



September 2017

FOREIGN MINISTER TILAK MARAPANA'S ADDRESS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE 2017



The Indian Ocean has historically been a powerful communication channel for the spread of culture, global trade and commerce. Today, the Indian Ocean's traditional status as a major source of livelihood is more valid than ever before, as it remains an important international trade highway.

It is in this context that the 2nd Indian Ocean Conference assumes significance. Identifying common challenges and finding amicable solutions will help us, as a community of nations to grow, prosper and secure our future together. Sri Lanka stands ready to do whatever is necessary towards achieving peace, progress and prosperity in the Indian Ocean region.

As an island nation, Ocean Affairs is of vital significance to Sri Lanka. We have for many years participated prominently in many international and regional initiatives related to Ocean Affairs. More significantly, we were closely involved from the outset with the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea at which a new legal regime for the oceans was developed.

The situation in the world, particularly in the Indian Ocean, has undergone a major transformation since that time. The end of Cold War, and the shift towards globalization, benefitted the region's economic thrust. However, several new challenges and threats to regional stability and security have emerged such as cross border issues, terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking, and environmental catastrophe. These challenges require the development of a common approach and commitment, by those who are present in the region.

Our economies rely on the free and secure passage of maritime trade through the region. Therefore, we have a fundamental interest in fostering peace and security and ensuring a safe maritime domain for all. An Indian Ocean, Rules Based Order that respects the rights of all states to the freedom of navigation and over-flight, and ensures unimpeded lawful maritime commerce, in line with international laws and regulations, is essential for peace and prosperity in our region and beyond. A stable and secure Ocean order will not only build confidence and predictability among its users but also assist in combating maritime crime and ensuring the safety and security of our Sea Lanes of Communication. *More*

REMARKS BY FOREIGN SECRETARY PRASAD KARIYAWASAM AT THE PANEL ON PEACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION



The Indian Ocean poses many challenges as well as opportunities in the present day. The Ocean keeps the networks of trading alive, providing livelihood and delivering prosperity to our people. At the same time, it also keeps the networks of terrorism, piracy, drug smuggling, and human trafficking, alive, which requires constant vigilance and action through cooperation, in our common interest.

Our desire is for a system in the Indian Ocean where all countries pursue their territorial claims and pursue their aspirations in accordance with international law. A system that sees greater cooperation, including on natural disasters, maritime security, and for keeping the sea lanes open and safe. A system that enhances economic connectivity in the entire Indo-Asia-Pacific, ensuring the transfer of goods and services at faster speeds, greater volumes, and especially at lower costs.

Sri Lanka, located right in the middle of the orient, is ready to work with our partners in the region and beyond for this purpose. We seek an inclusive Indian Ocean that is peaceful, stable, and secure. Our Ocean, since time immemorial, not only drew the attention of the rest of the world, but bene-

fitted from its interaction with those living beyond. Exchange of ideas, and goods and services within the region and those from afar, have enriched our lives and continues to do so. Establishing a Peaceful Indian Ocean Region, is essential for the long and short-term wellbeing of our region and the billions of people to whom this region is home. We need to create conditions, processes and procedures for cooperation so that prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region will not remain just a dream for our people.

90% of the world's population lives by the sea. As mentioned by many speakers yesterday, the seas remain the primary mode for the international transportation of goods, touching the lives of this large body of people, directly. The Indian Ocean Region is no exception. Statistics with regard to sea-borne transport has also been mentioned in this Conference and elsewhere. Therefore, it is evident that sustaining peace and stability in the Oceans including in the Indian Ocean is essential for peace and stability in the littoral. In this context, the proposal by the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, to establish a Code of Conduct in the Indian Ocean, we believe, requires urgent attention. *More*

NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES VISION 2025

Vision 2025 A of President Country Enriched, the economic development plan of Sri Lanka's national unity government, was launched under the patronage of President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on September 4. The document can be viewed [here](#)

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DELEGATION STRENGTHENS U.S.-SRI LANKAN TIES



Wickremesinghe, Speaker of the Parliament Jayasuriya, and Opposition Leader Sampanthan, on August 10.

A bipartisan delegation of Members of Congress from the U.S. House of Representatives arrived in Colombo on Wednesday, August 9 to further strengthen ties between the governments and people of Sri Lanka and the United States. Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen of New Jersey, Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and Congressman Henry Cuellar of Texas held productive meetings with Prime Minister

The Members of Congress traveled to Sri Lanka during the U.S. Congressional recess to emphasize continued U.S. commitment to political reforms and economic growth in Sri Lanka. They stressed in their official meetings the full support of the United States for the Government of Sri Lanka's efforts to expedite a new Constitution, strengthen democratic rights for Sri Lankans of all ethnicities, ensure reconciliation, and foster greater prosperity in all regions of the country. *More*

FOREIGN SECRETARY KARIYAWASAM ADDRESSES THE DEFENSE SEMINAR 2017



You are all familiar with Sri Lanka's story. Our country was mired in conflict for almost three decades. We experienced two youth insurrections in the South, and separatist terrorism in the North.

All this tore our societies and our communities apart. Thousands of young, productive lives were lost to our nation. Death, destruction, displacement, citizens leaving our shores, and considerable economic loss of a magnitude that is inconceivable – these were the results of violent conflict that arose as a result of extremism.

Today, as we chart

our path on a journey towards stronger democratic institutions, good governance, reconciliation, and economic development, we recognize that this is a journey that requires strong commitment and perseverance for the long haul. We have to heal our own who still bear the scars of conflict – both mental and physical. *More*

GEORGIA SENATE HONOURS SRI LANKAN-AMERICAN DR. INDRAN INDRAKRISHNAN

The Georgia Senate recently recognized Sri Lankan American Dr. Indran Indrakrishnan for his outstanding work and achievements. *More*

ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS ALICE G. WELLS VISITS SRI LANKA



Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Alice G. Wells concluded her visit to Sri Lanka September 2, 2017. In her conversations, Ambassador Wells emphasized continued U.S. support for the Government of Sri Lanka's efforts to promote reconciliation, economic development, and equal rights for

all Sri Lankans. Ambassador Wells arrived in Colombo on August 30 and met with representatives of the Government of Sri Lanka, including President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, the Tamil National Alliance, and civil society. During her visit, Ambassador Wells also participated in the Indian Ocean Conference, where she addressed a special plenary session.

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SRI LANKA TRAVEL GUIDE



A visit to rising ecotourism star Sri Lanka is kind of like having the best of Africa and Asia all rolled into a single easy-to-get-around island (it's slightly larger than West Virginia).

Herds of Asian elephants specific to Sri Lanka

roam, leopards frequent the southern forests, and rare gray slender lorises—among the smallest primates on Earth—present bucket-list-worthy wildlife-viewing opportunities.

Cultural heritage also reigns supreme here, from ancient Buddhist kingdoms that left behind vast archeological treasures to vibrantly vital Hindu festivals like Kataragama that draw thousands of spiritual devotees each year. *More*

CEYLON TEA A MAGICAL JOURNEY OF 150 YEARS



Let's brew a pot of delicious satisfaction. Let's pour cups of pure enjoyment. Let's drink to a 150-year heritage of quality and taste. And let us celebrate 150 years of Ceylon Tea! An island's gift to the world, a beverage so special, its value and appreciation still permeates the world.

When Scotsman, James Taylor planted the first commercial crop in 1867, its delicious taste, aroma and quality gave birth to an iconic brand that paved the way for a multi-million dollar industry. Today, Ceylon Tea epitomises the 'best tea' in the world. The Lion logo which symbolises 100% Pure Ceylon Tea is carried across all packaging and is recognised globally, as the ultimate stamp of quality and taste.

The short story about Ceylon Tea

It was during the British era that tea first began to be cultivated and manufactured on the island. Tea from Ceylon soon gained the reputation of being the finest in the world, and tea exports became the mainstay of the colonial economy. Housewives and restaurateurs across the globe grew familiar with the name of the country—learning that its appearance on a tin or packet reliably guaranteed the quality of the tea inside. Independence brought new markets, and production continued to increase. In 1965, Ceylon became the world's largest exporter of tea—for the first time. And to this day, the island remains one of the largest tea exporters.

It has endured for 150 years and strange as it may seem, the story of Ceylon Tea begins with coffee.

Though records are scant, evidence suggests that the cultivation of tea plants—imported from China—was attempted as early as 1824. Later, Maurice Worms, a member of the Rothschild family of international financiers, planted some China seedlings on Rothschild estates in Pussellawa and Ramboda. He even made tea from the crop using Chinese techniques, though the price, at £5 a pound, was much too high to be competitive.

It was left to a reclusive Scottish planter named James Taylor to succeed with the crop—almost a generation later. Taylor had been experimenting with tea, planting it along the margins of the divisional



roads on his coffee estate, Loolecondera. Already in 1866, he had withered the first leaves on his bungalow veranda, trying to emulate the process used by tea planters in Assam, India. By the time the coffee

blight struck, Taylor had twenty acres of Loolecondera planted in tea and had shipped his first modest consignment—23 lbs in all— to England. Soon, planters from all over the hill country were visiting Loolecondera to learn how to grow and manufacture tea. Ceylon and its plantation industry were saved.

For over one hundred years thereon, the Tea Industry has sustained the economy of this country and continues to contribute significantly to it. Though currently, eclipsed by one or two other revenue earning sources, which have emerged in more recent years, it is still one of the highest foreign exchange earners for the country, contributing over USD 1.5 billion.

The Tea Industry also supports approximately 20 percent of the country's population, through direct and indirect employment, even outsourcing dependent families, which extends to a number of ancillary



industries, such as shipping, transportation, printing, packaging, etc. Additionally, tea contributes 15% of the nation's foreign exchange earnings and generates 65% of export agriculture revenue. *More*