

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



**Summary Translation of the Inaugural Address
by His Excellency Mohamed Nasheed,
President of the Republic of Maldives,
11 November 2008**

Praise be to the one and only Almighty and blessings be upon the Holy Prophet.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Distinguished Guests and fellow citizens:

Please accept greetings and good wishes on the occasion of the Republic Day of the Maldives.

Our republic today is decorated with the new hues that mark this historic moment in time, the age that we live in, and the circumstances of the nation. The course of change that country has pursued has produced a smooth transition to a new presidency.

Today we can all sense that the time has come for the people to realise their long-cherished dreams. The anxiety that raised the pulse of the nation has now been replaced by calmness and serenity. Yet, we must never forget that the present always issues from the past.

We cannot arrive at our destination without recourse to the wisdom gained through our experiences in the past. No flowers will bloom, no birds will chirp and no butterflies will flutter in the flames of hatred, jealousy and rancour.

To be sure, this is a moment of success, a unique moment of change in the history of our nation. It is rare, certainly in recent times, for a people to achieve democratic transition as smoothly and as peacefully as has been done in the Maldives. That is why there are no losers in the recent presidential elections and why everyone can claim success. The

achievement is a contribution that the people of the Maldives have made to the global march to democracy. It will stand as a fine example to the international community. I congratulate my compatriots for that achievement. The people have spoken and spoken so well, thank you!

Our pledge in these recent elections was to set up a government of the people. We vowed to serve with sincerity, in good faith and with compassion. These are the values that the people of the Maldives have today endorsed. These are qualities they wish to see in everyone.

The right to freely express our views and the space for dissent have been secured through the hard work and the sacrifice of several thousand people. And in the first elections following the creation of that space, the people have embraced the vision of democracy that had energised us. The outcome of the freely expressed wishes of the people is a genuine transition to democracy. I thank those who did not vote for me as vigorously as I thank those who did. That is the spirit of democracy that we embrace in this country.

Beloved Citizens:

A government that does not fulfil its pledges forfeits its right to govern. Those who do not deliver electoral pledges cannot take pride in their electoral success. The people need to be freed from being confined to their islands due to lack of transport, their cost of living needs to be brought down, their worries for adequate shelter needs alleviation, having to seek sponsorship for medical treatment must stop, and the entry of drugs into the country should be barred. These are pledges that shall be fulfilled with the Grace of Almighty.

The five electoral pledges that we made covers policies in 28 areas grouped into three broad categories. These are necessary policies to establish a people's governance and foster the culture of popular government.

Beloved Citizens:

The state of the economy is a cause for concern. However, we have always worked with tenacity and determination, qualities that have enabled us to secure many achievements against tremendous odds. Today I would like to announce that all those who are over 65 years of age and who do not earn 2,000 rufiyaa per month will be paid, from January 2009, a monthly stipend of 2,000 rufiyaa.

Beloved Citizens:

History proves that the people of this country have always succeeded in attaining whatever goal that they had set for their nation. We have safeguarded our sovereignty against various imperial encroachments. Our history of determination to defend our Islamic nation extends to 855 years.

Ours is the nation for whom Sultan Ali VI laid down his life. This is the land for which Sultan Mohamed Thakurufan endured great hardship and attained victory. This is the nation for whom Sultan Hassan Izzudin fought. This is the country which overcame the treachery that took the young and noble life of Hussain Adam to martyrdom. We have always overcome. And we shall overcome.

Beloved Citizens:

I have today taken the oath of office of the President of Maldives fully aware of the onerous duties that the office imposes on me.

It is human to be consumed by the trappings of office and its lures. The only antidote is the party system for which we have striven so hard and which entrenches the freedom of expression and protects the right to dissent. I pray to the Almighty to keep me steadfast in honouring the responsibilities of my office and in protecting the rights of the people.

Let me also make a plea to you to give me your support and co-operation in everything just and good, and to help me by holding me to account for my actions.

I pray to the Almighty to bestow us all with His mercy and blessings. Ameen!