

Final Press Statement on the 2018 Presidential Elections

24 September 2018

Transparency Maldives appreciates and thanks the nearly 400 observers and volunteers in our observer network, based in 20 atolls including resorts, industrial islands, prisons, and abroad in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Without them this domestic observation would not have been possible.

Transparency Maldives believes that an independent observation effort at this scale promotes greater levels of trust in our electoral processes. Our observers played a crucial role in ensuring the transparency of electoral processes in the Maldives.

The methodology used for this 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 margin of error. In this case our margin of error is less than +/- 1.97%.

The following are the key findings we would like to highlight:

- 18% of polling stations closed before 7:00 pm, 96% of polling stations closed by 8:00 pm, and 2% of polling stations closed after 9:00pm.
- 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 0.02% of all voters).
- 2.2% of the total voter turnout were assisted voters spread across 84% of the polling stations.
- Voting was temporarily halted in 9% of polling stations. 88% of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer.
- Despite a few isolated cases of reported violence (1%) at the polling stations, we are happy to report that this election has been peaceful. We will be closely monitoring any further developments.
- We note that the police entered inside 26% of polling stations. However, in 70% of such cases, interventions occurred at the invitation of the Presiding Officer in accordance with the law.
- Candidates were well-represented during the counting, making the process transparent. Abdulla Yameen was represented at 88% of polling stations during the vote count. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was represented at 91% of polling stations during the vote count.

- Only 0.2% of ballot papers were disputed by the candidate/party observers during the counting process.

Based on our quick count, we are confident to announce that Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has won the 2018 presidential election.

The electoral observation by Transparency Maldives includes more than just the voting day processes. It is also an analysis of the larger electoral environment. We maintain that there were serious systematic issues during the pre-election period. Despite this, citizens have come out and used the power of the ballot to decide on the outcome of this election.

Transparency Maldives calls on all stakeholders to maintain an environment conducive for a peaceful transfer of power.

ENDS

For all media queries, please contact Aiman Rasheed, Advocacy and Communications Manager, +960 7908967.

