

Concerns of the family of Rilwan regarding preliminary hearing held at the Criminal Court on terrorism charges by the Prosecutor General against three individuals accused in Rilwan's Enforced Disappearance

Press Statement

Regarding the first hearing on the case of abduction of Ahmed Rilwan Abdulla and the three persons charged with terrorism, held at Criminal Court on 20th September 2017:

We are deeply concerned that two of the three individuals accused of the abduction of Ahmed Rilwan Abdulla and charged with terrorism by the Prosecutor General of Maldives--Aalif Rauf of H. Hilton, Male' and Mohamed Nooradheen of Karankaage, GDh. Vaadhoo -- remain at large while the whereabouts of the third suspect, Mohamed Suaid of Athiriaage, S. Hulhudhoo remain unknown. Despite the serious criminal charge of terrorism, the suspects have not been brought under state custody, as with defendants on similar charges in other cases, casting doubt about the function and independence of the Courts, Police and the Prosecutor General. The differential treatment of the suspects in this case raises questions on the integrity of the criminal justice system.

Furthermore, the court has been unable to deliver the summons to Mohamed Suaid and his family has informed the court that he has died. The Maldives Police Service has stated that Suaid's whereabouts are unknown.

Considering the situation and the two other suspects having been left free to move about and the possibility of them fleeing or tampering with evidence is highly concerning.

Moreover, while three individuals are being prosecuted for Rilwan's abduction, the State has maintained that others behind the abduction and details of what happened to Rilwan after the abduction has not been found. We are doubtful that such a grievous crime can be committed without the involvement of more people and resources.

We believe that failure to resolve these issues will result in failure to serve justice for Rilwan.

We acknowledge and thank Rilwan's close friends, concerned individuals, civil society organisations, journalists, lawyers and others including the international community for their relentless assistance, effort and help towards achieving justice in this important case. We hope for your continued engagement to find justice for Rilwan and other such human rights violations.

On behalf of Family of Ahmed Rilwan
Fathimath Shehenaz
(Sister of Rilwan)

20th September 2017

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