016 by the Spokesperson of the Vice-President of the European Commission / High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on the conviction of the former president of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed,

– having regard to the statement of 3 August 2017 of the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnès Callamard, on the ‘imminent’ resumption of executions in the Maldives,

– having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the EU has long-standing relations with the Maldives and hundreds of thousands of European tourists travel to the Maldives every year;

B. whereas the human rights situation in the Maldives has deteriorated dramatically since the country’s first democratic elections in 2008 and since its first democratically elected president, Mohamed Nasheed, was ousted in 2012;

C. whereas political and civil freedoms have been eroded, opposition leaders have been arbitrarily arrested, the media have been attacked, and growing religious conservatism is blamed for a decline in religious freedom and tolerance as President Abdulla Yameen, leader of the Progressive Party of the Maldives, and his government seek to tighten their grip on power;

D. whereas on 22 August 2017 security forces forcibly closed the Parliament (Majlis) in what opposition parliamentarians described as an attempt to block a motion to impeach the Speaker of the Parliament;

E. whereas opposition party members, independent journalists and human rights defenders report increased threats and attacks from authorities, police and extremist groups;

F. whereas in March 2015 Mohamed Nasheed, the Maldives’ first democratically elected president, was sentenced to 13 years in jail on charges of terrorism; whereas of the 85 members of parliament, 12 opposition members are on trial, at least three have had their passports confiscated, and at least one remains arbitrarily detained; whereas presidential elections are scheduled for 2018;

G. whereas concerns have been raised over the highly politicised Maldivian judiciary, which over the years has abused its powers and acted in favour of the current ruling party and against opposition politicians; whereas the right to a fair trial is still not guaranteed and the principles concerned constitute fundamental elements of the rule of law;

H. whereas on 9 August 2016 the Maldivian Parliament adopted the ‘Bill on Protection of Reputation and Good Name and Freedom of Expression’, which imposes a number of restrictions on freedom of expression and gives the government the power to revoke or suspend the licenses of broadcasters, publications, websites and other media sources;

I. whereas in August 2016 the President of the Maldives ratified a number of amendments to the Freedom of Assembly Act which restricted the designated areas for lawful protests;

J. whereas the Maldives has been identified by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians as one of the worst countries in the world for attacks against opposition members of parliament, with opposition politicians routinely being intimidated, arrested and imprisoned; whereas freedom of expression, freedom of the media, freedom of association and democratic pluralism have been increasingly under threat, with the arrest and charging of hundreds of anti-government protesters; whereas there is mounting evidence indicating that criminal charges brought against political opponents of President Yameen may have been politically motivated;

K. whereas President Yameen has repeatedly declared his intention to resume the practice of state-sanctioned executions, ending a 60-year moratorium; whereas in the Asia-Pacific region twenty states have abolished capital punishment and seven others are abolitionist in practice;

L. whereas at least 20 individuals are currently under sentence of death in the Maldives, at least five of whom were aged under 18 at the time of their arrest; whereas Maldivian law, in contravention of international law, allows minors to be sentenced to a delayed death penalty to be carried out when the minor reaches the age of 18; whereas the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has urged the Government of the Maldives not to resume executions;

M. whereas in at least three cases, namely those of Hussein Humaam Ahmed, Ahmed Murrath and Mohamed Nabeel, the Supreme Court of the Maldives has confirmed death sentences following trials which failed to uphold internationally recognised standards; whereas the three are now at risk of imminent execution;

N. whereas the International Commission of Jurists has recently condemned the suspension of 56 Maldivian lawyers, a third of the country’s practising lawyers, all of whom took part in calls for judicial reforms intended to secure the independence of the judiciary;

O. whereas there are also concerns about increasing radical Islamist militancy and about the number of radicalised young men and women alleged to have joined IS/Da’esh;

P. whereas blogger and vocal government critic Yameen Rasheed was murdered on 23 April 2017; whereas journalist Ahmen Rilwan has been missing since August 2014 and is feared dead; whereas blogger Ismail Rasheed was stabbed and wounded in 2012;

1. Expresses its deep regret at the deteriorating political and human rights situation in the Maldives and the increasingly authoritarian rule of President Abdulla Yameen and his government, which has created a climate of fear and jeopardised the gains made in the country in recent years in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, particularly in the light of the elections to be held in 2018;

2. Condemns the passing in 2016 of the Defamation and Freedom of Speech Act, which seeks to clamp down on freedom of expression, and the amendments in 2016 to the Freedom of Assembly Act restricting the right of assembly; calls on the Government of the Maldives to bring all national laws into line with international human rights law, and to repeal or reform the aforementioned acts;

3. Deplores the crackdown on political opponents in the Maldives, and calls on the government to drop all charges against former president Mohamed Nasheed and to release, immediately and unconditionally, all those being held for political reasons, including Jumhoory Party leader Qasim Ibrahim; reminds the government of its international obligations to respect fundamental freedoms and rights under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which include minimum fair trial guarantees;

4. Calls on the Supreme Court of the Maldives to immediately revoke the suspension of those of the 56 lawyers suspended in September to whom the measure still applies; reiterates its call on the government to ensure the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary and to guarantee all citizens the right to fair and transparent justice free of political influence;

5. Reiterates the EU’s firm opposition to the death penalty, in all cases and without exception; calls for the universal abolition of capital punishment; strongly condemns the announcement of the reintroduction of the death penalty in the Maldives and urges the Government and Parliament of the Maldives to respect the moratorium on the death penalty which has been in place for more than 60 years;

6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to publicly urge President Yameen and the Government of the Maldives to review all death row cases in order to ensure that internationally recognised and constitutionally safeguarded rights of fair trial are respected; calls on the Government to immediately revoke all capital punishment charges against juveniles and to prohibit the execution of juvenile offenders;

7. Believes that the only way to resolve the deterioration in democracy, human rights, and freedoms in the Maldives is through a process of genuine dialogue involving all political parties and other civic leaders;

8. Calls on the Government of the Maldives to respect and fully support the right to protest, freedom of expression, association and assembly, and freedom of conscience and freedom of religion and belief, irrespective of the majority religion;

9. Calls on the Government of the Maldives to end impunity for vigilantes who have used violence against people promoting religious tolerance, peaceful protesters, critical media and civil society;

10. Condemns the forcible closure of the Maldivian Majlis to its members and the harassment, intimidation and arrest of elected members of parliament;

11. Condemns the continued intimidation of and threats against journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders in the Maldives, the arrests of reporters, and the raids on and forced closures of news organisations;

12. Calls on the government to guarantee an impartial and independent investigation into the death of Yameen Rasheed and the abduction of Ahmed Rilwan in order to identify all those responsible and bring them to justice;

13. Calls on the Maldivian authorities to ensure that the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, the National Integrity Commission and the electoral commissions can operate independently and without government interference; calls on the Government of the Maldives to fully cooperate with UN human rights mechanisms, including Special Procedures and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;

14. Calls on the EU to make full use of all instruments at its disposal in order to promote respect for human rights and democratic principles in the Maldives, including by considering introducing temporary individual targeted sanctions against those undermining human rights;

15. Calls on the Maldivian authorities to ensure the full implementation of the laws criminalising female genital mutilation and to bring perpetrators to justice;

16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European External Action Service, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the OSCE/ODHIR, the Council of Europe and the Government of the Maldives.

1. OJ C 140E , 9.6.2005, p. 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2015)0180. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2015)0464. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)