Sri Lanka’s Ambassador Jayatilleka chosen as Coordinator of the UNCTAD Asian Group

Friday, 20 March 2009
Last Updated Friday, 20 March 2009

The Ambassador / Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka was unanimously chosen as the Coordinator of the Asian Group of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) today, taking over from Indonesia.

As coordinator of the Asian Group, the Sri Lankan Permanent Representative will be facilitating the formulation and presentation of the Group’s concerns and interests in UNCTAD, and working to ensure that these interests are properly addressed in the UNCTAD framework. Sri Lanka’s role as coordinator of one of the three regional groups (along with GRULAC and the Africa Group) of the larger developing country grouping known as Group of 77 and China (G77 and China) is particularly important at this time, given the increased challenges being faced by developing and least developed countries in the current environment of economic slowdown. In addition, Sri Lanka’s role as coordinator also comes at a crucial time as countries strive to achieve the fullest implementation of the Accra Accord, the Ministerial mandate received at the UNCTAD XII Ministerial Conference held in Accra, Ghana last year. This mandate sets out the work of UNCTAD over the next four years, particularly addressing the challenges of globalization for developing countries. In accepting the coordinatorship on behalf of Ambassador Jayatilleka, Mr. U.L.M. Jauhar, Minister of the Permanent Mission, thanked Members of the Asian Group for their confidence in electing Sri Lanka to this position, particularly at this critical time, and assured the Group of Sri Lanka’s commitment to cooperating with all Members to ensure that the Asian Group’s interests are represented and addressed. The Sri Lankan representative also extended congratulations to Indonesia and the Philippines, who were elected by the Asian Group to serve as President and Vice-President respectively of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, and assured them of Sri Lanka’s support in their work. Members of the Group congratulated Sri Lanka on its election, and promised their support to Sri Lanka in discharging its responsibility as coordinator. UNCTAD is the main forum within the UN Framework to address the challenges of trade and development, and has as its three main pillars of work, the provision of a forum for intergovernmental deliberations, research and policy analysis and provision of technical assistance.