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**Disappointing FCO Response on Human Rights and Democracy Report**

http://fcohrdreport.readandcomment.com/read-and-download-the-report/

**FCO Digital Diplomacy Team** *says:*

[February 21, 2013 at 10:45 am](http://fcohrdreport.readandcomment.com/read-and-download-the-report/comment-page-1/#comment-13431)

In reply to Lucy Johnson and Farah Faisal

The British Government continue to have concerns about longstanding human rights issues in Maldives, including on freedom of religion, a weak rule of law and women’s rights. We also have serious concerns about allegations of police brutality in Maldives, including in relation to the transfer of power in February 2012, and arrests which appear to be politically motivated. During his visit last month to Maldives, the FCO Minister for South Asia, Alistair Burt, urged the Maldivian Government to fully investigate all allegations of police brutality and ensure perpetrators are brought to justice. We have also called on all parties to ensure that related institutional reforms recommended by the Commission of National Enquiry are put in place to consolidate democracy and further protect human rights in Maldives.

The British Government only support activities which we judge will result in a Maldives Police Service which is better able to serve the Maldivian people in line with international standards. A professional and accountable police service is essential for consolidating democracy in Maldives, and increasing conformity with international standards lies at the heart of our interventions in Maldives. As with all British Government supported justice and security projects, we have safeguards in place that seek to ensure our work does not contribute to human rights abuses.

Targeted police capacity building programmes can lead to increased police professionalism, responsiveness and accountability. Although progress is not always swift, we judge that the work we are supporting, which includes UN work to strengthen police disciplinary mechanisms in line with international standards, will have a positive impact on police performance in the interests of the Maldivian people.

The Elections Commission in Maldives has now set the date for Presidential Elections as 7 September. The British Government has consistently called on all parties in Maldives to engage in constructive political dialogue and to ensure free, fair and inclusive elections.

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**Farah Faizal** *says:*

[January 25, 2013 at 6:45 pm](http://fcohrdreport.readandcomment.com/read-and-download-the-report/comment-page-1/#comment-11696)

I am extremely disappointed that the report does not cover the human rights violations in the Maldives last year which Amnesty International had described as a Human Rights Crisis. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA29/005/2012/en/6d93c0bb-67f0-4688-b22a-b8c115e83f52/asa290052012en.pdf> The FCO continues to fund police training of Maldivian Police Service at the Scottish Police College without any distinction made between those who carried out brutalities. The current Police Commissioner of Maldives himself had been publicly accused of torture by former Amnesty Prisoner of Conscience & former Deputy High Commissioner of Maldives, Naushad Waheed who accuses him of torturing him while he was imprisoned, but the FCO continues to fund police training in Maldives. The UN Human Rights Committee in July 2012 stated “that incidents of torture in the Maldives appear both systematic and systemic. At one point, it confronted the State delegation with documented, detailed testimonies of victims of torture in the Maldives. The Committee expressed grave concern about the low number of these cases that have undergone investigation, and urged the delegation to set up an independent Commission of Inquiry to conduct criminal investigations and ensure compensation for all victims of torture.” However, those torturers, known and documented, are still allowed to travel to the United Kingdom. The UN HRC added that “The Committee should further investigate all allegations of torture that took place at the time of the demonstrations of February 8, 2012, in Malé and Addu, prosecute those responsible , and provide compensation and rehabilitation to the victims.”. <http://www.ccprcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/MALDIVES-7.13.12_v2.pdf> Yet no policeman is held accountable while British tax payers money is being spent on training the very police force that carried out these brutalities including sexual assault as documented by Amnesty

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[**Lucy Johnson, Friends of Maldives**](http://www.friendsofmaldives.org/) *says:*

[January 25, 2013 at 11:33 pm](http://fcohrdreport.readandcomment.com/read-and-download-the-report/comment-page-1/#comment-11704)

The infant democracy in the Maldives, which could be seen to have kick-started the Arab Spring has deteriorated into a “human rights crisis”, according to Amnesty International. Since their first democratically-elected President, Mohamed Nasheed, was deposed in a coup d’état in February 2012, widespread police brutality and arbitrary arrests have become the norm and The Federation of International Human Rights has concluded that since the removal of Nasheed, the Maldives has suffered a deterioration in democracy and freedom of assembly and expression. Sadly, despite FCO monitoring the situation, there is still no date set for free and fair presidential elections and civil liberty is a short-lived memory from the 3 years of democratic leadership. To make matters worse, the Maldives police, who terrorize the public with impunity, are being trained in Scotland through the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA) and its agency the Scottish Police College (SPC), with British taxpayers’ money.

Friends of Maldives implore FCO to sever their long-standing ties with the Maldives Police Service and end the police training programmes which have developed the human rights monsters of the Abdul Gayoom and now the 2012‐coup eras. Efforts at reforming the police are clearly not working.

We also call upon the FCO to urge the current regime to hold democratic elections at the earliest opportunity.

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