



CENTRE FOR LAW AND DEMOCRACY

2 October 2014 – for immediate release

Maldives: Failing to Protect Journalists

The Centre for Law and Democracy has sent a letter to His Excellency President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom of the Maldives calling on his government to do more to fulfil its obligation to protect journalists and the media. The immediate focus of the letter is the disappearance of journalist Ahmed Rilwan, missing since 8 August in an apparent abduction related to his work as a journalist. Prior to his abduction, Mr. Rilwan received multiple death threats, which were reported to the Maldives Police Service (MPS).

“Mr. Rilwan’s disappearance fits into a broader pattern of violence and intimidation directed towards the media,” said CLD Executive Director Toby Mendel. *“The Maldives is clearly falling short of its international law obligation to create an environment in which the media can do its job of informing the public effectively and free of fear of attacks.”*

The media and journalists in the Maldives have been subject to numerous assaults, and there have been vandalism attacks on two television stations and arson attacks on two more. Freedom of expression, as guaranteed under international law, places a positive obligation on States to take appropriate measures to prevent such attacks, to provide protection as needed, and to ensure effective investigations when attacks do occur.

CLD calls on the Government of the Maldives to do everything within its power to rescue Mr. Rilwan, to take effective steps to protect the media and to bring the perpetrators of crimes against journalists and the media to justice.

The letter is available at: www.law-democracy.org/live/maldives-failing-to-protect-journalists/.

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