

**Joint press release calling on the Parliament to ensure full adherence to the
Constitution in the inquiry into Supreme Court Justices**



**ASSOCIATION FOR
DEMOCRACY
IN THE MALDIVES**



Joint press release calling on the Parliament to ensure full adherence to the Constitution in the inquiry into Supreme Court Justices

07 May 2025

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, express grave concerns over the recommendation by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) to dismiss Supreme Court Justice Dr Azmiralda Zahir and Justice Mahaz Ali Zahir. The sequence of events highlight the lack of due processes followed, including the denial of opportunity for the justices to adequately defend themselves and the implications that this decision has on judicial independence, rule of law and separation of power in the Maldives.

On 26 February 2025, Justices Husnu Suood, Dr. Azmiralda Zahir and Mahaz Ali Zahir, three out the seven supreme court justices, were suspended following an emergency JSC meeting, coinciding with a scheduled Supreme Court hearing on a constitutional case on the validity of the anti-defection clauses introduced to the sixth amendment to the constitution. The attempts to reduce the supreme court bench from seven to five, the expedited processing and the timing of the investigations alleging Justices Dr Azmiralda Zahir and Mahaz Ali Zahir of abuse of power by the Anti-Corruption Commission also adds to public concern over the coordinated attempt to capture and control the judiciary.

While Justice Husnu Suood has since resigned citing government's intimidation and attempts to influence the judiciary, all three justices have contested the actions of the JSC. Adequate opportunities for the remaining two justices were not provided by the JSC to present and defend themselves before the decision to dismiss them was announced on May 4, 2025.

The hasty decision-making, denial of the right to adequately defend oneself as well as the overall lack of transparency by the JSC raise legitimate questions over due process. We call on the Parliament, and the Judiciary Committee of the Parliament to:

- Conduct an open, thorough and fair investigation of JSC's decision to suspend Justices Dr. Azmiralda Zahir, Husnu Al Suood and Mahaz Ali Zahir and the commission's recommendation to dismiss Justices Dr Azmiralda Zahir and Mahaz Ali Zahir, including providing opportunity for the justices to defend the allegations against them, and ensuring that processes stipulated under the Constitution, Judges Act, the Judicature Act, the Judicial Service Commission Act and other relevant laws and regulations.
- Review the actions of the JSC to determine whether the JSC acted in accordance with legal procedures and principles of justice, and whether the recommendation for dismissal was based on sound legal reasoning and credible evidence, particularly given that the removal of Supreme Court Justices is a grave disciplinary measure that demands the utmost care and scrutiny.
- Uphold integral principles of transparency and fairness and make the proceedings public, with the consent of the Justices.
- Uphold principles of accountability by taking appropriate legal action against anyone found to have engaged in misconduct or unlawful action.

-ENDS –

1. Transparency Maldives,
2. Association for Democracy in the Maldives
3. Zero Waste Maldives
4. Save Maldives
5. Uthema