



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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MEDIA RELEASE

Finance Minister briefs EU inter-institutional group on March donor conference; strong EU presence assured

12 February 2010, Brussels; The Minister of Finance and Treasury, H.E. Mr Ali Hashim, has concluded a two day visit to Brussels in order to win EU support for the planned donor conference to take place in the Maldives from 28th to 29th March. A large contingent of staff from the various EU institutions was present on the first day and encompassed a range of relevant departments such as development, external relations, finance and trade. A representative from the European Investment Bank travelled from Luxembourg to also attend the briefing.

The Minister was accompanied on his visit to Brussels by H.E. Mr Adam Hassan, Ambassador-Designate to the European Union and the Kingdom of Belgium and Mr Ibrahim Rasheed, Under-Secretary from the President's Office. Representatives from the World Bank and the United Nations were also present to provide support for the planned donor forum which they will co-sponsor.

The Minister provided information on the donor conference in particular noting the five key focus areas namely Macro-economic reform, Public Sector Reform, Governance, Climate change and adaptation, and Social Development.

The Minister also provided background to the planned event noting the budgetary difficulties inherited by the new Government and the efforts taken since. He called for strong participation from the EU at the event leading to eventual pledges in the key areas highlighted.

The EU institutional representatives praised the Government for its efforts post the country's first ever multi party elections. A strong EU presence was assured at the donor conference and that collaboration would commence with the World Bank and the UN to ensure that no future duplication of support took place.

The Minister was also able to hold bilateral meetings with Ms Alexandra Knapton, cabinet advisor to Baroness Ashton, the new EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Mr James Moran, Director for Asia at the European Commission's Directorate

General for External Relations, which served to further raise awareness of the donor conference and to look to increased cooperation on climate change.

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