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03/NBAM\_PR/2026

15<sup>th</sup> May 2026

### Statement by the National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM)

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The National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) expresses its profound concern and sorrow regarding the tragic diving incident in Vaavu Atoll involving Italian tourists.

The loss of five lives in this incident is a matter of immense grief for us. During this difficult time, we extend our sincere condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of those who lost their lives.

As the Maldives is a world-renowned diving destination, such incidents pose significant challenges to the entire maritime and tourism sector. Ensuring the highest standards of safety in the boating and diving industry has always been our top priority. We remain committed to supporting all efforts to maintain the highest level of operational standards within this industry.

In light of this tragic event, we call for a swift, transparent, and comprehensive investigation before any action is taken against any party. We respectfully urge the relevant authorities to refrain from measures that could negatively impact the industry or bring disrepute to the wider tourism sector prior to the conclusion of the investigation. At the same time, once a thorough investigation is completed, appropriate legal action should be taken against any parties found to have acted negligently. It is crucial that the government conducts a prompt and exhaustive inquiry into this incident.

Additionally, we urge that if a decision is made to proceed with technical diving activities, a system be established to monitor such activities under robust regulations, following consultations with all relevant stakeholders in the tourism sector and a study of global best practices.

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Furthermore, the association emphasizes the need for extensive consultation with industry associations and institutions to identify the potential negative impacts on recreational diving before opening up spearfishing to the general public.

As the reputation of Maldivian tourism and the safety of tourists remain of paramount importance, we call for strong and effective measures to be implemented to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. The safety and well-being of our guests must remain the highest priority, and we therefore reiterate the need for firm and responsible steps to ensure that tragedies of this nature do not occur again.

During this difficult time, we stand in solidarity with the affected families, the people of Italy, and all those sharing in this grief.

Ismail Shareef  
President  
NBAM



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