
Govt, UN and NGOs discuss recovery strategy for NE

Saturday, 23 May 2009

Last Updated Saturday, 23 May 2009

A meeting of the Sri Lanka Early Recovery Cluster Group (ERCG), co-chaired by the Ministry of Nation-Building and Estate Infrastructure Development and the United Nations Development Programme, took place at the Ministry yesterday, a press release issued by the UNDP said.

It said: "The group, which includes the Government of Sri Lanka and representatives of UN agencies, NGOs and I/NGOs involved in early recovery, met to discuss ongoing and planned recovery efforts in the North and East of the country. The ERCG was established in February this year to provide a platform for relevant parties, led by the Government together with UNDP, to share their strategies and plans for helping conflict-affected communities achieve self-reliance, economic growth and development. In his welcoming speech, M. S. Jayasinghe, Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Nation-Building praised the initiative as an important forum to coordinate activities in Sri Lanka. Mr. Douglas Keh, Country Director UNDP, also stressed the need for such a group. "We must not overlook, or inadvertently deflect priority and resources from the tremendous humanitarian needs in Sri Lanka at present. That said, we must begin now to develop the consensus-building and coordination mechanisms - and spirit of partnership - that will be needed for the recovery process to have a real chance of success." The meeting included presentations and discussions on efforts underway to move the recovery process forward. UNDP's support to the Government in Mine Action and plans for the Eastern province were discussed. Professor Rajiva Wijesinghe, Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, said that the transition from the humanitarian to the recovery stage should ensure dignity and self-respect for the IDPs and that collaboration between the Government and its donor partners should be based on transparency, integrity and trust. "The bad faith that had characterized recent dialogue must come to an end, and we should return to a time when Sri Lanka and its partners worked together on the basis of trust and genuine mutual concern to support government efforts." As a follow-up to the ERCG meeting, a working group on the North will be established, following consultations with the Presidential Task Force for Resettlement, Development and Security in the Northern Province. Courtesy: Island.lk