

Reprisals | Submission: Reprisals against Maldives Human Rights Commission violate freedom of expression

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ISHR has asked the UN Human Rights Committee to rule that the Maldives violated international law by restricting the Maldives Human Rights Commission from submitting information to the UN.



In October 2016, ISHR filed a [communication](#) with the UN's Human Rights Committee on behalf of Ahmed Tholal and Jeehan Mahmood, former Commissioners of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM), to highlight the Maldives' failure to ensure their right to share information freely with the UN without reprisal. Click [here](#) for the original article.

The HRCM was prosecuted in 2015 by the Supreme Court in the Maldives following a submission made by the HRCM on human rights in the Maldives to the UN's Universal Periodic Review.

The Government of the Maldives [replied](#) to ISHR's communication in April 2019, noting 'the concerns and allegations' raised by the authors and acknowledging 'the subsequent operational adversities' faced by the HRCM. Furthermore, the Maldives sought to assure the Committee that the effects of the Supreme Court judgment 'will be taken into consideration', that the Maldives have entered a 'new era of democratic rule', and that the new administration pledges to reform, reconstitute and transform all State institutions to, inter alia, reinstate respect for international obligations and promote operation of State institutions within the designated ambit of authority.

In its [observations to the Maldives' reply](#), ISHR acknowledged and welcomed the proposed legislative amendments, while also submitting that the proposed amendments do not provide an effective remedy for past violations.

'We maintain that the Maldives breached Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by prosecuting the HRCM for the content of its communications to the UN and by limiting future communication between the HRCM and the UN,' said Madeleine Sinclair, Legal Counsel for the International Service for Human Rights. 'We furthermore request that the Human Rights Committee call on the State party to support, and the legislature to pass, the proposed Bill,' said Sinclair.

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