



**THE EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA
TO BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG AND THE EUROPEAN UNION
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Foreign Minister says greater understanding of the respective positions and the need to continue to engage in a dialogue on GSP+ realized

Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama has said greater understanding of the respective positions and the need to continue to engage in a dialogue was achieved, through his interactions in Brussels aimed at supporting Sri Lanka's continued retention of the GSP+ facility. He added that in meetings with EC External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and EC Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton, it was made clear that while Sri Lanka would not agree to subject itself to any intrusion of its sovereignty, it was ready for continued engagement and dialogue on any concerns the EU might have regards Sri Lanka benefitting from this facility. The Minister said the Government of Sri Lanka took the position that Sri Lanka has effectively implemented the three conventions highlighted by the EC and continues to extended cooperation to the UN/ILO convention treaty monitoring bodies relevant to the GSP+ process and also through its continuous interaction with the European institutions.

The Foreign Minister made these observations during a question and answer session that followed an address to members of the European Parliament, hosted by the 'Friends of Sri Lanka' Group on 28 January 2009. Minister Bogollagama also met with the President of the European Parliament Dr. Hans Gert Pottering.

He added that his engagement with the EC, along with a high level technical delegation led by Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union Ravinatha Aryasinha, and including Mr. Suhada Gamalath, Secretary/ Ministry of Justice and Legal Reform, Dr. Rohan Perera, Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on International Legal Affairs and Chair of the Committee developing the National Human Rights Action Plan, Mr. S B Divaratna, Commissioner General of Essential Services and Ms. Kshenuka Senewiratne, DG/ Europe and CIS, was aimed at clarifying matters of concern to the EC regards the GSP+.

Embassy of Sri Lanka
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