



Press Release

19 December 2022

Maldivian Democracy Network – three years to arbitrary de-registration, no accountability

Today marks three years since the government of Maldives arbitrarily cancelled our registration and launched a baseless, politically motivated investigation for blasphemy against the four authors of our [2015 Preliminary Assessment of Radicalisation in the Maldives](#). The actions of the government against MDN are in direct violation of its international human rights obligations and fail to comply with basic principles of due process and the rule of law.

On 16 September 2020 a Founding Members of MDN filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment for failure to follow due process in their de-registration of MDN. The Civil Court has failed to hold a hearing of the trial for over two years.

In their defence, the Attorney General's Office has submitted to the Civil Court a report of an apparent 'investigation' by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, into the alleged blasphemous content in the MDN's 2015 report. The report of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs is also the basis of the government action against MDN and its authors. The ministry's report calls for the death penalty against the four authors of the MDN report, accusing them of apostasy.

We are appalled by the government's arbitrary actions against us solely based on a report by the complainant, which has extra-judicially sentenced authors of our report to death.

MDN is the second civil society organisation to be de-registered for political motives in the Maldives. A third organisation is reportedly being investigated by the Maldives Police Service.

We call on the Parliament and the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives to thoroughly investigate the government's actions for violations of basic principles of due process and the rule of

law, as well as its international human rights obligations, and to uphold the right to freedom of association in the Maldives.

We call on the international community to hold the government of Maldives accountable for these serious human rights violations and take necessary steps to end the impunity it is currently enjoying within international fora.

ENDS.