

## Final Press Statement on the 2023 Presidential Elections

**9 September 2023** - Transparency Maldives appreciates and thanks the over 400 observers and volunteers in our observer network, based in 20 atolls including resorts, industrial islands, prisons, and abroad in Colombo, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. Without the dedication and commitment extended by 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 from 311 polling stations representing 56.86% of all ballot boxes. Our approach allowed us to generate results from the sample to the entire population, within a margin of error of +/- 1%.

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

- 4.4 % of ballot boxes were closed before 4:00 pm, 91.2% of ballot boxes closed between 4:00 – 5:00 pm and 4.4% of boxes closed after 5:00pm
- 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 0.1% of all voters).
- 1.8% of the total voter turnout were assisted voters spread across 78.6% of the polling stations.
- Voting was temporarily halted in 8% of polling stations. In 64% of these cases the interventions were 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 relatively peaceful. We will be closely monitoring any further developments.
- While Police entered inside 18% of polling stations, in 81% of these cases interventions occurred at the invitation of the Presiding Officer in accordance with the law.
- Candidate representation was highest for Dr Mohamed Muiz and Ibrahim Mohamed Solih during the counting process. Candidate representatives for Ilyas Labeeb, Qasim Ibrahim and Mohamed Nazim were present at 37%, 22% and 22% of polling stations respectively. It was noted that candidate representatives for independent candidate Umar Naseer, Faris Maumoon and Hassan Zameel were present at 2-3% of polling stations.
- Only 0.6% of ballot papers were disputed by the candidate/party observers during the counting process.

No reports or complaints regarding double voting, underage voting or issues with votes cast in the names of deceased individuals were reported in any of the boxes observed today.

Based on our quick count results, the simple majority of votes required was not reached by any candidate, resulting in a run-off election. The top two candidates, Dr. Mohamed Muiz and Ibrahim Mohamed Solih will be contesting in the second round, scheduled for 30 September 2023.

We call on all parties and candidates to maintain a peaceful environment, and ensure campaigning, which will resume on 6:00am on September 10, is conducted in accordance with electoral regulations and do not infringe on the rights of other parties or candidates.

ENDS

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