



## Statement of the IDB Acting Governor for the Republic of Maldives

The 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the IDB Board of Governors  
Tunis – Republic of Tunisia  
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Original Text  
(English)

**Chairman of the IDB Board of Governors, H. E. Zied Ladhari,  
Fellow Governors,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Assalamu'Alaikum.

It is indeed a great honour and pleasure for me to be here and address the Board of Governors at this very important meeting held every year.

Let me begin my statement by extending utmost appreciation to the Chairman of the IDB Board of Governors and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia for their warm welcome and the excellent hospitality extended to us.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Despite the challenges it faces due to being a small state and other geographical and environmental factors, Maldives has had strong economic growth over the past few years. Following a robust growth of 6.9% in 2017<sup>1</sup>, the Maldivian economy is expected to continue to grow steadily at 6.0% in 2018. These growth rates are mainly driven by the favourable growth rates in the tourism sector and the continued buoyancy in the fast growing construction sector.

These growth rates also reflect the benefits of the major economic transformations that the Government of Maldives has been pursuing over the past three years. In this regard, the Government has ventured into major infrastructural development projects, including the expansion of the International Airport, the bridge that connects the capital city Male' and Hulhumale', the various social housing projects in the Government's visionary Youth City Hulhumale', among others. These projects will indeed contribute to the continued economic growth of the country.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Although a small country, our experience of economic transformation can feed into the narrative of the other member countries' experience as well. This brings us to the topic of this years' round table discussion.

"Partnering to Build the Future We Want: What Member Countries' Economic Transformation Experience Tells Us About the Future".

In the midst of the various developmental challenges that the world is facing now, we in the Maldives are optimistic about our future. We see a future more of prosperity than that of fragility. Given the many challenges, we are striving towards mitigating them and out grow the challenges. We are working on building resilient communities both economically and environmentally, through projects such as the Preparing Outer Islands for Sustainable Energy Development (POISED), the Greater Male' Waste Management Project that will put an end to

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<sup>1</sup> Monthly Economic Review, February 2018, Maldives Monetary Authority

the environmentally unsustainable waste management practices and Integrating Climate Change Risk into Resilient Island Planning.

However, this future of prosperity will be realised through even major changes and transformations. We need to create awareness and shift perceptions and attitudes towards creating more sustainable practices. We need to mobilize as much resources possible, both physical and financial to realise such a future.

The private sector and the third sector are partners and a major driving force in the developmental efforts of any country. As such, the Maldivian private sector and third sector have a key role in the development of the country, through provision of employment to youth, innovations in their operations and creating economic efficiencies, executing CSR projects that contribute to socioeconomic development and doing business in manners that enhance sustainable development..

The private sector and the third sector have many opportunities such as having a considerable youth population that can be employed, investment opportunities budding from tourism and other sectors, supporting policies enabling sustainable practices. Nonetheless, these opportunities come in the face of challenges and obstacles such as lack of skilled labour, access to favourable financing options and environmental risks such as the effects of climate change.

It is in these challenging situations and the need to filling the gaps in the resources and the much needed expertise that the IDB Group could assist us in enabling broad based participation of the private and third sectors in our developmental efforts. Additionally, the IDBG, as have in the past assisted us in various sectors, such as creating trade facilitations to one of our SOEs and collaboration with the Government in the creation of an Islamic Bank in the Maldives, can continue to assist us in enhancing economic development.