



Joint Statement
on the occasion of the official visit
to the Republic of Maldives
by
Her Excellency Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra,
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Thailand
1 - 3 June 2013

1. At the invitation of His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Waheed, President of the Republic of Maldives, Her Excellency Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, paid an official Visit to the Maldives from 1 to 3 June 2013, which is the first ever visit by a Thai Prime Minister since the establishment of Thailand-Maldives diplomatic relations 34 years ago. She was accompanied by H.E. Mr. Surapong Tovichakchaikul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as other Ministers and senior officials of the Government of Thailand.
2. Her Excellency the Thai Prime Minister and her delegation were accorded a warm welcome on their arrival, and gracious hospitality during their stay in the Maldives, reflecting the strong bonds of friendship that exist between the Maldives and Thailand. His Excellency the President of Maldives hosted an Official Banquet in honour of the Thai Prime Minister at Kurumba, Maldives.
3. The official talks between the Maldives and Thailand were held on 1 June 2013. The discussion was held in an atmosphere of friendship, mutual understanding, and goodwill, characterising the enduring nature of the friendship between the two countries.
4. The two leaders had a wide-ranging discussion on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. Both sides noted with satisfaction that the visit has imparted greater momentum to the on-going bilateral ties. The two leaders acknowledged the deepening and expanding relations in recent years as partners for development. Both leaders expressed their firm commitment to work together to consolidate the bilateral relations for mutual benefit.

5. Reviewing the entire gamut of bilateral relations, the two leaders expressed satisfaction at the strong and growing trade relations between the two countries. The two leaders noted that for several years, Thailand has remained one of the most important trading partners of the Maldives, accounting for twenty-seven percent of the country's export, and five percent of imports. Both sides welcomed the expansion of bilateral trade between the two countries to the level of 109 million US dollars in the year 2012. The two leaders also agreed to double trade volume between Thailand and Maldives by the year 2018. At the same time, the two leaders stressed the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation in promoting investment, including renewable energy, waste management, health, higher education, tourism, agriculture, fisheries, processed food, development of small and medium enterprises, construction, logistics, and infrastructure programmes.

6. Both sides took note that, so far, several leading Thai hotel chains and private companies have already set up their businesses in the Maldives and agreed to facilitate implementation of investment projects in each other's country, especially on work permit and visa extension. The Maldives President welcomed more Thai investment in the Maldives, in sectors that are beneficial to both sides; especially, in food processing, infrastructure development and construction, as well as hospitality-related businesses.

7. Both sides recognized that people-to-people contacts are an important part of the relations between the two countries and expressed satisfaction with a greater flow of tourists and visitors between the two countries, with a 31.12 percent increase in the number of Maldivian tourists visiting Thailand in 2012. The Thai side invited more Maldivian people to visit Thailand for medical treatment. It was agreed that the conclusion of a visa waiver agreement in the near future would increase people-to-people contact.

8. Both sides acknowledged the importance of enhancing connectivity between the two countries through aviation linkages and agreed that more direct flights between the two countries will contribute to better connectivity linking the Maldives and Thailand.

9. The two leaders expressed satisfaction with the ongoing technical cooperation programmes which are an important aspect of their bilateral relations. The President of the Maldives expressed deep appreciation for Thailand's proposal to formulate a 3 year (2014-2016) implementation plan to be considered as a Country Programme for the Maldives which will focus on agriculture, fisheries, juvenile system, public health, human resources development, the areas to be mutually agreed by both sides.

10. The two sides noted with satisfaction the level of security and defense cooperation between the two countries and acknowledged that expanding cooperation would be mutually beneficial in addressing common challenges and concerns.

11. The two sides valued the close cooperation between the two countries in the United Nations and other international fora on issues of mutual interest. The Prime Minister of Thailand and the President of the Maldives reaffirmed an agreement to mutually support each other's candidatures for the membership of the UN Human Rights Council.

12. The two leaders expressed the desire to further enhance cooperation in all areas of mutual benefit, including, economic, cultural, and educational fields. In this respect, they stressed the need for the exchanges of visits of experts and officials to enhance cooperation in these areas.

13. During the visit, the Maldives and Thailand signed four bilateral agreements, and three agreements for private sector collaboration namely; the 'Comprehensive Framework Agreement on Cooperation between the Maldives and Thailand', the 'Treaty between the Kingdom of Thailand and the Republic of Maldives on the Transfer of Offenders and Co-operation in the Enforcement of Penal Sentences', the 'Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of Bilateral Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Of Maldives', and the 'Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic Maldives and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand', 'Memorandum of Understanding between Loxley Public Company Limited and AGT International and Ministry of Home Affairs of Maldives on Safe City', 'Memorandum of Understanding between the Maldives National chamber of Commerce and the Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking' and 'Memorandum of Understanding between ADK Hospital and Thonburi Hospital'.

14. Both leaders expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the official visit and concluded that it contributed positively to the strengthening of the existing friendly relations between the two countries. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to work together to further promote bilateral cooperation for the mutual benefit of their two countries.

15. Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Thailand thanked His Excellency the President of the Maldives for the warm welcome and the generous hospitality extended to her and members of her delegation during their stay in the Maldives.

16. Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Thailand extended an invitation to His Excellency the President of the Maldives to visit Thailand at a mutually convenient time, which His Excellency the President accepted with pleasure.

17. During the visit His Excellency Dr. Abdul Samad Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs paid a courtesy call on Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Thailand. In addition, Honourable Abdulla Shahid, Speaker of the People's Majlis and Honourable Ahmed Faiz Hussain, Chief Justice of the Republic of Maldives paid courtesy calls on Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Thailand.

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3 June 2013.