

Ban asks Sri Lanka to heed calls for Accountability, transparency

5 June 2009 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today reiterated his appeal to the Government of Sri Lanka to heed international calls for accountability and transparency, and for an inquiry into alleged abuses committed during the recently concluded conflict with Tamil rebels.

“It is crucially important that the Sri Lankan Government follow up on all the promises that they have made,” Mr. Ban told reporters following an informal discussion with Security Council members on Sri Lanka.

Last month, Sri Lanka's Government declared that its military operation against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was over, ending more than two decades of fighting.

In the joint statement issued at the end of his 22-23 May visit to the country, Mr. Ban and President Mahinda Rajapaksa agreed that the country had now entered a new post-conflict phase and faces many obstacles relating to relief, rehabilitation, resettlement and reconciliation.

“Whenever and wherever there are credible allegations of violations of humanitarian law, there should be a proper investigation,” the Secretary-General said today.

“Any inquiry, to be meaningful, should be supported by the members of the United Nations, and also should be very impartial and objective,” he added.

Mr. Ban also stressed that it was time to unite, and warned against “the risk of triumphalism in the wake of victory,” as this will hinder ongoing efforts by the Sri Lankan Government and people, and the international community, to help heal the wounds inflicted during the long-running conflict.

The UN remains ready “to facilitate ongoing efforts by the Sri Lankan Government in healing the wounds through national reconciliation and through inclusive political dialogue,” he stated.

The world body, which has been focusing its efforts on supporting the Government in aiding the 290,000 people who fled the fighting in recent months, also stands ready to continue providing humanitarian assistance, he added.

Source: UN News Centre