**Dr Hassan Saeed - Biography**

Dr. Hassan Saeed was attorney-general of the Maldives from 11 November 2003 to 5 August 2007. He ran as an independent candidate for the Presidency of the Maldives, and was placed third of six candidates. He is currently Leader of the Divehi Qaumee Party (DQP), which is one of the four parties in the Opposition front formed after the President's recent actions.

**Early life**

Educated in International Islamic University Malaysia before earning his Ph.D. at the University of Queensland in Australia, Dr. Saeed had served as the Chief Justice of the Criminal Court before being appointed as Attorney-General.

**Politics**

Following his appointment as Attorney General at just 33 years of age, Dr Saaed became a leading member of the then governing Maldivian People's Party (DRP). He was early on seen as a reformist, impatient at the slowness of democratic reform under the Gayoom regime. The Criminal Justice System Action Plan that he produced in March 2005 sought to completely overhaul the country's legal framework, penal system and the judiciary. He was also a key author of the government's Roadmap to Reform which eventually led to the countries first democratic elections, despite opposition from some elements within the government of the time.

As well as legal reform he was determined to push forward political reform and was a co-founder of the New Maldives Movement along with Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Dr. Mohamed Jameel, Minster of Justice. In April 2006 he was elected as the Vice President of DRP as the New Maldives Movement campaigned for reform with the DRP.

However the struggle for reform could not be totally conducted from within government. After four years in the cabinet, he, along with  Justice Minister Dr. Mohamed Jameel Ahmed resigned from the government on August 5, 2007. In his resignation statement he said “I have resigned because the reform agenda, which I joined the government for, has failed, and it is not appropriate for me to stay in the cabinet.”

The Gayoom Government spent much time intimidating the ex-Ministers, seeking to ban the New Maldives movement and then registering another organisation under the same name under the control of the ruling party.

Dr Hassan Saeed stood in the 2008 Maldives Presidential Election as an independent candidate. He chose Dr Ahmed Shaheed as his running mate. He sought to provide an alternative to then then governing DRP and the opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) that was both experienced in delivering good government but was also totally pro-reform. At the time of his manifesto launch he stated he was not in debt to big business and had no relatives in politics. He contrasted this to the position of Gayoom and other politicians.

In the first round of the election he came third of six candidate with a substantial 29,633 (16.67%) vote. He unhesitatingly backed Mohammed Nasheed of the MDP as the best placed reformist candidate for the final round and advocated his supporters help elect the current President.

Following the elections he turned his Independent movement into a Political party to contest the subsequent parliamentary elections. As a result he is currently Leader of the Divehi Qaumee Party (DQP), which is represented in Parliament and one of the four parties in the Opposition front formed after the President's recent actions.

Dr Hassan Saeed has been consistent in his advocacy of reform over the years. This has led him into conflict with the previous government, which he resigned from. He supported the present government in order to achieve reform, but now sees it behaving in a similar way to its predecessor and is thus speaking out in defense of reform and democracy.