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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **The new Secretary-General of SAARC pays a courtesy call on the President**

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The new Secretary-General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), His Excellency Amjad Hussain B. Sial paid a courtesy call on President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, this morning, at the President's Office.

At the ceremony, the President welcomed the Secretary-General to the Maldives and congratulated him on the assumption of office.

During the call, the President expressed hope that under the leadership of the Secretary-General, further upward momentum in SAARC would be gained and maintained, while emphasising that the need to review economic cooperation within SAARC is imperative. He further highlighted on the viable opportunities through SAARC to enhance regional cooperation and integration in areas of mutual interest. The President noted that to achieve the objectives and principles of the SAARC charter, the Association needs to gravitate towards a more forward-looking approach and expressed hope that necessary measures will be taken by the member states to come to an amicable agreement with regard to the SAARC process.

The Secretary-General thanked the President for receiving him and expressed pleasure for the opportunity to meet with the President. He also thanked the President for the support and cooperation extended by the Government of Maldives for the progress of the people of South Asia through SAARC and its various mechanisms.

The President was accompanied at the call by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E Dr. Mohamed Asim, and the Minister of State for Foreign Relations at the President's Office, H.E Mr. Mohamed Naseer.

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3 April 2017

