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Biographical Note

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IGNATIUS BENEDICT FONSEKA (SRI LANKA) ELECTED CHAIRMAN
OF AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE INDIAN OCEAN

Ignatius Benedict Fonseka, who was today elected Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, has since September of 1980 served as Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations.

From July 1978 until September 1980, Mr. Fonseka served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva. He has also been a representative on the Committee on Disarmament since his country became a member of the Committee in January 1979. He led the Sri Lanka delegation to the Second Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in August/September of 1980.

Born on 1 February 1925, Mr. Fonseka holds a bachelor of arts degree in economics from St. Peter's College, Colombo.

He was appointed to the Sri Lanka Foreign Service in 1949 and has served in Washington D.C., Rangoon, Bonn, Peking, Cairo, New Delhi, Nairobi and New York.

In 1960, Mr. Fonseka served as an advisor to the Sri Lanka delegation to the fifteenth General Assembly. He was a member of the Sri Lanka delegation to the Consultative Meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade in July 1969, and the Preparatory Meeting of Non-Aligned Countries in Dar-es-Salaam in April 1970.

From July 1966 to September 1970, he was Director of Foreign Relations in charge of Asia, Australia and the Pacific Region in the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs. From October 1970 to August 1974, he was High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Kenya; he was concurrently accredited to the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. On his return to Sri Lanka, he was appointed a Director-General in the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Affairs, and functioned as Deputy Director General of the Non-Aligned Conference Secretariat which co-ordinated arrangements for the Fifth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned States held in Colombo in August 1976.

(more)

* This supersedes Press Release BIO/1748-M/2270 of 16 September 1980.

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From February 1977 to July 1978, he was Deputy Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations. In April/May 1977, he was Chairman of the United Nations Mission to Observe the Referendum and Elections in Djibouti. While Sri Lanka was Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, he chaired the meetings of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Group in New York.

He is married and has three children.

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