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Joint Statement on the 3rd Meeting of the Maldives - United States Trade and Investment Framework Agreement Council



Washington, D.C. – Delegations from the governments of the United States and the Republic of Maldives met Wednesday in Washington, D.C. for the 3rd meeting of the United States-Maldives Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council.

The meeting was co-chaired by Mohamed Saeed, Maldivian Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and Brendan Lynch, Assistant United States Trade Representative (AUSTR) for South and Central Asia, and joined by wide interagency representation from both governments.

Minister Saeed and AUSTR Lynch shared their ambition to deepen economic relations and noted the important role of bilateral engagement

in diversifying trade and investment ties for inclusive, sustainable growth. The Maldivian side presented the economic vision of the President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu's administration and sought the U.S. government's support. Both sides highlighted progress on issues related to the protection and enforcement of intellectual property and noted the importance of providing regulatory transparency to enhance the investment climate.

Maldivian side emphasized its support for digital content creators, artists, and entrepreneurs to capitalize on global commercial platforms and payment system solutions, and highlighted investment opportunities in the financial, maritime, real estate, and tourism sectors. Both delegations committed to increase cooperation on worker rights, digital trade, and environmental sustainability to ensure that enhanced bilateral trade and investment benefits workers and businesses of all sizes in both the United States and the Maldives.

The governments discussed the Maldives' ongoing economic reforms and efforts to improve the business climate in order to increase trade and incentivize investment. USTR welcomed engagement with the Maldives on advancing worker centered trade, including on the implementation of its recently ratified Industrial Relations Act and Occupation Safety and Health Act and advancing labor rights for migrant workers. USTR congratulated the Maldives on implementing a majority of its commitments under the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade Facilitation, and encouraged working with donors, including the United States, on implementation of the outstanding provisions.

The United States and the Maldives committed to intensify the productive engagement under the TIFA, with a view to further strengthen bilateral economic ties for mutual benefit.

SOURCE : President's Office

The 56th Session of the Human Rights Council concludes with the active participation and engagement of the Maldives Delegation

The Human Rights Council adopted 26 resolutions, with the Maldives co-sponsoring 15 resolutions. This includes resolutions on the Safety of the Child in the Digital Environment, Plastic Pollution Implications on the Full Enjoyment of Human Rights, Promotion, Protection of Human Rights in the context of Peaceful Protests and Menstrual Hygiene Management, Human Rights and Gender Equality among others. The Maldives also delivered national statements on an array of thematic areas.

During this session, the Maldives was part of the cross-regional core group of the resolution on Independence and Impartiality of the Judiciary, Jurors, and Assessors, and the Independence of Lawyers. The resolution aims to reinforce the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and legal professionals to uphold human rights and achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16, while addressing modern challenges such as digital technologies, gender sensitivity, and global disparities. This resolution was adopted by consensus and had 70 co-sponsors supporting the resolution at the time of adoption.

The Maldives also co-sponsored 30 joint statements delivered during this session. This included statements by the Organization for Islamic Cooperation and Non-Aligned Movement among others. The Maldives, on behalf of the group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), delivered a statement on Human Rights and Climate Change and reiterated SIDS' commitment to work collectively for a sustainable environment for all. Furthermore, Maldives demonstrated its strong commitment to the Palestinian cause by co-sponsoring four joint statements covering themes such as education, health and systematic discrimination.

The Maldives delegation for the 56th Session of the HRC was led by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Ambassador Dr. Salma Rasheed. The delegation also included Counsellor, Adam Hamid, Counsellor, Uza. Aminath Shifaya Ibrahim, Second Secretary, Maryam Fathika Fayaz, Second Secretary, Aishath Rifga Mohamed, and Attaché, Raaidh Saeedh, from the Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

SOURCE : Ministry of Foreign Affairs





Deputy Speaker of the Parliament calls for Economic and Governance reforms



Deputy Speaker of the Parliament Nazim Sattar has emphasized the need for a comprehensive review of the Maldives’ governance system and the implementation of necessary changes. His remarks came during the inauguration of a workshop organized by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy at CROSSROADS Maldives.

In his address, Deputy Speaker Nazim highlighted the new responsibilities entrusted to parliamentarians and expressed optimism that they will honor their commitments to the residents of their constituencies. He urged all members to fulfill their duties and focus on the pledges made during their campaigns.

Nazim stressed the importance of reflecting on the successes and shortcomings of the past 15 years under the current constitution. He pointed out the urgent need for economic reforms to address the deteriorating financial situation of the country. He argued that it is essential for the Maldives to rethink its governance structures and make necessary amendments to improve the effectiveness of the state’s institutions.

Nazim called for a thorough reevaluation of the governance system in the Maldives, stressing that reforms are needed to address current challenges and enhance the effectiveness of government operations. He also underscored the importance of financial prudence and the need for economic reforms to manage the state’s resources more effectively in light of the nation’s financial difficulties.

Furthermore, Nazim emphasised that public opinions and concerns should be central to the drafting and amending of laws, advocating for greater transparency and public involvement in the legislative process. He highlighted the importance of maintaining integrity, self-accountability, and a clear separation of powers within the government institutions. In addition, he called for a commitment to democratic values and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, urging all parties to work together towards achieving national objectives.

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy will support parliamentarians with information and resources aimed at enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness. The workshop is part of ongoing efforts to improve the legislative process and governance in the Maldives.

SOURCE : PSM

Thilamale’ Bridge project nears completion with 40.47% progress

Minister of State for Ministry of Construction and Infrastructure Ibrahim Thoaam Mohamed has announced that the Thilamale’ Bridge project has reached 40.47% completion. The first segment of the bridge’s marine precast deck near Villimale’ has been successfully completed, he stated on a post on social media.



The Thilamale’ Bridge project, spanning 6.7 kilometers and connecting four areas, is valued at over USD 454 million. Signed during the previous administration, the project highlights the strong bilateral ties between the Maldives and India. By the end of the previous administration, only 29% of the project had been completed.

Despite initial delays, the final completion date for the entire project has been rescheduled to September 30, 2026, with the connection from Male’ to Gulhifalhu expected to be finished by March 31, 2026. However, the current administration aims to complete the Thilamale’ Bridge project by the end of 2025 or early 2026, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to finishing the project three months ahead of the revised schedule.

SOURCE : PSM

MIRA collects USD 133 million as revenue in June 2024

The Maldives Inland Revenue Authority (MIRA) has announced that it collected USD 133 million in revenue in June this year.

The latest statistics released by MIRA show that the amount represents a 26.8% increment compared to the same period last year, but it is 28.8% lower than the forecast for June this year. The increase in revenue was primarily driven by higher collections from Corporate Income Tax, GST and Tourism Land Rent.

The statistics show that the deadline for Income Tax Filing and Payment was extended in June 2023 due to the Eid holidays, unlike in June 2024. The lower-than-projected revenue for June this year was mainly due to decreases in the collection of Corporate Income Tax, Bank Profit Tax and Tourism Land Rent.

The statistics also show that GST accounted for the largest share of MIRA’s total revenue at 36.49%, followed by Income Tax at 30.69%.

SOURCE : PSM



Gov't opens applications for trade conference with China



The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade has announced that applications are open for individuals to participate in the upcoming trade and investment conference between the Maldives and Sichuan Province in China.

The conference will take place on August 6, coinciding with a visit by a six-member delegation led by Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Sichuan Provincial People's Congress of China Zhu Chunxiu. The event aims to enhance trade relations between Sichuan Province and the Maldives.

The economic ministry said that the conference will feature businessmen from Sichuan Province representing five key sectors including:

- agriculture
- fruit and vegetable supply
- food production, processing, export and supplying
- consumer goods and wholesale trade
- tourism

The ministry also said that the conference will offer an opportunity for local businesses to establish connections with their counterparts from the province.

Interested local businesses and individuals are encouraged to apply, with priority given to those in sectors relevant to the visiting companies. The deadline for the submission of applications for participation is by 1400hrs on July 18, 2024.

SOURCE : PSM



AG says Islam is an unalterable principle in Maldivian society

Attorney General of the Maldives Uz Ahmed Usham has stated that the religion of Islam is a principle that cannot be changed in Maldivian society. He made this statement at the review meeting of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Attorney General Usham led the Maldivian delegation to Geneva, Switzerland, for the review held by the United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) from July 9 to July 10. The Maldives submitted its second periodic report of the ICCPR to the UN in March 2022.

During the review, the Attorney General emphasised that Islam is one of the foundations of Maldivian citizenship and that no changes would be permitted to this principle. He also highlighted the current administration's efforts to strengthen the administrative system and legal framework. Usham noted that Maldivians will enjoy civil and political rights in accordance with the country's constitution and Islamic principles.



The UNHRC will share a report on the findings and recommendations, based on the information provided by the Maldives during the review, with the Maldivian government on July 19, 2024.

The Maldivian delegation, which attended the review in two sessions, included representatives from the President's Office, Attorney General's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology, Ministry of Social and Family Development, Department of Judicial Administration, and the Maldives Permanent Mission to the UN.

SOURCE : PSM

Sports Minister says new stadium will be built in Hulhumale' in five years

Minister of Sports, Fitness, and Recreation Abdulla Rafiu has announced plans to build a state-of-the-art stadium in Hulhumale' within the current administration's five-year term.

In an exclusive interview with PSM News, Minister Rafiu highlighted the critical need for a high-quality stadium in the Maldives. He disclosed that land has already been allocated in Hulhumale' for this project. Initially, the land was under the control of the Ministry of Construction and Infrastructure due to the transition of government. However, it has now been transferred to the appropriate agency, and efforts are underway to secure the necessary funding for the stadium's construction.

Minister Rafiu also revealed that architectural drawings and designs are already completed. The focus is now on securing the funds required to begin construction as soon as possible. The goal is to establish an iconic stadium on the allocated land by the end of the current five-year term.

SOURCE : PSM



MACL announces plans to enhance baggage handling at VIA



Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of the Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL) Ibrahim Mohamed Shareef has unveiled plans to upgrade the baggage handling system at Velana International Airport (VIA).

In an interview with PSM News, Shareef disclosed that MACL is working on installing advanced baggage handling systems, similar to those used at major international airports. This upgrade aims to expedite and streamline luggage inspection processes, significantly improving operational efficiency.

Shareef emphasised MACL's commitment to enhancing user convenience at VIA, with more improvements planned for the future. He stressed the importance of technological advancements in upgrading the airport, including the integration of data scientists to accelerate work and reduce costs.

Currently, the terminal at VIA, designed for about 3,000 individuals daily, is accommodating approximately 12,000 passengers on peak days. The new terminal, spanning 78,000 square meters, will feature modern facilities such as aero-boarding bridges and advanced baggage handling systems. It is expected to handle seven million passengers annually, addressing the space limitations of the existing terminal. The new terminal will also include various food and beverage outlets, retail spaces, lounges, and other amenities.

SOURCE : PSM

Air Service World Congress successfully concludes

The Air Service World Congress has successfully concluded with over 150 aviation delegates from across the globe.

The congress was held from July 9 to 11 at Kurumba Maldives, Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort and Spa, and SAii Lagoon Maldives. It was also organised in collaboration with the Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL).

The congress serves as a key platform for professionals in the air transport sector to foster networking and business opportunities. The opening ceremony took place at Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort and Spa, while the panel discussions and closing ceremony were hosted at Kurumba Maldives. Networking events were also held at SAii Lagoon Maldives in CROSSROADS. Participants were also updated on the developments in Maldives' aviation sector, including the contributions of Velana International Airport (VIA), the national airline Maldivian, and local tourism operators.



MACL highlighted that the congress offered valuable insights into the ongoing advancements in the Maldivian aviation industry and facilitated new business connections and growth opportunities.

The next Air Service World Congress will be held at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. This annual event, which began in 2010, continues to be a significant gathering for the aviation sector.

SOURCE : PSM

Maldives pledges over 1.29 million US Dollars to Palestine



The Maldives pledged a contribution of more than 1.29 million US Dollars to Palestine, through the United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) at the UNRWA Pledging Conference, held today at the UN Headquarters.

The Maldives announced this pledge in a statement delivered by Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations Dr Ali Naseer Mohamed. In his statement, Ambassador Mohamed stated that the Government of Maldives has increased its annual contribution to UNRWA ten-fold, from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Ambassador Mohamed noted that under the guidance of President Dr Muizzu, a telethon was organized to demonstrate solidarity with the Palestinians, through which support from the general public amounting to 18.4 million Maldivian Rufiya, and 49,800 US Dollars was raised, to be donated to the Palestinian people through UNRWA.

Ambassador Mohamed emphasised the important role UNRWA plays in providing crucial services and emergency assistance to Palestinians, particularly in Gaza, where the humanitarian situation is extremely dire. He further called on the international community to fulfil its financial and political obligations to UNRWA.

SOURCE : Ministry of Foreign Affairs