British and French Foreign Ministers meet Sri Lanka President

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President Mahinda Rajapaksa told visiting UK Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Secretary of State David Miliband that the humanitarian operation to free innocent Tamil civilians held hostage by the LTTE would continue unabated. He also told him that strict instructions have been given by him to the Security Forces to ensure that no civilian would be harmed in any way in conducting the operation. Apr 29, Ambilipitiya: British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner met Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa this evening at Ambilipitiya and held discussions on the current humanitarian situation Sri Lanka.

The President said so when he met the UK Minister together with French Foreign and European Affairs Minister Dr. Bernard Kouchner at Embilipitiya yesterday evening. During the discussions which were held in a cordial atmosphere centred round present developments in the North. The President also informed the visiting Ministers that the LTTE has not allowed any development activity to take place in the North during the last three decades and that the Government has decided to implement a vigorous development drive there. He also called for support of the international community for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the North. French Minister Dr. Kouchner expressed his appreciation of the Government’s program of liberating the northern people from terrorism and promised his government’s support for welfare programs for the IDPs. Earlier the two visitors visited IDP welfare centres in Vavuniya and the Field Hospital donated by the French government in Chettikulam. They also held discussions with Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services Minister Rishard Bathiudeen, Vavuniya Government Agent Ms. Charles and Competent Authority Major General W. A. Chandrasiri. Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, President's Secretary Lalith Weeratunga, Foreign Secretary Dr. Palitha Kohona, President's Additional Secretary Gamini Senerath, President's Coordinating Secretary Sajin De Vas Gunawardena, British Ambassador, and French officials were also present.

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