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வெளிநாட்டு அலுவல்கள், வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்பு மற்றும் சுற்றுலாத்துறை அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM

**Statement to the media by H.E. the President of Sri Lanka during the
State Visit to Maldives, 28 July 2025**

His Excellency President Mohamed Muizzu
Honourable Ministers
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen
Friends from the media

Ayubowan, Assalamualaikum, Good Afternoon!

It is indeed a pleasure to be in Malé on my first State Visit, which symbolizes the close bilateral ties and existing cordial partnership between Sri Lanka and Maldives. This visit infused renewed dynamism and energy to that relationship.

My visit to Maldives at this juncture is also significant as Sri Lanka and Maldives commemorate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations, this year.

I extend my sincere appreciation to His Excellency President Mohamed Muizzu for the invitation, and the warm welcome and hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

Friends from the media,

Sri Lanka and Maldives have enjoyed longstanding relations dating back to centuries. Our two countries, being Indian Ocean littoral states, have been enriched by our association with the ancient maritime trade routes and shared histories.

Just a while ago, President Muizzu and I along with our respective delegations concluded our bilateral deliberations. We carried out a comprehensive review of the present status of our relations and exchanged views on the ways and means to further strengthen our cooperation in areas of mutual interest in the future.

I thanked President Muizzu and the Government of Maldives for the steadfast support extended to Sri Lanka at all times.

President Muizzu and I acknowledged the importance of further strengthening our cooperation and diversifying our relationship for the mutual benefit of our peoples.

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I thanked President Muizzu for ensuring Maldives to be a viable destination for employment for many Sri Lankans. It is a pleasure to see their contribution to the Maldivian economy and society. Similarly, we acknowledge the contribution made by the Maldivian expatriates in Sri Lanka to the Sri Lankan economy and society.

Friends from the media,

Sri Lanka and Maldives have a strong partnership in education cooperation. We Sri Lankans have played a key role in supporting Maldivian students and professionals over the years. President Muizzu and I discussed ways and means to further collaborate in this sector.

We also focused on trade and investment cooperation between the two countries and investments in key sectors.

I am glad to convey that Maldivian investors can always look at Sri Lanka as a trusted destination for their investments.

I conveyed to President Muizzu, the Single-window system which is currently being worked out by Sri Lanka to support investors and the fiscal and non-fiscal incentive schemes which are in place to further encourage the investors. I also briefed him about the state of the art Technology Parks in Sri Lanka, which are investor-friendly and product-specific industrial zones, which Maldivian investors could explore to invest in Sri Lanka.

Further, I invited Maldivian businesspersons to invest in Sri Lanka especially in the IT/AI, Fisheries and Agro processing, Tourism and Leisure, Real Estate and Urban Infrastructure sectors.

Friends from the media,

Tourism is a key economic driver for both our countries. In this context, we also exchanged views on collaboration in the tourism sector. We also discussed matters of enhancing aviation cooperation, especially in increasing air connectivity.

We exchanged views on furthering cooperation in the fields of agriculture as well as youth empowerment and sports.

As island nations in the Indian Ocean, we acknowledged the great potential in the fisheries and ocean sector. We discussed enhancing cooperation in innovative, and sustainable fishing practices. We shared views on the provision of transit passage for Sri Lankan fishing vessels for smooth access to the Arabian Sea and further means of cooperation.

Friends from the media,

Sri Lanka and Maldives are deeply committed towards environment protection. My Government has embarked on the 'Clean Sri Lanka' Programme which is implemented

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through the three main pillars of social development, environmental development and ethical development to sustainably elevate Sri Lanka and the entire Sri Lankan society to a higher level. While commending President Muizzu for the successful implantation of the 'Maldives Clean Environment' Project for solid waste management, we acknowledged the importance of the collaborative efforts in countering the challenge of climate change and global warming.

Sri Lanka has set a target to generate 70% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030. With a view to realizing this target, I proposed deepened cooperation in the renewable energy sector between our two countries.

We also exchanged views on cooperation in the fields of defence, security and counter terrorism cooperation.

Friends from the media,

Sri Lanka and Maldives share strong cultural bonds. There are remarkable similarities in our languages, with Sinhala and Divehi stemming from the same root. With a view to further enhancing people to people contacts, our discussions focused on furthering cooperation in the areas of culture and heritage.

In the regional and multilateral cooperation domain, I thanked for the support extended by Maldives to Sri Lanka and expressed assurance of Sri Lanka's support to Maldives. Both our countries have consistently exchanged support at various international organizations and we committed to continue our cooperation with each other.

I also invited His Excellency President Mohamed Muizzu to visit Sri Lanka at a mutually convenient date.

Friends from the media,

During the course of my visit, I will also be addressing a business forum and meet with the Sri Lankan community in Maldives.

Your Excellency President Mohamed Muizzu, I take this opportunity to once again thank you, for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation in Maldives.

I wish to conclude by reiterating that Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the continuous enhancement and deepening of cooperation with Maldives, which I have no doubt would be further consolidated in the years to come.

Thank you. Shukuriyaa.

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