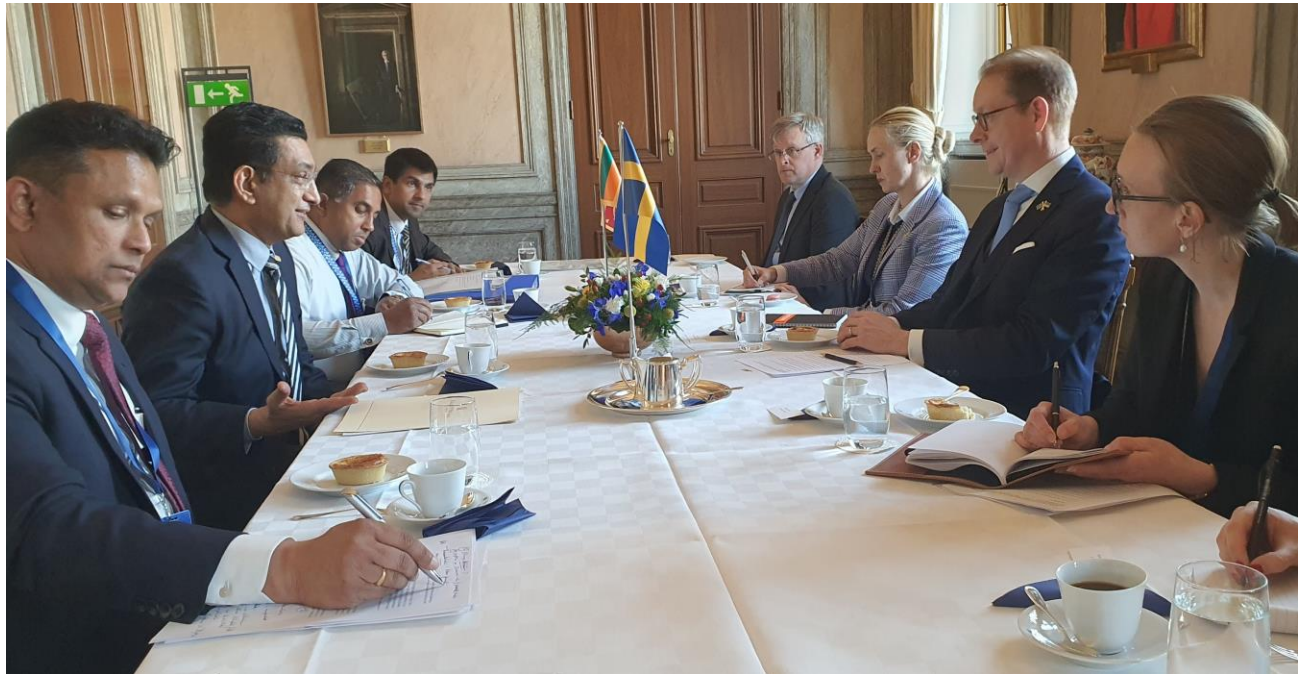


## Swedish and Sri Lankan Foreign Ministers agree to bolster bilateral engagement in all spheres



Foreign Minister, Ali Sabry commenced his visit to Sweden with bilateral discussions with his Swedish counterpart Tobias Billstrom on Thursday, in Stockholm during which the two Ministers agreed to bolster the engagement in all spheres reflected in the bilateral relationship.

While recalling the decades-old, multi-faceted, relationship between the two countries and peoples, the two ministers agreed to suitably commemorate in 2024 the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations. The two countries established formal diplomatic relations on November 18, 1949

During the bilateral discussions convened at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately upon his arrival on Thursday, Ministers Sabry and Billstrom delved into the gamut of areas which straddle the long-standing engagement, including in the political, economic, development spheres. They also exchanged views on the EU-Indo Pacific Ministerial Forum which Sweden is hosting during its current Presidency of the European Union. Foreign Minister Ali Sabry is leading Sri Lanka's delegation to the Ministerial Forum and will co-moderate one of three round tables- the key dialogue format of the Forum.

The two Ministers placed strong emphasis on economic cooperation between the two countries, and agreed to work together in several areas, including investment, trade, IT, climate and environment.

While highlighting the shared values of democracy including Universal Adult Franchise, peaceful transition of power through the electoral process, independence of the judiciary and separation of powers enshrined in the Constitution, Foreign Minister Sabry briefed his Swedish counterpart

the trajectory of the economic recovery, following the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the IMF. He appreciated Swedish support within the Paris Club, which backed the IMF process which Sri Lanka.

Discussions on the economic relations focused on improving trade, diversifying production bases for Swedish supply chains, further enhancing business linkages, in the IT sector, manufacturing, tourism, and investment particularly taking into account Sri Lanka's strategic location. He highlighted opportunities in Sri Lanka, including the financial hub which will emerge with the Colombo Port City and the attractive opportunity Sri Lanka presents with its strategic location for the diversification of supply sources for Swedish and global supply chains.

The Sri Lankan Minister also had occasion to brief the Swedish side on the forward movement on the reconciliation process, including the significant steps taken on judicial and legislative reform, release of land and highlighted the importance of economic advancement, and livelihood sustenance in the process.

The two Ministers also exchanged views on international developments, including its impact on economic stability and progress in different parts of the world.

The Ministers agreed for Sri Lanka and Sweden to work in close partnership to advance the relationship in all areas of mutual interest and to convene the bilateral Political Consultations at an early date.

On the sidelines of the EU - Indo Pacific, Foreign Minister Ali Sabry will continue his bilateral consultations with several other visiting European and Asian countries on the sidelines of the Ministerial Forum.

Embassy of Sri Lanka  
Stockholm, Sweden

12 May 2023