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### **UNDP and PGO Partner to Provide Mental Health Support Services for PGO Staff**

*Malé, 04 May 2025:* The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Maldives and the Prosecutor General's Office (PGO) of the Maldives signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide comprehensive mental health support services to all staff of the PGO. The initiative marks a major step toward building a more resilient and effective criminal justice system by prioritizing staff wellbeing as a cornerstone of institutional performance.

The signing ceremony formalized this collaborative effort, which aligns closely with the PGO's Strategic Action Plan (SAP) launched in March 2025. The SAP outlines a strong commitment to holistic institutional strengthening, with a specific focus on enhancing staff welfare and organizational resilience.

"This is a great initiative by our Witness and Victim Support Service Unit (WVSU) team. It will undoubtedly reflect greatly on the well-being in our work environment. I thank UNDP for the generous support to make this a reality for team PGO," reiterated Prosecutor General Abbas Shareef on this signing ceremony.

As part of the SAP, the PGO pledged to implement comprehensive reforms, including measures to support its workforce. The mental health support initiative will offer psychological services and wellness resources designed to help staff manage the high-pressure demands of legal work. By integrating mental health into its strategic priorities, the PGO aims to foster a culture of care, strengthen institutional performance, and reinforce public confidence in the justice system, contributing to a stronger rule of law.

The mental health support initiative is a key component of this pledge and represents a proactive strategy to build organizational resilience. By integrating psychological support into its strategic objectives, the PGO aims to foster a culture of care that enhances employees' capacity to cope with the demands of legal work. In doing so, it not only improves internal performance but also contributes to a stronger rule of law and public confidence in the justice system.

This collaboration is described as a 'value-added joint effort' because it complements technical and procedural reforms with essential human resource support. Rather than treating mental health as an afterthought, UNDP and the PGO are elevating it to a core priority. Such an approach is expected to yield long-term benefits for the criminal justice system by ensuring that prosecutors and staff can serve the public with clarity, dedication and empathy.

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"By investing in the mental wellbeing of its team, PGO is laying the foundation for a more resilient, responsive and people-centered justice system. This partnership reflects our shared commitment to institutional excellence – starting with the people who drive it," said UNDP Resident Representative, Enrico Gaveglia.

The signing of this MoU marks a pivotal step forward in justice sector reform and further strengthens the longstanding partnership between the Prosecutor General's Office and UNDP. As a key development partner, UNDP continues to support the Maldives' path toward meaningful access to justice. Through this joint initiative, the PGO and UNDP are setting a compelling example of how national institutions and international partners can work together to prioritize staff wellbeing as an integral part of institutional performance. As implementation unfolds, both organizations remain committed to closely monitoring progress and adapting the approach to maximize impact. By placing mental health support at the heart of this reform, the partnership is establishing a progressive benchmark—one that envisions a justice system that is not only efficient and fair, but also compassionate and inclusive.

## PROSECUTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE (PGO)

*Prosecutor General's Office was established in accordance with Article 220 of the Constitution ratified on 07<sup>th</sup> August 2008, which stipulates that there shall be an independent and impartial Prosecutor General in Maldives. The Prosecutor General's Office is responsible for overseeing the criminal investigations, file charges against individuals who are in conflict with the law, appeal criminal cases at higher courts and ensure justice, uphold the rule of law in the Maldives. learn more at <https://pgoffice.gov.mv/> or follow at @PGO\_MV*

## UNDP MALDIVES:

*UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. UNDP has maintained a physical presence in the Maldives since 1978. Learn more at <http://www.undp.org/maldives> or follow at @UNDPMaldives*

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