



# A TRUE HUMANIST AND A STATESMAN: OF, BY AND FOR THE PEOPLE

“for being one of the most influential global voices on foreign relations, education, democracy and freedom in the Maldives and beyond. For being a champion of women's education in lands torn by conflict and a consistent advocate for civil and human rights, equality and peace.”



His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan is the 5th President of the Maldives. He is the first Maldivian to receive a PhD, having received it from Stanford University - is recognized as one of the most well known voices on foreign relations, education, human rights, democracy and freedom in the Maldives. In 1989, against overwhelming odds, he also won a seat in Parliament with the highest majority recorded up to that point in the history of the nation. During his tenure in office, he was the first person to introduce a Human Rights bill in Maldives.

As a member of parliament, Dr. Waheed tried to protect his constituents who were imprisoned, including all those who were arrested for political dissidence. Dr. Waheed protested for the rights of his constituents organizing a 'black ribbon campaign' and wearing a black ribbon to Parliament. It was indeed a historical moment when under Dr. Waheed's leadership, for the first time in the administration's history there was an organized confrontation with the people defying the will of a government that robbed its people of their most basic and fundamental human rights.

As President of Maldives, he

promoted democracy and economic development and paved the way for free and fair elections. With his vision for a prosperous future, he firmed the country's economic base, stabilized its deficit, and strengthened trade and cultural relations between Maldives and other Asian countries. Dr. Waheed has also played a very crucial role as a freelance consultant with various UN agencies. He has worked with UNDP (the United Nations Development Fund) and UNESCO (the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in order to develop educational programs for Swaziland, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, Bangladesh and the South Pacific Islands. In Tanzania, he supported the Government to establish schools in remote areas of the country and helped lay the foundation for developing a quality primary education system. He has dedicated his life to the betterment of humanity both at home and abroad. In the Maldives, he served on a number of government committees and commissions, as well as with the Education Ministry.

Dr. Waheed is currently Visiting Distinguished Fellow at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National

University of Singapore and Member of the Board of Directors of Saudi Arabia's Red Sea Mega Project.

Dr. Waheed's wife Madam Ilham Hussain runs the Maldives Autism Association in addition to her other responsibilities along with President Waheed. Dr. Waheed along with Madam Ilham are mainly responsible for the growth of awareness about autism and its implications in the island nation.

Dr. Waheed is a specialist in international development and education. After the fall of the Taliban, Dr. Waheed went to Afghanistan on a special mission from the United Nations to play a lead role in the reconstruction of the country. Soon Dr. Waheed became crucial to the running of the Ministry. He then became the head of the UNICEF office in Kabul. While he was Representative for UNICEF Afghanistan, there were many achievements that were attributed to UNICEF. These include enrolling 5 million children in school, vaccinating 6 million children and providing health services, water and sanitation. Dr. Waheed headed an organization of 250 Afghan and international staff from twenty different countries.