



## **TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES CALLS ON THE STATE TO CONDUCT A CREDIBLE AND THOROUGH INVESTIGATION ON THE MURDER OF YAMEEN RASHEED**

Yameen Rasheed, a young and passionate human rights defender, social media activist, blogger, and community mobilizer who tirelessly spoke out against injustice, corruption, the rampant human rights abuses and the increasing religious fundamentalism in the country, was brutally murdered in the early hours of 23 April 2017. Yameen was also one of the closest friends of journalist and fellow human rights defender, Ahmed Rilwan, who was abducted in 2014. Transparency Maldives calls on all state institutions including Maldives Police Service, Human Rights Commission of the Maldives and the courts to conduct an open and transparent investigation into this heinous crime.

In the past few years Yameen Rasheed had received constant death threats and had reported these threats to the police. However, he reported on social media that the police had not taken any action about the threats he had reported. He also shared his concerns about security and lack of police support with Transparency Maldives.

Transparency Maldives believes such threats and attacks to be a direct threat to freedom of expression. The lack of timely and adequate response by state institutions to similar threats and attacks on individuals in the past indicates the State's lack of priority towards preventing such crimes. The widespread impunity and the absence of justice for such unspeakable crimes promotes and encourages perpetrators of violence. We note that the State has failed to find those responsible for the abduction of Ahmed Rilwan and the murder of parliamentarian, Dr. Afrasheem Ali.



Justice can never prevail in the absence of truth to these killings. The protection of individual rights and liberties is a prerequisite to establishing a just and peaceful society. Transparency Maldives condemns, in the strongest of terms, the murder of Yameen Rasheed and calls on the State to conduct a thorough and credible investigation to bring those responsible for the crime to justice.

Transparency Maldives would also like to send our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Yameen Rasheed. We pray for perseverance and strength at this time of grief.

**ENDS**