



Sri Lanka Shippers' Council



Hon. Arjuna Ranatunga
Minister of Ports, Shipping & Aviation



Sri Lanka Shippers' Council Chairman
Mr. Sean Van Dort



Sri Lanka Shippers' Council Vice Chairman
Mr. Chrisso De Mel

Sri Lanka Shippers' Council to celebrate its 50th Anniversary this year...

The Sri Lanka Shippers' Council, the first National Shippers' Council to be set up in Asia in 1966, will celebrate the significant milestone of 50 years since its formation, on March 23, 2016. The SLSC was established on a recommendation by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) that shippers' councils should be established in order that they could negotiate collectively with shipping conferences.

UNCTAD delved into many sectors of the world economy with the objective of creating a reasonable balance between the advanced and the developing countries. One area it identified for remedial action was shipping, and one segment identified within the shipping sector was the relationship between shipping conferences on the one side, which carried most of the world's trade except for oil and bulk products, and shippers on the other, i.e., exporters and importers, the sellers and buyers of the cargo.

While the shipping conferences were well organized bodies whose members were individual shipping lines or groups, which fixed freight rates and the frequency of service, the individual shippers who provided the cargo were usually unorganized and acted as individuals. Powerful cartels of ship-owners could, and often did, exploit their power over rates and services at the expense of shippers.

The Ministry of Commerce, the implementing body in the island, convened a meeting of both shippers and shipping conferences, explained the background, and requested the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, as the senior Chamber, to set up a Shippers' Council for Ceylon.

Starting from scratch, the Shippers' Council of Ceylon (SC) was set up in 1966, consisting of representatives of the leading export trades as members. Mr. Mallory Wijesinghe, then Chairman of the Chamber, was appointed Chairman of the SC. The Chamber undertook the secretarial work of the SC. The SC was therefore representative of the export trades – the shippers – led at the highest level.

To celebrate 50 years of achievement, the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council has planned a series of events during 2016, which will commence with a tree planting campaign in the Port of Hambantota, at which the Minister of Ports and Shipping, the Hon. Arjuna Ranatunga will be the chief guest, along with related heads of Government Agencies who will also be present at the event.

To coincide with its 50th Anniversary, the SLSC will host the Annual General Meeting of the Global Shippers Forum for the year 2016, in Colombo. The Global Shippers' Forum (GSF) is the world's leading trade association for shippers engaged in international trade moving goods by all modes of transport. This will be the first time that the Annual general Meeting of the GSF will be hosted in Asia.

The age of an organization says nothing about the strength of its origin, its vitality in terms of service innovation, or even its culture at any special moment in time. SLSC is at the mid-point in a century of care. There is certainly much to consider when preparing for such a landmark occasion.

These events will look forward to the developments and opportunities in the next 50 years and celebrate the past achievements of the SLSC.

The Chairman of the SLSC, Sean Van Dort, stated that, "This is a great opportunity for us to show case our country and its capabilities to the world and to recognize the SLSC's past Chairmen and Council Members whose significant contributions have uplifted the standards of the SLSC and have ensured that the voice of the Shipper was heard in this country".

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