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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE
SUPPRESSION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF APARTHEID

Reports submitted by States parties under
article VII of the Convention

Addendum

MALDIVES

[25 September 1986]

1. The Republic of Maldives has a democratic Government where supreme power is vested in the people and their elected representatives. The unicameral legislature of Maldives, called the Citizen's Majlis (parliament), is elected by universal adult franchise.
2. All Maldivians above the age of 21 possess all the political rights including the right of suffrage. Any qualified citizen may stand for election to the Majlis which consists of 48 members, two members elected from each atoll - rural administrative units - and two members from the Capital Malé, which has 25.5 per cent of the total population - 181,453 (1985 census), and eight members elected by the President.
3. Any eligible Maldivian can seek election for the supreme post of the President of the Republic. The Majlis nominates a President by secret ballot and this nomination is confirmed or rejected in a nationwide public referendum also by secret ballot. The term of office for the Majlis as well as for the Presidency is five years.

4. The Majlis has the power to question government Ministers and to call for their removal. The President is also answerable to the Majlis and liable to impeachment and punishment if the case so warrants.

5. The Constitution of Maldives and all its laws must be approved by the Majlis or by a Citizen's Special Majlis.

6. The Constitution guarantees all basic human rights and the Government upholds them. Individuals are free to pursue private interests as long as they do not violate the civil law or the shariah (the Islamic Legal Code).

7. The Constitution guarantees equality before the law and equal protection by the law. It specifically provides that unlawful practices, such as arbitrary arrest, detention, exilement or torture, should never be perpetrated either by the Government or individuals. A person accused of a crime is given a fair trial and appropriate opportunity to defend himself. Freedom of speech and expression or oral and written thought exists "so long as the specific provisions of shariah and the law are not contravened" and academic freedoms are guaranteed in the Constitution.

8. Immunities against interception of private property, premises and dwellings, letters, telephone conversations, telegrams, etc., are provided for in the Constitution.

9. Basic rights concerning freedom of movement, assembly and association, the forming of trade unions, marriage, public health, medical care, social services, choice of employment, just and favourable conditions of work, just and favourable remuneration, changing of jobs, foreign travel and emigration are guaranteed to everyone in accordance with the existing rules and regulations without any discrimination.

10. Women enjoy free, equal status with men and a conscious effort is being made to broaden opportunities for them.

11. All Maldivians are Sunni (Orthodox) Muslims of the Shafiite sect and there is no religious disharmony among them. As the belief in equality of all mankind is a tenet of Islam, Maldivians condemn all kinds of racial discrimination. There is no discrimination against followers of other creeds and religions who visit Maldives or are employed in the country in any way.

12. Maldives has always condemned and incriminated all forms of racial discrimination and resolutely supported measures for their elimination. In particular, Maldives resolutely condemns the policy of racial discrimination and apartheid practised by the South African régime in South Africa and Namibia and considers it a crime against humanity.

13. Maldives does not have diplomatic, economic, cultural or any other relations with the South African régime. Maldives denounces the aggressive terrorist activities of South Africa against her neighbouring front-line States and believes that if these actions are unchecked it will disrupt international peace and security.

14. Maldives believes that the arrogance and intransigence of the South African régime is an outcome of the support it receives from its allies, States having economic, military and other interests in South Africa, and transnational corporations plundering the bountiful resources of South Africa and Namibia.

15. The collusion of these States with the South African régime is evident in their reluctance to take sanctions against it.

16. These views were clearly echoed in the message of the President of Maldives to the International Conference for the Immediate Independence of Namibia held in Vienna in July this year as well as in the statement personally delivered by the Maldivian Minister for Foreign Affairs at that Conference.

17. The solidarity of Maldives with the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the recognized representative of the Namibian people, is clearly voiced in all appropriate international forums, also Maldives calls for the release of national leaders, cruelly detained by South Africa, such as Nelson Mandela. In the practices of the South African régime in Namibia, Maldives finds a parallel to the practices of Israel in occupied Palestine, this view is enhanced when the collaboration between South Africa and Israel and their mutual support is shamefully evident.

18. Maldives is an active member of various multinational and multiracial societies and organizations, such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries, the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), etc. where the Maldives lends its full support to the activities aimed at the suppression and elimination of apartheid and racial discrimination.

19. Study of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Human Rights Covenants is included in school curricula and in the training of teachers in Maldives.

20. Maldives regularly commemorates each year United Nations Day, International Women's Day and Human Rights Day to acquaint the people with the importance of these organizations and movements, and the activities regarding these organizations and movements are given wide coverage in the mass media.
