



**DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY**  
Chief Directorate: Communication Services

Tel: (012) 336-8264

Fax: (012) 324-6592

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Sri Lanka team arrives in the country on a study tour on Tsunami Assistance Programme**

**12<sup>th</sup> September 2005**

A team from Sri Lanka led by the Head of Technical Division in the Ministry of Urban Development & Water Supply and senior officials of the Water Board arrived in the country on a one-week fact finding mission. This is part of the Tsunami Assistance Programme to Indian Ocean Countries arranged by the Water Sector at the request of Minister of Water Affairs & Forestry, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica.

South Africa attended the Donor Summit in Jakarta organized by United Nations in early January and agreed to assist some of the Indian Ocean Countries affected by Tsunami on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004. South Africa agreed to share our experience on the implementation of the Re-construction and Development Programme (RDP) in the re-construction efforts in the areas devastated by Tsunami.

Overwhelming support was received from the Private Sector and NGOs in response to the appeal made by the Minister Sonjica to SA Water Sector following the conference. Rand Water, Umgeni Water supported by other Water Boards, have already dispatched 250 tones of Alum to Sri Lanka required for Water Treatment and prepared to assist with the reconstruction work. A Water Sector team from SA visited Sri Lanka in April 2005 and identified areas of support.

Nihal Somaweera, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development & Water Supply, who is heading the team, indicated on arrival at the Johannesburg International Airport that 'although large amounts of assistance were offered to Sri Lanka, South Africa's offer is the most crucial in unblocking the bottlenecks in delivering the services to the people'. The delegation will visit Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, Tshwane Metro, Ethekweni, Rand Water, Umgeni Water, EU Delegation Office in Pretoria and Masibambane Water Sector Support Programme to study how the water services businesses are conducted and managed using donor assistance as Sector Wide Programme. The Water Sector resources team will soon be dispatched to Sri Lanka & Maldives.

The study team, working with the Water Sector, will identify the most appropriate resources required in Sri Lanka for the Re-construction Programme and it is expected to despatch the team in October 2005. The Water Sector is also looking at assisting Maldives in their reconstruction efforts.

**Enquires:**

**Kalinga Pelpola**

**Director: Water Services Support and**

**Programme Manager: Masibambane Water Sector Support Programme**

**Tel: (012) 336-8797**

**Chris Swiegers**

**Disaster Management Coordination**

**Policy & Strategy Coordination Unit**

**Tel: (012) 336-8437**