US special representative Shuler commends resettlement of rescued hostages

Friday, 29 May 2009
Last Updated Friday, 29 May 2009

"I congratulate the Sri Lankan government on their victory against the terrorists in their country, the LTTE. I also commend the remarkable work and efforts of the government of Sri Lanka in putting together the IDP camps in such a short period of time," said United States representative Heath Shuler(Democrat- North Caroline) addressing a press conference held in Colombo, today(May 29).

The press conference was called-on following his first hand experience gained during the past few days while touring in Vavuniya and Trincomalee. Rep. Shuler visited the IDP centers at Vavuniya along with his Congressional delegation including Sri Lankan Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Jaliya Wikramasuriya. According to officials, Rep. Shuler had the opportunity to speak to a number of rescued civilian hostages as well as local and foreign officials working in the camps. "There is much more that needs to be done in order for the government to meet its goal of resettling people as soon as possible. Time is clearly of the essence in this situation and much needs to be done in terms of de-mining in order to create the conditions to allow IDPs to return to their homes as safely and as quickly as possible," Rep. Shuler further asserted. In addition to touring the camps, Rep. Shuler also met with His Excellency, President Mahinda Rajapaksa and a number of government ministers in order to gain a better understanding of the situation facing the country at the conclusion of the war. Shuler met with Secretary of Defence Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the Foreign Minster Hon. Rohitha Bogollagama, Member of Parliament and Senior Advisor to the President, Mr. Basil Rajapaksa, Governor of the Eastern Province Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama, and Foreign Secretary Dr. Palitha Kohona. "During this historic time, it is critical that the Sri Lankan government, along with the United States and the international community, dedicate the same amount of effort, attention and resources to the post- conflict reconciliation process as it did the conflict itself," he said. "I hope that my visit here is an important step in building a strong US/Sri Lankan relationship," further stated concluding his official visit to the island. Courtesy: defence.lk