

Invitation to a Lecture by

Mohamed Nasheed, President of the Maldives

“The Maldives: Leading the Fight Against Climate Change”

With a Welcome by

Franzjosef Schafhausen, Division Director, Environment and Energy, Ministry of Environment

March 11, 2010, 10:15 a.m.

Henry Ford Building, Freie Universität (Lecture Hall B)
Garystraße 35, 14195 Berlin (U3, Thielplatz subway station)

Mohamed Nasheed, President of the Maldives, whose mid-October underwater cabinet meeting in protest of international inaction on climate change drew worldwide attention, will visit Freie Universität on March 11. After consultations with the German federal government, Nasheed will hold a lecture in Berlin-Dahlem hosted by the Environmental Policy Research Centre at Freie Universität. Nasheed's lecture will focus on the drastic consequences of climate change for his home country which, consisting of some 1200 islands, is threatened with extinction because of rising sea levels.

Rising sea levels increasingly threaten the population of the world's lowest lying state. Hundreds of thousands of Maldivians would need a new home, if the rising sea level makes the islands of the archipelago in the Indian Ocean uninhabitable. Mohamed Nasheed is the first democratically elected president of the Maldives. As an opposition activist, he led a nonviolent fight against the authoritarian regime of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, who governed the country for 30 years. Nasheed was prosecuted for his political activism and imprisoned several times. In 1991 in recognition of his nonviolent activism, the human rights organization Amnesty International declared Nasheed a “prisoner of conscience.” After successfully founding the Maldivian Democratic Party in 2005, Nasheed was elected President of the Maldives in 2008. He has been honored with numerous awards for his political activism and his battle against climate change. In 2009 he was awarded the Anna Lindh Prize in recognition of his outstanding commitment to human rights, democracy, and environmental protection, and last September he was named “Hero of the Environment” by *Time* magazine.

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