



Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

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Maumoon Abdul Gayoom
President of the Republic of Maldives
Commander-in-Chief of the Police

By email
Tuesday 18 April 2006

Dear President Gayoom

Creation of a Police Integrity Commission

I am writing to convey my support for the inclusion of a Police Integrity Commission in the Maldives' Roadmap for Reform Agenda released on 27 March 2006 ("the Reform Agenda").

I am heartened by the Reform Agenda's focus on transparent and efficient management of democratic reform, and the inclusion of tangible mechanisms and targets. A key facet of a democratic, accountable police service is an independent complaints authority – and I hope that the Police Integrity Commission can take on this role.

The Police Integrity Commission's powers, structures and mandates will be key to its success. The minimum requirements for a successful oversight body are:

- independence – the body should be independent of the police and the executive, and report directly to Parliament;
- sufficient power – the body should have the authority to independently investigate complaints and issue findings (this includes the power to conduct hearings, subpoena documents and compel the appearance of witnesses);
- adequate resources – this involves financial support, infrastructure backup and skilled human resources; and
- the power to follow up on recommendations – this means that the body can make public reports, follow up recommendations with the police and draw Parliament's attention to police inaction.

The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) has been working in the area of police reform for over eight years, and has built up a considerable expertise relating to democratic policing and independent police oversight mechanisms. Our comparative knowledge allows us to look at various accountability mechanisms in different jurisdictions, comparing the mechanisms with one another and international best practice. Earlier this year, CHRI provided Minister Ahmed and Deputy Minister Shakoor with copies of our report on police accountability, and also a number of other resources that may be useful as the planning for the Commission is completed. If any of your Ministries or police departments would like any assistance, direct them to email Daniel Woods at our head office (daniel@humanrightsinitiative.org).

CHRI Ghana Office

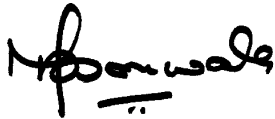
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I note that the Reform Agenda proposes the Police Integrity Commission will be in place by 31 August 2006. I look forward to both learning more of the details regarding the Commission, and its establishment by this date.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Daruwala', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Maja Daruwala
Director

cc: Dr Hassan Saeed – Attorney-General
Mohamed Jameed Ahmed – Minister of Justice
Ahmed Thasmeen Ali – Minister of Home Affairs
Azima Shakoor – Deputy Minister of Home Affairs
Adam Zahir – Commissioner of Police
Matthew Neuhaus – Director of Political Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

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