

# President Mahinda Rajapaksa: The Journey Continues

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November 19, 2010 marked a momentous occasion when President Mahinda Rajapaksa took oaths for the second term in office. The inaugural ceremony was held at the Presidential Secretariat commencing with the stately swearing-in ceremony at the auspicious time amidst blessings proffered by Buddhist monks. The President took oaths before Chief Justice Asoka de Silva, in the presence of Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to the President, First Lady Shiranthi Rajapasaka and sons, Namal, Yoshitha and Rohitha Rajapaksa. Many dignitaries both foreign and local attended the ceremony and witnessed the events both stately and celebratory that unfolded throughout the day. Following the swearing-in, the President was honoured by salutations of the Armed Forces in the presence of the Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The President in his address to the attendees that included an exuberant crowd shared his vision for the country, to develop as a five-fold hub and emerge as the Wonder of Asia.

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### **Achieving permanent peace**

#### ***President Mahinda Rajapaksa sworn in for the second term in office***

President Mahinda Rajapaksa was sworn in for the second term of office before Chief Justice Asoka de Silva. The President took his oaths in the presence of family members, First Lady Shiranthi Rajapaksa and sons, Namal, MP, Yoshitha and Rohitha. The ceremonial inauguration was graced by Ministers, Members of Parliament, senior government officials and foreign dignitaries. The Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force and security forces personnel were also present.

Addressing the nation after being sworn in for the second term, President Mahinda Rajapaksa stated that the Government's first task is to ensure lasting national unity and sustainable, permanent peace in the country.

He went on to state, "I believe that the eradication of poverty is greater than the defeat of uprisings. It requires true bravery." He noted that in keeping with the Mahinda Chintana of 2005, steps were taken to develop 16,000 villages, paving the way for greater opportunities in employment, industry, business and development.

The President also assured that every household will be provided with electricity by 2012, while water from the reservoirs will be harnessed towards development activities, echoing the proclamations of former kings that not a drop of water should flow to the sea without first serving the people.

He urged the people of the country to work harder towards its development, as this was what was required for the period ahead. "It is by increasing the quality of work that my country can be made the Wonder of Asia," he stated.

The President also underlined the importance of a trilingual future generation. He expressed hope that in the near future computer literacy would be developed to 75 percent, thereby ensuring that the names of Sri Lanka youth top the list of those employed in the fields of science and technology.

**"I Have Never Called The Land Of My Birth, 'Small Sri Lanka' Or 'Small Island'. This Is A Land With A Great History Of Many Centuries ... It Is Where People Who Follow Four Different Faiths Live In Harmony And Where Today Many Communities Live In Brotherhood; And Where The World's Largest Harbour And Five Other Ports Are Being Built. With Such An Abundance Of Greatness Who Would Dare To Say That This Is A Small Island?,"**

He reaffirmed his commitment to make Sri Lanka the centre of five hubs. "We must rise by making this country the hub of development in the five-fold areas of naval, aviation, commerce and trade, power and energy, and knowledge. We must make this country one among those with the best quality of life," the President added.

He went on to state, "There is no room for hatred on politics, community, caste or religion when our children are brought up in a life that is replete with all facilities, has shelter and security, and is rich in love and friendship."

However, President Rajapaksa noted that the great humanitarian traditions that exist among the people of Sri Lanka should be safeguarded, as the country progresses towards development. In resolving the crises that prevails in society, he stressed, "We need a land free of a lawless underworld, racketeering, extortion and the carrying of illegal weapons or

drugs; a land free of corruption and inefficiency.”

Stepping into the development era, existing relations between nations will be strengthened, while new relations will be established for national security and development. Recalling that he had never referred to this country as ‘small Sri Lanka’ or ‘small Island’, he encouraged the people to develop their “body, mind and word to match the dignity of this land”, in taking the country to the greatness it deserves.













