
Prof. Peiris briefs President of Senegal on Sri Lankan issues

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Prof. Peiris with the President of the Republic of Senegal External Affairs Minister Professor G.L. Peiris, travelling to Senegal as the Special Envoy of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, had a meeting in Dakar on Monday with Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal. President Wade recalled with pleasure the meeting he had with President Rajapaksa in September last year on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly. Professor Peiris handed over a personal letter of felicitation from President Rajapaksa to President Wade. The President of Senegal warmly reciprocated these sentiments and said that he looks forward to working closely with Sri Lanka in the new situation which has arisen since the eradication of terrorism. The External Affairs Minister referred to the resolve of Sri Lanka, as a significant feature of its foreign policy, to strengthen traditional and historic ties with countries in the continent of Africa. He recalled the 50th Anniversary meeting of the Asian African Legal Consultative Committee, hosted by Sri Lanka in Colombo last year, and emphasized the strong bond between Sri Lanka and Senegal as countries which show solidarity in applying the principles of the Non-Aligned Movement in addressing current regional and global issues. Minister Peiris stated that it was the initiative of The Asian African Legal Consultative Committee with regard to the concept of Exclusive Economic Zones which provided the foundation for the Law of the Sea negotiations on the demarcation of the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone. He added that a forum of this nature should be strengthened to harness the views and proposals of African and Asian countries to promote the vital interests of developing nations in both continents. He expressed appreciation of the active participation of Senegal in the work of the Group of 15 of which Sri Lanka is at present the Chair. Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, and the Government's plans regarding the way forward. The Minister informed the President of Senegal of the new vista of opportunity opening up in Sri Lanka for extended relations between the two countries in respect of trade, investment and tourism. Apart from the discussion with the President of Senegal, Prof. Peiris, during his 24 hour visit to the country, also had a meeting with Mr. Maitre Madicke Niang, Minister of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Senegal, and with Mr. Cheik Tidianesy, Minister of Justice, and Mr. Mousthaph Sourang, Minister of Defence of Senegal. Ministry of External Affairs Colombo January 10, 2012