

Press release

8 August 2023

Nine years have passed since journalist Ahmed Rilwan Abdulla was forcibly abducted, and there is still no justice.

A journalist at the Maldives' Independent, Ahmed Rilwan Abdulla was a young man with a love for literature, the Dhivehi language, and culture. He was someone who enjoyed immense popularity among the general public. His writings highlighted the political and social context of the country. Rilwan also spoke out against the religious extremism that is spreading rapidly in the Maldives. As a result, Rilwan faced many threats and dangers, and on 8 August 2014, he was attacked, abducted, and forcefully disappeared.

Nine years have passed since Rilwan's disappearance, and to date, what happened to Rilwan after his abduction has not been established in a court of law, and those who carried out the crime have not been brought to justice. Additionally, the masterminds behind the abduction and enforced disappearance of Rilwan have not been found. Neither has any action been taken against employees at state institutions who aided and abetted the forced disappearance and impeded its investigation.

Justice for Rilwan was one of the election pledges that was most vehemently promised by President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih during his 2018 presidential election campaign. We are gravely concerned and condemn the fact that there has been no change regarding this matter since the start of the presidency and the completion of the five year term.

With elections around the corner, we call on political parties to assure bereaved families that the next government will thoroughly complete the investigation of this case as well as other murders and disappearances.

ENDS.

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