MEDIA RELEASE

Visiting UN Secretary General Delivers Keynote Address on ‘Sustaining Peace and Achieving Sustainable Development Goals’

Colombo, 2 September 2016: On the final day of his visit to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, at the invitation of the Chairperson and Board of Directors of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS), UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, delivered a speech on ‘Sustaining Peace and Achieving Sustainable Development Goals’. The speech highlighted the significance of the Sustainable Development Goals, and, in particular, Goal 16 on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, for Sri Lanka’s development.

Stressing the importance of Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions, the visiting UN Secretary General stated, “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development marks a watershed in the way we have formally linked peace and security to sustainable development. Goal 16 is a benchmark of peaceful and inclusive societies. It demands action against corruption and crime, and requires that institutions function in a transparent and efficient way based on the rule of law and that access of justice is guaranteed for all people. These are important targets in themselves, but they are also crucial for achieving all the other goals.”

During his second official visit to the island, the Secretary-General met with the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena; the Prime Minister, Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe; the Speaker of the Parliament, Hon. Karu Jayasuriya; Political Party Leaders, and representatives from civil society.

The Secretary-General also visited Galle on 1 September 2016, attending an event involving youth under the theme ‘Reconciliation and Coexistence: Role of Youth’. Commenting on the youth representatives he met in Galle, he stated that he was “very much inspired by their vision for a peaceful and sustainable future. Young men and women have the energy, dynamism and motivation to break down barriers, and lead peacebuilding efforts”.

Acknowledging the United Nation’s commitment to support Sri Lanka, he stated, “The United Nations will be with you every step of the way forward. Ladies and gentleman, let’s work together to make this country and this world better through sustainable development and sustaining peace.”

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