
Senior Advisor to H.E. the President Basil Rajapaksa, MP is on a goodwill visit to Indonesia

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Hon. Basil Rajapaksa, MP, Senior Advisor to H.E. the President of Sri Lanka, is presently in Indonesia on a good will visit on the personal invitation extended by H.E. Dr. Hassan Wirajuda, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. He was accompanied by Mr. Dhammika Perera, Chairman, Board of Investment of Sri Lanka.

Hon. Rajapaksa called on H.E. Dr. Hassan Wirajuda, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, on 29th June 2009 and had cordial discussions on a wide range of issues, which are beneficial to Sri Lanka. H.E. Nanda Mallawaarachchi, Ambassador of Sri Lanka was also present at the discussions. During the discussion, Hon. Rajapaksa also thanked the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for the consistent support extended concerning human rights issues in the multilateral fora, particularly supporting Sri Lanka at the Special Human Rights Council Session held in Geneva recently and for the strong Statement issued on behalf of Sri Lanka. Recalling the Courtesy Call of Hon. Rohitha Bogollagama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka on H.E. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia, on the sidelines of the Bali Democracy Forum in December 2008, Hon. Rajapaksa appreciated H.E. the President's assurance of the support of the Republic of Indonesia to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. Hon. Rajapaksa took the opportunity to brief the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, of the comprehensive development initiative launched by the Government called "Uthuru Wasanthaya" which envisions the rehabilitation, reconstruction of the Northern Province while reintegrating the North once again to the National Economy. The Government of Sri Lanka is fully committed to a political solution to address the grievances of the Tamil Community in Sri Lanka. Both sides have noted that bilateral relations between the two countries are now at its peak and recent exchanges of bilateral visits have paved the way for improved bilateral relations. The two sides stressed the need to carry forward the existing cordial relationship towards practical areas of mutual interest for the benefit of the people of both countries. Hon. Rajapaksa also thanked H.E. Dr. Hassan Wirajuda for reiterating Indonesia's strong support extended during his recent visit to Sri Lanka and for the warm hospitality and courtesies extended to him during his stay in Indonesia. Hon. Rajapaksa also thanked the Indonesian Foreign Minister for the humanitarian assistance pledged to Sri Lanka for the use of IDPs in the North. The Indonesian Foreign Minister congratulated Hon. Rajapaksa and the Government of Sri Lanka for the recent victory over defeating terrorism in the country and expressed hope that the Government of Sri Lanka has the courage and ability to move forward the rehabilitation and reconstruction process in the North of Sri Lanka. H.E. Dr. Hassan Wirajuda, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia hosted a dinner in honour of Hon. Basil Rajapaksa on 29th June 2009. Hon. Rajapaksa and delegation consisting of Sri Lanka's Ambassador Nanda Mallawaarachchi, Mr. Dhammika Perera, Chairman, Board of Investment and Mr. C. Ignatius, Director/Promotion of BOI called on Hon. Irwandi Yusuf, Governor of Banda Aceh Province, who himself was a former rebel, on 30th June 2009, and discussed many issues. Both parties collectively agreed to the common aspect that both countries faced being the natural disaster Tsunami and the man made internal conflict. Commenting on the successful completion of the Aceh Peace Process in April 2009, Hon. Rajapaksa said that Sri Lanka has a deep admiration for the way Indonesia handled the Peace Process. Hon. Rajapaksa has shown a keen interest on the Aceh Peace Model and the Aceh Peace Reintegration Programme, which provided social support for persons and families affected by the conflict as well as economic empowerment funding for ex-combatants and amnestied prisoners and affected civilians. The Governor hosted a dinner in honour of Hon. Rajapaksa at his Official Residence attended by the Deputy Speaker of the Provincial Parliament, Provincial Ministers, Members of Parliament and other dignitaries, including H.E. the Ambassador of Sri Lanka and Chairman, Board of Investment of Sri Lanka. Hon. Rajapaksa inspected a Metal Workshop run by a former combatant in Aceh Province that has been facilitated and supported by the International Organization for Migration. He also had meetings with Senior Officials of the Aceh Sustainable Reconstruction Agency (BKRA) which has been created with a clear mandate to coordinate reconstruction and rehabilitation activities led by the Governor of Aceh. BKRA has been assigned the task of completing the balance 6% of the Aceh rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. Hon. Rajapaksa had meetings with Officials of the Aceh Peace Reintegration Board which was established in February 2006, in order to offer social support for ex-combatants and affected civilians in Aceh Province.