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Sri Lankan Senior Religious Leaders’ Efforts to Advance Reconciliation and Peacebuilding
Applauded by the Japanese Prime Minister

Tokyo, Japan; 28 March 2012 – A high-level multi-religious delegation from Sri Lanka met with Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Genba today to discuss post-war reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts in Sri Lanka. The delegation consisting of Sri Lanka’s senior-most leaders from Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities was led by the Sri Lanka Council of Religions for Peace (RfP Sri Lanka), one of the 90 inter-religious councils affiliated to Religions for Peace, the world’s largest coalition of religious communities dedicated to advancing common action for peace.

Working through its national and 11 district-level inter-religious councils, RfP Sri Lanka is the country’s most representative inter-religious body, working on the frontlines of inter-ethnic and inter-religious reconciliation and peacebuilding.

At the meeting, H.E. Foreign Minister Genba conveyed the Japanese government’s strong support for this historic, nation-wide inter-religious structure and emphasized the critical role of religious leaders and communities in post-war reconciliation and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka.

Most Venerable Prof. Bellanwila Wimalaratana Anunayaka Thero, the President of RfP Sri Lanka, expressed the commitment of RfP Sri Lanka to promote and advance dialogue, reconciliation and common action for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. Since its establishment, RfP Sri Lanka has worked to promote just peace and reconciliation throughout the various stages of violent civil conflict in Sri Lanka.

Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General of Religions for Peace International, who coordinates the work of inter-religious councils around the world and was present at the meeting, commended RfP Sri Lanka’s commitment to take concrete actions through district councils particularly in former conflict areas.