

**THE UNITED STATES SENATE UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION
URGING INJUSTICE OF HIS CONVICTION WITHOUT DUE PROCESS BE
RESOLVED IN STRONG REBUKE TO MALDIVES GOVERNMENT DEMAND
THAT FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMED NASHEED RETURN TO PRISON**

Resolution also urges the release of all political prisoners.

Washington – This afternoon, the United States Senate unanimously adopted S.Res. 392, a resolution urging the Government of the Maldives to redress the injustice of former President Mohamed Nasheed’s conviction without due process and to release all political prisoners in the country.

The bipartisan resolution, led by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, and Senator John McCain (R-Az.), Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was also co-sponsored by another dozen U.S. Senators. It was adopted unanimously by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 16, 2016.

In the resolution, the US Senate expressed “profound concern over the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process” and urged the Government of the Maldives to “take all necessary steps” to “redress this injustice,” and “to release all political prisoners” (Full Text Below).

The Senate resolution notes that, “increasing civil rights violations in the Maldives fuel instability and pose a threat to regional security,” and also that “President Abdulla Yameen of the Maldives has increasingly cracked down on dissent within his own party and the political opposition, presided over the erosion of judicial impartiality, and put increasing pressure on civil society.”

President Nasheed was allowed to travel to the United Kingdom for medical leave in January under intense international pressure. At the time, Minister for Legal Affairs Aishath Azima Shakoor told reporters that he would be able to stay abroad for necessary medical treatment and “[i]f he requests extension of medical leave, he will certainly get it.” Yet yesterday, the Government of the Maldives wrote to President Nasheed rejecting his request for an extension based on medical reports stating he required further treatment for his serious spinal cord issues.

“The Government of the Maldives should see this unanimous Senate resolution for what it is – a direct rebuke not only to their wrongful prosecution, conviction and sentencing of President Nasheed but also to their arbitrary request for him to return to the country against medical advice,” said Jared Genser, international counsel to President Nasheed and founder of Freedom Now.

For further information contact:

Jared Genser
jgenser@freedom-now.org
+1 202 320 4135

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S. RES. 392

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

March 8, 2016

Mr. Leahy (for himself, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Murphy, Mr. McCain, Mr. Reed, Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Peters, Mr. Rubio, Mr. Menendez, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Coons, Mr. Markey, and Mrs. Feinstein) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

March 16, 2016

Reported by Mr. Corker, without amendment

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, to release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

Whereas the Maldives is strategically important due to its location, which straddles major trade routes in the Indian Ocean;

Whereas increasing civil rights violations in the Maldives fuel instability and pose a threat to regional security;

Whereas since January 2015, President Abdulla Yameen of the Maldives has increasingly cracked down on dissent within his own party and the political opposition, presided over

the erosion of judicial impartiality, and put increasing pressure on civil society;

Whereas the arrest of former President Mohamed Nasheed in March 2015 was widely condemned as politically motivated, and his conviction and sentence of 13 years in prison has been condemned by Amnesty International as a “travesty of justice”;

Whereas in his speech in Sri Lanka on May 2, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry stated, “[W]e've seen even now how regrettably there are troubling signs that democracy is under threat in the Maldives where the former President Nasheed has been imprisoned without due process. And that is an injustice that must be addressed soon.”; and

Whereas, on September 14, 2015, in his opening statement at the 30th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad said— (1) “In the Maldives, the rule of law continues to be manipulated for political ends.”; and (2) in reference to former President Mohamed Nasheed’s detention, “Given the deeply tainted nature of this case, I urge the Government to release him, and to review several hundred pending criminal cases against opposition supporters in relation to protests in recent months.”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses profound concern over the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process; and

(2) urges the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps—

(A) to redress this injustice;

(B) to release all political prisoners; and

(C) to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.