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**Maldives: Former Vice President Ahmed Adeen denied medical care in prison**

Amnesty International urges the Maldives authorities to immediately grant the imprisoned former Vice President Ahmed Adeen permission to travel abroad to seek the medical care that he urgently needs. According to the Ahmed Adeen's legal team, authorities have since 2016 ignored repeated requests for specialised medical treatment that is only available outside Maldives, even as his health has deteriorated.

Ahmed Adeen was sentenced to jail on 10 June 2016 for his alleged involvement in a plot to assassinate President Yameen Abdul Gayoom. Amnesty International raised serious concerns about the fairness of his trial, including over the use of anonymous witnesses and the fact that no defence witnesses were allowed to testify.<sup>1</sup>

Ahmed Adeen is serving out his 33-year prison sentence on Dhoonidhoo Island, where his health has deteriorated sharply in recent weeks. He suffers from a number of serious health issues, including glaucoma, kidney stones and internal cysts, for which adequate treatment is not available in Maldives. His legal team say that they first filed a request with the Maldives Correctional Services in 2016 for him to be allowed to travel abroad to seek specialised treatment and that they have followed up several times since, but these requests have been ignored.

Failing to provide adequate medical care to prisoners is a violation of Maldives' international human rights obligations. As a state party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Maldives is legally obliged to respect, protect and fulfil "the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health."

Rule 24 of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules) clarifies that the "provision of health care for prisoners is a State responsibility" and that prisoners "should enjoy the same standards of health care that are available in the community" and without discrimination. Furthermore, prisoners who require specialist treatment must be transferred to specialized institutions or outside hospitals when such treatment is not available in prison (Rule 27).

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<sup>1</sup> Amnesty International, "Fair trial concerns around conviction of former Vice President", 13 June 2016, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa29/4254/2016/en/>