It is unreasonable to expect a complete remedy in a short span – Prof. Peiris

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Minister of External Affairs Prof. G.L. Peiris said yesterday that it was unreasonable for the international community to expect a complete remedy for all issues in the short span of two and a half years since the Lankan conflict ended. Addressing the diplomatic community in Colombo he pointed out that certain other countries which have faced similar situations had taken a number of years to come up with lasting solutions to major issues.
He pointed out to countries such as Cambodia and Bangladesh and said that in the latter it had taken nearly 25 years to achieve expected standards after a series of assassinations caused political turmoil. He stressed the importance of having clarity with regard to procedures by international bodies when dealing with related issues. He said that there should be clarity with regard to procedures in international bodies for there to be precision and predictability in their functions. He added that in turn this would ensure cohesion and stability to the global system. The minister noted that the United Nations Human Rights Council had a procedure when discussing issues related to countries, such as, the Universal Periodic Review. He emphasized the importance of abiding by those procedures. Prof. Peiris observed that due recognition should be given to established local mechanisms which are striving to come up with viable remedies and emphasized that LLRC was such a mechanism. The minister also stressed that justice, fairplay and morality should be embedded in international law and it should not be the subject of political interference. He told diplomats that at this crucial juncture Sri Lanka expects the support and understanding of the international community. The government intends to hold Provincial Council elections in the North, no later than early next year, External Affairs Minister Prof G.L. Peiris said. The minister said that the government expects to complete the resurrection of the electoral process in the North by holding PC polls at the earliest possible time. He pointed out that despite negative expressions coming from various quarters prior to the recently concluded local authority polls, the government was able to hold a free and fair election. “By holding elections, the government was able to reinvigorate the electoral process in the North and East which was dormant for a large part of the last 30 years due to acts of terrorism,” the minister added and called it as a triumph for democracy. Prof Peiris pointed out that the TNA, a party outside the government, had been able to win a majority of the councils in the North and now they had to exercise their responsibility in developing the area. The minister also underscored the government’s commitment to continue the dialogue with the TNA and other Tamil political parties. He said that it was the government’s position that both, bilateral talks with Tamil parties and dialogue within the proposed Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC), should be held simultaneously. The PSC does not supersede the bilateral process, he added. The government has no intention to steamroll the necessary political and constitutional measures through Parliament. Plans to put in place a durable and workable solution to the national question should come by way of dialogue and consensus, he added. The minister also told the diplomatic community that the PSC would consist of 31 Parliamentarians as there was a large number of political parties in Parliament. Commenting on the development in the North, the minister said rapid resettlement and economic empowerment is taking place in the North. He gave them a detailed report on the development and resettlement activities taking place in the North. The minister emphasized that the government in a short span of two and a half years, had been able to achieve a great deal of progress in all sectors in the North. He pointed out that achieving normalcy after such a damaging conflict elsewhere, had taken more than 25 years at times. In this context the international community should understand the magnitude of the task at hand and the government expects their support and understanding in completing the task, he added.Source: PRIU