



THE EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA  
TO BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG AND THE EUROPEAN UNION  
27, RUE JULES LEJEUNE, 1050 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

TEL: (0032.2) 344 53 94. (0032.2) 344 55 85 FAX: (0032.2) 344 67 37 E-MAIL: [secretariat@sriankaembassy.be](mailto:secretariat@sriankaembassy.be)

## **"Time has come to overcome the suspicions that remain" - Prof. Wijesinha**

Adviser on Reconciliation to the President of Sri Lanka and MP Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha has said, "Now that the terror and violence in Sri Lanka is over, we need also to overcome the suspicions that remain. It is vital that those abroad, who can remember only the distant past, will not endeavour to revive tensions, but will rather visit the country and see what they can do to help, their people of course, but through that the country as a whole. But I realize that getting over their suspicions will also be difficult, and we in government need to work concertedly to reassure them, to engage with those willing to move forward."

Prof. Wijesinha made these observations when he addressed a forum held in Brussels at the European Institute of Asian Studies (EIAS), in collaboration with the Embassy of Sri Lanka on Thursday, 07 July 2011.

Prof. Wijesinha who deplored the manner in which certain vested interests were seeking to disrupt Sri Lanka's current development efforts using the Darusman Report as well as the Channel 4 video, called upon the audience "not to be misled by this sensational reporting, but to be more objective in differentiating fact from fiction".

Sri Lanka Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU Ravinatha Aryasinha, who participated in the discussion said forums of this nature provide an opportunity to have a more enlightened and respectful discussion on current developments in Sri Lanka. He also noted that despite having been invited to participate in the forum, INGOs such as the Brussels headquartered International Crisis Group, as well as the Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International had chosen not to participate. He regretted that these organizations which have much to say about Sri Lanka from afar, constantly shy away from putting their assertions to public scrutiny in forums like these where objective discussion takes place, as they had done when invited to share their views with the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commissions (LLRC) hearings in Colombo last year.

Vice-President of the EIAS Mr. Dick Gupwell chaired the session, which was attended by diplomats, officials of the EU institutions and Belgium, as well as academics, INGO representatives and the Brussels based media.

The full statement delivered by Prof. Wijesinha is attached.

Embassy of Sri Lanka  
Brussels

08 July 2011