



C/o. Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, 50, Nawam Mawatha, Colombo 2, Tel. 5588871-6 Fax. 2449352

## AGM/2019

Minutes for the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council held on 26th July 2019 at the '**Barnes**' - **Jetwing Colombo Seven**

### Present

Incoming Chairman	Mr. Suren Abeysekera
Outgoing Chairman	Mr. Chrisso De Mel
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman	Mr. Russel Jurianz
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman	Mr. Imalka Kumarapeli

### Committee members

Association	Name
Import Section of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce	Mr. Dinesh de Silva
Import Section of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce	Mr. Rajiv Dharmarajah
The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka	Mr. Tissa Ruberu
The National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka	Mr. Rohan De Silva
The Ceylon Coir Fibre Exporters Association	Mr. Shavesh Mendis
Sri Lanka Freight Forwarders Association	Mr. Roshan Silva
Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters Association	Mr. Kumar Seneviratne
	Mr Sean Van Dort
National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka	Mr. Shiham Marikkar
National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka	Mr. Parakrama Weerasinghe
Sri Lanka Association of Air Express Companies	Mr. Sanjeeva Abeygoonawardena
Sri Lanka Association of Air Express Companies	Mr. Stewart Enoch
Sri Lanka Logistics Providers Association	Mr Gayan Maddumaarachchi

Sri Lanka Logistics Providers Association	Mr Andre Fernando
Tea Exporters' Association	Mr. Shiral Fernando
Tea Exporters' Association	Mr Gehan Kuruppu
The Colombo Rubber Traders Association	Trisherman Frink
Hub Operators Association	Mr. Jagatha Pathirana

### **Past Chairpersons**

Mr. Jayantha Perera (Past Chairman)  
 Mr. R Masakorala (Past Chairman)  
 Mr. Rohan De S. Wijeyeratne (Past Chairman)  
 Mr. Ravi Ratnapala (Past Chairman)

Mr. C G. Jayasuriya – Honorary Member

### **Individual Members**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Name</b>
APL Logistics Lanka Freight Forwarding (Pvt) Limited	Mr. Jeevantha Gunetilake
	Mr. Dileepa Dissanayake
Access Tower (CG Logistics Lanka)	Mr Kamal Boyagama
Access Tower (CG Logistics Lanka)	Mr Bosco Corera
C H Robinsons	Shehan
	Chamith
DHL Keells (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Dimithri Perera
Eskimo Fashion Knitwear (Pvt) Ltd	Mr B P L Batuwita
	Mr. Brian Jayakody
EAM Maliban Textiles (Pvt) Ltd	Kosala Weerasekera
Expelogix (Pvt) Ltd	Mr.Channa Gunawardena
Expelogix (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Michael Van Dort
Expelogix (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Manoj Pamuditha
Explanka Freight (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Christopher Kulatunga
Explanka Freight (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Daminda Mulgama
Explanka Freight (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Sammy Akbar
	Mr Leroy James Ebert
Finlays Colombo Ltd	Mr. Renil Perera

	Mr. Husain Shabbir
Freight Links International (Pte) Ltd	Dilrani Abeysekara
	Henry De Silva
	Chaminda Egodawatte
H-Connect Private Limited	Mr Kapila Korala
Hayleys PLC	Mr. Chrisso de Mel
	Mr. Nalaka Ratnayake
Hellmann Worldwide Logistics (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Sahan Jayasinghe
	Mr Niroshan Sirivasigam
	Mr Viraj De Silva
	Mr Shehan Perera
Inter Air & Sea Logistics (Pvt) Ltd	Ms Tania Polonnowita Wettimuni
	Mr Geoffry Polonnowita
	Mr Rex Hendrick
	Mr Dilhan Mirando
	Mr Sampath Yatagampitiya
	Mr. Jonathan Suppiah
KokosFibre Exports (Pvt) Ltd	Mr. Sheran Perera
Kings Log	Rohith Steinwall
MAS Kreeda	Dilantha Jayarathna
MAS Kreeda	Charles Bonsun
MAS Kreeda	Anton Fernando
MAS Kreeda	Nuwan Bandara
MAS Kreeda	Dhammadika Adhikari
MAS Kreeda	Ajith Peramuna
MAS Kreeda	Nishantha Kumara
MAS Kreeda	Nishan Fernando
MAS Kreeda	Jayantha Gamage
MAS Active Trading (Pvt) Ltd	Nisal Ranasinghe
MAS Active Trading (Pvt) Ltd	Charaka Gunawardena
MAS Active Trading (Pvt) Ltd	Rohan Perera
MAS Active Trading (Pvt) Ltd	Asitha Ranasingha
MAS Fabrics - Matrix	Palitha Liyanage

MAS Fabrics - Matrix	Joseph Perera
Linea Aqua (Pvt) Ltd	Anil Weerasekara
MAS Intimates	Senaka Pinto
Stretchline (Pvt) Ltd	Darshana Krishantha
Stretchline (Pvt) Ltd	Shiraz Mohmed
HMSC (Pvt) Ltd	Dulip Henadeera
US Cargo Freight Services	Sanjeewa Ranatunga
MAS BOI	M.V Wijesubghe
MAS Dart Global	Trudy Jurienz
MAS Thushara Morawaka	SriLankan Catering
MISA Smart Logistics (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Raiz A Razak
	Mr Esmath Althaf
	Ms Merl Jayasuriya
MAC Supply Chain	Mr. Stanley Samarakoon
Nor Lanka Manufacturing Colombo Limited	Sarath Wanniarachchi
Scanwell Logistics	Mr.Harry Joachim
	Ms. Aindreenie Ranmuthugala
Salota International (Pvt) Ltd	Ms Rachini Liyanage
	Mr. Rahula Silva
	Ms Madhu Welikala
	Mr Pasindu Kottage
	Mr Nisal Dimantha
	Ms Thakshala Thishanthi
Shermans Logistics	Ms Diruni Shanmugam
RNA Coir Fibre Industries	Mr R N Rajnesh
Tea Tang (Pvt) Ltd	Mr Rohan P Daluwatte
Trans Orbit Logistics	Mr Ramzeen Razik
Toll Global Lanka	Mr. Viduranga Perera
Universal Freighters Int'l (Pvt) Ltd	Mr. Mohan Molegoda
	Ms. Sherryn Soysa
Yusen Logistics	Mr Satyavan Dadallage

**Ms. Manori Dissanayaka (Assistant Secretray General) and Ms. Ushani Dassanayake (Manager) represented the Chamber Secretariat**

Mr. Chrisso De Mel, Chairman called the meeting to order and welcomed Committee members, distinguished guests, past Chairmen and fellow members to the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council.

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018/2019**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 09<sup>th</sup> July, 2018 at 5.30 p.m. at "Lotus Ballroom, Shangri-La Hotel, Colombo, was duly confirmed, proposed by Mr. Dinesh De Silva and Mr. Russell Juriansz.

**2 ADOPTION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2018/2019**

The Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended March 31, 2019 were adopted, proposed by Mr. Parakrama Weerasinghe and seconded by Mr. Rajiv Dharmarajah.

**3. OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH**

With the permission of Members, the Chairman delivered his address at the post business session which was commenced soon after the AGM.

**4 ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS FOR THE YEAR 2019/2020**

**▪ ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Mr. Chrisso De Mel proposed from chair Mr. Suren Abeysekera as the Chairman for the ensuing year 2019/2020.

In the absence of any other nominations, Mr. Suren Abeysekera was elected as the Chairman for the period of 2019/2020.

**▪ ELECTION OF VICE CHARMEN**

Mr. Suren Abeysekera proposed the name of Mr. Russell Juriansz as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman and Mr. Imalka Kumarapeli as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman respectively for the year 2019/2020.

In the absence of any other nominations, Mr. Russell Juriansz and Mr. Imalka Kumarapeli declared as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman & 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman respectively for the year 2019/2020.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR THE YEAR 2019/2020**

The Chairman, Mr. Suren Abeysekera proposed from chair M/s Ford Rhodes Thornton & Co. as auditors of the Council for the year 2019/2020.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH DUE NOTICE SHALL BE GIVEN PRIOR TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

There were no any other business matters received.

**7. ADDRESS BY INCOMMING CHAIRMAN, MR. SSUREN ABEYSEKERA**

With the permission of Members, the Chairman delivered his address at the post business session which was commenced soon after the AGM.

**9. ADJOURNMENT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Chairman declared the meeting closed and invite the members to join for the Post Business Session and Cocktails.

Sgd.

**MANORI DISSANAYAKA  
FOR SECRETARY**

**Post Business Session of the 49th Annual General Meeting**  
**26<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at the 'Barnes' - Jetwing Colombo Seven, Colombo**

- Mr. Imalka Kumarapeli, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council welcomed the Chief Guest, Mr. Mangala P.B. Yapa, Chairman, Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, Committee members, distinguished guests, past Chairmen and fellow members to the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council.
- Address by Mr. Chrisso De Mel Outgoing Chairman of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council

**Quote**

" Hon chief guest, Mr. Mangala Yapa (Chairman Board of Investment), Newly elected Chairman, Mr. Suren Abeysekera and vice Chairmen, Mr. Russel Jurianz and Mr. Imalka Kumarapeli, Past Chairmen, Our Honorary Member, Committee members, members, Invitees, Ladies and gentlemen.

It is with much pleasure that I welcome you today, to this post business session of the 49<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council. As you know this council has been in existence, now for 53 years. As much as I have enjoyed leading this council for the past two years as Chairman and in the past five years as an office bearer, it is my pleasure, to now make way for a new team, led by Suren Abeysekera, to take this council forward.

The journey during the past five years has not been an easy task, And I must confess, that if not for the wisdom from God, I would not have been able, to complete my task. To Suren and his vice Chairmen, I wish that you will be able to unleash, your best, to take this council to greater heights. I assure, that you will have my fullest support, either in the form of Counsel or intervention towards any challenges and matters in the future.

Being at the helm, and holding a position, as its Chairman, of one of the most prestigious councils in an Island, which has proved to the world of its true potential and has been recognised as the best hub for shipping and logistics in south east Asia, I will fail in my duties, if I do not identify, highlight and share with you, a few facts that need to be addressed sooner rather than later if we are to take our rightful position in the world map by assertively working towards getting our act together.

First and foremost, we must all identify and evaluate our strengths and weaknesses. Whilst we try to capitalise on our strengths we need to zero in on our weaknesses.

Today, we are attempting to rapidly move forward, in a very desperate manner, to achieve the desired goals, which we are more than capable of achieving. But which seem daunting due to the handicaps we have, the obstacles we face and the impediments we see, which seem enormous.

We all agree, that we need to leap frog, even if not to stay ahead, but at least to be on par, with competition. The solution is a very simple exercise, but now it is made to look so convoluted, thanks to the confusion and complications created by all stake holders. I believe we all would fall in to one of the following categories as stake holders.

- a. Politicians both in government and opposition.
- b. The Public sector, the State-owned enterprise.
- c. The Private sector including the SME's.
- d. The General public, citizens of this country.

The fact is that we all need to reshape our thinking if we are to usher in a new era. If we are to see the dawn of a new beginning, we need to get back to basics, and uphold the truth, respect and value for humanity and nature. Today we are prisoners and hostages of a broken-down system where we do not have respect for human life and livelihood, So will we have any respect to nature? We only have a remnant of people who are trying to move against all odds with the hope of a better tomorrow.

I believe you only need one individual, who need not be from a particular political party, to lead this country and take Sri Lanka to the place of a "promised land", but that person needs to be one who loves the country and loves its people. A person who is not desperately seeking power, wealth or fame in order to puff his ego or self-esteem, but a person with the true spirit of servant leadership who is in pain for his people with genuine love, who's heart beat is tuned to the voice of the people's cries echoing the reality from the ground and who is willing to labour and invest on sweat to stop the tears of poverty. Whose honest leadership will not have to be articulated with words but be seen through action. Whose honour will shine in the world stage as a light to the path, where other world leaders will want to follow. Who will be truly proud to hoist the national flag with hands, that are clean.

This I believe is the need of the hour, As Sri Lanka positions itself to appoint the right people to be governing this beautiful nation. The lessons learned in the recent past with a comedy of errors is not funny, but truly sad.

Poor governance, and the selfish and irresponsible political leadership both in the government and the opposition, with the exception of a few helpless souls caught in between the crossfire have led to the demise and deterioration of law and order. The lack of discipline, focus, and commitment has made everyone both in the private and public sector, drift away from our tracks where implementation and adoption of policy has become almost non-existent. It is clear that Stake holder engagement, discussion and unbiased agreement within all stake holders, in putting the country forward, has not been a reality. People opting to work in silo's has costed much and wasted valuable time and energy and at the same time has not had the same weight and result if it was consolidated and channelled in one force.

The industry of shipping and logistics in Sri Lanka does not lack the expertise to compete with the rest of the world be it in the form of knowledge or natural resources. What we lack is the support and the boost to existing businesses that have faithfully contributed to the GDP overtime and new entities that cannot even lift its head with the prevalent bureaucracy and corruption within the system.

We cannot afford to drag our feet on urgent matters such as the renewing of archaic laws and regulations that are still in place, when competing with modern business, transacted through international Trade.

I do not wish to repeat the lines that have been repeatedly echoed several times in regard to Trade facilitation, Ease of doing business and free and fair trade through a single window. But I must insist that we must have the right, honest and competent people in place at the

boarder agencies and enforcement authorities, in charge who are willing to hold themselves accountable, Free from the grip or favour of any politician.

Continuously assessing the industry needs and promptly reforming the processors and having the necessary laws in place is prudent rather than to react after the horse has bolted. In my opinion, the adhoc and Inconsistent changes made to policy is the biggest obstacle that will not attract long term investment.

Finally, Ladies and gentlemen, I urge you all, to be focussed and stay committed to fearlessly play your role as individuals in the market place, in the most responsible manner, upholding great values without favour, influence or prejudice. As we invigorate our efforts aiming at common goals I'm sure we will be able to achieve much that will not only benefit and reward all of us and our businesses but also help us sustain humanity who have been created to be the custodians of this planet we live in.

Thank you."

Unquote

- **Address by Mr. Suren Abeysekera, Chairman of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council**

Quote

" Our Chief Guest, Mr. Mangala P. B. Yapa, Chairman, The Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, distinguished members of various Government departments, special invitees, past Chairmen, executive committee and members of the council, associates of the press, well wishes, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to stand in front of you to address this gathering as the newly elected 19<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council, a prestigious position once held by many distinguished personnel connected to international trade, shipping and logistics in Sri Lanka.

As you know by now, the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council has a 50 + years rich history. Enriched by contributions made by various prominent members of our society, it remains as the apex body which represents the interest of shippers in the Island. It was also the first National Shippers' Council to be set up in Asia now having 14 product member associations and over 50 individual members representing almost all industries engaged in international trade making it one of the most vibrant councils in Sri Lanka. In this back drop, let me take this opportunity at the outset to thank the executive committee and membership of the council for placing their trust and confidence in me and the 2 vice chairmen elect Russel and Imalka to carry on the baton for the ensuing year at the AGM just concluded. We are well aware that this responsibility is a transitional one that we need to enhance and handover to a successor thus a temporary endeavor.

Ladies and Gentlemen let me begin my few remarks this evening in debt to the great writer and social critic Charles Dickens who once wrote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness". I'm sure these thoughts echo in our

minds specially taking into context our country's current state of affairs. While we boast record export revenues in 2018 with its predominant export sector; apparels reaching the staggering US\$ 5 Bn mark, a very unfortunate incident in April this year almost steered a U-turn in the country's economy breaking the momentum it enjoyed for the past several months. The continuing political instability in the country not only distracts foreign direct investment opportunities but makes it difficult for the already invested businesses to function. It is in such a state that we take over to steer this enormous organization to help transform the future by enabling importers and exporters to flourish by supporting them to overcome challenges and enabling fair-trade.

Here, I must place in record with great appreciation and admiration the splendid job performed by our outgoing chairman Mr. Chrisso De Mel who in some instances single handedly managed many tasks representing the council in myriad of committees and audiences portraying Sri Lanka Shippers' Council as a strong advocate of policy and industry best practices. It will no doubt be big shoes to fill but am confident to carry out the legacy he leaves behind. We wish him the very best as he takes over the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka as its Chairman in a few days.

In fact, earlier last week we were given good counsel by our chief guest Mr. Mangala Yapa himself when we called on him, about taking over responsibilities and understanding others' needs. He illustrated to us that to get into someone else's shoes, first you need to be mindful to remove your own. Thank you, sir for this advice and moreover accepting our invitation and being here with us tonight.

Thinking about the work ahead, I accept that there are 3 cardinal challenges the council is currently faced with that the dynamic team in office need to manage for the betterment of the Council.

Firstly, collaboration between relevant stake holders involved in the trade. Unfortunately, we live in a society that projects the work done by service agencies, government departments and other trade related parties as favors done to the EXIM industry. Where, in essence, they are performing a facilitation role enabling industry engines to work in sync and improve trade which is beneficial to country's economy. Most departments tend to work in silos upholding age-old rules, regulations and practices that most times deter new thinking and moving forward to compete with other economies around us. The fading relationships between most servicing partners/ agencies and trade today together with the erosion of public private dialog has resulted in many a dispute some totally alien to the need of the trade. We urge relevant stake holders and government departments to join hands with us to leverage Council's strength to reach a cross section of the industry when taking policy decision, rate revisions and changes to how this industry functions.

Secondly, combating policy inconsistencies and the growing cancer of industry stakeholders using national level opportunities and formulation of policies for individual gain supporting specific trades and/or organizations without putting country first. It is no secret that some quarters try to hide behind new policy drafts to safeguard personal gains. As a council, we are committed to uphold good governance and a country first attitude. We will continue to strive to bring about fair-trade and competition where market forces would decide ultimate winners.

Another need of the hour is to strictly enforce the mandate of the council to safe guard importers and exporters from unethical and unlawful trade practices. As our vibrant past Chairman and the current Chairman of GSF Mr. Sean Van Dort would say, defend the helpless shipper from

unscrupulous parties with vested interests waiting to grab any opportunity to debit unlawful surcharges. The council will continue to monitor, control and expose such unlawful practices and parties for responsible government agents to take necessary action. But make no mistake, we salute and always support those who conduct their affairs justly and lawfully.

While we understand that this is not an easy road to tread, call upon the executive committee, all members, distinguish past chairmen and the trade at large to support us in these endeavors as we step into the next chapter of the Council. We will continue to partner with the Global Shippers' Forum in these ventures particularly to address some of these necessities internationally.

I take this opportunity once again to thank our Chief guest, our sponsors, Hayley's Advantise, Expo freight limited, Kerry Logistics, Scanwell Logistics and all other sponsors and those who provided e-banners to make this event a success. A special word of thanks to our secretariat, Manori, Lakmani, Ushani from the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce for their untiring efforts not forgetting associates of the press covering today's event. Personally, permit me to pay tribute to few people who enabled me to reach this position. Mr. Hanif Yussoof who introduced me to the trade stalwarts, Mr. Rohan Masakorala who invited me to be a part of JAAF, Mr. Sean Van Dort who recognized me to join the Sri Lanka Shippers' Council, Mr. Chrisso De Mel for all his mentoring and my colleagues at Mast Industries (Far East) Limited without whom I would not be standing in front of this august assembly today.

Thank you all for your participation at our AGM post business session and hope you will have a good evening. God Bless!"

Unquote

- **Presentation made by the Chief Guest Mr. Mangala P. B. Yapa, Chairman, Board of Investment of Sri Lanka**

Quote

" Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me run through all of you a brief background of the Shippers' Council where I extracted these information from the Council's website

### **1<sup>st</sup> slide**

Sri Lanka Shippers' Council

- 50<sup>th</sup> Year in Operation & 49<sup>th</sup> AGM
- Affiliated to the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce
- 1<sup>st</sup> Shippers' Council in Asia & a member of the Global Shippers Forum (GFS)
- Member of Association of Shippers' Councils of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (ASCOBIPS), founded in 1981 & the Asian Shippers' Council founded in 2004.
- Consists of Chambers of Commerce, Trade Associations (14) & Individual Organisations (58). Managing Committee consists of 14 Product Associations.

- The apex body that represents the import/export trade in the country with a broad based representation

Now look at the **3<sup>rd</sup> Slide** where I have circled....The Asia Pacific Context

There are more people living inside this circle than outside of it.

Where is Europe? Where is England? Where is USA? Where is Australia? The people are in this circle... the bigger population is there! Not only that, it is also the fastest growing region in the world.

So on one side we have the largest population which is growing fastest, which is also enables a very large middle-income population, and Sri Lanka is just close to that.

So then the question is - Why are we stuck here? We have such a big, huge opportunity, why are we here?

**04<sup>th</sup> Slide** This is a snapshot, not today, months old, contract all ship movements, and around Sri Lanka is a heavy concentration of ship movements, and that's what you people are involved in , that's a business you are involved in...

Let me look at it from another perspective. The location of Sri Lanka, [from the side it is not very clear – sorry about it.] you could reach almost to the large segment which is covered by that 1 billion population, within a maximum 3 hours by flight. You take Singapore or Dubai, you won't have that far. It is not only that you are located in this very advantageous location, you have sea connectivity, you have air connectivity, you have a huge opportunity before you.

Let me give you one other unique advantage Sri Lanka has. As of now we have three major ports. Singapore has only one. In spite of being a small island, there are three major ports, you have Colombo, you have Trincomalee, you have Hambantota. These three ports can serve three different markets for three different purposes. So Sri Lanka can be that valuable hub. It has its geographical advantage, it is located in the right place; it has all the other natural advantages that is required.

So the growth strategy, if you look at transforming Sri Lanka in my view, which I must say, the government has very well recognized, has not orchestrated very clearly, is integrated with

global value chain, and that to be done through three sea ports and also maybe with three airports, Colombo Katunayake, Hambantota Mattala, and may be one in the eastern side, enhanced internal mobility and inclusive growth through a network of expressways, connecting all regions, enabling people and products to move easily. They are logistics experts with a developed transport system and expressways, any place in Sri Lanka is connected, maximum within two to three hours. And you have these three ports, and the airports which will also give connectivity of products and services in a very short time.

And then we come to the last one. I think it was spoken of by the previous speaker - How can we be competitive – and that's through liberalization of trade. I know that's a 'hot' topic to speak about! But without liberalization of trade, you'll be stuck where you are. With that Sri Lanka can be very competitive, not just value up, but competitive value up. And that's exactly what the government envisages today, through selected bilateral trade agreements. Creating a larger market, a market that is rapidly growing with about a four billion population.

So you change the whole paradigm from a twenty-one million population, or a twenty-two million population to a four billion population. And you become, part of the global value chain. Very simple, isn't it. The infrastructure is there, not necessarily where it is needed but better than many other places. We have the expertise. We have organizations like the Shippers Council, which is Asia's first. We have chambers like Ceylon Chamber, One hundred and eighty-one years. Again, one of the very first in Asia.

As many speakers prior to me have spoken about. The problem seems to be the public policy. Not necessarily the policy, *per say*. But is there really a connection between these policies and this strategic national vision? We can have policies and policies, but are they interconnected with where we want to be or where we want to go. This is spoken of as policy consistency. Is it current, are they valid today? Are they any longer valid in today's context?

We always talk about policy reforms, but now being on the other side of the fence, for about four-and-a half years, I know how challenging it is. When some want reform, others come and say 'we don't want it'. Some agree in the public open discussion, but come privately and say 'although I said this, don't take it too serious!' actually, as far as my business is concerned, I

could agree, but I can't say this in public, therefore I am only saying what others would like to hear – but protect me!

We talk about the policy development process, We can have an arbitrary restrictive policies, you can have a consultative process. For being a democratic country with educated people, you can say, 'okay, let's choose the consultative process. I don't want to challenge it. Because one thing Sri Lanka is good at it, they are very good at getting opinions, but not productive contributions!

Last but not least is the policy implementation. What is the point of having policies if they are not implemented? In my career I have at least contributed, four or more shipping policies in Sri Lanka. Every minister, every government develops on it. But what is the purpose, they all get dusted in some cupboard somewhere!

Now I am at the last end of my presentation. I have come to do a key note. I know this is a spaghetti bowl - lots of issues, lots of problems, I only need to give a key note. Where others can compose music. So I found two each types. One is pertaining to the individual / entity , the other is related to the process. The individual or entity, is it an individual measure or a share? Sorry to say, often this stands for our own individual indices. And that's a problem. We blame politicians, we blame bureaucrats, we blame everybody, but are we blaming ourselves? Are we looking at an immediate narrow opportunity, or are we looking at a growth long-term strategy for the country? In this game some lose, some gain. The transformation has to take place, is it vested interests or shared interest.

How do we manage public interests. It is a small island. Before this Chairman of shippers Council becomes Chairman or Exporters Association. In a small country this is quite normal. You go to Singapore, they have been almost everywhere. But you must still be able to work without conflict of interest. I will let you agree to decide. You have collective wisdom. Are you willing to listen to others? How about our values and ethics? Are we reacting situation based or are we principle based? Do we have the right leadership? Not to look at government, but in entities, institutions, companies etc. Again this will tell us what kind of leadership we need. My personal opinion is we lack severely in leadership, not only at the top, but across the entire structure.

The other key challenge is the process. The decision making process. Now that I am sitting on the public side, everyday there is a lot of frustration. Whenever you bring up an issue and try to solve it, there is a process to do it. You know the solution, you know it can be done, but it cannot be done because there is a way of doing it. So what happens – nothing! Telephone calls are given, meeting are held, decisions are made and that's it. but we are not moving! We have loads of fun doing it, but not getting anywhere. So this has to change, from process oriented to outcome, or goal oriented. You must have a target, a goal. Make sure it is done. Some people may criticize, can't help – we need to move.

I am at my last slide. There are three photographs. On the far left is ancient Sri Lanka with many ports round. That is how we became the center of the Silk Route trade at that time. Then I go to the Port Development in Colombo, from 1870, 1906, and so on and so forth to current modern day. Then the last slide is development transforming Colombo hub to close upon 12M,00 TEUs with the ECT and WTC. What touched my heart is this picture taken in 1870 when the breakwater was built. See a small tug boat there – the name of the boat we cannot read, (Anyone going into Ports Authority Chairman's office, climb the ladder, the enlarged photograph is there) and that's the tug boat that was used to construct the breakwater. What it says there is "Ready Colombo 1870" - The question I have to ask today is, and the key note that I have set for your music is "Are we ready?"

Ladies & Gentlemen, Thank you very much. "

Unquote

- Vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Mr. Russell Juriansz, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman of the Council.