

# UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA

## NATIONAL OBSERVANCE OF THE 76TH UNITED NATIONS DAY & 71st Anniversary of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka

### Message from the Hon. Foreign Minister



**Prof. G. L. Peiris**  
Hon. Foreign Minister

I am pleased to send this message on the occasion of the 71st Anniversary of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka which coincides with the 76th Anniversary of the UNITED NATIONS.

The UNA -Sri Lanka is an NGO which was formed in 1950 and is the sole affiliate of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), in Sri Lanka, whilst it was five years later that Sri Lanka became a member of the United Nations, in 1955. On this occasion, it is significant to mention that the UNA-Sri Lanka works at the grassroots level, disseminating information on the United Nations and creating enormous awareness on the UN and its Charter, mainly among school children.

The UNA -Sri Lanka Study Circle is a vibrant network which operates in over 325 schools, island wide, with the approval of the Ministry of Education. Its programmes, which

are highly commendable, include lectures, seminars, educational sessions, inter-school competitions as well as awareness on patriotism, protection of the environment, drug abuse, non-communicable diseases, with special emphasis on diabetes and vision.

It is pertinent to mention that the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, is one of the most important programmes being implemented by the UN and UNA's globally along with the governments of all member countries of the United Nations. Its agenda is a plan of action for People, Planet and Prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace, whilst recognising the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

I am also happy to note that for the first time in over 70 years, the UNA - Sri Lanka has endorsed a candidate for the post of Executive Committee Member of the World Federation of United Nations Associations and I take this opportunity to convey my sincere greeting and best wishes and feel confident that UNA - Sri Lanka will be elected to the Executive Committee of the WFUNA at the next Plenary Assembly, scheduled to be held in 2022.

Let me extend my warm felicitations and good wishes to the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka and the United Nations, in all its endeavours.

### Message from the President United Nations Association of Sri Lanka



**M. Mohamed Zawahir**  
President

Happy birthday! - I am honored to be the President of this prestigious Association at the time we celebrate 76th Anniversary of UN along with 193 member countries. The United Nations Day as we commemorate today reflecting on the official creation of the United Nations on 24th October 1945 when the UN charter (which was signed on 26th June 1945) came into force. We at the UNA-SRI LANKA celebrating the 71st anniversary of the Association made it an annual event to mark this important day on the calendar as the "National Observance of UN day" It is an opportune moment to reflect upon the achievements and look optimistically to the future.

The preamble of the UN Charter begins with "We the People of the United Nations Determined... meaning the UN belongs to the peoples of the United Nations, therefore we have a responsibility to contribute towards the deliberations of this great institution which was established with the objectives to maintain international peace and security, the promotion of the well being of the peoples of the world and international cooperation.

People's Movement - UNASL- United Nations Association of Sri Lanka is truly a people's Association dedicated to educating the common people of the irreplaceable work of the UN. UNA-SRI LANKA has been one of the leading advocates for the UN since its inception on 19th August 1950, working closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and the UN Colombo office and its specialized agencies. This year we will continue to involve and educate on the SDG-Sustainable Development Goals through our network.

Partnering - We work closely with multiple UN agencies in line with our objectives especially with our

well-established study circle programme. We are now focusing and educating the youth on the work of the UN. This year we have planned to have a series of educational programmes to train the student leadership and train the trainers programme for students.

Innovation - Staying ahead of new trends in education has been the core objectives of the Association. We embrace "Thought Leadership" which is the need of the hour; our innovative programmes have brought tremendous influence on the study circle members. We have consciously chosen SDGs as our key programme. This is done as we should not be frozen in the history of time.

We must grow with our youth rather than living in the glory of the past. It is my desire that our members must get involved to evolve with the youth to create a better-informed society to face the challenges of the world. "You can build a world on paper, but you got to build it out of men"- Frank Buchman - Initiator of moral re-armament once said and meant that in every area, such people are at work to build a new world, this was and is the task of our founding fathers committed and continued by the leaders of the Association.

Founded in 1950 under the leadership of Retired Major the late Honourable Montague Jayawickreme MP, followed by eminent past presidents of the association such as the Late Minister of Justice Felix Dias Bandaranayake, Dr M V P Peiris, Dr F G Hudson Silva, Prof Lakshman Marasinghe, Dr Siran Deraniyagala, Dr Gaminii Corea, Dr Vernon L B Mendis, Ambassador Neville Kanagaratne, Ambassador Nissanka Wijewardene, Gen.Cyril Ranathunga, Ambassador S A C M Zuhlye, Rienzie Wijetilleke, Rohini Nanayakkara and Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Upul Perera, all of them who dedicated their service and contributed to the success of this great Association. The backbone of success was mainly due to the commitment of its earlier Secretary General, the late Kumaran Fernando who dedicated his life to the work of the UNA-SRI LANKA. May the United Nations continue to flourish globally, whilst UNA-SRI LANKA continues to play its' part.

### Message from the UN Resident Coordinator in Sri Lanka



**Hanaa Singer**  
UN Resident Coordinator

Last year, in celebrating 75 years of the United Nations, we asked the people of the world what they would like to see happen in the next 25 years - as we head towards 100 years of the UN. The culmination of this listening exercise was a report presented by the UN Secretary-General at the General Assembly last month, titled 'Our Common Agenda'.

Our Common Agenda builds on many of the ideas that emerged during the year-long global listening exercise where thousands of people in all 193 Member States - including Sri Lanka - voiced their opinions. They also seek to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in light of the gaps and delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The people called on us for changes in 12 areas:**

1. To leave no one behind
2. To protect our planet
3. To prevent conflicts and promote peace
4. To abide by international law and justice
5. To place women and girls at the centre
6. To build trust in public institutions and services
7. To improve digital cooperation
8. To upgrade the United Nations
9. To ensure sustainable financing
10. To boost partnerships
11. To listen to and work with young people
12. To be prepared for global crises, including on public health

Our Common Agenda goes beyond the crucial issues we talk about every day, to consider where our world is, and what we need to do, to fix it. Because business as usual is not an option. Today we need to reorient, based on the 12 areas mentioned in Our Common Agenda.

As the UN Secretary-General noted we need change now and we need to make important choices, so what actions do we take going forward?

- a) We need to re-embrace global solidarity. The COVID-19 pandemic taught us one important lesson - no one is safe until everyone is safe.
- b) Rebuild trust and embrace a comprehensive vision of human rights. People need to see results reflected in their daily lives. Especially with the active and equal participation of women

and girls. We need updated governance arrangements to deliver better public goods and usher in a new era of universal social protection, health coverage, education, skills, decent work and housing.

- c) Bring an end to the "war on science". All policy and budget decisions should be backed by science and expertise.
- d) We know there is a glaring blind spot in how we measure economic prosperity and progress. When profits come at the expense of people and our planet, we are left with an incomplete picture of the true cost of economic growth.
- e) Let us think for the long term, to deliver more for young people and succeeding generations and to be better prepared for the challenges ahead. Our Common Agenda includes recommendations for meaningful, diverse and effective youth engagement both within and outside the United Nations, including through better political representation and by transforming education, skills training and lifelong learning.
- f) Finally, we need an effective United Nations, one able to adapt to global challenges while living up to the purposes and principles of its Charter.

**In Sri Lanka, this translates to the need for immediate action in the following areas:**

- First: Recovery. We need both a health-response to ensure that we recover from the pandemic and reinforce health systems to be more resilient. At the same time, we need to rebuild the economy, by envisioning a future that is sustainable.
- Second: We need to ensure that development is inclusive and equitable. As we journey towards the future, we need to bring communities together and for society to be able to depend on justice and accountable and inclusive governance.
- Third: We need to safeguard the planet and ensure resilient and green growth for shared prosperity and environmental sustainability.

More so than ever, all these areas need to be considered from a gender perspective. We cannot achieve success while leaving behind more than half of our population. Working towards gender equality means ensuring investment in engaging women in all these sectors.

As the Secretary-General has said 'we are at an inflection point in history. Humanity's welfare - and indeed, humanity's very future - depend on solidarity and working together to achieve common goals. The choices we make, or fail to make, today could result in further breakdown, or a breakthrough to a greener, better, safer future'.

Thank you all for marking with us today the founding of the UN, which is your UN.

### Message from the Secretary General United Nations Association of Sri Lanka



**Errol Smith**  
Secretary-General

As we commemorate the National Observance of the 76th United Nations Day, we are also proud to celebrate the 71st Anniversary of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka (UNA-SRI LANKA), which was established on 19th August, 1950.

I am happy to be re-elected for the fifth consecutive year as the Secretary-General of this prestigious Association which is now an active and vibrant organization, dedicated to the cause of the United Nations and its ideals.

The COVID-19 Pandemic had hampered many of our activities but nevertheless, gave us the new opportunity to get actively involved in the response operations, providing dry rations to the needy, medical equipment, personal protective kits, face shields, face masks, examination gloves, infrared thermometers, spray tanks, boots, goggles, etc., to hospitals, the Police and Public Health Inspectors attached to MOH Offices, in affected areas and to other organizations as well. Although we were able to commence a Computer Training Center with the support of the UNA-CHINA, this center has been non-functional for over one year, due to the pandemic situation. UNA-SRI LANKA

works in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, United Nations Organization in Sri Lanka and the UN Information Center, among other specialized agencies affiliated to the UN, in carrying out our activities. Our focus has been on promoting the 17 Sustainable Goals, tree planting, protection of the environment and beaches, vision screening, cataract surgeries, diabetes awareness, healthy life, etc., as well as strengthening the UNA-SRI LANKA Study Circle island wide, by conducting Teacher Training Programmes.

The Diplomatic Membership Programme is another important area that we are focusing attention on and we envisage organizing an event to recognize the Diplomats accredited to Sri Lanka and reviving their membership, in order to establish closer relations and ties with all our friendly countries/nations, worldwide.

The membership of the UNA-SRI LANKA is the strength of our organization and the commitment and dedication of all members should be highly appreciated and acknowledged.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that the UNA-SRI LANKA has endorsed the candidature of Dr. M.M.M. Rushanudeen, Executive Chairman of the UNA-SRI LANKA, to submit his nomination for the post of Executive Committee Member of the WFUNA, as the forthcoming 43rd Plenary Assembly, scheduled to be held in November, 2022 at Georgia. This is the first time in over 70 years that the UNA-SRI LANKA is contesting for a seat on the Executive Committee of the WFUNA.

### Down Memory Lane .....

The United Nations Association in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (UNA-SRI LANKA) was established under the guidance of the late Right Honourable D.S. Senanayake PC, MP, the first Prime Minister of Ceylon, on 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. The Association is registered under the Companies Act No.17 of 1982 and with the Department of Social Services as well as the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Council.

In 1951, the UNA-SRI LANKA was admitted as the sole National Affiliate of the WFUNA - World Federation of United Nations Associations, joining the rest of the world comprising over 110 member countries.

UNA-SRI LANKA accelerated its activities joining WFUNA informing the common people on the work of the UN through 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.

The Governors General and subsequently, the Presidents of the Republic of Sri Lanka have always been the Patron of the Association. Honorable Prime Minister, the Chief Vice Patron, Honorable Speaker of Parliament and the Honorable Leader of the Opposition are Vice Patrons. His Excellency the late Justice Christopher Gregory Weeramantry, former Vice President of the International Court of Justice, had been the Honorary Vice President of the Association.

UNA-SRI LANKA holds its Annual General Meeting on the last Saturday of March every year and the members of the newly elected Committee are sworn in on this day. The Committee consists of the President who is an eminent citizen of the country and an Executive Committee consisting of the Secretary-General, Executive Chairman, Treasurer,

Editor, two Deputy Executive Chairpersons, seven Assistant Secretaries-General, three Vice Chairpersons and seven Committee members. Several categories of members form the Association, namely, Life, Special Life, Complimentary, Honorary members, Corporate members, Overseas Life Members, etc. It also has a conferred category of membership called Diplomatic Membership for Ambassadors and High Commissioners currently accredited to Sri Lanka. A unique feature is that UNA-SRI LANKA is perhaps the only organization which has Diplomatic Members. The Diplomatic Members have been contributing immensely towards the activities of the UNA-SRI LANKA. We maintain closer links with the foreign missions in Sri Lanka.

UNA-SRI LANKA currently has over 1800 members, comprising Special Life, Life, Honorary and Corporate Members as well as 328 schools registered under an island wide UNA Study Circles programme which was introduced in 1981 and is approved by the Ministry of Education.

Through the numerous activities carried out by the UNASL, there are ample opportunities to reflect on the success and challenges of the common people as well as to consider the significant accomplishments the organization has contributed to maintaining peace and security, promoting human rights, and democracy, preventive and curative health related activities which include screening and awareness programmes on Diabetes and Vision Care. We also provide solutions to environmental issues, the alleviation of poverty, economic development and promoting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The UNA-SRI LANKA is moving forward as a vibrant organization through the tremendous commitment of its volunteers taking the message of the United Nations to the grassroots of the Sri Lankan population, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Colombo, which includes the United Nations Specialized Agencies and the UN Information Center.

### UNA-SRI LANKA COMPUTER TRAINING CENTER

A fully equipped, air-conditioned Computer Training Center is being conducted by the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka, providing computer training and application certificate courses to less-fortunate student and adults at a very nominal charge.

Those wishing to join are requested to contact the UNA-SRI LANKA Secretariat at the following address:

39/1, Cyril Jansz Mawatha, Panadura.  
Tel: 038-2243080 / 038-2232123  
E-mail: unasl@sl.lk  
www: unasilanka.org



## UNA - SRI LANKA

### ENDORSED CANDIDATE FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS (WFUNA)

Forthcoming 43rd Plenary Assembly in Georgia

**35 YEARS OF HONORARY/VOLUNTARY SERVICE TO UNA-SRI LANKA, WFUNA, UN & MOTHERLAND**

|                       |                                     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>1992 - 1995</b>    | <b>Executive Committee Member</b>   |
| <b>1995 - 2005</b>    | <b>Assistant Secretary-General</b>  |
| <b>2005 - 2008</b>    | <b>Vice Chairperson</b>             |
| <b>2008 - 2015</b>    | <b>Senior Vice Chairperson</b>      |
| <b>2015 - 2018</b>    | <b>Deputy Executive Chairperson</b> |
| <b>2018 - to date</b> | <b>Executive Chairperson</b>        |

**Executive Chairman - UNA - Sri Lanka**

**Chairman - Finance, Fundraising & Disaster Relief, Membership Development**

**UN Calendar - Observances, Sustainable Development Goals Sub Committees**

**Volunteer of the Year Award 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017 - UNA - Sri Lanka**

**UNA - Sri Lanka Invaluable Services & Highest Honor Awards**

**Voluntary Service 1985 up-to-date**

**Life Patron, Honorary Member, Life Member**

**Founder President - UNA Study Circle, Zahira College 1990 to 1992**

**Managing Partner - MMR Marketing Service, Nizam Trading and MMR Prints**

**Old Boy - Zahira College, Colombo**

**Old Boy - Hameed-Al-Hussienie College, Colombo**

**HRH Prince Dato Seri Ambassador Deshakeerthi**  
**Dr. M M M Rushanudeen**  
Justice of Peace - Whole Island

MRushanudeen
MohamedRushanudeenMohamedMarzook
www.unasilanka.org



# UNITED NATIONS

## ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA

### NATIONAL OBSERVANCE OF THE 76TH UNITED NATIONS DAY

&

### 71st Anniversary of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka



**COVID 19 - Project 01**  
Donations to Police Stations



**COVID 19 - Project 02**  
Donations of Dry Rations



**COVID 19 - Project 03**  
Donations to Police Check Points



**COVID 19 - Project 04**  
Vision and Diabetic Screening



**COVID 19 - Project 05**  
Donations to MOH Offices



**COVID 19 - Project 06**  
Donations to Hospitals



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- 1 NO POVERTY
- 2 ZERO HUNGER
- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
- 5 GENDER EQUALITY
- 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
- 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
- 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
- 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
- 13 CLIMATE ACTION
- 14 LIFE BELOW WATER
- 15 LIFE ON LAND
- 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
- 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

**International Women's Day - 2020**



**Annual General Meeting - Fiscal Year 2021 / 2022**



**UNA - SRI LANKA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2021 / 2022**

|  |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <br>President<br><b>M. M. Zawahir</b>                        | <br>Executive Chairman<br><b>Dr. M. M. M. Rushanudeen</b>      | <br>Secretary-General<br><b>Errol Smith</b>  | <br>Treasurer<br><b>Kumudu Weerasinghe</b>                         | <br>Editor & Assistant Treasurer<br><b>Dharmadasa Vitharanage</b> |
| <br>Deputy Executive Chairman<br><b>Sampath Priyankara</b>   | <br>Deputy Executive Chairman<br><b>Dr. Rohan P. Dayaratne</b> | <br>Vice Chairman<br><b>D. M. Siriwardena</b>  | <br>Vice Chairman<br><b>Dr. M. Z. M. Nizar</b>                     | <br>Vice Chairman<br><b>Dr. K. D. S. Ranasinghe</b>               |
| <br>Assistant Secretary General<br><b>E. Karunaratne</b>     | <br>Assistant Secretary General<br><b>J. M. L. P. Bandara</b>  | <br>Assistant Secretary General<br><b>R. H. Ashoka Perera</b>  | <br>Assistant Secretary General<br><b>Dr. S. M. K. Abeywardane</b> | <br>Assistant Secretary General<br><b>Dr. Upali Jayawardena</b>   |
| <br>Assistant Secretary General<br><b>Dr. T. Anver Dole</b>  | <br>Executive Committee Member<br><b>Dr. Sarath Samarage</b>   | <br>Executive Committee Member<br><b>Shyama Wijekulasuriya</b>   | <br>Executive Committee Member<br><b>H. R. Nagarajah</b>           | <br>Executive Committee Member<br><b>S.P.D. Sanjewa De Silva</b>  |
| <br>Executive Committee Member<br><b>Panchali Rathnayake</b> | <br>Executive Committee Member<br><b>Rohan Fernando</b>        | <p>Greetings &amp; Best Wishes</p> <p>on the 71st Anniversary of the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka &amp; Commemoration of the 76th United Nations Day from</p> <p><b>Ambassador Khalil Ibrahim Nassour</b><br/>Special Life Member - Overseas<br/>United Nations Association of Sri Lanka &amp; Chairman<br/><b>2 Sisters Jewelry &amp; Gems</b><br/>Belgium and Lebanon</p> |  |   |