



H. E. THE PRESIDENT

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Speech made by

**HIS EXCELLENCY
J. R. JAYEWARDENE**

**President of the
Democratic Socialist Republic
of Sri Lanka**

*responding to the toast
proposed by Secretary of State
George P. Shultz*

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*Mr. Secretary,
Mrs. Shultz,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Thank you for your kind words, and for your gracious hospitality. We will all take back happy recollections of this event to Sri Lanka.

In our continuing dealings with your colleagues in Colombo and Washington and particularly in the planning of this State Visit, we have at all times experienced courtesy and efficiency. We appreciate that.

This is a unique occasion ; the first State Visit to your country by a Sri Lankan Head of State. At the same time, it is part of a continuity which has lasted over many years. Our views on world political

situations do not always coincide, yet we have been united in many common endeavours down the years.

Our strongest bond is our mutual commitment to democracy. Modern democracy in Sri Lanka is over 50 years old, but the practice of government with the consent of the governed is fully in keeping with the long-established philosophical traditions guiding our people. Democratic institutions flourished at the grassroots level in Sri Lanka hundreds of years ago. Today, our Constitution enshrines the sovereignty of the people ; preserves human rights and guarantees fundamental freedoms to all citizens. These rights are justiciable before an Independent Judiciary.

Today's world, faces the new and repugnant threat of terrorism. Civilized human beings cannot accept the argument of force as a substitute for the force of argument. We must all be united and unflinching, therefore, in resisting the vicious threat of terrorism, whatever mask or disguise it sometimes wears.

Sri Lanka faces this threat, from separatists who want to divide our country. The extent to which they will go was recently demonstrated when they

kidnapped an American couple working in Sri Lanka. We are all relieved that it was possible to secure the safe release of these two young people. This criminal act however could have had a very different ending because terrorists do not respect human life and moral values.

The Government of Sri Lanka is pledged to safeguard the rights of all communities. We will not be diverted from the responsibility of seeking a negotiated settlement of any issues that divide our communities. We will never agree to the division of our country. We will never submit to terrorism. We have never been conquered nor ever will be.

Our own approach to world affairs is to extend to our dealings with the world around us, those principles of our religion (the Dhamma) that guide us in our daily life and in domestic affairs. We seek to eliminate greed, hatred and delusion from our lives. If we could reach that goal individually and collectively both at home and abroad, we would be well on the way to creating a perfect world.

We are a democracy, and just as we have enshrined the sovereignty of man in our Constitution, we want the sovereignty of man to be

protected universally. Men and women who are threatened by guns and bombs are not sovereign. Nor are men and women sovereign who are unable to secure their basic needs from day to day.

We look to you, Mr. Secretary, and to your great country to help maintain peace and stability in as many regions of the world as you are able to do. Disparities within and among societies contribute significantly to domestic, regional, and international instability. All of us in the human family owe it to ourselves to be resolute about ending such disparities. We are confident that America in its role of leadership, will continue to strengthen those institutions which contribute to international stability and development.

Mr. Secretary,

Our two countries enjoy a long-standing history of co-operation. Our discussions in Washington have paved the way to closer and more detailed co-operation in the years ahead. The agreements to be signed by representatives of our two countries later today will lead to new areas of co-operation. You have become a closer partner in our progress. May that partnership endure.

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May your influence on the world for the good of all humanity increase. May you be guided in these efforts by principles, and not prejudice (Samma Vayama); endowed with right intention (Samma Ditthi); and moved by compassion (Maitriya).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please join me in drinking a toast to Secretary and Mrs. Shultz ; to all men and women who strive within this building and beyond it to keep the peace of the world.