

## China offers mediation, rejects UN intervention

China on Thursday rejected UN intervention to resolve the crisis in Maldives, but offered to mediate between the feuding parties in the archipelago.

Asked to comment on China's position on a possible UN role, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said: "China has always closely followed the development of the situation in the Maldives. China thinks that the current situation and disputes in Maldives belongs to its internal affairs. It should be properly resolved through dialogue and consultation by the relevant parties. The international community should respect Maldives' sovereignty and territorial integrity and play a constructive role for the dialogue between the relevant parties."

He also said: "China is willing to maintain close communication with the relevant parties in Maldives so as to promote (and) restore normal order in the Maldives as soon as possible."

### **'No political strings'**

Mr. Geng did not clarify whether China was also in touch with the Opposition as well, but pointed out that Beijing was "maintaining close communication with the relevant parties in the Maldives". He also rejected the cited remarks of former Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed that Beijing had enforced a "land grab". He stressed that China has never attached "political strings" to cooperation with the Maldives.

Mr. Geng's remarks preceded the arrival later on Thursday of Maldivian Minister for Economic Development Mohamed Saeed as President Abdulla Yameen's special envoy.

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