

**JOINT STATEMENT
BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF
SRI LANKA ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL VISIT TO MALAYSIA
BY
HIS EXCELLENCY MAITHRIPALA SIRISENA,
PRESIDENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA,
15-17 DECEMBER 2016**

At the invitation of the Honourable Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka undertook an Official Visit to Malaysia from 15-17 December 2016.

2. Prime Minister Najib Razak and President Maithripala Sirisena held in-depth discussions on all aspects of Malaysia-Sri Lanka relations, and exchanged views on regional and international issues of common concern. The bilateral discussion between the two leaders was held in a warm and cordial atmosphere.

3. Both leaders, while expressing satisfaction with the progress made over the years, reaffirmed their determination to take the bilateral relations between the two countries to the higher levels by exploring new areas of cooperation including in the political, trade and investment, education, tourism, human resource, training and cultural relations as well as people-to-people contact.

4. Both leaders recognised the need to engage at the highest level towards further enhancement of bilateral relations between the two countries. The two sides agreed that every effort will be made to encourage and promote exchanges between Government officials and leaders of private sector with a view to further expand the relations at official and private sector levels.

5. President Maithripala Sirisena apprised Prime Minister Najib Razak of the current status of the national reconciliation process, constitutional reform and economic development strategies undertaken by the National Unity Government of Sri Lanka. Prime Minister Najib Razak welcomed and appreciated the commitment of the National Unity Government of Sri Lanka to good governance and reconciliation and expressed the support of the Government of Malaysia for Sri Lanka's efforts in this regard.

6. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral trade and investment cooperation, and to deepen their economic engagement for mutual benefits. President Maithripala Sirisena assured that the Malaysian investors would enjoy a conducive investment climate in Sri Lanka, and invited those Malaysian investors to pro-actively look at the attractive investment opportunities in Sri Lanka. Both leaders welcomed the significant interest shown by Malaysian companies to partake in the business opportunities provided by Sri Lanka.

7. In promoting trade, Malaysia and Sri Lanka agreed to explore the possibility of initiating the Malaysia-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

8. Both sides reaffirmed their desire to promote greater opportunities for students to pursue their higher studies in each other's country. The two leaders also acknowledged the increasing two-way tourist movement and recalled the close cultural affinity of the peoples of the two countries, including the presence of a large Sri Lankan community in Malaysia, which is a positive factor in fostering and sustaining current and future linkages to imbue greater dynamism to the friendly relations between Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

9. Noting that the two countries maintain a common understanding on a number of important regional and international issues, both sides expressed satisfaction with their close and active engagement in regional and international affairs, and recognized each other's responsibility in the promotion of peace, development and security of the region, and beyond, based on a convergence of political and socio-economic interests and aspirations.

10. Both leaders were unanimous in their rejection of violent extremism, and in expressing their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestation, and called upon all States to reject terrorism and bring perpetrators of terrorism to justice. Both sides agreed to continue to sharing information and best practices with a view to address the challenges posed by terrorism, and other traditional and non-traditional threats.

11. Both sides underscored the need to adhere to the main objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and norms of International Law based on trust, equality, and cooperation. The two leaders emphasized the need for concerted efforts to build confidence and mutual understanding and strengthen stability regionally and internationally. The two leaders agreed that international issues should be resolved through peaceful dialogue and diplomatic means.

12. Malaysia would continue to promote the moderation agenda and mediation approach, promote the enhancement of UN peacekeeping operations, support peace building in countries emerging from conflicts and encourage continued discussion on the comprehensive reform of the United Nations Security Council.

13. Both leaders witnessed the signing of five Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) namely the MoU on Tourism Related Activities, MoU on Cooperation in The Field of Youth Development, MoU on the Recruitment, Employment and Repatriation of Workers and MoU in the Field of Culture, Arts and Heritage and MoU between the Sri Lanka Council For Agricultural Research Policy (SLCARP) and Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) on Scientific Research and Technical Cooperation.

14. President Maithripala Sirisena expressed his deep appreciation for the warm reception and generous hospitality extended to him and his delegation during the visit and invited Prime Minister Najib Razak to visit Sri Lanka at a mutually convenient date. Prime Minister Najib Razak accepted the invitation with pleasure.

16 December 2016
Kuala Lumpur