



EXPORTERS' ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA

Minutes for the 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka held on Monday, 29th July 2019 at 3.00 p.m. at the Ground floor Auditorium of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

Present : Mr. Harin de Silva/ Outgoing Chairman
Mr. Chrisso de Mel/ Incoming Chairman
Mr. M H Talal Shums/ 1st Vice Chairman
Mr. Lakshan Algama Perera/ 2nd Vice Chairman

Member Companies/ Associations

Past Chairman
Past Chairperson
Imperial Teas/ Past Chairman
Akbar Brother (Pvt) Ltd
Ceylon Biscuits Ltd
Hayleys PLC

Hatton National Bank

KIK Lanka (Pvt) Ltd
Lion Brewary (Ceylon PLC)
Link Natural Products (Pvt) Ltd
Rainco (Pvt) Ltd
Tea Tang (Pvt) Ltd/ Past Chairman
The Spices & Allied Products, Producers' & Traders' Association
Sri Lanka Fruits & Vegetable Producers, Processors & Exporters' Association
Sri Lanka Association of Manufacturers & Exporters of Rubber Products
Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters Association

Represented by

Mr. Fazal Mushin
Mrs. Nirmali Samarathunga
Mr. Deepal Chandrasekara
Mr. Udesch Witharana
Mr. Priyantha Bandara
Mr. Nalaka Ratnayake
Mr. K G V Fernando
Mr. Janath Ilangatileke
Mr. Randeve Mahaarachchi
Ms. Nadie Kahatapitiya Algama
Mr. Ranil Goonetilleke
Mr. Thakshila Gamage
Mr. Ahmed Aroos
Mr. Rohan P Daluwatte
Mr. Vernon Abeyratne

Mr. S Gnanaskandan

Mr. Justin Senevirathne

Mr. Azeez Rummy

1. MINUTES

Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting held on July 10, 2018 at the Board Room of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce were confirmed, proposed by Mr. Fazal Mushin and seconded by Mr. Justin Senevirathne.

2. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka for the period ended 31st March 2019 were adopted, proposed by Mr. M H Talal Shums and seconded by Mr. Vernon Abeyratne.

3. ADDRESS BY THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN

With the permission of the Members, Chairman stated that he will deliver his address at the Post Business Session scheduled on 13th July 2018 at Atrium, The Cinnamon Grand Hotel.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF OFFICE BEARERS AND THE MANAGING COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 2019/2020

Secretariat announced that at the first meeting of the Managing Committee for 2019/2020, the following were elected as office Bearers for the year 2019/2020.

Chairman	- Mr. Chrisso de Mel
1 st Vice Chairman	- Mr. M H Talal Shums
2 nd Vice Chairman	- Mr. Lakshan Algama Perera

MEMBERS ELECTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP

The following 14 members were elected to serve on the committee for 2019/2020.

1. Akbar Brother (Pvt) Ltd
2. Ceylon Biscuits Ltd
3. Eastern Merchants PLC
4. Hatton National Bank PLC
5. Hayleys PLC
6. KIK Lanka (Pvt) Ltd
7. Lion Brewary (Ceylon PLC)
8. Link Natural Products (Pvt) Ltd
9. Meezan & Company (Pvt) Ltd
10. Rainco (Pvt) Ltd
11. Shums & Company (Pvt) Ltd
12. Saboor Chatoor (Pvt) Ltd
13. Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation
14. Tea Tang (Pvt) Ltd

REPRESENTATIVES NOMINATED FROM PRODUCT ASSOCIATIONS

In addition, 11 representatives from the following export Product Associations were also nominated to serve on the Committee.

Represented by

1. Lanka Fruit & Vegetable Producers' Processors and Exporters Association
- Mr. S Gnanaskandan/ Mr. Zuraish Hashim
2. Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters' Association – Mr. A J Rummy/Mr. Athula Jayasundera
3. Sri Lanka Gem & Jewellery Association – Mr. Ajward Deen/Mr. Rizwan Nayeem
4. Spices & Allied Products Producers Association – Mr. Vernon Abeyratne/
Mr. Rumesch Jayasuriya
5. Sri Lanka Diamond Manufacturers Association – Mr. Sanjay Baid/
Mr. R. D. Samaranayake
6. Seafood Exporters' Association – Mr. Channa Weeratunga/ Mr. Dilan Fernando
7. Sri Lanka Manufacturers & Exporters of Rubber Products – Mr. Justin Senaviratne
8. Sri Lanka Association of Software Services Companies – Mr. Ruvindu Peiris/
Mr. Chrishan de Mel
9. Tea Exporters Association - Mr. Deivoo Deivanayagam/
Mr. Ranjith Abeykoon
10. The Colombo Tea Traders Association – Mr. H D Hemaratne
11. The Colombo Rubber Traders Association – Mr. Harin de Silva

Secretariat announced the following past chairpersons were nominated to serve on the Managing Committee

Mr. Harin de Silva (Immediate Past Chairman)
Mr. Fazal Mushin
Ms. Dawn Austin
Mrs. Nirmali Samarathunga
Mr. A.S.M Muzzamil

This comprises the Managing Committee for the year 2019/2020

5. ELECTION OF AUDITORS

Chairman proposed from the Chair that Baker Tilly Edirisinghe & Co. to be appointed as Auditors for the year 2019/2020.

6. ADDRESS BY THE INCOMING CHAIRMAN

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

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE SHALL HAVE BEEN GIVEN

There was no other business of which due notice has been given.

8. ADJOURNMENT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Chairman declared the meeting closed and invited the members to join for Post Business Session and Refreshments.

**Post Business Session of the 22nd Annual General Meeting
of Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka**

**29th July, 2019 at 3.00 p.m.
Ground Floor Auditorium, The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce**

Committee members, past Chairmen, fellow members and distinguished invitees were welcomed to the 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka.

1. ADDRESS BY THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN, MR. HARIN DE SILVA

Quote

“Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen”.

“Our chief guest for this afternoon Mrs. Dawn Austin, members of the management committee of the EASL, members of the EASL, invitees. I take this opportunity warmly welcome you all for the 22nd AGM of the EASL.

It's been both a privilege and an honor for me to have served in the capacity of Chairman of the EASL for the past 2.5 years.

In these 2.5 years under my stewardship my team and I have made considerable progress in raising the profile of the EASL and in the process have made valuable strides in the EASL being recognized as one of the premier export related organizations representing the Sri Lankan export fraternity.

Under my watch EASL has continued to promote and protect the interests of the Exporter Community at large and brought together a wide spectrum of Exporters under a strong single platform aimed at exchanging views and making representation on Macro issues relevant to the country's Exports.

My team and I have constantly engaged with Government agencies, making representations and lobbying Exporter concerns with a view to facilitating a dialogue with regard to national policy direction, whilst taking into account the shared goal of achieving strong national economic development through the combined endeavors of the Export Sector and the Government.

The hard work that my team and I have had to put in In the last 2.5 years has been rewarded by the fact that the EASL has been invited to be a part of following bodies and forums

- The Steering Committee on Trade Liberalization of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce
- National Agenda Committee (NAC) on Export Development
- Monitoring Committee on Benefits of GSP+ and Labor Matters
- Exporters Forum, Sri Lanka Export Development Board
- National Export Strategy (NES) Core Team and Working Group, conducted by the International Trade Centre and headed by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board
- Working group for GAP in spices under the *Sri Lanka Standards Institute*
- Evaluation committee on Market Access program under Sri Lanka Export Development Board.
- Employers Federation of Ceylon

- Advisory Commission Constituted Under the Intellectual Property Act No. 36 of 2003, Ministry of Industry & Commerce
- Sri Lanka Trade related assistance project - Geographical Indication (GI) Ceylon Cinnamon facilitated by the EU & headed by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce

The Association has forged and maintained a closer dialogue & relationship with the following Institutions on export related matters:

- Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade
- Ministry of Industry and Commerce
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Sri Lanka Export Development Board
- Department of Inland Revenue (VAT Dept)
- Sri Lanka Customs
- Board of Investment
- The Central Bank of Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka Ports Authority
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Exchange Control
- Joint Apparel Associations Forum
- Sri Lanka Standards Institute

The primary focus for my team and I has always been about creation of an environment for the Exporters with a focus on global competitiveness and achieving strong growth of the export sector. I am happy to state that we have forged ahead to capitalize on the Government's declaration that all imperatives required to encourage the growth of Export will be addressed and resolved. Consistent and frequent representation has been made by the EASL to every related agency connected with Exports, drawing attention to aspects that constrain Export businesses from being able to achieve the targets which each sector has set for itself. We have continued stress on the importance of having a consistent policy framework whenever my team and I have engaged with relevant institutions and policy makers. Over the past 2 years the EASL on its own have developed 2 documents under the title "Recommendations for a National Export Strategy" or NEDEVs which was a continuation of the first document that was compiled under the stewardship of Mr. Fazal Mushin.

My team and I set about identifying cross cutting issues at a macro level via extensive consultations with our membership & stake holder in the export fraternity along with economist who specialize in the field of exports. This document was shared with policy makers in the current government. Taking a step further this document was also shared with all political and interested parties who are concerned with the development of exports out of Sri Lanka.

Each of the 2 documents addressed the most critical issues challenging the export fraternity in Sri Lanka that need to be addressed at the highest levels of government. The 2nd document focuses on 5 main points that are currently essential in formulating the foundations for the growth of Sri Lankan exports.

They are

1. Driving the National Exports Strategy
2. Improving the investment climate for exports
3. Addressing Constraints for Market Access and Promotion
4. Proactive Engagement in Trade Liberalization
5. Fostering Innovation to drive exports

My team and I have continued to stress on the above points whenever we have engaged the relevant authorities on the development of Sri Lanka's export sector.

The EASL also made significant contributions to developing Sri Lanka's export industry via its participation in developing Sri Lanka's National Export Strategy (NES) in the capacity of both a core team and a working group member.

The Government of Sri Lanka unveiled the National Export Strategy (NES) on 19th July 2017. It was a blueprint for achieving increased exports, enhanced regional cooperation and job creation.

Alongside other national initiatives such as Enterprise Sri Lanka and Vision 2025, the Strategy was an important addition to the country's development agenda and its goal of becoming a leading Asian export hub driven by innovation and investment.

The five-year Strategy aimed to enable Sri Lanka to reach its goal of \$28 billion in export revenue by 2022. It benefited from the input of more than 600 public and private-sector stakeholders across Sri Lanka to reflect their export ambitions.

The Strategy sets out specific priority actions and investments to address competitiveness constraints and modernize regulatory systems for improved efficiency, and boost Sri Lankan industries in order to increase exports. It also sets targets to improve opportunities for Sri Lanka's micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and exporters in regional and global trade.

Advisory Committees were set up where members of the EASL committee were invited to serve on these committees. These export "Advisory Committees" were rapidly activated for effective implementation and monitoring of the NES and were set up for a period of 3 years.

I do not intend on boring you with each and every achievement the EASL has achieved under my stewardship. The above mentioned achievements are just a few of the noteworthy achievements that my team and I have been able to achieve over the last 2.5 years.

I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been blessed with such a great team who stuck by me through both the good and the challenging times during my tenure. A very special thanks to Fazal, Talal, Lakshan and Chrisso for all the advice, assistance and encouragement afforded to me over the last 2.5 years. A very special thanks to Mrs. Dawn Austin and Mr. Gulam Chatoor who have always helped me with sound advice and support on how to run the affairs of the association. A special thanks to the secretariat for their assistance in running the day to day affairs of the association.

My sincere congratulations and good wishes to the new chairman Chrisso, the two vice chairs and the new committee. The export fraternity is currently sailing in uncharted waters where political uncertainty and influence may threaten and undermine the actual development of Sri Lanka's export industry. I urge the EASL to be strong and persistent and keep the Sri Lankan export flag flying high in these turbulent times.

Thank you".

Unquote

2. ADDRESS BY THE INCOMING CHAIRMAN, MR. CHRIS DE MEL

Quote

“Good afternoon!

It is with much pride and delight I stand here today, as the Chairman of the EASL. I want to first and foremost acknowledge my appreciation to all those who placed their trust in my capability to give the right kind of leadership to this great institution, An Association that has been in existence over the past two decades.

As I look at the names of some of the founder members and the purpose for which this Association was formed back in time, I’m inspired to take the leadership, noting that the challenges then and now have not been much different. It is evident, that even with the advancement of science and technology the quality of human life when transacting business and the nature, and the spirit in which we do business have not progressed to the better.

Sadly, there has clearly been a deterioration of ethics and morals and instead of developing towards an enriching future we have positioned ourselves to be vulnerable today due to selfish, corrupt, unsustainable thinking, putting self and business before Country and its people. All the main stakeholders, the Politicians both in government and the opposition, the public sector and the private sector are to be blamed for not having done their part towards development.

In the recent past, even after coming out of a trade handicap after a senseless civil war that existed for three decades which clouded and blocked the potential of growth in this Nation, THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP HAS FAILED..... to lead this country to where we should be, but instead further marred the reputation of our beautiful island by being corrupt, none transparent and none accountable, either through means of a dictatorial leadership or a weak leadership. Either way, none of the main political parties have been able to remove these stains and usher in good governance, law and order and fair trade, leaving doubts in the hearts of potential investors who would have been ideally bringing in the much needed Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) to boost our economy.

Sri Lanka needs to compete with the rest of the world, thinking “No man is an island”. If we look at some of the successful economies like Singapore, one begins to think ‘ what resources do they have? Compared to our blessed motherland’. But how have they evolved to be the trading hub that they are today? If not for the visionary thinking of its political leadership ably assisted by its robust stakeholders.

We the Exporters Association, in the recent past has done an exhaustive study, identifying key areas for improvement and action and published two valuable strategy documents that have been handed over to the Ministry of Finance and other key government institutions. Though some of our proposals have been well received and even incorporated to the national budget. We must say that we are disappointed that the proper implementation of same has not been done – leaving us standard in our blocks, and not helped us to move forward. We have not seen the intent and the commitment in the part of the government to fire all guns in order to grow the exports. With the exception of The Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade (MODSIT), The Ministry of Ports & Shipping and since of late The Ministry of Science and Technology.

I want to commend The Export Development Board (EDB) ably led by that dynamic lady Mrs. Indira Malwatte and her team, who have been closely working with us through the formulation of the National Export Strategy (NES) and other export development initiatives.

I'm also in appreciation of the integrity and the tireless efforts of Madam Sonali Wijeratne of the Department of Commerce and her team who have worked hard to implement the Trade Information Portal (TIP) and other trade facilitation initiatives.

I wish to acknowledge the vital role played by The Sri Lanka Customs and The Board of Investment (BOI) to improve the efficiency and speed simplifying the processes in order to help the exporters compete with other international origins.

I urge all government institutions who are to facilitate exports to fully understand Sri Lanka's obligations to the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) signed with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and stay committed to execute and fulfill all possible trade facilitation initiatives, paving way to create ease of doing business, and moving forward towards a national single window, on which we have all invested much time.

I must insist that the trade cannot afford to entertain sudden changes in procedures and processes without proper planning and dialog and without explaining reasons for same, as done in many occasions in the recent past. Arbitrary increases of charges due to add-hoc procedural changes cannot be afforded without the proper value addition to the supply chain. These measures will only make Sri Lanka uncompetitive.

As I speak, I hear from the vine that a new procedure that is to be implemented with scanning of cargo will cost the trade additionally for export and imports (brought in for export). Whilst we are fully in support of the introduction and the installation of scanners and other modern intelligent security devices we are of the opinion that the trade should not be taxed or burdened. We already have our experiences in the past where several levies have been imposed under the guise of development and international marketing, but has eventually been utilized for entertainment or for a totally different purpose from what it was meant to be. Sri Lanka must be mindful and be sensitive to capture the transactional cost when pitching in with other efficient origins.

It is unfortunate that we have to voice out our displeasure and disappointment, but it is imperative that we do it nevertheless in the hope that all stakeholders will pick up these recommendations positively and work towards achieving common goals that will see Sri Lanka turning around and standing in front rather than lagging and being left behind.

We have an excellent story to tell as a maritime hub, specially in relation to the growth of the Colombo Port. But with over 75% or more coming from the transshipment volumes from our neighbouring countries, other than for the port handling income we make, we haven't capitalized on the possible trading platform, that would have enabled us to generate additional export revenue. Development of entreport trade and multi country consolidation, free zone facilities and aggressive off shore trading are game changes. We must understand these concepts and develop the necessary procedures to make it more feasible for business to operate.

Finally ladies and gentlemen as Sri Lanka races against time position herself to be contender in the global platform in par with the rest of the world, it is imperative that we overcome all hurdles and handicaps that we have locally in order to forge ahead in full throttle to end up as a match winner.

Thank you".

Unquote

3. ADDRESS BY THE CHIEF GUEST, MRS. DAWN S. AUSTIN

Quote

“Chairman Chrisso, Past Chairman Harin, Members of the EXCO, Distinguished Invitees, Fellow Exporters Ladies & Gentlemen.

It is a real honour to have been invited to deliver the keynote address at the 22nd AGM of the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka.

On reflecting on the years that have passed since I was first associated with EASL, when in fact it was called the Federation of Exporters (or FEDEX) in the 1990's, I thought it would be interesting to review progress from my perspective, as to how the mission of the EASL has stayed relevant to the Terms of Reference for which it was formed.

I found myself absorbed in loads of information relevant to Export strategies recommended by the EASL over the past 22 years, some of which have been taken on board and resolved, whilst other matters are still 'work in progress' or have even been ignored and is now water under the bridge. The Addresses of successive Chairman and a Chairperson from 2010 to date and EXCO deliberations and submissions gave me the opportunity to track our mission, which, in principle have not changed, but the change in gears on the journey have taken on varied sounds!!!

In April 2010, following the downturn in global economies in 2009, against the backdrop of other export businesses in the region being given stimulus packages to stay in business, the SL Government responded to Exporter appeals and put in place what was known as the Export Development Rewards Scheme (EDRS) to stimulate Exports in a time of global recession in order to encourage exporters to keep their businesses functioning. The specific intention was to prevent trained staff from migrating away from the jobs at which they were skilled. The program had a tenure of one year, but by the 2nd quarter, payments fizzled out and Exporters were left to 'paddle their own canoe' whilst carrying expenses they really did not need to have incurred.

Despite an expectation of the dividends of peace, Exporters had to contend with world economies crashing and dwindling markets. They had to re-invent their strategies. Changing markets, revised consumer demands, volatile currency market concerns and a range of 'relative to the specific product' issues had to be addressed.

The on-going thrust of the EASL continued to work to lobby for an environment where Export Companies would find it conducive towards keeping their businesses moving in an 'equal playing field' environment with its global competitors both within and outside of Sri Lanka.

I believe we are still flogging this old horse hoping for a change? Many are the anomalies that Sri Lankan Export companies are pitted against when global players are able to secure unchallenged benefits without any stakeholder consultation by the agencies which sanction them.

The most positive outcome and reward for the work and serious lobbying of the EXCOs of the EASL was in 2009 and 2010, under the leadership of Mrs Nirmali Samarasinghe, the roll out of the suspended VAT (SVAT) system was implemented. This initiative no longer left huge amounts of Exporters funds by way of VAT payments reposed with IRD /Treasury.

This single initiative has made a significant difference to cash flows of Export Companies. There are still some aspects which need resolution and the trajectory is on course, despite the efforts of a few who appear to want to de-rail the program.

In 2012, the EASL recommended that it would be prudent to address the matter of looking at the increased cost of operation in the light of the anticipated rise in the per capita income levels envisaged that as we were moving towards being a middle income country. EASL cautioned that the related higher costs to produce for Exports will constrain the competitiveness through reduced productivity levels unless automation became the order of the day. The Apparel industry has demonstrated the wisdom of this thinking.

It recommended that in such instances, appropriate modalities are introduced to support this capital intensive input with an extended tax break to encourage investment in such automation. This was accepted and implemented at the next Budget which has now seen to be yielding results.

However, automation incurs increased use of energy and the EASL's concerns served to alert the authorities that the high cost of Energy in the Export sector is one where consideration has not been forthcoming. At the time the response from the authorities was that the cost of Energy generation will reduce in a few years' time. Six years later we are not in the happy position of reduced energy costs, and this promise has not materialised. Added to this is the greater confusion that arises when erratic power outages have begun once more.

The fact that whilst the rest of the successful economies are encouraging the generation of Solar energy sources, a recent media release intimates that current thinking is to suspend the use of small units of solar generation!!

This rationale I have not been able to comprehend!

India and China undoubtedly need to be Sri Lanka's most significant trading partners, and I believe that there should be more efforts made to make Sri Lanka more conducive to attract FDI's and with it technology transfer drivers from these countries.

However, the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka has alerted the authorities over the past 5 years that despite the Free Trade Agreement between Sri Lanka and India being in place, that there are inexplicable and insidious Non-Tariff Barriers being implemented to dissuade SL Exporters from tapping into supplying the vast Indian retail market. A case in point is the matter where consignments of Sri Lankan food items still have to undergo multiple testing procedures before being permitted into India, whilst Indian products are imported into Sri Lanka with relative ease.

There is a fast growing labour shortage in many industries that requires the attention of policymakers. Skilled labour is in serious short supply. It may perhaps be appropriate to request that Sri Lankan companies be permitted to bring in labour from neighbouring countries like Nepal and Bangladesh as is evident in the Maldives for instance? Also how does one perceive it to be an even playing field for development when one observes certain construction sites using Chinese Labour exclusively?

The EASL has frequently acknowledged the importance for Sri Lanka to link light industries into global value chains. However I believe that this can only be achieved if Sri Lanka is acknowledged regionally, to have a stable labour policy and a workforce with a good reputation for high productivity. On-going clearly defined programs that focus on skills development and education to upgrade standard of labour will enable Sri Lanka to move up value chain for greater specialisation. This is the facilitation that the Government should put in place to enable the private sector to bring in the business.

The Ease of Doing Business Index (DBI) which is a transaction and regulation based ranking might encourage investors to look at Sri Lanka, however, the EASL has recommended that the Government consider other indicators like the Global Competitiveness Index which will enable prospective investors to look at other parameters that determine how well a country uses its resources.

The EASL has documented that the **lack of a clearly defined PPP Policy, with clearly enunciated regulations and a legal framework acts** as a disincentive to investors. Resolution of this aspect will instil confidence in investors and allow for greater collaboration and transparency between the respective parties.

Currently there is so much confusion in the Governance arena.

Reducing the overlapping of line ministries related to, for examples, Agriculture, Exports and Investment to a more simplified process will definitely create a conducive and transparent environ for more Public Private Partnerships and inflow of the much valued FDIs.

So as I recap the journey of the EASL.

However, right now the need of the hour is to send out strong signals, that Sri Lanka's house in order and ready to become a super island nation.

It may be our last chance to get a turnaround as other economies are addressing the same opportunities that we know exist. The economy has taken an unprecedented, unexpected, serious beating in the past few months.

The economy is in tatters. The cost of living has spiralled, and in this background businesses are struggling to stay afloat.

I believe that it is absolutely vital for all authorities, political and administrative bodies to come together and show the world that we stand together for progress. Let us capitalize on the beautiful multi ethnic, multi cultured, educated nation which Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yu so admired and looked to emulate some decade ago.

We have done it before, and we have to do it now. We have to set aside differences and rise together to show the world that right now. Sri Lanka is POSITIVE. It has the capacity to turn adversity to advantage and that we are open for business.

Thank you”.

Unquote

4. VOTE OF THANKS BY 1st VICE CHAIRMAN, MR. M H TALAL SHUMS

Quote

“Good evening Mrs. Dawn S. Austin, Past Chairperson of EASL and Managing Director of Nidro Supply (Pvt) Ltd, distinguished invitees, past chairpersons, fellow members and ladies and gentleman.

It is my privilege that I have been asked to propose the vote of thanks of the occasion of the Post Business Session of 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka. On behalf of our EASL, I would like to thank our chief guest, Mrs. Dawn S. Austin for accepting our invitation and being here this evening.

Mrs. Austin, we thank you sincerely for taking the time off your busy schedule to be here with us this evening. I also thank our past chairpersons who also supported the EASL in numerous ways this year.

We also thank the members of the EASL for extending their support and cooperation at all times. On behalf of the association I also thank the chamber of commerce for providing the secretarial work and for the numerous services rendered to us during the last year.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Mrs. Dhara Wijayatilake, CEO of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, and Mrs. Alikie Perera, Deputy Secretary General and Financial Controller of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. I must place on record the excellent services rendered by Ms. Manori Dissanayake and Ms. Ushani Dassnayake. I wish to express our sincere thanks, the media for covering today’s event.

Last but not least, on behalf of the management and the committee I thank all members and guests for being here with us this evening.”

Unquote

The Chairman extended an invitation to all present to join in a time of fellowship and cocktails.

Ushani Dassanayake
For Secretary