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### **MDP Welcomes CMAG's Decision to Continue to Watch Maldives Situation**

The Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) has welcomed the decision of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group to continue monitoring the human rights situation in the Maldives and place the country in the category of "matters of interest to CMAG".

The MDP also welcomes CMAG's decision not to allow the Maldives to resume its seat on the CMAG board unless human rights obligations are fulfilled.

CMAG stated that police brutality during the period must be investigated and that the Maldives judiciary, police and the human rights commission needed further strengthening. Additionally, it also emphasized the "need to ensure that all parties and leaders are able freely to conduct election campaigns."

Commenting on the issue, MDP spokesperson Hamid Abdul Ghafour said: "We are pleased CMAG has decided to continue to keep a close eye on the Waheed regime, especially when it is gearing up to jail former President Nasheed in order to prevent him competing in next year's presidential election."

### **Following the CMAG meeting in New York on Friday, the group released a statement in which it said:**

13. Ministers noted the Report's conclusion that the change of President in the Republic of Maldives on 7 February 2012 was legal and constitutional, but also that certain acts of police brutality had occurred during that period which should be further investigated. They looked forward to advice from the Government of Maldives on progress with those investigations.
17. Ministers urged party leaders to commit to dialogue, paving the way to credible elections. Ministers emphasised the need to ensure that all parties and leaders are able freely to conduct election campaigns.
18. In accordance with CMAG's enhanced mandate, as agreed by leaders at the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Ministers further agreed that they

would continue to engage with Maldives positively and constructively to support Maldives in advancing the Affirmation of Commonwealth Values and Principles, in particular in strengthening the judiciary, in the process of democratic consolidation and in institution building. In this context, Ministers asked the Secretary-General to continue to brief the Group on progress in Maldives, including at CMAG's next meeting.

19. Accordingly, CMAG agreed to continue to monitor the situation in Maldives, and to move consideration of Maldives in future to its agenda item "Matters of Interest to CMAG". Ministers looked forward to Maldives' resumption of full participation at CMAG's next meeting, in the absence of any serious concerns.

The MDP is encouraged by the clarifications issued by the Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. John Baird after yesterday's CMAG meeting. <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-eng.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=1&nid=697389&crtr.tp1D=1>

ENDS

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