

National Press Club Newsmaker Program
Media Advisory

Fighting for the Release of Imprisoned Former Maldives President Nasheed Mohamed

Washington, DC – Laila Ali, wife of imprisoned former President of the Maldives Mohamed Nasheed, will speak at a National Press Club Newsmakers news conference on Thursday, April 30, and make public a filing that day to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention urging it to find that Nasheed is being held in violation of international law.

Examining the case with Ali will be her international lawyers Amal Clooney and Jared Genser.

After many years as a dissident journalist, prisoner of conscience, and democracy activist, Mohamed Nasheed became the first democratically elected President of the Maldives in 2008. As President, Nasheed used his position to strengthen democratic institutions in the Maldives and as a platform to advocate for increased awareness of and action against global warming. He made global headlines by staging an underwater cabinet meeting to highlight his low-lying country's vulnerability to rising sea levels. He also set an example by outlining policy to make the Maldives carbon-neutral, transitioning from oil to solar power. His environmental efforts were chronicled in the acclaimed documentary *The Island President*.

Nasheed was forced to resign in 2012, under the threat of personal violence against him in a coup d'état. Despite winning a plurality of the vote in the country's 2013 elections, that nation's Supreme Court annulled the results, returning to power the same family which had ruled the Maldives for decades.

Nasheed was convicted and sentenced to 13 years in prison on "terrorism" charges in March, stemming from the alleged wrongful detention of a judge by the Maldivian military while he was president. Amnesty International condemned the "sham trial," and said the verdict was a "travesty of justice."

When:

Thursday, April 30 at 10 a.m.

Where:

The National Press Club's Murrow Room, on the 13th Floor of the National Press Building, 529 14th St. NW, Washington DC 20045.

Who:

Like all Newsmaker events, this news conference is open to credentialed press and NPC club members, free of charge. No advance registration is required.

Contact:

Tony Gallo, NPC Newsmakers Event Host
202 -544-6973, agallo2368@verizon.net