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Mexico assures support for Sri Lanka

Mexico has reassured Sri Lanka of its firm support at international fora, including the UN Security Council. Mexico is holding the presidency of the Security Council in April.

Mexico confirmed that they do not have any intention of permitting the Sri Lankan situation to be placed on the Security Council agenda, as it does not pose a threat to international peace and security.

This is a sequel to talks in Mexico City between Foreign Secretary, Dr. Palitha Kohona and senior Mexican government officials, including Vice Minister Gomez-Robledo. A press release issued by the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Colombo yesterday said:

"Dr. Kohona explained how the LTTE had cleverly 'herded' thousands of civilians into the tiny no-fire-zone in the North East of Sri Lanka, while pulling back its combatants and weapons also into it with the intention of sheltering behind this human shield and using these thousands of human hostages to save itself.

"He repeated the call of the Government to the LTTE to let these hostages go (which will automatically result in a cessation of hostilities) and lay down their weapons for the sake of the civilians.

"The Mexican authorities expressed their understanding of the dilemma confronting Sri Lanka in view the fiendish circumstances deliberately manipulated by the LTTE and offered to do everything possible to bring the civilians out to safety.

"Mexico also expressed its appreciation of the large quantities of food and medical relief supplies being sent by the Government to the people held hostage by the LTTE with the assistance of the UN and the ICRC.

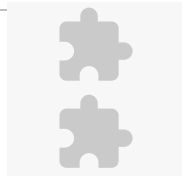
Dr. Kohona also provided a detailed briefing on the processing procedures for IDPS escaping from the LTTE, the raft of relief measures being undertaken to make their lives easier in the relief villages the access provide to NGOs and INGOs, the continuing engagement with UN officials, the advanced planning for the early return of IDPs to their own village sand towns, including demining and the ongoing work to re-establish inclusive democracy in the North.

"The Mexican authorities saw the parallels between their own experience in Chiapas and the negative impact of a cleverly manipulated propaganda machine. They also expressed hope for deepening and strengthening the bilateral relationship, including through the exchange of thigh levels visits".

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