

Transparency Maldives calls on all actors to accept the results and maintain the environment of peace

PRESS RELEASE

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Transparency Maldives appreciates and thanks all observers and volunteers in our observer network, based in 20 atolls and in London, Singapore, Colombo, Kuala Lumpur, Delhi and Trivandrum. The observers were key to the success of the observation. Transparency Maldives believes that an independent observation effort at this scale has instilled greater levels of trust in our electoral processes. Our observers have ensured increased public participation and the transparency of electoral processes in the Maldives.

Transparency Maldives has participated in international election observation missions, including Nepal, Bangladesh, United States, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Transparency Maldives is also affiliated with many domestic and international elections observation and electoral knowledge networks including ANFREL and GNDEM. The election observation effort by Transparency Maldives in this Presidential election has been guided by the National Democratic Institute.

The methodology used for our observation was based on systematic random sampling. Our observers collected both qualitative and quantitative data and our approach allowed us to generate results from the sample to the entire population, within a known margin of error. In this case our margin of error is less than +/- 1.5%.

The elections were credible, transparent and extremely well-administered, as were the two previous rounds. Transparency Maldives congratulates the Maldivian citizens for their spirited engagement in the democratic process, with unprecedented voter turnout. Transparency Maldives congratulates the winning candidate Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom and his supporters. Transparency Maldives also congratulates President Nasheed and his supporters, in this closely contested election. Transparency Maldives urges all actors to respect and accept the election results and swear in the next president at the earliest.

The following are the key findings which we would like to highlight.

99.6% of polling stations closed by 5.00 p.m.

There were reports that people were not able to vote because their names were not on the voter registry, but this affected very few cases (less than 0.07% of all voters). Out of those affected (0.04%) of voters complained at the polling stations.

1.7% of the total voter turnout were assisted voters spread across 79.6% of the polling stations.

Voting was temporarily halted in 4.4% of polling stations. 50% of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer while 60% were interventions by political party supporters/affiliates.

We are happy to report that this election has been peaceful with no reported incidents of violence inside a polling station.

We note that the police entered 14.2% of polling stations. However, in 84.4% of such cases, interventions occurred at the invitation of the Presiding Officer as the rules allow.

Candidates were well-represented during the counting, making the process transparent and adding to its credibility. Abdulla Yameen was represented at 87.1% of polling stations during the vote count. Mohamed Nasheed was represented at 93.3% of polling stations during the vote count.

Only 0.11% of ballot papers were disputed by the candidate/party observers during the counting process.

While election day administration has been excellent, we believe that the real electoral issues are those of lack of political financing transparency, failure of the state to hold to account parties and individuals in violation of electoral offenses, the loopholes in the legal framework which paves way for abuse, all of which ultimately reduces trust and confidence in the electoral system.

Transparency Maldives calls on all relevant actors to reform the electoral systems to increase confidence in and improve the electoral systems in the Maldives.

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