

## **UN Under Secretary General briefs Security Council**

Sir John Holmes, Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator of the United Nations who visited Sri Lanka at the invitation extended to UN Secretary General by President Mahinda Rajapaksa to send one of his colleagues to Sri Lanka, and pursuant to a telephone discussion with Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, gave an informal closed door information briefing on his visit to Sri Lanka to the members of the UN Security Council on 27th February in New York.

Sir John gave a favourable account of the humanitarian assistance being provided by the Government of Sri Lanka to the civilians held captive by the LTTE as human shields as well as to those who have managed to escape and come into the Government controlled areas. He described the situation of trapped people as dire but acknowledged IDPS in transit camps are reasonably well. He stated that he was not aware of any major outbreak of disease in the conflict area. He gave some descriptions of his conversations with IDPs and commented on the fairly satisfactory physical conditions and the efforts made to have acceptable screening procedures.

The remarks of Ambassadors of Security Council member states to the media following the briefing by Sir John reflected their appreciation of the sincere and commendable efforts of the Sri Lankan Government to render assistance to its citizens who are caught up in the conflict, amidst extremely difficult ground conditions.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Colombo

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