

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



President Dr Mohamed Waheed  
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Dear President Dr Mohamed Waheed

With this letter Amnesty International Denmark wishes to urge you to ensure the release of a 15-year-old victim of rape and ensure that she is not flogged or otherwise punished. **22.101 Danish human rights activists** for her freedom (A list of the signatories is included).

The 15-year-old girl has been found guilty of "fornication" or sex outside marriage by a juvenile court in the Maldives on 25 February 2013. She has been sentenced to eight months' house arrest and 100 lashes. The girl has been raped by her stepfather, who has been charged with several offences, including sexual abuse of a minor. The Prosecutor-General's office then pressed charges against her for "fornication".

"Fornication" is not an offence in accordance with international human rights law and standards. Further, flogging is in violation of the absolute prohibition on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The existence of the offence of "fornication" and the punishment of flogging in Maldivian law are inconsistent with Maldives' obligations under international human rights law.

Amnesty International and the signatories urge you to:

- Release the girl immediately and unconditionally, including ending the house arrest, and ensure that she is not flogged or otherwise punished;
- Ensure that the judicial process is initiated in order to overturn the conviction for "fornication";
- Ensure that she has access to adequate and appropriate protective and support services;
- End the practice of flogging as a form of punishment and act to amend Maldivian law to remove the provisions that allow flogging, as well as those that criminalize "fornication".

I thank you for your kind consideration of this serious matter.

Kind regards

Lars Normann Jørgensen  
Secretary General

Copies of this letter are sent to Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdul Samad Abdullah and Prosecutor General Ahmed Muizzu