

NEW SAARC SECRETARY GENERAL AHMED SALEEM ASSUMES OFFICE

KATHMANDU: Ahmed Saleem has taken over as the new Secretary General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Maldivian national Saleem, who replaces first woman Secretary General Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed, took over the charge yesterday here.

Fathimath had resigned from the post of Secretary General of SAARC last month over the issue of her controversial remarks regarding the arrest of Maldivian criminal court's Chief Justice Mr. Abdulla Mohamed.

Sixty two-year-old career diplomat Saleem is the 11th Secretary General of SAARC.

"I will try to strengthen the SAARC process and will follow the footsteps of our leaders who envisioned this process", Saleem told reporters at the Tribhuvan International Airport upon his arrival.

Saleem had served as the first Director from Maldives at the SAARC Secretariat in 1990, and had worked in the foreign ministry for over two and a half decades.