



European Union  
Election Observation Mission Maldives 2014



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**Statement by Eduard Kukan, Chief Observer of the European Union  
Election Observation Mission to the Maldives**

**MALE', 9 March 2014** – Following today's press conference to launch the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM), the mission notes the ruling this evening of the Supreme Court to convict all four members of the Elections Commission of contempt of court; to sentence the Elections Commission chairperson to six months in prison, suspended for three years; to remove immediately from office the Elections Commission chairperson and his deputy; and to order the People's Majlis to appoint replacements within six working days.

The mission will study the verdict carefully, including the reasoning upon which the ruling was based.

This court decision leaves the Maldivian Elections Commission with only two members, thus without a quorum. With less than two weeks remaining before the scheduled elections on 22 March, the mission recognises the time pressure that now weighs on the preparation of these elections, and the many associated challenges related to organising them in a manner that ensures they are credible, transparent, inclusive and fully representative of the wishes of all Maldivians. The mission will continue to monitor developments on the issue.

An independent and professional election administration, functioning in accordance with international standards on democratic elections, is a key institution in a democracy.

The EU has previously recalled the important role played by the current Elections Commission in ensuring transparent, inclusive and credible electoral processes in the Maldives.

**ENDS**

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