
GL holds discussions with President of Burkina Faso

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Minister Peiris with the President of Burkina Faso Continuing his visit to several countries in West Africa as the Envoy of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Professor G.L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, arrived in Burkina Faso at the conclusion of his meetings with the President and the Foreign Minister of Senegal. Minister Peiris had discussions with Mr. Blaise Compaore, President of Burkina Faso, on Wednesday. At this meeting the Foreign Minister handed over a personal letter from President Rajapaksa to the President of Burkina Faso. President Compaore requested that his warm greetings be conveyed to the President of Sri Lanka.

The Minister of External Affairs said that the Government of Sri Lanka, as a matter of priority, is eager to expand its relations with countries in Africa and, as part of its plans in this regard, is working on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Burkina Faso. This is appropriate, he commented, especially in view of the growing economic relations between the two countries, the volume of trade between Sri Lanka and Burkina Faso having doubled during the last few years. The Minister noted, in particular, the significantly expanding market in Burkina Faso for Sri Lankan exports of rubber products including tyres and apparel products. Minister Peiris congratulated President Compaore on the rapid progress being made by the Government of Burkina Faso with regard to the strengthening of its services sector and innovation of its mining technology, resulting in a dramatic increase of its production of gold, one of Burkina Faso's principal exports. President Compaore reacted with enthusiasm to the suggestion by Minister Peiris regarding potential scope for collaboration between the two countries in respect of the gem and jewellery industry, where the traditional expertise of Sri Lankan craftsmen could be combined with the quality of Burkina Faso's natural resources to the mutual advantage of both nations. President Compaore appreciated the offer by the visiting Sri Lankan Foreign Minister to make available training opportunities in Sri Lanka for officials from the public sector in Burkina Faso as a contribution to human resource development, which has been identified as a priority objective by the Government of Burkina Faso. Professor Peiris provided President Compaore with a detailed briefing on current developments in Sri Lanka, and thanked the President for Burkina Faso's support for Sri Lanka at the international level. President Compaore expressed the wish of his government to work closely with Sri Lanka in multilateral fora. They agreed on the importance of the role which both countries could play in promoting the interests of the developing world both in respect of political issues and in terms of economic and trade co-operation. At the meeting with Mr. Djibrill Ypene Bassole, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, the two Foreign Ministers surveyed the specific modalities for enhanced collaboration between the two countries. At the end of his one day visit to Burkina Faso, Minister Peiris left for a series of meetings with the Government of Mauritania. Ministry of External Affairs Colombo January 12, 2012