

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urging the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.

Whereas the Maldives is strategically important due to its location, which straddles major trade routes in the Indian Ocean.

Whereas increasing civil rights violations in the Maldives fuel instability and pose a threat to regional security.

Whereas since January 2015, President Abdulla Yameen of the Maldives has increasingly cracked down on dissent within his own party and the political opposition, presided over the erosion of judicial impartiality, and put increasing pressure on civil society.

Whereas the arrest of former President Mohamed Nasheed in March 2015 was widely condemned as politically motivated, and his conviction and sentence of 13 years in prison has been condemned by Amnesty International as a `travesty of justice'.

Whereas in his speech in Sri Lanka on May 2, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry stated, `[W]e've seen even now how regrettably there are troubling signs that democracy is under threat in the Maldives where the former President Nasheed has been imprisoned without due process. And that is an injustice that must be addressed soon.'

Whereas on September 14, 2015, in his opening statement at the 30th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad said, `In the Maldives, the rule of law continues to be manipulated for political ends.' He also stated, in reference to former President Mohamed Nasheed's detention, `Given the deeply tainted nature of this case, I urge the Government to release him, and to review several hundred pending criminal cases against opposition supporters in relation to protests in recent months.' ; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

Expresses profound concern over the prosecution and conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed without due process and urges the Government of the Maldives to take all necessary steps to redress this injustice, release all political prisoners, and to ensure due process and freedom from political prosecution for all the people of the Maldives.