

ANNUAL 2017



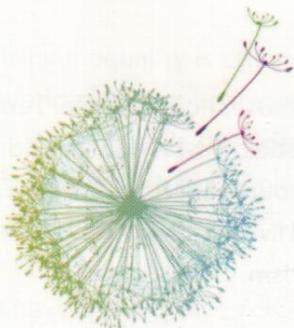
United Nations Association of Sri Lanka

Registered Office

National Secretariat General, 39/1, Cyril Jansz Mawatha, Panadura, Sri Lanka

Tel/Fax : 0094-382232123 / 0094-382243080 / 0094-382232110

E-mail : unasl@slt.lk, Web : www.unasl.org



2017
INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
FOR DEVELOPMENT



H. E. António Guterres
The Secretary General
Address to 72nd Session of the General Assembly
19th September 2017



Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
I am here in a spirit of gratitude and humility for the trust you have placed in me to serve the world's peoples. "We the peoples", and the United Nations, face grave challenges. Our world is in trouble. People are hurting and angry. They see insecurity rising, inequality growing, conflict spreading and climate changing.

The global economy is increasingly integrated, but our sense of global community may be disintegrating. Societies are fragmented. Political discourse is polarized. Trust within and among countries is being driven down by those who demonize and divide. We are a world in pieces. We need to be a world at peace. And I strongly believe that, together, we can build peace. We can restore trust and create a better world for all.

I will focus today on seven threats and tests that stand in our way. For each, the dangers are all too clear. Yet for each, if we act as truly United Nations, we can find answers.

First, the nuclear peril. The use of nuclear weapons should be unthinkable. Even the threat of their use can never be condoned. But today global anxieties about nuclear weapons are at the highest level since the end of the Cold War. The fear is not abstract. Millions of people live under a shadow of dread cast by the provocative nuclear and missile tests of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I condemn those tests unequivocally. I call on the DPRK and all Member States to comply fully with Security Council resolutions.

The solution must be political. This is a time for statesmanship. We must not sleepwalk our way into war. More broadly, all countries must show greater commitment to the universal goal of a world without nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon states have a special responsibility to lead. Today, proliferation is creating unimaginable danger, and disarmament is paralyzed.

Let me turn to the global threat of terrorism. Nothing justifies terrorism no cause, no grievance. Terrorism continues to take a rising toll of death and devastation. It is destroying societies, destabilizing regions and diverting energy from more productive pursuits. National and multilateral counter-terrorism efforts have indeed disrupted networks, reclaimed territory, prevented attacks and saved lives. But we need to intensify this work. Stronger international cooperation remains crucial against terrorism.

I am grateful to the General Assembly for approving one of my first reform initiatives: the establishment of the UN Office on Counter-Terrorism.

But it is not enough to fight terrorists on the battlefield or to deny them funds. We must do more to address the roots of radicalization, including real and perceived injustices and high levels of unemployment and grievance among young people. Political, religious and community leaders have a duty to stand up against hatred and serve as models of tolerance and moderation. Together, we need to make full use of UN instruments, and expand our efforts to support survivors.

Third, unresolved conflicts and systematic violations of international humanitarian law. We are all shocked by the dramatic escalation of sectarian tensions in Myanmar's Rakhine State. A vicious cycle of persecution, discrimination, radicalization and violent repression has led more than 400,000 desperate people to flee, putting regional stability at risk. I take note of State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi's address today – and her intention to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State that was chaired by Kofi Annan within the shortest time possible.

The United Nations is forging closer partnerships with key regional organizations such as the African Union, the European Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We continue to strengthen and modernize peacekeeping – protecting civilians and saving lives around the world. And since taking office, I have sought to bring together the parties to conflict, as well as those that have influence on them.

They may speak of a willingness to compromise. But their actions too often betray a thirst for outright military victory, at any cost. Violations of international humanitarian law are rampant, and impunity prevails. Civilians are paying the highest price, with women and girls facing systematic violence and oppression. I have seen in my country, and in my years at the United Nations, that it is possible to move from war to peace, and from dictatorship to democracy. Let us push ahead with a surge in diplomacy today and a leap in conflict prevention for tomorrow.

Fourth, climate change puts our hopes in jeopardy. Last year was the hottest ever. The past decade has been the hottest on record. Average global temperature keeps climbing, glaciers are receding and permafrost is declining. Millions of people and trillions of assets are at risk from rising seas and other climate disruptions. The number of natural disasters has quadrupled since 1970.

We should not link any single weather event with climate change. But scientists are clear that such extreme weather is precisely what their models predict.

Fifth, rising inequality is undermining the foundations of society and the social compact. The integration of the world's economies, expanding trade and stunning advances in technology have brought remarkable benefits. More people have risen out of extreme poverty than ever before. The global middle class is also bigger than ever. More people are living longer, healthier lives. But the gains have not been equal. We see gaping disparities in income, opportunity and access to the fruits of research and innovation.

But we have a blueprint to change course to achieve fair globalization. That plan is the 2030 Agenda. Half our world is female. Half our world is under 25 years of age. We cannot meet the Sustainable Development Goals without drawing on the power of women and the enormous energy of young people. We know how fast transformation can take place in our day and age. We know that with global assets and wealth worth trillions, we are not suffering from a lack of funds.

The dark side of innovation is the sixth threat we must confront and it has moved from the frontier to the front door. Technology will continue to be at the heart of shared progress. But innovation, as essential as it is for humankind, can bring unintended consequences.

Finally, I want to talk about human mobility, which I do not perceive as a threat even if some do. I see it as a challenge that, if properly managed, can help bring the world together. Let us be clear: we do not only face a refugee crisis; we also face a crisis of solidarity. Every country has the right to control its own borders. But that must be done in a way that protects the rights of people on the move.

We also need to do more to face the challenges of migration. The truth is that the majority of migrants move in a well-ordered fashion, making positive contributions to their host countries and homelands. It is when migrants move in unregulated ways that the risks become clear – risks for states but most especially risks for migrants themselves exposed to perilous journeys. Migration has always been with us. Climate change, demographics, instability, growing inequalities, and aspirations for a better life, as well as unmet needs in labour markets, mean it is here to stay. The answer is effective international cooperation in managing migration to ensure that its benefits are most widely distributed, and that the human rights of all concerned are properly protected.

I myself am a migrant, as are many of you in this room. But no one expected me to risk my life on a leaky boat or to cross a desert in the back of a truck to find employment outside my country of birth. Safe migration cannot be limited to the global elite. Refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants are not the problem; the problem lies in conflict, persecution and hopeless poverty. I have been pained to see the way refugees and migrants have been stereotyped and scapegoated and to see political figures stoke resentment in search of electoral gain. In today's world, all societies are becoming multicultural, multiethnic and multi-religious. This diversity must be seen as a richness, not as a threat. But to make diversity a success, we need to invest in social cohesion, so that all people feel that their identities are respected and that they have a stake in the community as a whole. We need to reform our world, and I am committed to reforming the United Nations. Together, we have embarked on a comprehensive reform effort:

- to build a UN development system to support States in bettering peoples' lives;
- to reinforce our ability to safeguard people's peace, security and human rights;
- and to embrace management practices that advance those goals instead of hindering them.

We have launched a new victims-centered approach to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. We have a roadmap to achieve gender parity at the United Nations – and we are already on our way. We are here to serve: to relieve the suffering of “we the peoples”; and to help fulfill their dreams. We come from different corners of the world. Our cultures, religions and traditions vary widely – and, I would say, wonderfully. At times, there are competing interests among us. At others, there is even open conflict. That is exactly why we need the United Nations. That is exactly why multilateralism is more important than ever. We call ourselves the international community. We must act as one, because only together, as United Nations, can we fulfil the promise of the Charter and advance human dignity for all.

Thank you. Shokran. Xie Xie. Merci. Spasibo. Gracias. Obrigado.

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák
President of the Seventy Second Session of the
United Nations General Assembly



On 31 May 2017, the General Assembly of the United Nations elected H. E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák of Slovakia as President of its seventy second session, which spans from September 2017 to September 2018. At the time of his election, Mr. Lajčák was serving his third term as Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, a position he held since April 2012. From April 2012 to March 2016, Mr. Lajčák also served as Deputy Prime Minister of his country.

Mr. Lajčák has dedicated his professional life to diplomatic service, representing both the Slovak Republic and the international community on posts in Brussels, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

He joined the foreign service of the then Czechoslovakia in 1988 and was posted in Moscow from 1991 to 1993, initially as an assistant to the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia, and from 1993, after Czechoslovakia peacefully split, in the same position at the newly formed Slovak Embassy there.

Upon his return to Slovakia in 1993, Mr. Lajčák played a vital role in the transformation of his young country. He actively helped to build and shape the Slovak national Foreign Service as Director of the Cabinet of the Foreign Minister of the newly established Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia.

In 1994, at the age of 31, Mr. Lajčák was appointed as the Slovak Ambassador to Japan, thus becoming the youngest-ever head of a diplomatic mission of Slovakia as well as the youngest foreign ambassador serving in Japan. From 1999 to 2001, Mr. Lajčák served as the Executive Assistant to the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Balkans, Eduard Kukan.

Following his tenure as Slovak Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia between 2001 and 2005 Mr. Lajčák served as Political Director at the Foreign Ministry of the Slovak Republic from 2005 to 2007. A key figure in the mediation of the post-conflict crises in the Western Balkans, Mr. Lajčák negotiated, organized and supervised the referendum on the independence of Montenegro in 2006 on behalf of the European Union High Representative for Common and Security Policy, Javier Solana.

In 2007, Mr. Lajčák was appointed High Representative of the International Community and European Union Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During his tenure, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the landmark Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union. From 2009 to July 2010, Mr. Lajčák served as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

From 2010 to 2012, Mr. Lajčák helped shape the newly formed diplomatic service of the European Union, the European External Action Service, as its Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia. In addition, he also served as the EU's Chief Negotiator for the Association Agreements of the EU with Ukraine and Moldova, as well as the EU Representative for the "5+2 Talks" on the Transnistrian Settlement Process.

Mr. Lajčák is a graduate of the Moscow State Institute for International Relations and has a law degree from the Comenius University in Bratislava.

He is married and has two daughters.

**Message from Ms. Una McCauley,
UN Resident Coordinator and
UNDP Resident Representative in Sri Lanka**



I extend my warmest wishes to the United Nations Association as we celebrate the 72nd United Nations Day.

We are working towards equitable and sustainable development with the government of Sri Lanka to ensure that we leave no one behind. This concept of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, is at the heart of the UN Sustainable Development Framework for 2018 – 2022. This Framework jointly signed by the government and the UN, will guide the UN system's ongoing and future work in Sri Lanka promoting reconciliation and supporting national efforts on achieving the SDGs. In order to ensure we leave no one behind however we need everyone to

spread the word about the goals and be committed to achieving them.

All of us can be sustainable development advocates and spread the word about the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Let us all work together to help all human beings achieve dignity and equality; to build a greener planet; and to make sure no one is left behind.

I take this opportunity to express my best wishes to the United Nations Association, and my gratitude to your vital contributions towards our development efforts.



Members of the visiting delegation from the United Nations Association of China with the State Minister of Foreign Affairs Vasantha Senanayake and members of the UNASL.

Four member delegation was in Sri Lanka at the invitation of the UNASL in September 2017

They had discussions with senior officer of the Foreign Ministry and officials of the organizations of the United Nations resident in Sri Lanka

They also visited the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy during the visit.

H.E. Maithripala Sirisena
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

The Address to the 72st Session of the General Assembly of United Nations
19th September 2017.



I wish you all a good evening,
 His Excellency President Miroslav Lajcak, President of the 72 General
 Assembly of the United Nations,
 Secretary-General of United Nations,
 His Excellency Antonio Gutterres,
 Excellencies, Honorable Delegates and distinguished guests,

It is my greatest pleasure to address this annual assembly for the third time as the President of Sri Lanka. The theme of this 72nd Assembly is 'Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet'. Given the challenges of that the world is facing today, I consider theme highly relevant.

There are a few promises that I made to the people of Sri Lanka when I contested the Presidential election in January 2015. One of the key promises among them was that, because Sri Lanka's Executive President had been vested with more powers than any other leader in the world, I would curtail those excessive powers of the Executive Presidency and would transfer those powers to the Parliament. I have set an example to my country as well as the entire world by duly curtailing those powers and transferring them to the Parliament.

In countries that protect and nurture democracy, it is important that leaders who come to power in them, use their power in a good manner and protect democracy, while building a fair society. Yet, when we look at the last two decades and the world history, we see that, because of their unwillingness leave it to successors, some leaders let their countries lose peace, sometimes even leading to international divisions and disharmony. We have a good understanding of such phenomena at national and international levels. Against a backdrop such as this, I must state to this esteemed audience, that we have been able to complete two and half successful years in protecting and promoting democracy, since ending the rule of a group of people who has kept power to themselves by restricting freedom of the citizens.

In the development vision of our country, we declared year 2017 as the year for freeing the nation from poverty. At present, the whole world is engaged in an attempt to free itself from poverty. In line with declaration of the Year 2017 as the year of poverty alleviation, many development projects have been launched to strengthen the domestic economy.

As you all know, the armed conflict that dragged on for nearly 30 years in my country, weakened our economy. We were able to defeat the armed separatist movement that attempted to divide our country by resorting to terrorism. We could restore peace and democracy and march forward as a free and peaceful country. With the lessons learnt from the bad experiences of the conflict, we could turn a new page in our path to sustainable economic development by focusing on domestic agriculture and local industrialization. Specially, my government emphasized the protection of our environment in our drive to achieve sustainability of our development.

I must mention that, today, the whole world is facing challenges posed by severe changes in climate. I would like to propose that the community of nations must focus on implementing the Paris Accord that the world reached in 2015, by further improving the unity that we reached by signing that accord. We must remember that the Paris Accord is critically important to future of the entire biosphere and humanity.

In order to incrementally free our nation from poverty, my government has launched the 'Gramashakthi' national programme. We have also declared a clear economic plan until 2025. I believe that the proposed economic plan for 2025 will revitalize our economy and help reduce poverty by further strengthening local agriculture and industries.

Mr President, children all over the world, including in my country, are facing many challenges. We launched a National Programme for protecting the nation's children. They need to be saved from intoxicants, and from abuse. I would like to highlight the need to implement targeted programmes at national and international levels to ensure the safety of our children.

The world has recognized the need to ensure the rights of women. However, there are still countries and societies, where women are not treated equally. In my country, more than 52% of the population are women. New changes in our Constitution protect the rights of women. New measures include the legislation that makes it mandatory that a minimum of 25% candidates at elections should be women.

While it is important to work for the progress of women and children, it is also necessary to fight the menace of drugs and other intoxicants. Sri Lanka has launched a nation-wide campaign to fight drugs and other intoxicants. However, while noting that they pose a threat to the humanity, I underscore the need to implement a broader international response to the threat posed by drugs, and other intoxicants. As I see it, drug prevention and mitigation oriented programmes with a broad acceptance and consensus are the need of the day.

When I came into power having gone through nearly three decades of war, we were facing two main challenges. The first of them was the huge debt burden on the economy. We had to pay insupportable amounts for servicing our debt, emptying our coffers. The other was facing the allegations of war time human rights violations by United Nations and the UN Human Rights Council. However, in our new programme to revitalize the domestic economy, we have been able to identify a plan to reduce and incrementally free ourselves from our foreign debt while encouraging foreign investments.

At the same time, as a government, we are paying serious attention to the aforementioned allegations and to find solutions to them as a matter of priority. Mainly, my government has performed well in terms of strengthening democracy and protecting human rights. I must mention here that the government will continue to ensure their progress in the future.

My government is committed to work tirelessly to achieving reconciliation by fostering understanding among all ethnic and linguistic groups, while eliminating mutual suspicion and hatred in order to create a society where all can live freely and harmoniously. Further, we are dedicated to ensure that the country will accomplish economic prosperity while promoting a moral and disciplined society. Specially, my government is committed to the creating a fair and just society by strengthening rule of law.

Mr President, I must mention here that, at a moment when Sri Lanka is committed to a course of good governance by strengthening democracy, human rights, and fundamental rights while winning the goodwill of the international community, I look forward to the kind support of the United Nations. We have been a member of United Nations for 62 years. Sri Lanka has always been a country that has respected its treaties and conventions, agreements and rules and regulations while acting to improve such relations further. As such, in our country's journey where we protect our independence and sovereignty, we respectfully request the support of the international community for us to go on a moderate but steady path achieve our targets in order to find sustainable solutions to the allegations leveled against us.

Some extremist groups are expecting a high speed. Some extremist groups want radical solutions. However, as a country that has faced a three decade long war, where deep divisions have been existed, I request the support of all of you to promote peace and fraternity, so that my beloved country and its

people can rise from the current situation. That is why I emphasize that it is for a slow and a successful journey that we need the support.

We all have heard that speedy journey is a dangerous journey. Therefore, I believe that you will understand the complex nature of issues that hinder the instant and radical solutions that some impatient groups are asking for. As such, I reiterate with respect the need of support from the United Nations and its member states for my country to ensure the non-recurrence of war by fostering peace and harmony among all communities in Sri Lanka. I wish to conclude my speech wishing good luck to the President and the membership and by requesting the blessings for Sri Lanka to emerge as an economically prosperous illustrious country in the world where democracy is strong and the gruesome past never repeats.

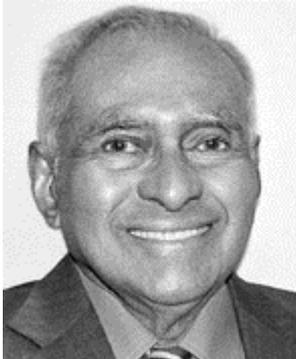


The Secretary General Antonio Guterres met President Sirisena at United Nations while attending 72nd Sessions of the General Assembly. The Secretary General promised to provide assistance to Sri Lanka in its efforts to build up a prosperous nation.

He also commended the president's commitment in adopting agreement set out in the Paris convention. And expressed his appreciation on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

President invited to Secretary General to visit Sri Lanka to observe the progress.

Prof. Lakshman Marasinghe
President
United Nations Association of Sri Lanka
Message on the 72nd Observance Day



Last year when I wrote my annual message I was hopeful that the world was slowly but steadily creeping out of a terrible *cul-de sac* and moving relentlessly into an open space where breathing some gasps of fresh air becomes possible. I thought that ISIS was something in the past, and the decade old conflict of Syria is going slowly to a close. I even mentioned how very kindly the weather has been freed from threats of massive destruction. The sixty-sixth year of the UN, I thought, would be a period of milk and honey of tranquility and peace.

It is with profound sadness that I write today that those hopes now appear to have been shattered. Stretching from the East to the West, we have the terrible events in Myanmar, one of the cradles of Buddhism, and administered by one who had once been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, who occupies a position of power at the Helm. The terrible exodus that has now become, an insoluble problem for Bangladesh, and has become one of the worst human tragedies of this decade.

The Middle East continues to be a troubled area of human habitation, with the Civil Wars in Yemen and Syria, continuing unabated. The more recent divisions in Kurdistan and Catalonia adds to the threat of breaking up of settled international borders. The bitter icing on this cake comes from North Korea and Iran, both Nuclear Powers, in their disputes with the USA. To add extra political burning cinders to this boiling cauldron, is where a group of 11 Middle Eastern Powers have taken upon themselves to isolate the Sheikdom of Kuwait. This has raised both political and economic issues.

The Gods that monitor the climatic changes too have had forgotten that "Power and Kindness" should go together. They have unleashed hurricanes along the Atlantic and devastating bush fires along the Pacific coasts of the USA.

We live in a period of mounting chaos, between and among these terrible episodes, some man made, some nature made. Although man may not be directly responsible for the occurrence of some of these calamities, man (includes women) are centrally responsible for occurrences of many of these terrible happenings.

It is important that the rest of the world must, in these conditions live in hope that wiser counsel would prevail and find among the teachings of the Buddha, the Bible, the Quran and the Bhgawat Githa some solace, and self-containment, so that the rest of us would remain both holistic and sane.

PROF. LAKSHMAN MARASINGHE
LL.B (Lond) LL.M(Lond) PH.D(Lond) LL.D(Col)
PRESIDENT

Mr. Errol Smith
Secretary General
United Nations Association of Sri Lanka
Message on the 72nd Observance Day



I am pleased to pen this message on the occasion of the 72nd United Nations Day National Observance which also marks the 67th Anniversary of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka

The United Nations Association in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (UNASL) was established under the guidance of the late Right Honorable D.S. Senanayake PC, MP, the first Prime Minister of Ceylon, on the 19th August, 1950, five years before Sri Lanka was admitted as a Member State of the United Nations on 14th December, 1955, together with 15 other countries.

In 1951, the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka was admitted as the sole National Affiliate of the World Federation of United Nations Association (WFUNA), joining the rest of the world comprising around 100 member countries, in hosting seminars, lectures, educational sessions and inter-school competitions throughout the country, thus creating a better understanding among communities. UNA-Sri Lanka is today one of the most senior members of the Federation, actively involved in the work of WFUNA.

We are immensely grateful to the Diplomatic Membership of the UNASL comprising Ambassadors and High Commissioners accredited to Sri Lanka for their valuable contribution and we are in the process of strengthening our ties and relationships, as in the past.

Let me express my sincere gratitude to the entire membership of UNSAL, including all Special Life, Life, Annual, Honorary and Corporate Members as well as the students and teachers of our 326 Study Circle Schools island wide, for their active participation and contribution in numerous ways in promoting and propagate the United Nations, in Sri Lanka.

The declaration of the Year 2017 as “International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development” is indeed very pertinent, especially to Sri Lanka, since Sri Lanka is a well known Tourist destination with natural and historical tourist attractions. UNA-Sri Lanka is actively involved in taking the message of the United Nations to the grassroots of Sri Lanka with the co-operation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Information Center. It also plays a significant role through its contribution towards maintaining peace and security, promoting human rights and democracy, providing solutions to environmental issues, poverty alleviation and economic development.

I would like to pay a tribute to the Founder/Secretary-General of the UNA-Sri Lanka, the late Mr. Kumaran Fernando for his great initiative, commitment and dedication towards the ideals of the United Nations. May I also express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the dynamic team of volunteers of the National Executive Committee of the UNASL for their commitment and dedication, which is the strength of the Association.

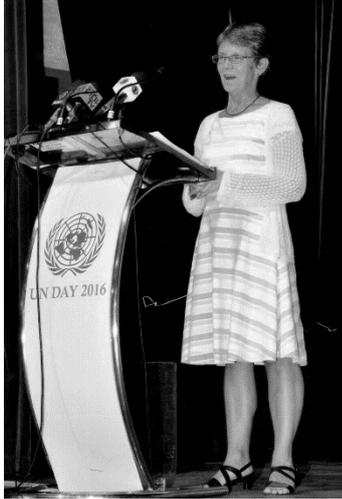
On behalf of the UNA-Sri Lanka, I wish to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the United Nations in Sri Lanka and its specialized agencies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and all those who have contributed in many ways towards the success of this event, as well as for the progress of the activities of the UNASL and we look forward to your unstinted support and co-operation, in all our future activities.

ERROL SMITH
SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Activities of the UNASL during the year 2016-2017

UNASL conducted its activities for the 66th year under the guidance of the National Executive Committee. Highlights of activities are indicated below.

1. National Observance of the 71st United Nations Day.



United Nations Association of Sri Lanka conducted the National Observance of the 71st United Nations Day at a function at the Bishop's College Auditorium, Colombo 03 on 23rd October 2016 with the distinguished participation of Ms. Una McCauley, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Sri Lanka as the chief guest. Members of the Diplomatic corps and Mr. D. M. Gunasekara, General Manager of the Bank Of Ceylon and other distinguished guests participated. Teachers and Students from many Study Circles of the UNASL around the country also participated. The function commenced with the recital of the National Anthem and a Pooja Dance by the Police Cultural troop. Thereafter the President of UNASL Prof. Lakshman Marasinghe welcomed the gathering. The first copy of the UNASL Annual 2016 was ceremoniously handed over to the chief guest. Thereafter T. M. S. D. N. Bandara of St. Sylvester's College, Kandy the student who won the Best Student Speaker contest delivered the keynote address on the theme

"International Year of Pulses".

Ms. Una McCauley the chief guest speaking thereafter indicated the importance of observing these functions by the National Organizations linked to the UN. Dr. G. P. P. Silva spoke in Sinhala and English for the benefit of many students who participated. Thereafter awards were distributed to winners of the Speech contest, General Knowledge contest and the Essay contest. In order to encourage participation of teachers in the Study Circle activities, cash awards were handed over to Teachers in Charge of Study Circle activities in the five schools that did well. Special awards were given to members of the UNASL in recognition of their active support to the organization. A special award was presented to Dr. Ajith C. S. Perera well known Accessibility Rights Activist for his continued participation in activities relating to Accessibility Rights of disabled people. There were few individuals and organizations which helped the UNASL to conduct this event successfully. Among them were Mr. D. M. Gunasekara, General Manager of Bank of Ceylon, Mr Haroon Hussaindeen, Director Luckey De Two Pvt Ltd, Deshamanya Eng. N Rajkumar, Dr F Nizreen Fazeen and Mr M Fazeen Junkeer, Directors of Winspire International Education and Mr V B Meyvin, Proprietor of Grandpass Medical Centre who assisted us financially, many other well wishers and members of the UNASL who assisted us in many ways.

2. The Schools Study Circle Programme.

The UNA Study Circle Programme inaugurated in 1981 has a membership of 328 partner schools at present. The Study Circle Programme, 2017 was conducted at the Premises of the Sri Vijaya Saugatha Vidyalaya, Panadura on the 23rd of September as the part of the UN Day celebrations. Three contests namely, the Speech contest on the UN theme for 2017, the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, an Essay contest on "There are many challengers to be faced in the moments towards Sustainable Development" and the General Knowledge contest were conducted. Details of winners are indicated elsewhere.

3. Kanagawa art Exhibition.

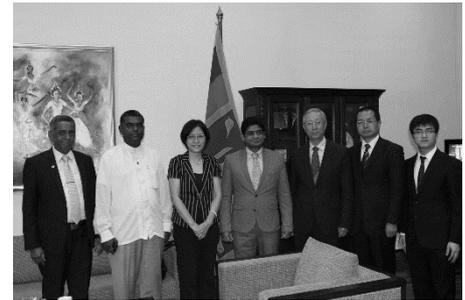
As usual the UNASL forwarded Artworks of children from Study Circles of 4 – 15 years to the 20th Kanagawa Biennial World Children's Art Exhibition conducted by the Japan Overseas Cooperative Association (JOCA). We are happy to announce that S. A. H. M. R. Santhush Roshan Bandara Uggoda of Nalanda College, Colombo has won President of the United Nations Association of Japan award for his painting. His award will be presented to him on the National Observance of the UN Day

4. Annual General Meeting 2017.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 26th March 2017 at the National Secretariat, Cyril Jansz Mawatha, Panadura following the Hoisting of the National Flag and the UN Flag. The report of the Annual General Meeting of March 2016 and the Financial Report were presented and approved by the members. At the AGM Professor Lakshman Marasinghe was elected unanimously as President for the Fourth year in succession.

5. UNA China delegation meet State Minister of Foreign Affairs

The delegation from the United Nations Association China visited Sri Lanka and met State Minister of Foreign Affairs Vasantha Senanayake at his ministry recently. The President of UNA China Lu Shumin, Vice President and Director General Zhang Dan, Deputy Director Zhang Yi, and You Bai Shun with Deputy Executive Chairman M.M.M. Rushanudeen and the Secretary General of UNA Sri Lanka Errol Smith were also present.

**6. Recent Floods and Landslides in Sri Lanka**

The recent torrential rains in Sri Lanka resulted in severe flooding and landslides in many parts of the country. Roads were severely inundated whilst several people lost their lives as well as over 500,000 persons were displaced due and rendered homeless in many areas.

It was observed that the government machinery had also moved in, in a big way providing immediate necessities and medical aid. The United Nations Association of Sri Lanka also worked closely with the government and other voluntary organizations in providing relief to the affected persons.

The damage caused by the floods and landslides were huge and the government along with other NGO's addressed these issues promptly including the environmental clean-up or debris management which needed urgent attention. The Sri Lanka Security Forces and Police played a major role along with the NGO's in this endeavor.

The UNA Sri Lanka has plans to identify schools within the UNA Study Circle and provide any educational equipment which had been damaged and needs replacement.

7. SOUTHERN CONFERENCE IN GALLE

Southern Conference of UN Study Circles organized by United Nations Study Circle of Richmond College, Galle was held on 13th March 2017 at Richmond College Auditorium. Children from other schools in the vicinity of Galle also participated in the conference conducted under the distinguished patronage of Mr. Sampath Weeragoda Principal, Richmond College and attended by Vice Principals Mr. Piyasiri Kumarage and Ms. Devika Haputhanthri and Ms. R. R. H. Priyadarshani and Ms. M. N. D. Abeysinghe teachers in charge of the study circle at Richmond. UNASL was represented by the executive chairman, Secretary General and other members of the Executive Committee. The Principal welcomed all those who were present inclusive of the students from nearby schools and teachers in charge, Ms. Kumari Wikkremasinghe Knowledge Management Focal Point, United Nations Information Center conducted a session on Sustainable Development Goals. Mr. M. M. Zawahir executive chairman of the UNASL, Dr. G. P. P. Silva former Chairman, Sumathi Fernando Member, and Executive Committee made presentations on various aspect of activities of the UNASL and SDGS. There was also the contest to develop a logo for the Southern conference. An opportunity was also given to representatives of other schools to express their thoughts and conference ended after the vote of thanks by Ms. Priyadarshani.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

IN THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

OF SRI LANKA



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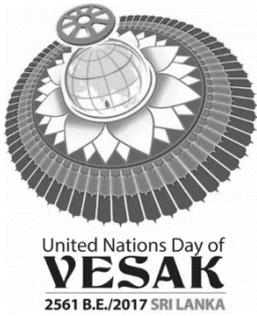
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Vesak Celebrations in Sri Lanka *and the Kandy (Mahanuwara) Declaration*

Vesak celebrations in Sri Lanka had a special significance this year, as celebrations were held under the auspices of the United Nations. In addition to the traditional activities of observances of Atasil and other religious activities a number of Vesak Zones were set up in many parts of the country which attracted thousands of people. There were many creative items including laser – illuminated pandals which was a key attraction of this year's Vesak celebrations.

However the main item was a symposium on the theme “Buddhist Teaching for Social Justice and Sustainable World Peace” organized by the Ministry of “Buddha Sasana”. Mahanayake Theros of all three Nikayas and religious dignitaries from Sri Lanka and across the Buddhist world and over 600 others across the globe participated at this conference.

“Vesak” was formally recognized by the United Nations only in 1999 and the celebrations have been held mainly in Thailand and Vietnam. At the conference held in Thailand in 2016, it was decided that Sri Lanka will host the celebrations this year.

The ceremony was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India Hon. Narendra Modi on 12th May 2017 while Madame Bidhya devi Bandari , the President of Nepal graced the closing ceremony held in the vicinity of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy. At the end of the conference a declaration in the name of “Mahanuwara Prakashanaya” was adopted unanimously.

The declaration which was adopted at the conclusion of the symposium is indicated below.

The United Nation Vesak Day Council unanimously agreed to adopt this declaration on this historic occasion of conducting the closing ceremony with blessings of Sacred Tooth Relic of Tooth Relic Temple in Kandy (Mahanuwara), Most Venerable Mahanayakes and Sangarajahs, venerable Members Maha Sangha and Her Excellency Bidhya Devi Bhandari, the President of Nepal who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and with the participation of His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, the President of the Republic of Sri Lanka, Dr Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe, Minister of Buddhsasana and Justice of Sri Lanka and many other dignitaries at Mahamaluwa of the sacred Tooth Relic Temple in Kandy (Mahanuwara) as follows;

1. In realizing the long felt need to have an aligned organization among Buddhist Communities underpinned by solidarity, solemn initiatives shall be taken to form such an organization with minimum delay in furtherance of our objectives and aspirations based on values and principles of the teachings of the Buddha.
2. In consideration of the challenges faced by Buddhist communities all over the world plausible methodology shall be evolved to address and encounter them as one community.
3. In considering the fact that tendency of materialism is superseding spiritualism, measures shall be taken to forestall the danger of not only of the debilitation of humanity but also calamities which may break out in consequence of such an inimical transition

4. In deciphering the hand writing on the wall which sounds an alarming danger to the existence of mankind as a consequence of the production and distribution of weaponry of mass destruction, measures shall be taken to ward off such production and distribution as a matter of great urgency and also to work in closer collaboration with international agencies and countries dedicated to ensure the restoration and retention of peaceful and harmonious environment in the world.

5. In considering the unprecedented destruction of the environment that is being caused continuously, measures shall be taken to create awareness among the world community and to work in unison with organizations and countries which are dedicated to protect the environment.

6. In view of the speedy addiction of the younger generations to drugs and narcotics, measures shall be taken to create an awareness among them to the grave danger of it and to take every possible step to salvage them from their predicament.

7. In considering the incorrigible disaster which is being constantly caused due to religious disharmony, our council shall play a prominent role in ensuring long lasting inter-religious harmony in the world.

8. In view of the alarming decline of morals and spirituality, steps shall be taken to set-up a media network to disseminate the message of Dhamma leading towards a virtuous life based on Buddhist principles.

9. In considering the overall deterioration of the human kind and the potential danger of the erosion of human values and qualities, the measures shall be taken to disseminate the teaching of the Enlightened One to help create a world free of conflict and strife by following the path enunciated by the Buddha.

Sri Lanka being the country which preserved and protected the Dhamma over a period of two millennia, its Government expressed its commitment and dedication to extend its fullest support and cooperation to United Nations as well as our Council to disseminate the Noble Dhamma for the achievement of the above mentioned sublime objectives and aspirations and to ensure a world of peace and serene for posterity.

May Triple Gem Bless profusely shower upon all of you!!!

We publish below some observations on the relevance and the timeliness of the Kandy Declaration by Mrs Usula wijesuriya well known scholar in the field Buddhist philosophy and an award winning authoress.

Comments on the Kandy (Mahanuwara) Declaration 12th to 14th May 2017

“In this world of storm and strife, hatred and violence, the message of the Buddha shines like a radiant sun. Perhaps at no time was that message more needed than in the world of the atomic and hydrogen bombs. Two thousand six hundred years have only added to the vitality and the truth of that message. Let us remember that immortal message and try to fashion our thoughts and actions in the light of that teaching. We may face with equanimity even the terrors of the atomic bomb age and help a little in promoting right thinking and right action”.

Sri Nehru, Former Prime Minister of India

This tribute made more than twenty years ago holds true even today. Perhaps it is more meaningful now, more than it was when Sri Nehru made these comments, for the world is moving towards its own destruction socially, morally and environmentally. The Buddha foresaw these trends and advised how man could avoid these pitfalls and make his world a safe and fruitful place.

In this context the Kandy (Mahanuwara) Declaration is timely. In the year 2000 a resolution was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations for International recognition of the day of Vesak at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations offices. This resolution was passed with the initiation of the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister at that time, Mr. L. Kadiragamar. This was only a beginning. It was only a mark of respect for one of the oldest religions in the world. The Kandy (Mahanuwara) declaration led to the true and deep contribution Buddhism could make towards the United Nation's goal of Achieving Sustainable World development in 2030. The Symposium was held on the theme "Buddhist Teachings for Social Justice and sustainable world Peace" which is in agreement of the United Nations goal. Sri Lanka being the only country which chronicled the "Tripitaka" Canon and preserved the teachings of the Buddha, it is quite appropriate that this symposium was held in Sri Lanka. Therefore the United Nations Vesak Day Council unanimously agreed to adopt this declaration in Sri Lanka.

What can Buddhism offer for Social Justice and Sustainable World Peace?

In this multi-Cultural, multi Lingual, multi Ethnic world, people are struggling to find personal and universal Peace. It is becoming more and more elusive because of greed for power and selfishness. Buddhism has the answer. The Buddhist view, that all people are equal is relevant today as it was 2600 years ago. So says the "Vasettha Sutta". Mankind is biologically the same and divisions in human society are mere conventional classifications. It further states that a person's spiritual advancement defines whether he is "high" or "low". Birth does not define his status in life.

A definition of a Righteous State or Social Justice may be traced back to 306 BC when Arahant Mahinda giving his first admonition to the King Devanampiya Tissa said "O, great King, the birds of the air and the beasts have as equal right to live and move about in any part of the land as thou".

How are these values incorporated in the Symposium?

The theme for this year's conference is "Buddhist Teachings for Social Justice and Sustainable World Peace". The four main topics were Social and Natural Justice in the Buddhist Perspective, Inter religious understanding for the Common future of Mankind, Buddhist Forum for Economics and Promotion of Cultural Tourism and International Buddhist Media Net Work.

All these targets are within the reach of humanity.

"When we read the Buddha's discourses, we are impressed by his spirit of reason. His ethical path has for its first step, right views, a rational outlook. He endeavours to brush aside all cobwebs that interfere with mankind's vision of itself and its destiny."

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

We have only got to see ourselves as we really are.

In 2002, the World summit on sustainable Development further clarified the objectives to be achieved through sustainable development as; “*economic, social and environmental*”, referring to them as the “three pillars” of sustainable development. Those three pillars incorporate the “four bench marks” set out in the Dag Hammarskjold Report. The Johannesburg Declaration at the World Summit, in 2002, created “a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the independent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development, namely; economic development, social development and environmental protection at Local, National, Regional and Global levels”. These three pillars of sustainable development may be traced to its antecedents in the four bench marks for development proposed in the *What Now* Report of the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation of Habitat, Food, Health and Education.

Sustainable Development Goals

Sri Lanka’s work to date

The ministry of Sustainable Development and Wild Life has been entrusted with activities relating to achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

A separate unit in the ministry has been formed to carry out this work. This unit will work as a central agency to coordinate with all stake holders and to facilitate research and all other work.

A Strategic Plan is being prepared and the intention is to prepare a road map which needs to be followed in our path towards Sustainable Development.

Tourism

In order to the develop the tourism sector a detailed strategic plan for the period 2017 – 20 has been prepared. A huge work load has been identified for further development of the tourism sector. However substantial amount of work needs to be carried out.

Environment

Ministry of Mahaveli Development continues to work in the areas relating to environmental protection and the development of eco-friendly economic activities. Substantial amount of work has been conducted in this area and the work is continuing.

Coordination with UN agencies

It appears that a fair amount of work relating to coordination has to be conducted. It is noted that Sri Lanka has agreed to conduct a Voluntary National Review on the achievements of SDGs in 2018. All units involved in SDGs may have work together to carry out a successful review.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Where are we

and

Where to

The UNASL is among the pioneers in Sri Lanka in dissemination of information relating to the 2030 Agenda for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A detailed account on SDGs including a summary description of the 17 Goals and the process through which the SDGs came into existence was published in UNASL Annual of 2015 even before the Agenda for 2030 was formally approved by the General Assembly (GA).

The Annual for 2016 followed up on the work of the previous year by publishing a short note with the title, “**Path Towards 2030**”. It contained information on follow up and review of the implementation of the SDGs and the role that the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) was expected to play in the follow up and review.

The Annual for 2017 continues in the same vein in dissemination of information relating to follow up and review.

The follow up of SDGs commenced in 2016 under the guidance of the High Level Political Forum on the theme ensuring that “**No one is left behind**”. The Theme for 2017 was “**Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in the Changing World**”. It was also decided to review 6 of the 17 Goals namely No.1 on poverty, No.2 on Zero Hunger, No.3 on Good Health, No.5 on Gender Equality, No.9 on Sustainable Industrialization and No. 14 on Life below Water. This work was carried out by the HLPF with the assistance of the various organs of the UN. In addition, the office of the Secretary General also prepared a report with the title “Progress Towards Sustainable Development Goals.” This report which was prepared with the assistance of other UN Agencies was used as a background paper in the review of the Goals mentioned above. These discussions were carried out at the High Level Political Forum convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and was held from 10th July to 19th July 2017. These discussions also included a three day Ministerial meeting.

The review of the HLPF indicated, that further work is needed in all areas of SDGs. Even though space does not permit to discuss details relating to individual goals, it indicated that a substantial amount of work has to be carried out in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda. It also appeared that a more concerted effort is required from all the stakeholders inclusive of the business and industrial sectors and other non - government entities in the march towards fulfilling the targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Two important factors have been highlighted at the discussions this year.

One was the arrangement to conduct Voluntary National Reviews by member countries. These reviews could be the basis for regular reviews by the HLPF in the future. This year, 43 countries have conducted Voluntary Reviews. Further 48 countries, including Sri Lanka have agreed to conduct Voluntary National Reviews in 2018. It is clear that, these reviews indicate the need for an increase in the level of enthusiasm among all stakeholders.

The other important factor was, the recognition of the need for a strong statistical base for proper review and moving towards the future. The need for a detailed statistical base was discussed in many fora and a **team** of experts was entrusted with this task. A substantial amount of work has been completed and many countries have commenced developing their own base indicators so that proper statistical information can be provided to all stakeholders inclusive of policy makers and reviewers.

In addition to the reviews discussed above, there was another detailed study conducted on the initiation of Mr. Peter Thompson, the outgoing President of the General Assembly. They undertook an extensive range of activities during the 71st session aimed at delivering a universal push to transform our world through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

He organized a team of experts to study all aspects of Sustainable Development, and conducted detailed discussions with all stakeholders and arrived at the conclusions indicated below. In view of the comprehensive nature of the conclusions, all conclusive comments are reproduced below for the benefit of the readers.

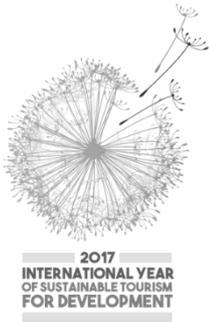
- SDG momentum is growing, but implementation is not yet taking place at the speed or scale required.
- Governments are clearly embracing the SDGs, but fidelity to the 2030 Agenda requires a greater focus on integration, inclusion, empowerment, sustainability and maintaining the conditions for sustaining peace.
- While the great majority of the international community remains committed to the Paris Agreement, climate action is more urgent than ever.
- Integration is a central pillar of the SDGs, but greater effort is needed to keep transversal Goals, such as poverty eradication, to the fore.
- Progress has been made in sensitising the private sector to the SDGs, but governments can do much more to transform financial systems to drive both public and private investment in support of the SDGs. The UN system can play a more proactive role in this area.
- Member States, particularly the most vulnerable, require a UN system that provides them with coherent SDG support at the country level. The Secretary-General's proposed reforms are crucial in this regard.
- There is enormous scope to deploy innovation and technology in support of the SDGs. The UN has a key role to play in facilitating collaboration between innovators and implementers.
- The Ocean Conference demonstrated the global interest in uniting around the SDGs. It reminded us that multi-stakeholder collaboration at all levels is key to delivering the SDGs.
- A more effective campaign is required to raise global awareness of the SDGs at individual and community levels.
- Greater effort is needed to place young people and vulnerable communities in driving seats of SDG implementation.

It appears that this was the most comprehensive review conducted during the year. However It also appears that various organs of UN seem to be spending a lot of time and energy in reviewing activities and there seem to some duplication too.

However follow up and review under the auspices of the HLPF is expected to continue into the future. The theme for review for 2018 would be “**Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies**” while the goals to be reviewed in detail would be 5, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17.

The theme for 2019 would be “**Empowering People and ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality**” while goals to be reviewed in detail would be 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17.

However reviews alone may not help to enhance it's level of implementation. It is clear that reviews indicate the need for increase in the level of enthusiasm among all stakeholders. In addition, some least developing countries seem to be in need of assistance as they are unable to move forward on their own. Even though the idea of National Voluntary review is encouraging, it would appear that more assistance for implementation at National and grass root levels is required. It would be of paramount importance to encourage the Private sector entities to get involved in a much more enthusiastic manner for the ultimate success of the 2030 Agenda.



International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development and



The role of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation in making it a success

The United Nations designated the year 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (IYSTD). This decision was based on the proposal by **UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)**. After detailed deliberations among themselves at meetings of the UNWTO, it was decided to propose at their Annual sessions held in Colombia in September 2015, that the year 2017 be designated as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

Based on these recommendations, the General Assembly of the UN decided to do so at the meeting of the 70th sessions held in December 2015. They also decided to entrust the task of organizing all activities relating to its implementation to the UNWTO.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations Agency, entrusted with the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible Tourism. UNWTO's membership includes 156 countries, 6 Associate Members and over 500 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and other local tourism authorities. As the leading International organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO promotes Tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development, and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.

In deciding to select Tourism as the theme for the International year 2017, the UNWTO indicated that Tourism can contribute to all three dimensions of Sustainable Development namely, Economic, Social and Environmental. It also indicated that Tourism can cover all seventeen SDGs and will play a leading role in the achievement of all SDGs.

UNWTO high-lighted five areas in which Tourism can help in the achievement of SDGs and decided to emphasize on these areas during the year. A discussion paper prepared for the UNWTO for this purpose has attempted to cover the current and potential contribution for sustainable development from Tourism under the five areas.

1 Inclusive and sustainable economic growth

In comparison to other areas of economic activity, it is believed that tourism has been playing a sustainable role and will continue to play that role in the future.

2. Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction

in view of the involvement of skilled and unskilled labour in Tourism, which amounts to one in ten jobs generated in all global economic activity and the high level of female employment, it is expected that tourism could lead to increases in the levels of inclusive growth generating more opportunities for women and youth.

3 Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change

Even though the use of resources in Tourism could have resulted in an adverse impact on the environment and the climate in the past, an enlightened policy mix will help in efficient use of resources in an environmentally friendly manner and could be a vehicle for protecting the biodiversity.

4. Cultural Diversity and heritage

Expansion of cultural tourism will result in giving an economic value to the traditional activities and heritage sites becoming economically viable units that can integrate with other tourism activities. This will result in generating resources required for their maintenance and upliftment.

5. Mutual Understanding, Peace and Security

Tourism can play a leading role in eliminating barriers among nations and communities, which will result in increasing the levels of harmony among each other.

The discussion paper was later developed into a fully pledged document for the guidance of all stakeholders in propagating sustainable tourism.

In addition to conducting studies, UNWTO has taken a series of steps to promote Tourism in a sustainable manner.

They have appointed ten leading states persons as special Ambassadors of sustainable tourism. These include, Heads of State and other distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

In addition, various events were organized by UNWTO and their members. These events spread throughout the year covering all corners of the globe.

These Events commenced with the opening ceremony held in Madrid, Spain in January this year and is expected to end with the closing ceremony to be held in Geneva, Switzerland on 11-12 December.

In between, there were various events organized with the co-operation and the initiation of UNWTO held in Addis Ababa in April, and again in Madrid and Bangladesh in May and in Honduras and Moldavia in June, and in many other venues.

Another significant event was the conduct of the 22nd General Assembly of the UNWTO in Chengdu China. At this meeting two documents were discussed and adopted.

1. A Framework Convention of Tourism Ethics

The code of ethics which was in existence from the year 1999, was transformed into an International convention covering all stake holders involved in the field of tourism. The approval of this Framework Convention is expected to help in development of the mutual understanding between various stake holders, specially incoming tourists and the hosts. Ultimately it would help in propagating peace and prosperity in the world as a whole. After approval, the Framework is to be adopted by all member countries according to the procedure that has been developed by the UNWTO.

2. The Chengdu Declaration of Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals

This Declaration cover 21 areas of activity. These activities included work to be carried out by all stake holders. National Governments were requested to develop an integrated and holistic approach

in development of Tourism policy .They were also requested to measure the economic, social and environmental impact to tourist destinations and make regular assessments of Tourism's contribution in propagating SDGs. The declaration also requested the setting up of a multinational framework to allow active participation of all stakeholders. It also envisaged increasing cooperation among all stakeholders. One other important factor was to recommend that steps be taken to identify and adopt strategies, which will increase the efficiency in the use of resources. There was also a request to develop innovative financing solutions to encourage further investments in the field of tourism. It also requested that all donor communities recognize the importance of tourism and increase their levels of assistance to all areas of tourism especially in developing countries.

Finally the declaration requests that all stakeholders promote tourism as an effective tool for nurturing respect, tolerance and mutual understanding between peoples and cultures which could develop peace and understanding among all communities.

The work of the UNWTO was not limited only to the release of these two documents

They had an integrated programme to develop tourism during this year

They also conducted a world-wide campaign by the title **Travel Enjoy and Respect**.

The main themes in this campaign are -

- 1 Honour your host and our common heritage
- 2 Protect your planet
- 3 Support the local economy
- 4 Be an informed Traveller
- 5 Be a respectful Traveller

The volume of work conducted by the UNWTO was far in excess of the work normally carried out when an International Year is declared. The amount of finances required to carry forward this vast set of activities was also huge. However the UNWTO, with its strong institutional backup with over 500 private sector participants had no difficulty in financing these varied activities without becoming a burden on the United Nations.

All funding for these activities were obtained via voluntary contributions thereby saving financing burden being transferred to the UN or any other organization .This seems to be an attempt to encourage stake holders to take responsibility in propagating growth and expansion.

It is anticipated the work that commenced during this year will be carried forward so that, Tourism will play its role in propagating Sustainable Development Goals in the years to come.

Sumathi Nimal Fernando



Ecotourism: A Tool for Sustainable Development

Kanchana Wickramasinghe

Research Economist, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS)



Sustainable tourism has now widely been recognized as a key contributor for sustainable development. Tourism has been well integrated to sustainable development, as indicated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tourism has direct relevance to three SDGs. They include, Goal 8 (*promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*), Goal 12 (*ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*), and Goal 14 (*conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*).

Ecotourism is a form of tourism, which is by definition a sustainable concept. As the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines it, ecotourism means “*responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people*”. Accordingly, ecotourism should provide benefits to local communities and generate benefits for the natural environments where it is taking place. It also aimed at improving environmental awareness and understanding among visitors as well as among host communities. Thus, the key principles of ecotourism address the environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development, in addition to its economic benefits.

Prospects

Ecotourism is a rapidly growing niche market in the global tourism industry. Sri Lanka possesses an enormous potential for ecotourism. Sri Lanka owns adequate natural capital for the development of ecotourism. The country is very rich in its biodiversity. Sri Lanka, together with Western Ghats in India, is listed as one of the world’s 25 biodiversity hotspots.

Ecotourism can be an important element in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, if implemented according to its key principles. This is an area with prospects as mentioned in the Sri Lanka Tourism Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020.

In Sri Lanka, nature tourism based on wildlife parks and forests have been in operation for decades. However, there are several sustainability issues attached to nature tourism such as over-visitation, lack of benefits to local communities etc. This experience can be effectively made use in promoting ecotourism which is inherently a sustainable form of tourism.

Issues

A comprehensive policy and legal framework should be in place for ecotourism as it is based on natural environments and closely associated with local communities (Fennel and Dowling, 2003)¹. In this connection it is important to have a shared definition and goals for developing ecotourism among its all stakeholders. The ecotourism stakeholders cover tourism agencies and the agencies responsible for managing the natural resources and environment.

¹ Fennel, D.A., R.K. Dowling (2003), *Ecotourism Policy and Planning*, CABI Publishing

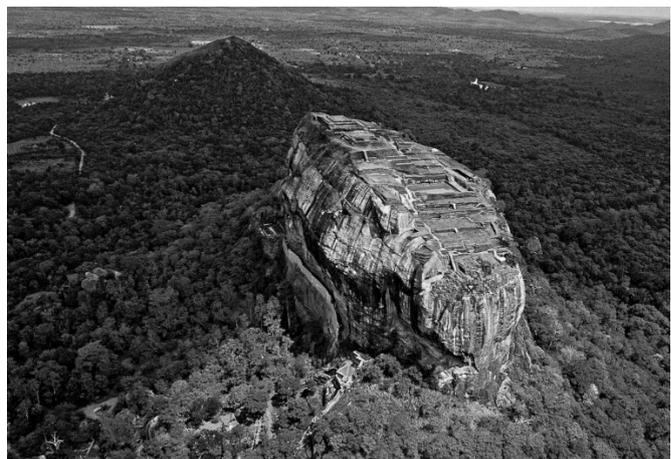
Absence of a comprehensive legal framework can lead to many issues which can lead to reduce the true potential of ecotourism as a tool for sustainable development. This is very much important as ecotourism takes place in fragile natural environments and socio-cultural set-ups.

Due to the growing prospects in ecotourism, some tourism nature tourism businesses market themselves as ecotourism businesses, without actually adhering to its sustainable principles. This is termed as 'green washing' in ecotourism. This is an issue for the sustainability of ecotourism destinations. Implementation of ecotourism certification programmes is identified as an important step in order to minimize the issues related to green washing.

Way Forward

Ecotourism, for it to be successful has to be undertaken as a well-coordinated effort of all the key stakeholders representing the environmental and tourism agencies. Both the government agencies and private sector have crucial roles to play in this regard. It is also essential to formulate effective policy and legislative framework for ecotourism in Sri Lanka. This is needed to avoid possible negative implications on the natural environment and the socio-cultural aspects of the ecotourism sites. This can also make sure that comprehensive education and awareness programmes are carried out. Visitor education is a crucial aspect of ecotourism which differentiates it from other forms of tourism which are based in natural environments. For Sri Lanka, it will be a good step to formulate and implement an ecotourism certification programme to make sure that the destination offers true ecotourism products.

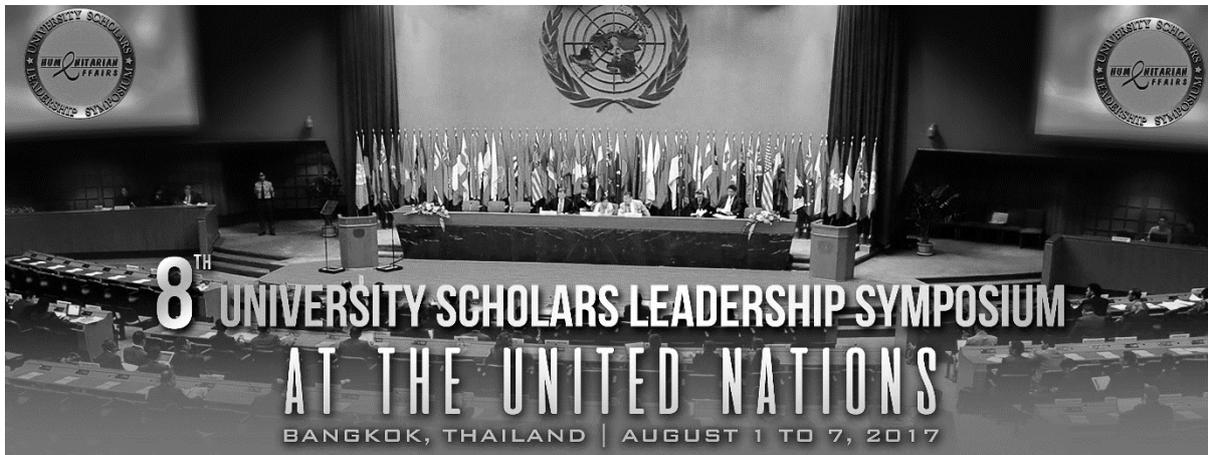
The article is based on the IPS publication titled "Ecotourism for Sustainable Forest Management in Sri Lanka" authored by Kanchana Wickramasinghe



8th University Scholars Leadership Symposium - 2017

Bangkok, Thailand

Conducted by Humanitarian Affairs United Kingdom in collaboration with United Nations Development Program (UNDP)



Overview

The University Scholars Leadership Symposium, (USLS) a weeklong leadership development training program was conducted by the Humanitarian Affairs (UK) in collaboration with United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Thousand young leaders from all over the world met in one platform in the heart of Asia to participate in this Symposium. Three of us represented Sri Lanka.

Introduction

University Scholars Leadership Symposium (USLS) has creatively planned to help young university students to discover their hidden potential and to actively engage their learning experiences beyond the conference rooms. The event had been organized enabling the students to acquire robust confidence, goal setting capabilities, self-reliance & independence, and sharpen their cutting edge, which are prerequisites for the next generation of “21st Century Leaders”.

Since the inception of the 1st USLS in 2010, Humanitarian Affairs UK has partnered more than 500 of the World’s leading Universities, many are listed by “The Times Higher Education World University Rankings” or “QS World University Rankings”. The reputed institutions such as United Nations Association, are encouraged to nominate young leading members of their organizations to participate as delegates and their participation has helped, shaped and spurred their communities in global mission of “Sustainable Development”

The endeavors of UNDP and Humanitarian Affairs are characterized by excellent management, innovative and yet practical approaches, as well as commitment to encouraging young people to develop a sense of global citizenship and responsiveness to those living in deprivation.

This symposium was held annually in a developing country in the Asia Pacific Region (2010 Malaysia, 2011 Thailand, 2012 Indonesia, 2013 Philippines, 2014 Cambodia, 2015 Hong Kong, 2016 Vietnam, 2017 Thailand)

Objective

The rapid development in the 21st century was marked by rise of globalization, digital revolution, advances in life sciences, economic growth, third world consumerism and deepening concern over terrorism. These subjects pose many challenges to future young generation and the core objective of this symposium is to provide young leaders the required knowledge and how to tackle those problems creatively and much effectively.

Building Life, Giving Hope

8th USLS 2017 was held at “The United Nations Conference Center” in Bangkok, Thailand from 1st August 2017 to 7th August 2017 and three young members from UNASL actively participated in this Symposium. Thousand delegates from UN member countries participated in this event and this year’s theme was “**BUILDING LIFE, GIVING HOPE**”. Each country’s point of view and progress was discussed on **End Poverty** (SDG1), **Quality Education** (SDG 4), **Gender Equality** (SDG 5), **Clean Water and Sanitation** (SDG 6) and **Climate Change** (SDG 13) with respect to 2030 Agenda. All the delegates were stayed at Marriot Marquis Queens Park Hotel, Bangkok.

Participated Delegates, nominated by UNASL

1.Nadeeshan Thilanka Amarathunga

Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering graduate at Monash University, Malaysia

2.Waruna Uditha Maddumage

Mechatronics Engineering undergraduate at Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology

3.Ramal Suvin Fernando

Photography and Multimedia Designing undergraduate at Sunway University Malaysia



Sri Lankan Delegates at 8th USLS

Highlights



Opening Ceremony



Group Discussions Mobilization of resources

1. Service day activities

There were five SDG goals and all the delegates need to participate in one activity. We selected Climate Change and Quality Education as our activities.



Climate Change Activity (SDG 13): Removing garbage in the mangrove forest, planting mangrove and building bamboo fences.

Quality Education (SDG 04): Objective is to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.



Activity - Journey to preschoolers of mercy center for a party.

We helped the small children to engage in many activities and to keep them happy with fun and laughter. We talked to them and tried to understand their family issues and their needs. We did our best to keep them happy by giving our affection to them. A meal was also provided. It was a day of fun and enjoyment and we were happy that we could make their life happier and to put a smile on their faces at least for few hours.



2. Closing Ceremony



Secretary General of Humanitarian Affairs Uk Mr.Kim Solomon with Nadeeshan



Ramal with Ms Irini Kassas, Global partner specialist in Humanitarian Affairs Asia and best delegate award winner for 2016 USLS and Outstanding performance winner of UNDP

Summary

The USLS was a truly humbling experience; various testimonials of participants attest to this fact. The symposium provided us the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals from across diverse cultures and backgrounds, and build on our professional network. Being surrounded by more than 1,000 like-minded individuals from across the world gathered to discuss important global humanitarian issues was an opportunity that no one wanted to miss. The symposium served as a platform for participants to share their ideas and views freely as well as expanding their intellectual and cultural horizons through a diverse range of activities, insightful life lessons, and vibrant exchanges. For future leaders, the one-week learning experience was a platform for personal development and attaining practical life skills.

In the USLS we learned to enhance our self-perception and build upon our leadership presence. They promoted self-awareness and problem solving skills in young leaders. By attending the USLS, it helped us to improve our personal efficiency, communication skills and emotional intelligence so that we can develop upon our personal as well as professional self. Many young scholars came to the symposium unconfident and not knowing what to expect and have left it as a force to reckon after being turned into formidable humanitarians by the week long experience.



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Right for Information Act came in to operation in Sri Lanka this year. Extract from the forthcoming book in the second Edition titled “**Evolution of Constitutional Governance in Sri Lanka**”, authored by **Dr. Lakshman Marasinghe**, Emeritus Professor of Law, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada is published below in view of its timeliness and relevance.

Right of Access to Information.

It introduces a new Article 14A which provides every citizen a right of access to information. That Constitutional right of access to information (RTI) is provided to every citizen to obtain information about him/her self, held by a wide variety of public authorities that control its sources. These sources are described in the amended Article 14A of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. It lists the following sources as:

“(a) The State, a Ministry or any Government Department or any statutory body established or created by or under any law; (b). any Ministry of a Minister of the Board of Ministers of a Province or any department or any statutory body established or created by a statute of a Provincial Council; (c) any local authority; and (d) any other person, who is in possession of such information relating to any institution referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) (b) or (c)”.

On the 2nd December 2015, a Bill *to provide for the Right of Access to information*, was presented to the Cabinet and was accepted to be presented to Parliament as a legislative enactment. That Bill provided a detailed exposition of some of the procedural and substantive implications of a citizens’ right of access to information. It has forty-four sections and was certified by the Speaker², and passed into law on 4th August 2016. It became operational on 3rd February 2017. Subject to limitations of its application found in section 5 of the Act, Section 3 (1) declared that:

“Subject to provisions of Section 5 of this Act, every citizen shall have a right of access to information which is in the possession, custody or control of a public authority.”

What institutions would the Act consider as constituting a public authority has been extensively detailed in section 43 of the Act. In a memorandum issued by the Cabinet, Cabinet decisions and Cabinet Memoranda, the contents of which that do not fall within the prohibited matters mentioned in Section 5, are also regarded as accessible by the citizens under Section 3 of the Act. As required under Article 23(1), that all Public Authorities within three months of the Act becoming operational, or the Public Authority becoming established, shall appoint, “one or more officers as information officers of such Public Authority, and a designated officer to hear appeals”, the Cabinet office too as a Public Authority shall appoint such officers to deal with the citizens when they seek access to information.

The Cabinet falls within the list of Public Authorities designated as such in Section 43, as “a Ministry of the Government” or as a “ Government Department”, under sub-paragraphs (a) or (c) of section 43, respectively.

In an application before the Supreme Court (circa March 2017) it was alleged by a petitioner that there are some 100 statutes that are in conflict with the Right to Information Act (R.T.I.). Section 4 of the R.T.I. declared that:

“The provisions of this Act, shall have effect notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any other written law and accordingly in the event of any inconsistency or conflict between the provisions of this Act and such other written law, the provisions of this Act shall prevail.”

It appears from the wording of section 4, that the RTI Act amends all other Acts that are inconsistent with it. In Part II of the Act provisions have been provided where, in specified matters there listed, an application for access to information may be denied. Section 5(1) by referring to section 3 (2) declared that the right to

²Right to Information Act, No 12 of 2016.

information embodied in the RTI, shall not take effect in “derogation of the powers, privileges and practices of Parliament”. Additionally, section 5(1) lays down a list of areas in which access to information may be denied. The categories to which that sub-section refers, among others, include: personal information with no relationship to any public activity or interest, information that would undermine the defence of the State, information that may undermine the relationships between Sri Lanka and other States. These are matters pertaining to the application of International law. Disclosure of such information as would be prejudicial to the economy of Sri Lanka shall also be denied. Disclosure will be denied of matters that affect the commercial confidence of the State. The denial of access also includes of any personal medical records, and the release of material that would lead to a contempt of court. The list included in section 5(1), where access would be denied, is both extensive and is detailed. Section 6 provides the authority issuing the information, the power to separate and detach from any request, such information as that cannot be issued, from such information that can be issued. The right of severability of a request for information allows the issuing authority to choose from a list of requests, those that are permissible to be issued and those that are not.

In Part III of the Act, the legislature has laid down, in section 7, a number of ways in which public authorities may arrange and organize their public records, so that there could be an easy access to them, whenever a citizen makes an application for information from a source held by such a public authority. Particularly, when an application is made by a citizen, requesting access to information, contained in them. In section 7(4), the Act prohibits the destruction of records or information, during the pendency of a request of access to information contained in such records or information. Section 8 requires every Minister to whom any subject matter had been assigned, to publish bi-annually, before the thirtieth day of June and the thirty – first day of December of each year, a Report, of the documents available in each Ministry. This facilitates a citizen to exercise his right of access to information, in accordance with the right given to him, and mentioned under section 3 above. Following those reports a citizen will be able to direct his request to the correct source from which the information sought could be obtained. Another aspect of the right of access to information is contained in section 9. Under that section a Minister in charge of a proposed project is required to communicate to the public, three months prior to the commencement of any project, and also to communicate specifically, to any person who is likely to be interested in it or might be affected by such a project, so that such person may, if needed, seek further information of the project before the project begins to be executed.

As above mentioned section 10 requires every Public Authority to provide annual reports before the thirty-first of December which shall be made available to the public at the office of such Public Authority or at its website. The statutory requirement to furnish information in such a Report is quite extensive and the extent required to be included in such a Report is found stated, in section 10 (a) – (h) of the Act³.

Part IV deals with establishing a Right to Information Commission. In section 11(2) the Commission is given a legal personality. It could sue and be sued, with perpetual succession and is established as a body corporate. The Commission shall consist of five members “appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Constitutional Council”. Section 12 mentions three sources from which at least one person from each source should be chosen by the Constitutional Council for appointment. The three sources are: (a) the Bar Council which shall nominate an eminent, Attorney-at-Law or a Legal Academic. (b) a person from the organization of publishers, of Editors or of the Media. (c) A person from a Civil Society organization.

While requiring the appointment of one person from each of those sources, the Act disqualifies the appointment of a person who is a Member of Parliament, a member of a Provincial Council or of a Local Authority. An appointee to the Commission should not be a person holding a public or a Judicial Office or other office for profit. Further, an appointee to the Commission should not be connected with any political party. The

³Section 10 (a). The total number of requests received during the year and information provided and rejected; (b) the amount of fees collected during the year; (c) the number of requests rejected under section 5; (d) the number of times information was provided at the direction of the Commission; (e) any suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the regime of transparency; (f) the number of appeals from refusal to communicate information; (g) practices relating to the maintenance, management and destruction of records; and (h) its activities under section 8.

most broadly framed disqualification for membership is declared, by excluding persons who are carrying on any business or pursuing any profession.

While it is left to the President to appoint a chairperson out of the members of the Commission, the Commission as a whole shall hold office for a period of five years.

The Commission shall appoint a Director –General who shall be the Commission’s Executive –Officer. The duties and functions of the Commission have been extensively detailed in eight sub- sections of section 14. In order to ensure the effective discharge of those duties and functions the RTI Act provide eight powers to the Commission in section 15. The following duties and functions of the Commission are stated in section 14 (a) to (g). They are as follows:

“(a) monitor the performance and ensure the due compliance by public authorities, of the duties cast upon them under the Act; (b) make recommendations for reform both of a general nature and those in regard to any specific public authority; (c) issue guidelines based on reasonableness, for determining fees to be levied by public authorities for the release of any information under this Act; (d) prescribe the circumstances in which information may be provided by an information officer , without the payment of a fee; (e) prescribe the fee schedule based on the principle of proactive disclosure, in regard to providing information;(f) co-operate with or undertake training activities for public officials on the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act; (g) publicize the requirements of this Act and the rights of individuals under the Act; (h) issue guidelines for the proper record management for public authorities. ”

In order to perform those functions and discharge the duties given, the Commission has been given powers detailed in eight subsections of section 15. Some of those powers are inquisitorial powers. An important aspect of those powers was to reach an equitable solution to situations where under section 5 the public authorities have denied access to information. Any aggrieved person may under sections 31 and 32 appeal to the Commission for redress. Those two sections have a direct bearing with sections 14 and 15 of the Act. The powers given to the Commission under section 15 are as follows:

- (a) to hold inquiries and require any person to appear before it; (b) to examine such person under oath or affirmation and require such person where necessary to produce any information which is in that person’s possession, provided that the information which is exempted from disclosure under section 5 shall be examined in confidence.; © to inspect any information held by a public authority, including any information denied by a public authority under the provisions of this Act;
- (b) to direct a public authority to provide information in a particular form; (e) to direct a public authority to publish any information withheld by a public authority from the public, subject to the provisions of section 5; (f) to hear and determine any appeals made to it by any aggrieved person under section 32; and (g) to direct a public authority or any relevant information officer of the authority to reimburse fees charged from a citizen due to any information requested for not been provided in time.”

In Part V of the RTI Act, there are provisions in section 23, for the appointment of special officers referred to as “Information Officers”, in each Public Authority, designated to deal with the public who come in search of obtaining information. Section 24 lays down statutory procedures that any citizen who is desirous of obtaining information under the Act may adopt, in applying for information to an aforementioned “Information Officer”. In section 25, the Act makes it obligatory upon such an “Information Officer” to provide the information within fourteen days, or makes it obligatory that the applicant for information be told why such information cannot be given, within the required statutory period of fourteen days. If the material requested do fall within section 5 of part II, the “information officer” is required to inform the citizen applicant, within fourteen days, why the information sought cannot be released. Section 5 (1) (a) – (n) provides the grounds upon which an “Information Officer” may deny to a citizen, an application made under the RTI Act for information. Section 28 requires the “Information Officer”, who refuses to supply such information, with reference to any one of the fifteen grounds stated in section 5, to specify, under section 28:

“(a) the grounds on which such request is refused; and (b) the period within which and the person to whom an appeal against such refusal may be preferred under section 32 of this Act.”

The person referred to, in section 28 (b), to whom an appeal against the refusal to provide the information sought by a citizen may be preferred, is the same person as the one referred to in section 31 as the “Designated Officer”. A citizen who is aggrieved as a result of any one of the seven specified reasons found in section 31⁴, may as a first step in the appeal process, set out in the RTI Act, prefer an appeal to the “designated officer”, under section 31(1) of the Act. That first step should be taken by the aggrieved “citizen- applicant for information”, within fourteen days of receiving the letter of refusal, referred to, under section 28.

That right of appeal to the “designated officer” does not prejudice his right of appeal to the ‘Right to Information Commission’, established in Part IV of the Act⁵. Under section 31(3) of the RTI Act, the “Designated Officer” is required to deliver, in writing, his decision on the Appeal preferred to him under section 31(1), within three weeks of the appeal being preferred to him. That decision must, under section 31(3), contain the reasons for the decision which must include the specific grounds upon which the decision was reached. The decision of the “designated officer” is required under section 31(3) to be given within three weeks of preferring the appeal under section 31(1) to him, which constitutes a statutory requirement.

Where the “Citizen – Applicant for Information” is dissatisfied with the decision reached by the “Designated Officer”, he, as the aggrieved party, under section 32(1), may appeal, to the “Right to Information Commission”. His right to appeal must be exercised within two months of receiving the communication containing the decision of the “designated officer”⁶. That refers to the decision made by the “designated officer”, to whom an appeal had been preferred under section 31 (1). As an alternative, if the aggrieved party had not received a decision from the “designated officer”, within the statutory period of three weeks after the appeal had been preferred to him, then the appeal under section 32(1) to the aforementioned Commission should be made, within two months of the expiry of that statutory period of three weeks, mentioned in section 31(3). Under section 32(1), the Commission shall decide and respond within thirty days of receipt of such appeal, affirming or reversing, the original decision taken by the “designated officer” under section 31(3). The decision taken by the Commission, shall be sent to the “information officer” of the Public Authority for necessary action. In concluding the hearing of the appeal, the Commission, under Section 32 (3), “shall give reasons for its decision in writing, to the appellant, the information officer and the public authority concerned”. Further, under section 32(4), the burden of proof at the hearing before the Commission is placed upon the public authority, to establish to the satisfaction of the Commission, that it followed the provisions of the RTI Act, when processing the appellant’s request for information.

Where either the citizen or the public authority remains dissatisfied with the decision made by the Commission, either party has a power, under section 34 (1), to appeal against that decision.

⁴Section 31(1) Any citizen who is aggrieved as a result of -----(a) refusing a request made for information; (b) refusing access to the information on the ground that such information is exempted from being granted under section 5; (c) non-compliance with time frames specified by this Act; (d) granting of incomplete, misleading or false information; (e) charging an excessive fee; (f) the refusal of the information officer to provide information in the form requested; or (g) the citizen requesting having reasonable grounds to believe that information has been deformed, destroyed or misplaced to prevent such citizen from having access to the information”.

⁵Right to Information Act, No.12 of 2016, section 31(4).

⁶Right to Information Act, No.12 of 2016, section 32(1) (a).

Human papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine introduction into National Immunization Programme

Dr. Deepa Gamage, Consultant Epidemiologist, Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is introduced in to the National Immunization Programme from July 2017, aiming for the prevention of cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is a preventable non-communicable disease by early intervention in preventing HPV infection. Globally most affected age group is around 30-55 years causing high morbidity and mortality to women. Over 80% of these newly diagnosed cases are from developing countries. Nearly 12% of all female cancers are cervical cancers. Globally, it accounts for 266,000 deaths annually and 85% of them are from developing countries. Without organized cervical cancer preventive programmes and urgent attention in preventing deaths, it is projected that cervical cancer deaths would rise by almost 25% over the next 10 years.

In Sri Lanka, it is estimated that 7.52 million women are at risk of developing cervical cancer, 1395 cases and 814 deaths (according to international estimates, IARC)). According to National Cervical Cancer Control Programme data, a total of 850 - 950 cases of cervical cancers have been identified and admitted to hospitals annually. Cervical cancer is the 2nd most common female cancers accounting for 10% of all female cancers in Sri Lanka.

Human papillomavirus infection is a common viral infection in the genital tract and cause genital warts, precancerous lesions and genital cancers. Most of these HPV infections are transient and asymptomatic but persistent genital HPV infection with high risk (oncogenic) HPV genotypes can lead to develop anogenital precancers and cancers.

Out of sexually transmitted HPV genotypes, low risk (non-oncogenic) genotypes of 6 and 11 cause majority of the genital warts (90%) and Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis. But high risk (oncogenic) genotypes of 16 and 18 cause most of the cervical precancerous lesions, cervical, anal, vulval, vaginal and penile cancers. High-risk HPV types are attributed for 99% of cervical cancers but genotypes 16 and 18 are attributed for about 70% of cervical cancers.

A prophylactic HPV vaccines aiming for primary prevention of this major proportion of cervical cancers due to high risk HPV genotypes 16 and 18 are available to use since 2006 globally.

There are three types of prophylactic vaccines available to use for the prevention of HPV-related diseases mainly for prevention of cervical cancers.

- a. Bivalent HPV vaccine : for 2 - HPV genotypes 16 and 18, indicated for girls aged 9-14 years, as 2-doses (at 0 and 6 months) but if age is 15 years and above, given as 3 doses
- b. Quadrivalent HPV vaccine: for 4-HPV genotypes 6, 11, 16 and 18, indicated for girls and boys aged 9-13 years, as 2-doses (at 0 and 6 months) but if age is 14 years and above, given as 3-doses
- c. Nonavalent HPV vaccine : for 9- HPV types 6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52 and 58 for girls and boys aged 9-14 years, as 2-doses (at 0 and 6 months) but if age is 15 years and above, given as 3 doses

HPV vaccination was available in Sri Lanka in the private sector since 2010 (bivalent HPV vaccine was registered in 2010 and quadrivalent HPV vaccine was registered in 2012). But the opportunity of quadrivalent HPV vaccine for the prevention of cervical cancer is available free to the child through National Immunization Programme since July 2017. Ministry of Health has incorporated Quadrivalent HPV vaccine in to National immunization schedule at completion of 10 years to girls in Grade 6 through the school immunization programme. All girls in Grade 6 are provided with 2 doses of quadrivalent HPV vaccine every year as 2-dose schedule with a minimum interval of 6 months between 2 doses.

This quadrivalent HPV vaccine prevents cervical cancer by preventing HPV genotype 16 and 18 but it has an additional benefit for prevention of non-cancerous HPV genotypes of 6 and 11 for prevention of genital warts.

Global advisory committee for vaccine safety regularly vigilant and reviews evidence on vaccination in countries and closely monitors and reviews HPV vaccine safety information. In January 2016, this committee re-assured and concluded that HPV vaccine is a very safe vaccine based on country evidences.

The strategy of early detection of cervical cancer by Pap smear screening or HPV-DNA detection to identify early stages of cervical pre-cancers are accepted methods to be continued even though primary preventive strategy of HPV vaccination is implemented.



Commemoration of 84th Birth anniversary of UNASL Founder Secretary General



Mr. Kumaran Fernando was one of the founder members of United Nations Association of Sri Lanka (UNASL). He assumed duties on July 7th 1976 as the secretary General and Chief Executive Officer of UNASL and rendered valuable services for four decades to the UNASL. Mr. Kumaran Fernando was the live wire in all the activities especially programmes such as National Observance of the United Nations and the School Study Circle programme. Recognizing the significant contribution made to the programmes and objectives of the International year of peace proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, the Secretary General designated Kumaran Fernando as a “Peace Messenger”. He also established the Kumaran Fernando Foundation to assist with the activities of the UNASL.

84th Birth Anniversary of late Mr. Kumaran Fernando, was commemorated on August 5th 2017. On this day an “Eye Clinic” was set up and over one hundred pairs of spectacles were distributed free amongst the under-privileged, with the collaboration of Mr. Errol Smith, the present Secretary General of UNASL. Ven. Panadure Vijithananda, Viharadhipathi of Sri Vijaya Saugatha Vidyalaya Pirivena, and the Patron of the Kumaran Fernando Foundation conducted religious activities. In the evening, Ven. Panadura Passanna, Lecturer of Sri Vagiragnana Darmayatnaya, Maharagama conducted a Dhamma Sermon with the participation of the President and the members of the Kumaran Fernando Foundation and members of the UNASL.



BEST UNA SCHOOL STUDY CIRCLES IN 2016 / 2017

01st Place - G / RICHMOND COLLEGE, GALLE

02nd Place - B/ SRI DEVANDA CENTRAL COLLEGE, MIRAHAWATTA



1ST ROW LEFT TO RIGHT :- Rev. Kandegedara Upananda, Principal Mrs. M.M.U. Marasinghe, V.Principal Mrs. W.R.S. Wijekoon, Teacher Mrs. R.P.V. Ganga Shayamali ,M.G. Kavindaya Kawshalya, D.A. Damitha Rathna Disanayaka,R.M.M. Dananjaya Kavindu Hansana,G.M. Hashini Nethmini,B.M. Nimesha Esaani,R.M. Piumi Anjalika,J.J.M. Nimesha Sapekshani,A.M. Danusha Sathsarani,M.M. Nimesha Lakshani,D.M. LakMINI Arunida,R.M. Kalpani Nisansala

BEST UNA SCHOOL STUDY CIRCLES IN 2016 / 2017

03rd Place - HALPATHOTA ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL, BADDEGAMA

04th Place - MT / VIJAYA COLLEGE, MATALE

05th Place - MT / CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE, MATALE

WINNERS OF SPEECH CONTEST - 2017

1st Place - Vidya Nayani Senavirathne
Christ Church College, Matale

2nd Place - Rusira Sathnindu Liyanage
Mahinda College, Galle



3rd Place - Sithumi Samoda Wimalakeerthi
Sacred Heart Convent, Galle



4th Place - L. S. S. Vikrama
Vijaya College, Matale

5th Place - G. G. Indumini Sewwandi Herath
Sri Pranyarathna College, Gelioya



WINNERS OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CONTEST - 2017

- 1st Place** - **H. K. Nadun Sasanga Kumarasinghe**
Richmond College, Galle
- 2nd Place** - **Lasith Gaurauv Balasooriya**
Mahinda College, Galle
- 3rd Place** - **Sanduni Ama Dilrukshi Premasiri**
Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy
- 4th Place** - **A. G. Sadeepani Kaushalya Abeysekara**
Sri Swarnajothi National School, Kiribathkumbura
- 5th Place** - **M. Dilini Tharuka Mendis**
Southland College, Galle



WINNERS OF ESSAY WRITING CONTEST - 2017

- 1st Place** - **H. Kawisha Gayathri Rupasinghe**
Holy Family Convent, Maravila
- 2nd Place** - **T. G. M. Mihindula**
Mahamaya College, Kandy
- 3rd Place** - **W. M. Gayani Prasadi Vijethunga**
Christ Church College, Matale
- 4th Place** - **D. M. M. K. B. Dissanayaka**
Sri Pranyarathna College, Geliyoa
- 5th Place** - **W. Lovindu Palani**
Sudharma College, Galle



BEST TEACHERS IN CHARGE OF THE WINNING SCHOOLS

- 1st Place** - **M.N.D. Abeysinghe, R. H. Priyadarshani**
G / Richmond College, Galle
- 2nd Place** - **R.P.V. Ganga Shayamali**
Sri Devananda Central College, Mirahawatta
- 3rd Place** - **N.G. Sadani**
Halpathota Roman Catholic School, Baddegama
- 4th Place** - **D. Renuka Weerakon**
Mt / Vijaya Vidyalaya, Matale
- 5th Place** - **M.Z.M. Reza**
M / Christ Church College, Matale



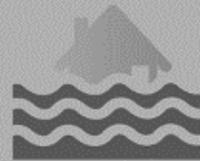
THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



CLIMATE CHANGE IS WORSENING THE EFFECTS OF STORMS AND EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS:



LONGER DROUGHTS



INCREASED FLOODING



MORE FREQUENT COLD WAVES AND HEAT WAVES



STRONGER STORMS, CYCLONES, AND HURRICANES

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS NETWORK



END POVERTY
IN ALL FORMS
EVERYWHERE

END HUNGER
ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY, IMPROVED NUTRITION,
PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

**ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND
PROMOTE WELLBEING
FOR ALL, AT ALL AGES**

**ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF WATER
AND SANITATION FOR ALL**



**ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE
QUALITY EDUCATION AND
PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
FOR ALL**

**PROMOTE
SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE & SUSTAINABLE
ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT
WORK FOR ALL**



**ENSURE ACCESS TO
AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE,
SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN
ENERGY FOR ALL**



**ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY
AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN
AND GIRLS**

**BUILD RESILIENT
INFRASTRUCTURE,
PROMOTE INCLUSIVE & SUSTAINABLE
INDUSTRIALISATION AND
FOSTER INNOVATION**



**ENSURE
SUSTAINABLE
CONSUMPTION
&
PRODUCTION
PATTERNS**

**MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE,
RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE**



**CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE
OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE
RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**



**REDUCE
INEQUALITY
WITHIN AND
AMONG
COUNTRIES**



**TAKE URGENT
ACTION TO
COMBAT
CLIMATE
CHANGE
AND IT'S IMPACTS**

**PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE
SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL
ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY
MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION
AND HALT AND REVERSE
LAND DEGRADATION, AND
HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS**



**STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION & REVITALISE THE
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*We extend our sincere appreciation and thanks to Mr. Sumathi Fernando,
Executive Committee Member in compiling the Annual 2017.*

*Mr. Dharmadasa Vitharana
Editor – United Nations Association of Sri Lanka*

GSM TECH SOLUTION



160 A, 1/1 High Level Road, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

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JOB GUARANTEE



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Medium: සිංහල
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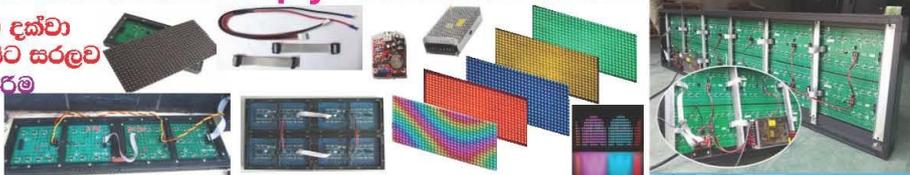
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