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President Dr Muizzu calls for international financial architecture reforms to help SIDS reach SDGs

President H.E. Dr Mohamed Muizzu called for financial architecture reforms and avenues for partnerships for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to enable easier access to finance to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He made the remarks in his keynote address at the High-Level Meeting on Resource Mobilization for SIDS at the Fourth International Conference on SIDS (SID4) held in Antigua and Barbuda.

The President remarked that numerous SIDS, including the Maldives, that have graduated from the Least Developed Countries (LDC) category pay a hefty price tag, considering the increase in the cost of borrowing from bilateral creditors and restrictions on access to affordable finance.

Despite commitments made by the international community to augment development and climate financing for SIDS, President Dr Muizzu noted with concern that the net external resource inflow to SIDS has been on a declining trajectory over the past two decades. The President added that SIDS should not have to make impossible choices, such as deciding between funding the establishment of a new school and constructing seawalls.

The President called upon Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and international financial institutions (IFIs) to help enact reforms such as channelling funds through international capital markets given their positive credit ratings and, in turn, lend to SIDS at highly concessional rates and fulfil the promises made to SIDS in the last three decades. He then proposed that the development partners of SIDS partner with the MDBs and the private sector to scale up private finance flows to SIDS. The President also urged SIDS to broaden their vision and aim higher by identifying goals and seeking assistance and support from development partners.

In his statement, the President challenged the commitment and will to direct finance towards where and who needs it the most and urged development partners to stop viewing SIDS as mere recipients of aid and instead view us as partners in sustainable development.

SOURCE : The President's Office

Minister Zameer calls for stronger public-private partnerships to drive transformational change in SIDS



The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Moosa Zameer, today delivered remarks at the Private Sector Roundtable during the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) held in Antigua and Barbuda.

In his address, Foreign Minister Zameer described public-private partnerships as a compelling framework for collaboration, as they involve pooling together resources and expertise, reducing risk significantly. He stated that through genuine partnerships, governments and businesses can deliver essential services and develop infrastructure in various sectors including healthcare, education, transportation, and energy.

Drawing on his experience in the private sector, Minister Zameer urged the private sector to engage more actively with SIDS. He noted that private sector investment has the potential to catalyse transformative change. He called on governments to create an enabling environment for businesses to invest in SIDS, through robust policies and economic diversification. He also called on the international community to support boosting the state and productive capacities of SIDS, which would enable SIDS to mobilise resources and attract investment.

The Private Sector Roundtable, organized by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN OHRLLS), gathered leaders from governments, the private sector and civil society to discuss the importance of partnerships towards the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS. The Roundtable also showcased the outcomes of the SIDS Global Business Network Forum, which was held from 25-26 May 2024.

SOURCE : Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MALDIVES AT



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Small Island
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2024

presidency.gov.mv/sids4





Abdul Raheem elected as Speaker of the Parliament

Parliamentarian Abdul Raheem Abdulla has been elected as the Speaker of the Parliament and Parliamentarian Ahmed Nazim has been elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Parliament were elected during the first sitting of the new Parliament. The first sitting was presided by Parliamentarian Ahmed Siyam.

An interim committee has been established to elect a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker of the Parliament. While the Parliament consists of five parties; People's National Congress Party (PNC) which is the ruling part, Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) which is the opposition party, Jumhooree Party (JP), Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) and Maldives National Party (MNP), the committee comprises of members from each party. Members of the committee and their respective parties are as follows: Ibrahim Didi (PNC), Abdul Gafoor Moosa (MDP), Gasim Ibrahim (JP), Mohamed Nazim (MNP) and Mohamed Abbas (MDA).

In addition to Abdul Raheem, Parliamentarian Ibrahim Nazil was also nominated as the Speaker of the Parliament. However, he obtained only 14 votes.

The Speaker and Vice-Speaker of Parliament are elected by secret election held among the members of the Parliament. Abdul Raheem successfully secured the title of the Speaker of the Parliament with 71 votes.

Following the elections of Abdul Raheem as the Speaker of the Parliament, the upcoming sittings of the Parliament will be presided by him. Deputy Speaker of the Parliament will only preside the sitting in situations in which mark the absence of the Speaker.

SOURCE : PSM

The President urges Governments to forge stronger partnerships with private entities and foster an environment conducive to increased private-sector investment

President H.E. Dr Mohamed Muizzu urged Governments to forge stronger partnerships with private entities, and foster an environment conducive to increased private-sector investment. He made these remarks at the Maldives Side Event, "The Pivotal Role of Private Sector Financing for Climate Resilience in SIDS," organised by the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy, at the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4).

The President articulated that economic diversification called for a fundamental re-evaluation of business practices. He stated that Governments must forge stronger partnerships with private entities, fostering an environment conducive to increased private-sector investment. He highlighted the private sector's indispensable expertise, innovation, and capacity in the collective efforts for development.

President Dr Muizzu stated that the Maldives is shifting towards economic diversification. He further added that investments in infrastructure such as airports, healthcare facilities,

communication, real estate, and transshipment ports are pivotal in this endeavour, emphasising that these investments catalyse economic growth and advance human development.

The President cited the development of 'Ras Malé' with state-of-the-art sustainable and climate-resilient features. He noted that Ras Malé aims to address the housing crisis, open doors to economic prosperity, and represent the Maldives' commitment to sustainable urban living and inclusive development.

President Dr Muizzu additionally disclosed that to reduce reliance on food imports and enhance food security, the Maldives is actively pursuing avenues to introduce cutting-edge technology to bolster food production and is committed to establishing an agricultural industrial park.

Concluding the statement, the President urged the international community to join the development journey, offering accessible and adaptable solutions that recognise the distinct challenges and meet our pressing development needs.

SOURCE : The President's Office

Health minister addresses climate-related health disasters



Minister of Health Dr. Abdulla Khaleel has stated small island countries like the Maldives are facing significant health disasters due to global warming. He made the remarks addressing the 77th World Health Assembly.

Delivering the address, Minister Khaleel highlighted the severe impact of climate change on small island nations, pointing to issues such as erosion and coral bleaching, which are adversely affecting the tourism and fishing industries in the Maldives.

The minister emphasised that these climate changes are not only economic challenges but also major health concerns. He noted the numerous obstacles in mitigating the societal damage caused by these environmental changes.

Furthermore, Minister Khaleel stressed the critical need for accessible financial assistance to help countries address these pressing issues.

Additionally, he called for an end to the persecution of Muslims in Gaza, underscoring that healthcare is a fundamental human right.

SOURCE : PSM



The President meets with the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth



President H.E. Dr Mohamed Muizzu met with the Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland KC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth on the sidelines of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) in Antigua and Barbuda today.

During the meeting, President Dr Muizzu expressed gratitude to the Commonwealth

for the development assistance provided to the Maldives by the Commonwealth. He also acknowledged the support in the fields of sports, youth empowerment, education, the environment, and technology.

The President and Secretary-General of the Commonwealth spoke on issues of importance to SIDS and other Small States in the Commonwealth. Commonwealth Secretary General applauded the strong and valuable leadership of Maldives on critical issues of concern to SIDS.

President Dr Muizzu and Secretary General discussed avenues for the Commonwealth to further augment its role in aiding SIDS.

The President concluded the meeting by reiterating his Government's unwavering commitment to enhancing cooperation with the Commonwealth.

SOURCE : The President's Office



Environment minister highlights CSRI's crucial role in climate awareness

Minister of Climate Change, Environment, and Energy Thoriq Ibrahim has underscored the significance of the Climate Smart Resilient Islands (CSRI) initiative in finding sustainable solutions to the challenges confronting small island countries and in increasing awareness about climate change. He made these remarks at the opening of Maldives' first side event at the International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Conference. Organised by the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment, and Energy, the event focused on advancing SIDS goals through the CSRI initiative, titled "From Ambitions to Practice."

President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu attended the side event, which featured esteemed panelists including Special Envoy for Climate Change Ali Shareef, Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme Sefanaia Nawadra, and Secondary Director of Climate Resilience Ministry of Climate Resilience, the Environment, and Renewable Energy Titus Antoine.

In his opening address, Minister Thoriq emphasised the pivotal role of the CSRI Initiative in addressing the unique challenges faced by small island nations while enhancing awareness about climate change. He urged environmentally sensitive small island countries to collaborate closely in this endeavor.

The Fourth SIDS Conference, held once every decade, adopts the theme "Charting the Course Toward Resilient Prosperity" this year. This gathering brings together leaders of SIDS countries and relevant stakeholders from diverse sectors to collaborate towards a sustainable, prosperous, and vibrant future for developing small island nations.

SOURCE : PSM

Maldives represents a success story in digital transformation: President

H.E. Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has called upon the international community to join hands in navigating towards a future where SIDS flourish in the digital age. He made these remarks in his keynote address at the "Smart Maldives: Journey towards a digitally inclusive community" side-event held at the SIDS4 conference. The event was organized by the Ministry of Housing, Land and Urban Development, the Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology, and the National Centre for Information Technology.

Noting that the Maldives is in the process of transforming into a digital economy, the President called for international cooperation, investments, and partnerships to support this transformation.

Speaking in this regard, President Dr. Muizzu highlighted the Maldives' pursuit of targeted investments to advance innovation and technology. He further noted the need for technical assistance to the Maldives to create and implement strict consumer protection laws, rules, and regulations aligned with regional and international best practices. The President also emphasised the importance of support for inclusive participation in regional and international standard-setting negotiations, as

well as fair representation in shaping the digital economy.

Highlighting the Administration's commitment to achieving SDGs, President Dr. Muizzu underscored that the Maldives continuously invests in building digital citizens who are well equipped for the age of Artificial Intelligence and "Big Data."

President Dr. Muizzu further underlined the Administration's commitment to introducing new digital services that will benefit all residents of the Maldives. He expressed the Administration's intention to demonstrate to the international community, the results of the Maldives' resilience and strong determination that despite the challenges constantly faced, it is possible to overcome them and bridge the limitations.

"We have navigated treacherous currents, faced tempests of doubt, and charted our course through uncharted waters. But it is in our vulnerability—the soft sands of our limitations—that resilience takes root. Just as an island withstands the relentless tides, we too must rise above self-imposed boundaries," the President concluded.

SOURCE : The President's Office



New parliament : Public hope rises with gov't supermajority

The legislative authority is widely regarded as the most closely linked with the people, given its representation of public opinions and standpoints through elected officials from various constituencies.

In the recent parliamentary elections, the new parliament has set a record with 93 members representing different constituencies, an increase from the previous parliament's 87 members. This addition reflects a growing engagement with diverse public perspectives, as each member represents approximately 5,000 people in relation to the Maldives' population.

The ruling party, People's National Congress (PNC), has secured a super majority in the new parliament, winning 66 seats. Additionally, nine of the eleven independent candidates who contested the elections have joined PNC, bringing the total number of PNC representatives to 75. This majority further signifies substantial support for PNC's policies and governance.

Three other parties allied with PNC, Jumhooree Party, Maldives National Party (MNP), and Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) also secured seats without contesting against PNC candidates, resulting in a unified vision among 78 members of the new parliament.

Moreover, President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu highlighted this record-breaking result as a testament to the people's trust in the current administration and their commitment to the nation's substantial progress. The Maldives Democratic Party (MDP), which previously held a super majority with 65 seats, faced a significant loss, securing only 12 seats in the new parliament. Additionally, two members will serve independently.

The people place significant trust in the parliament, believing that decisions will be made in their favor and that the government will be held accountable. They expect their elected representatives to cooperate fully in providing necessary services and ensuring that governance benefits the nation as a whole.

SOURCE : PSM



For SIDS to achieve the SDGs, access to affordable finance is a question of justice, says the President



President Dr Mohamed Muizzu stated today that access to affordable finance is a question of justice for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in his opening remarks as Co-Chair at the Interactive Dialogue "Revitalizing SIDS' Economies for Accelerated and Sustainable Growth" of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) in Antigua and Barbuda.



The President highlighted the obstacles SIDS face, including external shocks, climate change impacts, inadequate financing, and unsustainable debt. He commended the resilience of SIDS despite these challenges, showcasing their ability to thrive amidst adversity. He remarked that the COVID-19 pandemic served as a stark reminder of the vulnerability of SIDS economies to external shocks.

President Dr Muizzu noted the need for accelerated and sustainable growth for SIDS to transition to middle-income status and develop

further. Stressing the importance of building productive and state capacity, he underscored the critical need to build human capital and mobilise resources. The President underlined the need for capacity building, partnerships, advocacy, and strategic planning, highlighting the experience of the Maldives efforts towards disaster preparedness and its success in sustainable tourism.

The President further noted financing as a central challenge for SIDS, reiterating the need for affordable and accessible financing for development and stating that 'access to affordable finance is a question of justice' for SIDS.



President Dr Muizzu is the co-chair of the Dialogue, along with H.E. Anders Adlercreutz, the Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering of the Republic of Finland. This is the first of five interactive dialogues in the SIDS4, from May 27 to 30, 2024, in Antigua and Barbuda.

SOURCE : The President's Office



President Dr Muizzu meets with the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda



President H.E. Dr Mohamed Muizzu met with H.E. Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, on the sidelines of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4).

During the meeting, the President commended the excellent arrangements made by the Antiguan and Barbudan Government for the Conference and expressed his appreciation for the warm hospitality extended to the Maldivian delegation.

The leaders' discussions ranged from issues relating to the conference as well as issues of concern to SIDS. They additionally discussed cooperating to strengthen resilience and collaborating on multilateral platforms and issues of shared interest.

Antigua and Barbuda is hosting the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) from May 27-29, 2024.

SOURCE : The President's Office



UK praises Maldives' role in SIDS

President H.E. Dr Mohamed Muizzu met with the Rt. Hon. Lord Richard Benyon, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth and Department of Environment of the United Kingdom, on the sidelines of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) in Antigua and Barbuda today.

The President and Minister of State discussed a range of issues relating to enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation, especially on issues relating to SIDS.

Speaking at the meeting, the President emphasised the Administration's resolve to combat the climate crisis and outlined some of the steps the Administration has taken to address climate mitigation-related concerns.

Minister of State Lord Benyon applauded the Maldives' active leadership on advocating for SIDS and commended President Dr Muizzu's strong vision for the development and prosperity of the Maldives.

SOURCE : The President's Office

"China has always been a valued partner for the Maldives, and I am proud to say that China remains our number one market for tourism." - Minister Faisal

The Maldives Minister of Tourism, Mr Ibrahim Faisal, has highlighted the strong relationship between the Maldives and China at the ITB China trade fair, reiterating that China is the number one market for the Maldives Tourism Industry. The Minister made this statement while speaking at the Maldives Media Meet hosted by Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC/ Visit Maldives) on the sidelines of ITB China 2024, Shanghai, China.

Minister Faisal emphasised China's position as the Maldives' number one tourism market and stressed the importance of further strengthening connectivity through additional direct flights from various regions in China.

"The recent launch of direct flights from Fujian is a significant step forward, and we are committed to establishing more such connections to facilitate travel for Chinese tourists," said Minister Faisal.

The Minister also announced the Maldives' expanding tourism offerings beyond luxury resorts. This includes the development of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) sector with upgraded facilities and venues, positioning the Maldives as a destination for international events. Additionally, a focus on community-based tourism allows visitors to experience local culture, traditions, and authentic Maldivian hospitality through guesthouses, traditional activities, and home-cooked meals.

"The Maldives offers something for every traveller," stated Minister Faisal. "Whether you seek luxury, a unique venue for your next conference, or an immersive cultural experience, our islands are ready to welcome you."

He concluded his remarks affirming the importance of the Maldives-China partnership

for tourism growth, cultural exchange, and regional stability and expressed his commitment to continued collaboration for a brighter future for Maldives tourism.

A crucial event at ITB China 2024, the Maldives Media Meet is a fantastic opportunity to connect with influential media from the Chinese market. This event allows us to share exciting updates on Destination Maldives, including the latest tourism products and developments.

ITB China is amongst the leading travel trade shows and a global travel and tourism community that drives the power of entrepreneurship, driving innovation, revenue growth, and long-term sustainability, with a main focus on the Chinese Travel Market. MMPRC's participation as the Official Destination Partner in ITB China greatly assists in elevating the Maldives' presence within the Chinese Market travel industry.

SOURCE : MMPRC