



President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom  
The President's Palace  
Malé  
Republic of Maldives  
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18 August 2004

Your Excellency,

We at the English Centre of PEN, the international association of writers, are appalled to learn of the wave of arrests in Malé following peaceful demonstrations calling for democratic reforms.

We understand that family relations of our fellow writer and honorary member, **Mohamed Nasheed**, are currently held and may be subject to ill-treatment. We believe that the detention of Mr Nasheed's family members is in retaliation for his work as a dissident writer and reformist politician. Mr Nasheed is internationally renowned and has wide support and we will be utilising every means possible, at the highest levels, to bring international attention to the current misfortune of his family and to any of Mr Nasheed's colleagues similarly detained.

We urge you to ensure that family and colleagues of Mr Nasheed currently detained are immediately and unconditionally released together with all those found to be detained in contravention of their internationally recognised right to peaceful freedom of expression and association.

Further, we reiterate our call for the release of **Naushad Waheed**, **Mohamed Zaki**, **Ahmed Ibrahim Didi** and **Fathimath Nisreen** and the quashing of the sentence against **Ibrahim Moosa Luthfee**.

We would welcome your comments on our appeal.

Yours sincerely

Dr Alastair Niven, President, English Centre of PEN

Copies to: His Excellency, Mr Adam Hassan, High Commission of the Republic of Maldives, The FCO.

**pen** IS A BENIGN AND VITAL FORCE, DEDICATED TO THE FREE EXPRESSION AND EXCHANGE OF IDEAS, AMONG THE WORLD COMMUNITY OF WRITERS.

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by Mrs C A Dawson-Scott