



INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY



10 DECEMBER 2008

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Statement of the UN Resident Coordinator in the Maldives, Mr. Patrice Coeur-Bizot on the occasion of Human Rights Day – 10 December 2008



Today as we celebrate Human Rights Day, we also mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. With this, the world has cause to celebrate the great achievements made on the road to ensuring fundamental freedoms for everyone. Today is also the culmination of a global year long human rights campaign which was spear-headed by the UN Secretary General to mark this important milestone.

As the Maldives joins in the celebration of these rights and this day, it is a chance to reflect upon the achievements of the country and reaffirm the national commitment to remove all obstacles to the realization of human rights. Moreover to publicly reaffirm that the Universal Declaration and its core values of inherent human dignity, justice, non-discrimination, equality, fairness and universality apply to every Maldivian.

The maintenance of the Declaration and the universality of human rights at the centre of the country's development is significant especially as the country moves forward to consolidate its democracy and address the socio-economic challenges ahead, in order to ensure a better future and life in dignity to which every Maldivian is entitled.

At this critical juncture in the history of the Maldives, it is essential that the Government, Human Rights Commission, civil society, private sector and individuals work together to efficiently protect and promote human rights.

About UDHR



Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt of the United States holding a Declaration of Human Rights poster in English - 10 December 1948

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) turns 60 on 10 December 2008. On Human Rights Day 2007, the United Nations Secretary General launched a year-long UN system-wide advocacy campaign to mark this important milestone. The initiative celebrates the Declaration and the promise that has made this document so enduring: **"Dignity and justice for all of us"**.

The campaign aims to increase knowledge and awareness of human rights among the largest number of rights holders so that they can claim and enjoy their rights. Many governments, civil society, educational, cultural and human rights institutions have taken the opportunity during 2008 to reaffirm their commitment to the values and principles of the UDHR and to disseminate information about the Declaration.

In Maldives, the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives held a Human Rights Art Competition which was opened to all the schools in the country in October 2008. A panel of nationally acclaimed judges has selected the winners who will be announced on 20 December 2008 in Addu Atoll, at a special function to be held to mark Human Rights Day. The theme for the art competition and the Human Rights Day celebrations is UHDR60.

The Commission also launched its first newsletter in August 2008. The first edition was especially dedicated to the 60 Anniversary of UDHR.

The awareness workshops conducted by the Commission throughout the year, in Male' as well as the atolls have been utilized as a forum to impart information regarding the UDHR and celebration of its 60 Anniversary.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2008

United Nations General Assembly, New York - On 10 December, the United Nations General Assembly will mark the 60th anniversary of the Declaration. At this meeting, the United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights – awarded every five years – will be presented. Other activities on the anniversary will include the screening of *Stories on Human Rights*, followed by a panel discussion on the state of human rights 60 years after the adoption of this landmark document.

Human Rights Council, Geneva - On 12 December, the Human Rights Council will hold a commemorative session to mark the 60th anniversary of the UDHR. The morning segment will be dedicated to presentations of national, regional, and international initiatives launched on the occasion of the anniversary. The President of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, Mr. Ahmed Saleem, will also be attending this session. The afternoon will be devoted to a high-level segment. *Stories on Human Rights Films* - To mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and a non-governmental organisation, Art for the World, commissioned a series of 22 short films created by some of the world's leading directors.

Stories on Human Rights will be shown at events organised on 10 December in Geneva, New York and Paris, as well as many other locations across the world.

Human Rights Day Concert, New York, 15 December 2008 - The Concert, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Spain, will feature a performance by the West-Eastern Divan Quintet, with celebrated pianist and Messenger of Peace, Mr. Daniel Barenboim.

Human Rights Day, Addu Atoll, Maldives, 20 December 2008- Human Rights Commission of the Maldives is to mark the Human Rights Day and celebrate the 60th Anniversary of UDHR in Addu Atoll this year. The Day long celebrations would include a children's Festival, a music show and a special function in Hithadhoo to mark the day and the fifth Anniversary of the Commission as well. The winners of the art competition held to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the UDHR, will also be announced at this function and prizes awarded.

The Human Rights Commission of the Maldives has been including information about the UDHR in all its activities throughout the year.



Human Rights awareness workshop 2008- Addu Atoll

LOGO

The UDHR60 logo depicts a human shape standing with arms wide open. The icon is gender neutral and represents liberation and equality. The yellow colour is a sign of peace and warmth. The icon is set on a solid block which represents the foundation block of human rights. The choice of the earthy red colour for the block reinforces the idea of human rights as the foundation stone and mankind's common heritage.

