



**Ministry of External Affairs**  
Government of India

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## QUESTION NO.965 INDO-SRI LANKA JOINT WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES

November 24, 2016

RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.965  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.11.2016

### INDO-SRI LANKA JOINT WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES

965. SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Sri Lanka have reached an agreement on establishing a joint working group on fisheries to resolve the dispute between fishermen of both the countries; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) Yes. India and Sri Lanka agreed on setting up of a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries between the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of India and Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development of Sri Lanka as the mechanism to help find a permanent solution to the fishermen issue. The decision was taken by the Ministerial level meeting on fishermen issues on November 5, 2016 in New Delhi. The JWG would include representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Coast Guards and Navies of both countries. The Terms of Reference of JWG would include (i) expediting the transition towards ending the practice of bottom trawling at the earliest, (ii) working out the modalities for the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for handing over of apprehended fishermen, and (iii) ascertaining possibilities for cooperation on patrolling. The JWG would also discuss the issue of release of detained fishing vessels.

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