

## **President Rajapaksa gave practical scope and depth to non-alignment -Minister Bogollagama**

He also paid glowing tribute to the late Prime Minister, Madam Sirimavo Bandaranayake, stating that she was instrumental in entrenching the principle of non-alignment in Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy. "This policy today", the Foreign Minister added, "continues to be upheld by President Mahinda Rajapaksa who has given it practical scope and depth in Sri Lanka's engagement with the outside world."

In his speech at the interactive debate on "solidarity for peace and development", the Minister identified terrorism as one of the major challenges to peace and stability of states, and urged the international community to shed double standards in fighting terrorism. Stressing that global challenges required collective responses, Bogollagama called upon the Non-Alignment Movement to show leadership in advancing such collaborative efforts.

The two-day Ministerial Meeting which began 13 July, preceding the 15th NAM Summit scheduled for the 15th and 16th July 2009, was addressing priority issues such as financial and economic crisis, threats to international peace and security, reforming of the United Nations and the international financial architecture as well as poverty alleviation.

On the sidelines of the Ministerial Meeting today, Minister Bogollagama met his counterparts from South Africa and Iran. Ministers of State of Pakistan and Colombia also paid bilateral calls on the Foreign Minister.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Colombo.

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