Second Meeting of SAARC Ministers of Science & Technology held in Colombo

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The Second Meeting of the SAARC Ministers of Science & Technology which was chaired by the Minister of Science & Technology of Sri Lanka, Prof. Tissa Vitarana, was held in Colombo on 24th November 2009. The Ministerial meeting was attended by Ministers of Science and Technology from SAARC countries namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan.

In his inaugural address, Minister Vitarana emphasized the need to further promote cooperation in the area of Science and Technology within the SAARC to achieve socio – economic development in South Asia. Delivering a message from the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Hon. Ratnasiri Wickramanayake, the Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Mahinda Bandusena, stated that the application of science and technology would enable value added products to be developed from the agricultural produce of South Asian countries. Mr. Ghulam Dastgir, Director, SAARC Secretariat, also addressed the Inaugural Session. The Second Meeting of SAARC Ministers of Science & Technology reviewed the progress in the implementation of the decisions of its First Meeting held in New Delhi in September 2008. The Meeting also considered the Report of the Fourth Meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Science & Technology and the Report of the Third Meeting of the SAARC Working Group on Biotechnology. The Meeting reviewed the implementation of the SAARC Action Plan on Science & Technology and underscored the need for expediting the harmonization of standards within SARSO under SAFTA. The Meeting also considered the matters connected to funding modalities to undertake science & technology programmes and projects under the implementation of the SAARC Action Plan on Science & Technology, Programme of Cooperation, SAARC Industrial Research and Development Initiatives, “Science Caravan”, the format/framework of the SAARC Science and Technology web portal, Sri Lanka Nanoscience Institute to serve as a SAARC Institute for Nano Technology, a SAARC mechanism on intellectual property rights etc. The visiitng Ministers from the SAARC countries called on H. E the President on 25th November 2009 and held a detailed discussion on future endavours of the SRRAC in the fields of Science & Technology. The Ministerial Meeting was preceded by the Meeting of Senior Officials held on 23 November 2009. The Meeting of Senior Officials was chaired by Ms. M.B.A. Ekanayake, Secretary, Ministry of Science & Technology of Sri Lanka. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Colombo 25th November 2009