Minister Devananda meets UN High Commissioners for Human Rights and Refugees

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A high-level delegation led by the Hon. Minister Douglas Devananda, Minister of Social Services and Social Welfare, which also included the Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen, Minister of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services, H.E. Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka, Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office in Geneva, Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha, Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, and Mr. Yasantha Kodagoda, Deputy Solicitor General, Attorney General's Department, represented Sri Lanka at the Durban Review Conference. Organized by the United Nations, the Durban Review Conference provides an opportunity to assess and accelerate progress on implementation of measures adopted at the 2001 World Conference against Racism, including assessment of contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. On the opening day of this conference, Hon. Douglas Devananda made a statement behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka. On the sidelines of the Durban Review Conference which is being held from 20th to 24th of April 2009, the Sri Lankan delegation met with senior UN officials, and a number of dignitaries from diverse countries and updated them on the current situation in Sri Lanka against the backdrop of Sri Lanka’s fight against separatism and terrorism. Hon. Devananda and Hon. Bathiudeen, along with the rest of the delegation, held meetings with Ms. Navanethem Pillai, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (and a former Prime Minister of Portugal) and Mr. Anders Johnsson, Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Meeting with Ms. Navanethem Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human RightsMeeting with Mr. Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for RefugeesMeeting with Mr. Anders B. Johnsson, Secretary General of the Inter Parliamentary Union The other dignitaries that the Sri Lankan delegation met included Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa; Mr. Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan; Mr. Edson Santos, Chief Minister of the Special Secretariat for Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality in Brazil; Ms. Fayza Aboulnaga, Minister of International Cooperation of Egypt; Dr. Riyad Al-Maliki, Foreign Minister of Palestine; Mr. Rezlan I. Jenie, Deputy Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Indonesia; Mr. Alfonso Lopez, Vice Minister for External Affairs of Ecuador and Ms. Adriana Mejia Hernadez, Vice Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Colombia. Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South AfricaMeeting with H.E. Mr. Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Meeting with H.E. Mr. Edson Santos, Chief Minister Special Secretariat for policies for the promotion of Racial Equality Brazil The Sri Lankan delegation briefed the UN officials and other dignitaries on the new developments of Sri Lanka’s war against LTTE terrorists and the steps the Sri Lankan government has been taking to meet the immediate requirements of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who are crossing into government controlled areas. H.E. Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations-Geneva, hosted a working lunch in honour of the visiting Sri Lankan delegation to the Durban Review Conference. On this occasion, Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives/ diplomats of the following foreign Missions to the United Nations were present: Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, India, Japan, Mexico, Algeria, Turkey, Ethiopia, Egypt, Denmark, United Kingdom, Iran, Pakistan, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Nigeria and Costa Rica. Ministers Douglas Devananda and Rishard Bathiudeen and Deputy Solicitor General Yasantha Kodagoda left Geneva on April 22nd -23rd. Meeting with H.E. Ms. Fayza Aboulnaga, Minister of International Cooperation of Egypt- Meeting with the Foreign Minister of Palestine, H.E. Dr. Riyad Al-Maliki at the Lobby of the Hotel interContinentalMeeting with the Deputy Minister of Multilateral Affairs of Indonesia H.E. Mr. Rezlan I JenieMeeting with H.E. Mr. Alfonso Lopez, Vice Minister for External Affairs of Ecuador Meeting with Deputy Minister for Multilateral Affairs of Colombia, H.E. Ms. Adriana Mejia HernadezWorking Lunch with Ambassadors and diplomats Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Geneva 23 April 2009