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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS



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ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

2019

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS
SRI LANKA

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

2019

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No.	Contents	Page No.
1.	Vision, Mission, Subjects and Functions of the Ministry of Foreign Relations	01
2.	Overview - 2019	02 -16
3.	Organogram of the Ministry of Foreign Relations	17 - 18
4.	Performance Reports of Ministry Divisions	
	I. Public Diplomacy and Spokesperson Division	19 -24
	II. Policy Planning, Research and Human Resources Development Division	25 -30
	III. International Security and Counter Terrorism Division	31 - 34
	IV. United Nations and Human Rights Division	35 - 46
	V. Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division	47 -54
	VI. Europe, Central Asia, European Union and Commonwealth Division	55 - 134
	VII. North America Division	135 -150
	VIII. Latin America and Caribbean Division	151 -162
	IX. South Asia and SAARC Division	163 - 180
	X. East Asia and Oceania Division	181 - 216
	XI. South East Asia Division	217 - 234
	XII. Africa Division	235 - 250
	XIII. Middle East Division	251 - 290
	XIV. Economic Affairs Division	291- 302
	XV. Human Resources and Mission Management Division	303 - 308
	XVI. Overseas Asset Management and Development Division	309 - 318
	XVII. Protocol Division	319 - 330
	XVIII. Consular Affairs Division	331 - 340
	XIX. Legal Division	341 - 348
	XX. General Administration Division	349 - 354
	XXI. Finance Division	355 - 360
	XXII. Internal Audit & Investigation Division	361 - 363
5.	Network of Diplomatic Missions/ Posts Abroad	364
6.	Revenue collected by Sri Lanka Missions/ Posts Abroad-2019	365 - 367
7.	Consular activities carried out by Sri Lanka Missions Abroad - 2019	368 -370
8.	Auditor General's Summary Report	371 -377

Vision

To be a responsible nation within the international community and to maintain friendly relations with all countries.

Mission

The Promotion, Projection and Protection of Sri Lanka's national interests internationally, in accordance with the foreign policy of the Government and to advise the Government on managing foreign relations in keeping with Sri Lanka's national interests.

Subjects and Functions of the Ministry of Foreign Relations

Implementation of political plans and programmes in respect of Foreign Affairs;

Representation of Sri Lanka abroad;
International Agreements and Treaties;

Foreign Government and international organization's representation in Sri Lanka; External publicity;

Diplomatic immunities and privileges
and Consular functions.

Overview -2019

The work of the Foreign Ministry has been, guided by its vision and the key policy objectives—to promote, project and protect Sri Lanka's national interests internationally. During the period under review, the Ministry has continued to strengthen its engagements in exercising its bilateral diplomacy, multilateral diplomacy, economic diplomacy, social and cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy. Whilst maintaining Sri Lanka's sovereignty and integrity, it has strengthened its friendly relations with all the States, being a responsible member of the international community.

Sri Lanka experienced the catastrophic Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in April 2019 which re-aligned the growth path of the country and needed revisiting of its policy towards terrorism in all its manifestations as well as the pressing need for economic revival in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attack. The incidents following the attacks also contributed to some of the alterations of Sri Lanka's foreign relations and its policies.

The assumption of office by HE the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in November 2019 with a pledge to usher in a neutral foreign policy, guided by the National Policy Framework –Vistas of Splendor and Prosperity, has sought to charter a new course for Sri Lanka's international relations.The appointment of Foreign Minister Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena and State Minister Hon. Susil Premajayantha saw the Ministry of Foreign Affairs being renamed as the Ministry of Foreign Relations and making a concerted effort to be inclusive in its outreach to the world.

Bilateral Relations

Continuity and consolidation of relations

Our engagement with States, international and regional fora, including the United Nations, the European Union, SAARC, BIMSTEC, IORA etc. established Sri Lanka as a constructive partner for engagement at all levels of global diplomatic platforms.

Sri Lanka has made considerable improvements during 2019 in the bilateral relations, with its **South Asian** neighbours, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan and the Maldives ensuring the political, economic cooperation and the security of the Indian Ocean region adhering to the geopolitical dynamics of the sub-continent. The robustness of the diplomatic relation with India was reflected in the high-level visits that were exchanged during 2019, the State visit of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, newly elected President of Sri Lanka to India from 28th - 30th November 2019, and the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India to Sri Lankain the aftermath of the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks on 9th June 2019 marking his first overseas outreach, after being re-elected as the Prime

Minister and that of the External Affairs Minister Hon. S. Jaishankar immediately upon the assumption of office by H.E the President in November 2019.
Since the assumption of office by H.E Gotabaya Rajapaksa, steps have been taken to consolidate Sri Lanka's relations with the **India, China, US, UK, EU, Russia and Japan** with a view to ensure a more balanced approach to Sri Lanka's foreign policy. Clarity and direction have been achieved in many policy areas.

Earlier in 2019, the 'EU-Sri Lanka Joint Commission' in Brussels in February 2019 led by Foreign Secretary Ravinatha Aryasinha and the Sri Lanka-US 'Partnership Dialogue' in May 2019 in Washington DC led by then Foreign Minister Hon. Tilak Marapana, had sought to recalibrate the relationships and bring the relations on to a more equitable footing. Sri Lanka's relations with Europe and the European Union bolstered governmental and people-to-people links through several high-level official visits. Following agreement reached with the EU to hold a dialogue on Counter Terrorism under the umbrella of the Joint Commission, the first EU-SL dialogue on Counter Terrorism was held in Colombo in June 2019.

During 2019, the Sri Lankan Mission in the United Kingdom and the territorial desk had focused on studying the impact of BREXIT on Sri Lanka. The Ministry through its diplomatic presence in Europe, continued to engage its interlocutors and had made numerous efforts to build Sri Lankas' positive image whilst countering pro-LTTE propaganda activities and monitoring the extremist activities including radical elements in the UK. Sri Lankas' traditional relations with the Russian Federation and with other Central Asian countries were further cultivated during the period of review. Especially, bilateral political relations with Russia was strengthened, with a number of high-level official delegations as well as through the engagement of the Mission with the Russian government.

Prioritizing the areas of economic diplomacy and development assistance, Sri Lanka continued its close relations with the **East Asian** countries. Sri Lanka's partnership with China was further strengthened in 2019 by the Visit of President Maithripala Sirisena to China from 13th to 16th May 2019. The visit of President Maithripala Sirisenato Japan from 22-23 October 2019 to attend enthronement ceremony of the new Japanese Emperor Naruhito and the visit of Foreign Minister Hon. Tilak Marapana to Japan on 13 December 2019 also marked millstones in the relationship between these countries.

Sri Lanka continued its active engagement with **Middle Eastern Region** through formal diplomatic relations with 14 countries of the region including the representative office in the State of Palestine. The focus of the relations in the Middle East is centered upon the economic interests of Sri Lanka which includes consolidation of Sri Lanka's position as a leading labour sourcing country. With regard to the Middle East, the Ministry has sought to address the issues that arose with the re-imposition of the Iran sanctions, navigating the fissures arising within the region and also on frameworks that address migrant worker safety and

expansion of employment opportunities to more skilled categories. Relations with the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) have been a special focus of attention.

Creation of New Territorial Divisions and region specific policies

The Ministry took stock of some of the relations which had not received sufficient attention and re-calibrated its strategies and policies with respect to these regions. In this endeavor, Latin America & the Caribbean Region and the Africa Region were placed under independent DGs. Considering the economic and political gains which Sri Lanka can access by strengthening our relations in these two regions through Missions and concurrent accreditations, as a priority, it was decided to formulate policies for the Africa region and the Latin America & Caribbean region, and to pursue relations more concertedly. The related policies were discussed with stakeholders including Sri Lanka's Ambassadors in the related Missions, Government agencies and Colombo based Ambassadors and Hony. Consuls of those countries in Sri Lanka, business leaders and academia with experience in the regions. The formal Policy documents in this regard were launched in November 2019.

During the policy development exercise, the Ministry identified the need to harness opportunities growing in **Africa** and the need to expand the presence of Sri Lanka in the region bilaterally and to also intensify relations with the African Union (AU). The symbolic soft launch of the '*Revitalized Africa Policy'* during the Bilateral Political Consultations in Egypt with the participation of Foreign Secretary Ravinatha Aryasinha marked the revival of Sri Lanka's diplomatic interest.

Similarly, the **Latin America** policy conceptualized with the objective of enhancing the diplomatic footprint of Sri Lanka in the region, probably is the first time the Ministry has showcased clear focus and a planned activity targeting this region. The immediate intent also included improving the economic relations in the region. The occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the two countries and Visit of then State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Vasantha Senanayake to Cuba, on 03 June 2019, provided a precursor to the launching of the 'Latin America Policy'.

In the exercise of recalibrating relations with regions, recognizing the rising importance of the ASEAN region, it has been accorded a separate Directorate General under the title '**South East Asia & ASEAN**'. A more concerted push towards Sri Lanka becoming a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the ASEAN was also to receive added fillip. During 2019, Sri Lanka continued to actively engage with the regional organizations such as Shanghai Cooperation Dialogue, Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building in Asia (CICA) and Bali Process, in addition to enhancing its focus to similar Policy Documents to be developed for Central Europe, Central Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Multilateral engagement

In the area of multilateral relations, Sri Lanka continued its commitment through Sri Lanka's Permanent Missions in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris, Rome, Nairobi, Bangkok and the Hague. During the period of review, the Ministry along with other key stakeholders coordinated and assisted the process undertaken by the Government with regard to the UN Human Rights Council resolutions 30/1 (2015), 34/1 (2017) in keeping with the Government policy.

However, during 2019, Sri Lanka sought to establish a more balanced approach in its engagement in the multilateral fora as well. During the 40th Human Rights Council (HRC) session in March 2019, the Sri Lanka statement made by Foreign Minister Hon. Tilak Marapana corrected inaccuracies in the report of the High Commissioner and clarified Sri Lanka's position with regard to the delivery of its commitments under Resolution 30/1, particularly emphasizing that it will be done within the Sri Lanka Constitution, which did not permit the involvement of foreign judges. Greater acknowledgement has also been sought to the significant improvements in the human rights sphere in recent years.

Foreign Secretary Ravinatha Aryasinha represented the Government at the 74th UNGA in September 2019. It is the first time a Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary has addressed the UNGA during the High-Level segment. In this forum, Sri Lanka articulated its stance on the importance of protecting multilateralism from intrusions, commitment to reconciliation and efforts in protecting human rights while fighting terrorism, and furthering disarmament objectives espoused through Sri Lanka's Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament in 2018. Sri Lanka further committed to pursuing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). The Sri Lanka Statement also affirmed Sri Lanka's steadfast commitment to the Palestinian cause. It also stressed that obstacles must not be placed on Sri Lanka's long-standing Peacekeeping contribution to the UN.

Further, the Ministry worked closely with the United Nations, to ensure that the continuous opportunities are made available for Sri Lankan Armed forces to serve in the UN peacekeeping missions. This was amidst the challenge faced by Sri Lanka in August 2019 thatall "non-essential" Sri Lankan forces will be returned from UN Peacekeeping operations.

Persisting on the historical engagement with the Non-Aligned Movement, Foreign Minister Hon. Tilak Marapana, led the Sri Lanka delegation to the 18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 25- 26 October 2019 held under the theme "Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of a contemporary world".

Sri Lanka also took leadership in several regional organizations and initiatives during 2019. As the Chair of the BIMSTEC, the Ministry was able to hold two meetings of the BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee in Colombo. Sri Lanka has successfully led the deliberations during these meetings to finalize rationalization of areas of cooperation of BIMSTEC and finalize the draft Charter of the organization in areas crucial in re-energizing the organization, in order to maximize utilization of resources and to make BIMSTEC a result-oriented organization delivering tangible benefits to all its peoples. Under the new rationalization of sectors, Sri Lanka will be the lead country for Science, Technology and Innovation, which corresponds with the National Policy Frame of the Government that gives greater emphasis on knowledge based and innovation-based development approach. The Ministry is working towards hosting the next BIMSTEC Summit in 2020.

Consistent with Sri Lanka's interest in playing a key role in the Indian Ocean region, at the 19th IORA Council of Ministers Meeting of IORA in Abu Dhabi in November 2019, Foreign Secretary, Ravinatha Aryasinha, delivering the Country Statement, conveyed Sri Lanka's interest to serve the organization as the Vice Chair of the coming biennial 2021-2023. During the Meeting, Sri Lanka also called for "an overarching security architecture tasked to mitigate regional security challenges in the Indian Ocean Region, giving priority to the littoral states and sensitive to the interests of all maritime users of the Indian Ocean" reflecting the Country Position on this matter.

Through the efforts of the **Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division** of the Ministry, Sri Lanka has shown interest to tackle issues related to these subject areas. Some of the involvement includes the role as the Focal Point for Commonwealth Blue Charter (CBC), CBC Action Group on Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods Action Group (MELAG) which is championed by Sri Lanka and the Indian Ocean Rim Association Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (IORA-WGMSS). Since 2018, Sri Lanka has taken on the responsibility of being the Coordinator of the IORA Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (IORA-WGMSS), bringing to it the experience of having faced numerous maritime security threats during the separatist terrorist conflict. The First Meeting of the group held in Colombo in August 2019, provided a platform to discuss shared priorities of Member States in the sphere of maritime safety and security, mainly focusing on tackling maritime criminal activities in the Indian Ocean, evolving maritime security challenges with existing maritime legal jurisprudence, drug trafficking, transnational crime and the global fishing industry.

Sri Lanka supported an important diplomatic endeavour in March 2019 towards the registration of the *Theravada Tripitakaya* in the UNESCO Memory of the World Index and the Foreign Secretary led the Coordinating Committee responsible for lobbying for the assistance of all the Buddhist countries in the world in this

endeavour. The Ministry and Mission also supported celebration of 'Vesak' in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution 54/115 recognizing the day of Vesak internationally as the most significant day for the Buddhists all over the world.

Re-structuring divisions for optimized service delivery; cross cutting areas

Counter Terrorism & International Security

The Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) which was previously housed in different directorates on an ad hoc basis has been upgraded as a Division; **International Security & Counter Terrorism Division,** with separate and dedicated office space and staff in the Ministry. The Division is now fully functional and has a wider scope to incorporate the multi-faceted defence and security relations of Sri Lanka. Several initiatives were taken to revitalize relations with the local defence and intelligence agencies. The Division has been able to liaise with the Ministries of Defence, Law & Order, Justice, Home Affairs, the Attorney General's Dept. and international partners leading to considerably strengthened coordination, particularly in addressing transnational organized crimes (drugs, human smuggling, etc.), and in maintaining the LTTE proscription. The Division actively contributed to coordinating dialogues with regional and international bodies to strengthen the counter terrorism framework and enhancing capacities of Sri Lanka's law enforcement and intelligence authorities. It continues to provide input to sustain the listing of the LTTE. Setting up of this Division in January 2019, in fact enabled better coordination between the Foreign Ministry and the Defence authorities in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attacks. Additionally, it helped in coordination of offers of assistance internationally, including from the EU, UN, US, Australia and organizations including UNODC and Interpol in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attacks.

Public Diplomacy

With a view to improving and streamlining the Ministry's public communications and media relations, the Public Communications Division was rebranded as the **Public Diplomacy Division** centralizing all media related operations, while the head of this Division was also restored as the Spokesperson of the Ministry with a view to ensure better coordination. The Division has now assumed a wider role from its traditional responsibilities to ensure greater visibility with an image projection mindset in terms of Sri Lanka's global outreach. This shift allowed the Division to re-focus to serve the necessity of supporting the marketing of Sri Lanka abroad, communicating Sri Lanka's positions on relevant issues internationally and addressing issues relating to Sri Lanka in international fora. Particular focus was also given to development of media relations and expanding the Ministry's presence on social media. This has also resulted in the better

projection of the work done by the Ministry and Missions, as well as in clarifying and rebutting criticism when unwarranted.

In addition to the above changes, to keep up with the evolving technological developments and to provide a more user-friendly experience, revamping of the Foreign Ministry website and ensuring better cyber security for the Foreign Ministry assets was also undertaken.

Given the need for all diplomats to be media savvy, the Public Diplomacy Division, and the Policy Planning, Research and Human Resource Development Division (PP, R & HRD), facilitated a 'Public Diplomacy Training Programme' for all officers of Sri Lanka Foreign Service based in Colombo in coordination with the Sri Lanka Press institute (SLPI) in December 2019. This programme was initially developed for the newly recruited SLFS Officers in December 2018.

Policy Planning, Research and Human Resource Development

With a view to giving emphasis to policy planning and research in order to plan and evaluate the direction of the Ministry, in November 2018, a new Division was created. This Division was previously coupled with the Human Resources Development Unit, which had been under the Overseas Administration Division (OAD), where training was ad hoc and not geared towards specific skills required to implement policies. During 2019, the **Policy Planning, Research and Human Resource Development Division** has strived to convert the Ministry into a more expert and agile organization. Accordingly, through "Annual *Action Plan 2019: Priorities, Targets & KPIs*" the Ministry has initiated a new policy to Overseas Missions and Divisions, with a view to,at the end of each year, objectively assess the performance, as a qualitative and quantitative process.

From a human resource development perspective, with the new Division, the Ministry is also better able to train the professionals within the Foreign Ministry to contribute more effectively in implementation of the corresponding policies. During 2019, the Division initiated several processes to revise the recruitment scheme of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service and worked to streamline several internal policies of the Ministry HR practices. It additionally conducted training programmes targeting all levels in the period under review. The Division in collaboration with the Human Resources & Mission Management Division and the General Administration Division is engaged in a cadre rationalization exercise at the Ministry tore-position the necessary staff and human resource requirements of the Ministry.

In order to create a work culture geared towards research and analysis, starting with the 2018 newly recruited batch of SLFS Officers, a project to develop Research Papers on key foreign policy related topics, was held in early 2019 with

the support of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI).

Bifurcation of the Overseas Administration Division

With the increase in the number of Missions/Posts and Consulates General of Sri Lanka, at present numbering 67, it was necessary for the Ministry to ensure more effective and expeditious management of Missions. In order to bring focused attention in resolving matters concerning Missions, the Overseas Administration Division was bifurcated, as the Human Resources and Mission Management Division (HR & MM), and the Overseas Assets Management and Development Division (OAM & D). Whilst the HR & MM looked into the personnel aspect of the Officers in Missions, the OAM & D concentrated on GoSL assets overseas and their development, as well as the passage of officers (Travel Unit) and diplomatic correspondence (Security mail-DPL bag, Cypher Units).

Expansion of areas of focus in Economic diplomacy

The Foreign Ministry's Economic Diplomacy Programme (EDP) continued in 2019 enabling the Foreign Ministry and Missions to serve as a catalyst and in providing forward and backward linkages to economic cooperation between the international players and local counterparts, in close collaboration with the relevant Government agencies and business establishments. Following on the provision of separate budget allocations for economic diplomacy related work since 2018, the Ministry has been able to assess the performance of the Missions in a more quantifiable and tangible outcome-oriented approach. The Ministry has set **targets on trade, tourism, investment and foreign employment** for Missions/Posts Abroad, following a comprehensive study in consultation with relevant line agencies, including the Export Development Board, the Board of Investment, Sri Lanka Tea Board, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Board, National Gem & Jewellery Authority, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment and the Central Bank.

Galvanizing these efforts of key stakeholders, the Ministry has continued to play an active role as a facilitator to support the engines of economic growth and economic revival in Sri Lanka through strengthening economic relations with other countries. The economic focus was re-aligned with a special focus on the revitalization of the tourism industry in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attack.

Ensuring Sri Lanka as an attractive investment and tourism destination, championing Sri Lankan products, widening access to international markets, assisting and providing market information on diversification of export baskets, expanding and up skilling foreign employment are some of the activities directly undertaken by the Missions to promote Sri Lanka in emerging and potential markets.

Engaging Overseas Sri Lankans

The **Overseas Sri Lankans Unit,** which was previously under the Public Communications Division was brought under the Economic Affairs Division with a view to engage the Sri Lanka diaspora in contributing to Sri Lanka's economy and also availing of its benefits. Notably, the Economic Affairs Division developed a concept paper on engaging **Overseas Sri Lankans** as development partners under the categories of economic, political, public and cultural diplomacy and people to people contact. The Division through this concept paper is working towards conducting a 'Foreign Policy and Economic Diplomacy Dialogue' to exclusively focus on Engaging Overseas Sri Lankans as Development Partners. The Ministry has also worked towards exploring avenues to engage with OSLs through the use of information technology.

People to People Contacts and Citizen-centric Services

The Ministry Consular Division continued its services for the general public through Sri Lanka Missions/Posts Abroad and its' regional office in Jaffna, while opening the new regional consular office in Matara on 16 February 2019 to strengthen the decentralization of the Ministry's consular services.

The Ministry extended its Document Authentication service to Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad, though Branch Document Attestation System (B-DAS) with effect from 01st of January 2019 and a MoU was signed between the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry for the certification of export related documents through the electronic Document Attestation System (e-DAS) of the Ministry.

Integrated Consular Mobile Services (ICMS) were conducted in various parts of the country such as Ampara, Batticaloa, Mullaitivu, Monaragala, Divulapitiya, Matale and Jaffna. In addition, the Consular Division of the Ministry assisted with necessary support in 480 reported Sri Lankan deaths overseas and 208 cases of repatriations while facilitating the recovery of approximately SLRs. 394 million, by settling the cases of nearly 16 families /victims, as compensation/blood money and other dues during the year 2019.

A Symposium on 'Enhancing Protection and Welfare of Sri Lankan Migrant Workers Abroad' was held in September 2019 in Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Employment and the ILO. The Symposium attended by Foreign Secretary Ravinatha Aryasinha focused on enhancing protection and welfare of Sri Lankan migrant workers, through revision of the Operational Manual for Labour Sections of Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions. In consultation with the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau, ILO, IOM, UN Women and Sustainable Development Council and other relevant local agencies, the Ministry has sought to

increase the employment opportunities for Sri Lankan migrant workers, upgrade their skills and ensure their welfare.

The **Legal Division** of the Ministry continued providing legal advice on several policy decisions on a wide range of international issues. Agreement on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments, promulgation of UNSCRS on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) and on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Migration, Prisoner Transfer Agreements, Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (DTA) with several countries were referred to the Legal Division in 2019 by line Ministries, in addition to its direct engagement related to matters on Status Agreements with UN Specialized Agencies and other International Organizations, International Humanitarian Law matters, implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs). The Division also took part in discussions on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations and is responsible for handling Right to Information issues of the Ministry.

The **Protocol Division** of the Ministry has facilitated State, Official and other international delegations during 2019 while providing protocol arrangements to all ceremonial functions involving foreign dignitaries in Sri Lanka. In addition, the division continued its role of facilitating and monitoring diplomatic immunities and privileges to the diplomatic corps in Sri Lanka and non-resident accreditations.

During the period under review, the **General Administration Division, the Financial Division and the Audit Division** of the Ministry have taken several efforts to be responsive to challenges and to improve the quality of establishment and maintenance matters, and financial management under the monitoring of the audit process. These three Divisions comprising mainly officers from the Sri Lanka Administrative Service and Sri Lanka Accountancy Service have worked in an integrated manner with the Sri Lanka Foreign Service officers, reflecting the strength of collective bureaucracy in upholding administrative and financial systems of the country. They have also assisted other territorial and operational Divisions, as well as the Missions overseas to achieve organizational objectives.

Institution building; Upgrading of Personnel, streamlining administrative processes & appointments to Missions

A clear Direction; An Action Plan with targets, priorities and KPIs

Having studied the 'best practices' in other countries and also intensive consultations with its Divisions and Missions/Posts abroad, *'Action Plan 2019 – Priorities, Targets and KPIs'* was developed for the Ministry and Missions/Posts. This new mechanism based on 'tangible targets' and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be achieved, serve as a credible evaluation process which is consistent with the expectations of the National Authorities responsible for evaluation of the performance. It allows for holistic evaluation and will hold the Heads of

Missions/Posts abroad, as well as the Heads of Divisions in the Ministry, to account. It will also serve as a 'Performance Audit' and provide an objective base for assessing the efficiency of all individual officers serving in the Ministry and Missions.

A better working environment; Providing necessary physical resources

Having noted the extremely constrained space in certain Divisions, steps were taken to relocate Divisions and create a more conducive work environment within the Ministry. In this regard, space has been secured from the Ceylinco building for the re-location of the Economic Affairs Division and the archives of the IT Division have been relocated to derive maximum usage from the available space. This has been done with minimal disruption to ongoing work under the supervision of the General Administration Division.

A trained and productive work force; Upgrading of personnel, streamlining administrative processes & appointments to Missions

Diplomatic staff - To address some of the limits in career progression and prospects of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service Officers, the Ministry has engaged in a revisiting of overseas appointments at all levels.

In October 2018, the number of SLFS Heads of Mission (HOM) stood at approximately 37%. Steps were taken in December 2018 to recommend the appointment of 14 SLFS officers as Heads of Mission for the approval of the Head of State and Parliament Committee for High Posts and assumed duties in mid-2019. In 2019, another 9 SLFS officers were nominated for Missions subsequently and took up their posts. 2 more SLFS officers were approved by the Parliamentary High Post Committee in late 2019, bringing the ratio of SLFS officers in HoM positions to approximately 58%. It is noteworthy that of the 29 HOMs appointed over 2019, 25 (86%) have been from the SLFS.

During this period, transfer cycles have also taken place with regard to diplomatic positions at all other levels, through the Transfer Board scheme of applications and interviews ensuring greater accountability and transparency. Since 2019, with a view to ensuring predictability, efficiency and regularity, the Ministry has, as far as possible, sought to operationalize all transfers to and from Missions in July/August and December of each year, which creates least disruption to the officers while on transition/transfer.

Non-Diplomatic staff – In 2019, transfers to Missions abroad have also been initiated and largely operationalized in a transparent and competitive manner through and interviews for all levels of Mission support staff. (i.e. PAs, PMAs, Protocol Assistants, Consular Assistants, KKS and Drivers) Open competitive

examinations for selection of Public Management Assistants and Personal Assistants were also conducted during 2019.

Regularization of Posts - The Ministry has also initiated a cadre regularization process for posts in the Ministry in consultation with the Department of Management Services and the Salaries and Cadre Commission which includes institutionalizing of the 'Special Grade' of SLFS Officers to meet the institutional needs and professional requirements of the Foreign Service. This process is also inclusive of re-visiting of allowances, keeping in line with comparable countries. The effort is to make the staffing in the Ministry, as well as Missions, lean but efficient.

Rationalization of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) Minute- A Cabinet Memorandum to amend the SLFS Minute of 2016 to streamline the granting of 'Ambassador rank', has been presented to the Cabinet, in consultation with the PSC, the Dept. of Management Services, Salaries & Cadre Commission and other relevant agencies. Measures were also taken through a process of internal consultations to evolve a rationale for selection for the 'Special Grade' in the SLFS, and has been presented for the concurrence from relevant line agencies, upon which Cabinet approval is required. The Efficiency Bar examinations for SLFS Officers were also gazetted.

Professionalization of the SLFS -Training of officers to face new challenges and the changing role of diplomats was made a priority. Programmes to train the probationers as well as selected senior officers in Economic Diplomacy, Public Diplomacy, Multilateral Diplomacy, and Administrative Processes & Finance have been held in the period under review. Scholarships were also secured by the Ministry for training in foreign languages for several in the 2018 SLFS batch.

Recruitment of a new SLFS batch – Having noted the drawbacks in the present recruitment process which has led to undue delays in recruitment of new batches and in the initial year, approximately a 20% drop out ratio from the numbers selected/joining the SLFS, causing wide gaps between batches and lack of Officers to serve in the Ministry and Missions, a revised scheme was created after a careful study and consultations with other relevant agencies. The Cabinet Memorandum to formalize the change was submitted to Cabinet in 2019.

Affiliated Institutions

During 2019, the **Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute (LKI)** which falls under the purview of the Ministry, collaborated with the Ministry in several initiatives. Some of them include assistance rendered in the supervising the Research Papers of the newly recruited Foreign Service Officers, assistance and support in Policy Dialogues on Latin America and Africa, training porgrammes conducted by the Ministry for Heads of Missions and diplomats etc. The Institute also assisted the

Ministry in collating the 'Economic Diplomacy Blue Book' based on the Foreign Policy Dialogue conducted by the Economic Affairs division in 2018.

The training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, the **Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute (BIDTI)** assists the Ministry in its conduct of training programmes through logistical and substantive content development. During 2019, the Ministry has given an undertaking to meet the rental costs of hosting the BIDTI at the BMICH premises. The BIDTI has assisted the Ministry in continuous training of SLFS officers and support staff, while conducting several courses on international relations for public officials and the general public alike.

Impediments in executing the Ministry mandate

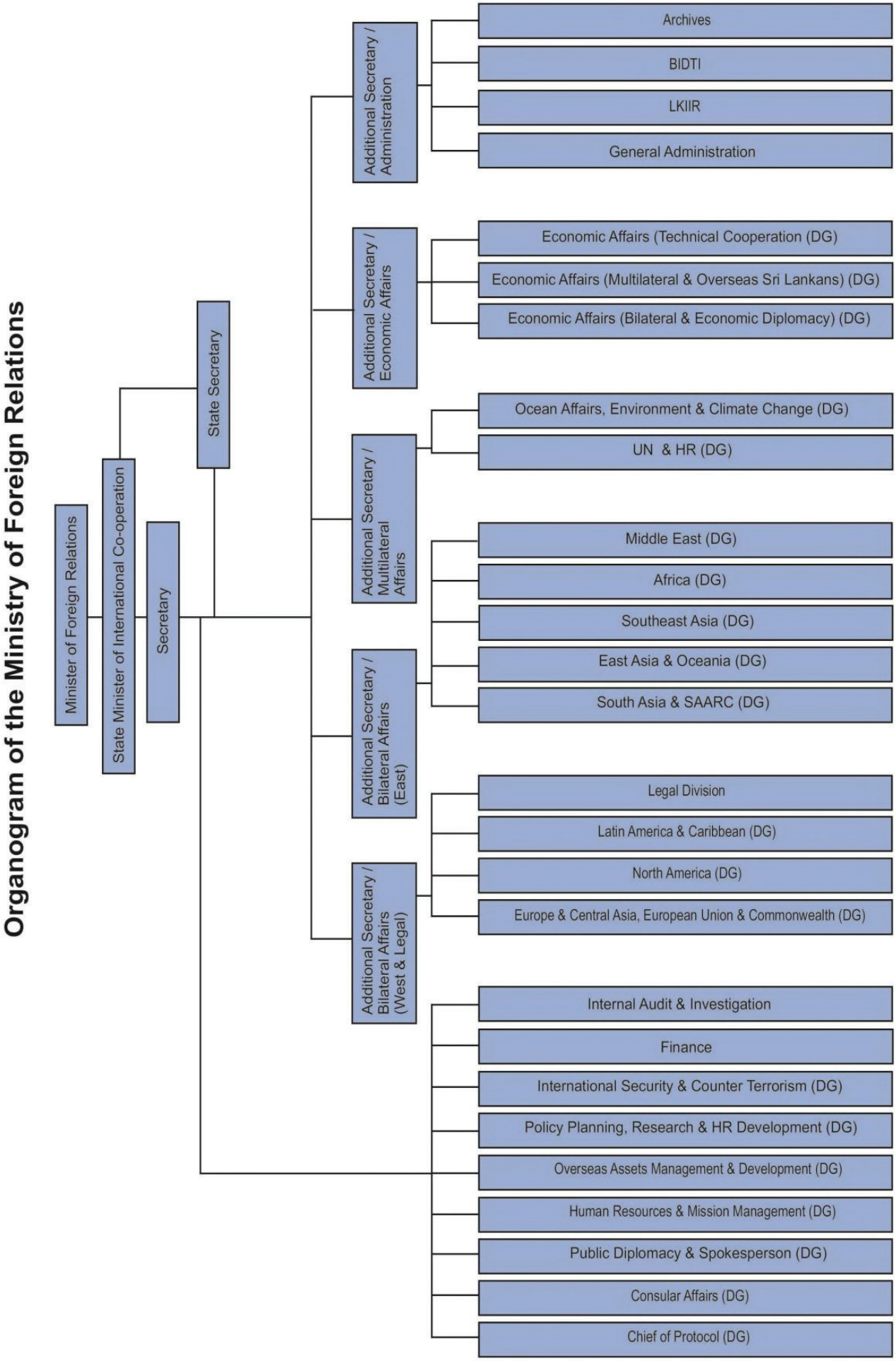
During 2019, the Ministry and its overseas Missions/Posts were able to foster foreign policy directives of the government by promoting and safeguarding the national interests of the country and catering to the needs of Overseas Sri Lankans, notwithstanding the challenges resulting from the Easter Sunday bombings and the ramifications that followed. However, several gaps and challenges have also been identified; lack of coordination among various Divisions within the Ministry and also some Missions and key stakeholders, issues related to planning of activities, concerns of adequate human resources and the quality, insufficient training in related specializations, lacuna in utilizing modern technology, lack of research capacity etc. need greater mention.

In terms of the human resources related bottlenecks, there are delays in the recruitment process of the SLFS, the resulting top-heavy management pyramid, anomalies in the hierarchical structure of the Ministry, and a reliance on new recruits to fill the gaps has been a drawback. The time-consuming processes connected with the recruitment to the SLFS and support level officers, have been a serious impediment to the work of the Ministry and Missions.
It is crucial that while the SLFS recruitment be streamlined ensuring a swift process of recruitment, that with respect to the support services, also be made a 'closed services' to strengthen the implementation of Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka abroad. A Cabinet paper to streamline the recruitment process and a proposal for creation of a closed service cadre has already been submitted under the rationalization of Ministry cadre positions as highlighted above.

It is understood that lack of predictability regarding allocation of funds for new areas of engagement such as the Economic Diplomacy Programme in 2019, made the operationalization of these programmes more difficult. Consideration must also be given to allow Heads of Missions greater latitude to work/ operationalize special programmes, provided they show proportionate results.

The Ministry and its Overseas Missions/Posts will be taking constructive actions to address these gaps and to further strengthen the processes which are currently in place.

Organogram of the Ministry of Foreign Relations



Public Diplomacy Division

Public Diplomacy Division

The Public Diplomacy Division (PD Division) is an operations Division and is the interface between the Government and external actors for information dissemination and projection of Sri Lanka's image overseas. The Division covers events/ situations that take place in the Ministry and the country in general, related to Sri Lanka's foreign policy and international relations.

1.1 Key Activities

i. Promotion of Sri Lanka's image abroad in coordination with Sri Lanka Missions abroad.
ii. Dissemination of information / publicity material to Sri Lanka Missions abroad and keeping Missions and the wider public informed through media releases/ government statements.
iii. Responding to media queries on aspects related to the Ministry and matters related to Sri Lanka's foreign policy / international relations.
iv. Dissemination of promotional materials on tourism, culture, trade and investment to Sri Lanka Missions and relevant stakeholders.
v. Liaising with local and foreign media.
vi. Preparation and release of media statements in consultation with the relevant Divisions in the Ministry.
vii. Issuance of media accreditation for visiting foreign media in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
viii. Maintenance of records of foreign correspondents in Sri Lanka and reporting on Sri Lanka.
ix. Compilation of Local News Round-up through local print media to be disseminated among all Missions and officials and selection of news reports of interest to Sri Lanka from foreign and local media to be posted on the Ministry website.
x. Maintenance of the Ministry Website including social media platforms in all three languages; (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram).
xi. Promotion and facilitation of Film Festivals, Media Workshops and Conferences that are held in Sri Lanka in collaboration with the line agencies/stakeholders.
xii. Monitoring and countering adverse media coverage related to the image of Sri Lanka in local, foreign and social media.
xiii. Ensuring the security of all internet based systems of the Ministry (website, social media accounts, e-mails. and other systems.
xiv. Arranging Ministry's Media Conferences and Media Briefings.

1.2 Performance of key activities of the Division during the year 2019

i. Monitoring Local Media, Foreign Media and Web news items

a) Updating all the officials in the Ministry and all Sri Lanka's Mission/Posts on a daily basis regarding important news items related to the Ministry and Sri Lanka.

b) Updating the Secretary, Foreign Relations on local and foreign news items that are detrimental to the image of the Ministry and Sri Lanka on a daily basis, and conduct of 24- hour media monitoring.

- During the review period, prepared 730 Daily News Reports for Secretary/Foreign Relations.

c) Monitoring and countering adverse news items related to the Ministry in local media/foreign media and social media. During the review period, over 10 rebuttals were issued by the Ministry /Missions

ii. Disseminating Media Releases, Statements, Mission News, Notices to Local Print and Online Media, and Foreign Media Correspondents.

Collation and editing of media releases received from the other Divisions of the Ministry on matters of importance, and provision of publicity by updating Ministry media platforms and by disseminating them to local media and Sri Lanka Missions abroad. During the review period 184 media releases from the Ministry were Media disseminated for publicity.

Collation, editing and disseminating of media releases receiving from Sri Lanka Missions abroad to local media for publicity, while updating Ministry's web-based media platforms.

During the review period, 1100 media releases from Sri Lanka Missions were disseminated, while providing publicity in the Ministry's social media platforms as: Facebook posts – 146, Twitter Posts – over 500, Website Publications 1284

iii. Facilitating foreign media coverage in Sri Lanka (assisting visits of Journalists and Film Crews)

a) During the review period, 296 foreign journalists arrived in Sri Lanka, and their letters of media accreditations were facilitated in coordination with the Department of Government Information for them to obtain media passes to work on their media coverage in Sri Lanka.

b) Facilitated by issuing over 50 letters for Customs Clearance for the media equipment brought by foreign media personnel to Sri Lanka for their coverage.

c) Facilitated approvals from line agencies; National Film Cooperation/ National Wildlife Department etc to visiting foreign journalists and during the review period 19 documentaries and films were produced by the foreign journalists.

d) Acting as the Focal Point in coordinating with line agencies and foreign media, and during the review period 19 approvals received from the line agencies requesting facilitation for media personnel.

iv. Providing coverage to foreign VVIP/ VIP visits to Sri Lanka

Provided assistance for media personnel of visiting VVIP/VIP delegations, by facilitating them with required media passes, venue access, custom clearances for media equipment etc. During the review period total number of VVIP/VIP visits covered was 16.

v. Enhancing publicity related work of the Ministry

a) Increased the number of press releases generated by the Ministry in local print and online media, and during the review period over 1800 media releases issued by the Ministry were appeared in the local print and online media platforms.
b) Ensured to respond to media queries within the day.
c) Increased the number of website hits of the Ministry, and the during the review period there were over 200,000 hits of Ministry web viewers.

vi. Increased the public-outreach to Ministry social media platforms

a) During the review period there had been an increase of followers and subscribers of Ministry's social media accounts as:
- Twitter Followers: 23,900 - Facebook Followers: 25,166
- You Tube subscribers: 762 - Instagram Followers: 238

vii. Ensured the security of all internet-based systems in the Ministry (website, social media accounts, e-mails etc., and removed/mitigated the vulnerabilities of the Ministry internet system by 100%)

1.3. Additional Activities

In addition to the above key activities, the following activities have been carried out by the Division in 2019.

i. Development of a New Website of the Ministry of Foreign Relations

Upon the instructions and supervision of Secretary/Foreign Relations, the Ministry website is being newly developed and revamped to increase user-friendliness. Following a study done by a special website committee, the new website is expected to be launched by July 2020.

ii. Facilitated dissemination of accurate information among overseas Missions during emergency situations of Sri Lanka

- During the Easter Attack, Division contributed in disseminating accurate/verified information about affected foreign nationals in Sri Lanka, and status updates to Sri Lanka Overseas Missions in coordination with line agencies. Further, Division functioned on a 24 hrs basis during the respective period.
- Provided information to Sri Lanka Missions abroad on natural disasters of the country.

iii. Facilitated the Public Diplomacy and Media Relations Training Programme for Sri Lanka Foreign Service officers.

As Public Diplomacy is a key aspect in the career of a diplomat, this Division in collaboration with the Policy Planning, Research and Human Resource Development Division (PP, R & HRDD), facilitated a Public Diplomacy Training Programme for all officers of Sri Lanka Foreign Service based in Colombo with the assistance of Sri Lanka Press institute in December 2019. A Networking Reception with journalists was also arranged on the sidelines of the training for contact building

iv. Cultural Diplomacy

Under Cultural Diplomacy, key tasks of the Division are to support public diplomacy initiatives for promotional and cultural activities, support educational exchanges, media and film projects, assist establishment of partnerships between private and public entities to promote scholarship and research, and outreach activities such as conferences and workshops.

Key activities during the year:

Facilitated the film crew of Sri Lanka Rupavahini's "Ethera Methara" programme in Italy, UK, London, Kuwait, Qatar, USA, the Republic of Korea and Botswana to enhance interaction with overseas Sri Lankans and promotion of Sri Lankan culture They were held:

1. Kuwait - 01-03 Jan 2019
2. Botswana - 04-10 Feb 2019
3. Kuwait - 10-14 April 2019
4. Italy - 19 April - 05 May 2019
5. London - 05-16 July 2019
6. South Korea - 19-25 July 2019
7. USA 20 July-07 August 2019
8. Doha - 10-15 December 2019

- Assisted several cultural diplomacy initiatives of Sri Lanka Missions abroad by providing audio-visual materials, documents and other required information.
- Assisted Indian journalists of 10 Television Stations, by providing them with required clerances/passes to cover the Kachchatheevu Church Festival which was held on 06 and 07 March 2019.

During the review period, disseminated 522 Daily News Round-Up Reports (foreign and local media) to all officials in the Ministry and to all Missions/Posts.

Policy Planning, Research and Human Resources Development Division

Policy Planning, Research and Human Resources Development Division

Policy Planning, Research and Human Resources Development Division was established in May 2019, amalgamating Policy Planning & Research Division and HRD sub Division.

Key function of this Division is to undertake research, provide analysis on issues of contemporary, global relevance, develop policy briefs on specific aspects of Sri Lanka's foreign policy and undertake assessment of existing policies which would contribute to long-term strategic planning of the Foreign Ministry. The Division is also entrusted with human resource development of the Ministry, focusing on capacity building and training of Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) officers with a view of transforming the Ministry in to a 'learning space' for career development of SLFS officers and those officers selected to serve in Missions Abroad.

Followings are the highlights of activities performed by the division during the year 2019.

1. **Annual Action Plan of the Ministry and Overseas Missions-2019**

   A new policy of setting targets has been introduced, with a view to revising the performance assessment process, from being a descriptive elaboration of work done by the Ministry Divisions and Missions, based on priorities, targets and KPIs, ensuring that there is a basis for evaluating performance of the institution and individual officers in both qualitative and quantitative terms, to be assessed objectively at the end of each year.

2. **Annual Performance Evaluation -2018**

   The performance Evaluation Report of the Ministry-2018 was prepared and submitted to the Parliament.

3. **Recruitment**

   - With the concurrence of Public Service Commission and Department of Examination, the recruitment methods for Home based Public Management Assistants and Home-based personal assistants for Sri Lanka Overseas Missions were restructured, by including a component of a practical assessment. Both Gazettes were issued by the Division and the processed of conducting the practical test and interview process would be carried out in collaboration with Human Resources and Mission Management Division and General Administration Division.
   - Also, actions were initiated to revise the recruitment method of Sri Lanka Foreign Service. The recruitment process of the SLFS was to be conducted in two phases with the consent of the Department of Examinations and the Public Service Commission. Accordingly, a Cabinet Memorandum was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers seeking amendment to the Sri Lanka Foreign Service recruitment

process. However due to changes in the Cabinet, the paper did not result in a decision.

4. Policy Development

Career progression of SLFS Officers

- A committee was appointed by Secretary/Foreign Affairs to give recommendations to identify a pool of Post Graduate qualifications for the promotion of Sri Lanka Foreign Service Officers, as prescribed by the Service Minute. The Division coordinated this matter, taking into consideration the quality and relevance of the qualifications to the functions of the Ministry as well as the role of a diplomat.

- Through the on-going cadre rationalisation process of the Ministry, consultations were held institutionalising the Special Grade of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service and the formalising of the Ambassador Rank
- Policy inputs were provided to streamline the transfers of drivers and office assistants to Sri Lanka Overseas Missions.

5. Training and career development

35 Sri Lanka Foreign Service Officers were sent for Foreign Diplomatic training programmes within the period under consideration. One Japanese language training under a scholarship scheme was granted by the Japanese government.

The following trainings were conducted during the period;

- Public Diplomacy and Media Relations training programme in January, together with a networking event with Sri Lankan and Foreign media professionals was conducted for junior-level officers in the Ministry to enhance their knowledge, skills and attitudes on public diplomacy and media handling. A total of 19 officers benefitted from the Training.
- A leadership and negotiation training programme for diplomatic and legal officers in the Ministry in collaboration with United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute (BIDTI) in 32 Staff officers from 08 line agencies were also invited for the programme. A total of 42 officers benefitted from the Training.
- Two orientation programmes in June and August were organized for 14 and 13 outgoing Ambassadors and High Commissioners in collaboration with Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for Strategic Studies (LKI) and Ministry respectively relevant line agencies and territorial and operational divisions of the Ministry to direct the designate Head of Missions prior to their assumption of duties.
- Economic Diplomacy training programme on 3rd-6th April, 2019 were conducted for 13 Director Generals and for 19 Assistant Directors (all together for 32) senior level officers of the Ministry and newly recruited SLFS officers in collaboration with BIDTI and Canadian Foreign Service Academy.

- The SLFS probationary officers recruited in 2018 were trained on General English courses from January to March 2019 by the British Council to improve their proficiency in English Language and professional skills.
- The gazette notification to held the first and second Efficiency Bar Examination and Second Language Examination for Sri Lanka Foreign Service Officers was published in 2019.
- Discussions and negotiations were initiated to sign a MoU with UNITAR on collaboration for training and Development of Diplomatic officers.

Policy Research

The Division in coordination with the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for Strategic Studies (LKI) developed a concept to guide the newly recruited in Sri Lanka Foreign Service officers to carry out Policy Researches on selected topics, under the supervision of LKI.

International Security & Counter Terrorism Division

Internatioanl Security & Counter Terrorism Division

Introduction:

International Security & Counter Terrorism Division is the focal point of the Ministry of Foreign Relations on defence and security matters that relate to Sri Lanka in the international sphere. In this regard, the Division supports the local agencies working in defence and security in coordinating and cooperating with the international community in combatting threats to Sri Lanka's security, including terrorism, violent extremism and drug trafficking.

This includes the following key activities,

- Support the maintenance of the proscription listing of terrorist groups that threaten the security of Sri Lanka
- Coordinate with local agencies on defence cooperation matters and initiatives to be undertaken with foreign countries and entities
- Contribute to the agenda for discussions and expansion of engagement in this sector in bilateral relations through the relevant Political desks of the Ministry
- Liaise with local defence and legal authorities in keeping our Missions abroad updated on local developments
- Monitoring and assisting in ongoing cases abroad related to Sri Lankans who have engaged in terrorist activities in Sri Lanka, as required and requested
- Assisting in operations related to extradition of Sri Lankans who are wanted by local authorities in coordination with Sri Lanka Missions abroad
- Coordinating with foreign entities and countries in securing training opportunities to develop the capacities of defence and law enforcement authorities in areas identified

Main activities during 2019:

Revamping of Unit:

- The "Counter Terrorism Unit" (CTU) had been initiated in 2008. In the last several years the Unit had fallen into disuse with material scattered in the Ministry in different divisions, as the Unit had been placed under other Divisions at different times. From February 2019, the Unit was revitalized as a separate stand alone Division, and a DG was assigned to same.
- The scope of the Division was expanded with its renaming as "International Security & Counter Terrorism Division", to incorporate the multi-faceted defence and security relations of Sri Lanka.
- Initiatives were taken to revitalize relations with the local defence and intelligence agencies.
- Logistically, the Division was assigned a separate room in the Ministry, where the files were housed.

Terrorism:

- Following the Easter Sunday attacks in April 2020, the DG of the Division headed the Operations Room on monitoring the developments. One of the main tasks was to monitor the status of foreigners who were affected in the attacks.
- Coordinated visits by foreign delegations at bilateral level in the aftermath of the attack with offers of assistance in various aspects of Counter terrorism measures, including border management, detection, improve law enforcement responses, support legal efforts to try terrorism cases and legal reforms
- Coordinating dialogues with regional and international bodies to strengthen the CT framework and capacities of Sri Lanka's law enforcement and intelligence
- Provided input and reports to countries to continue the listing of the LTTE in their countries. 3 such listings were extended for a further period in 2019.
- Division coordinated obtaining information on identified individuals of interest to Sri Lankan law enforcement authorities, related to terrorist attacks
- Provided information dossiers to support the cases ongoing in foreign countries against former members of the LTTE
- Monitored and compiled information received through Missions on activities by LTTE-related and other organizations in foreign countries to share with relevant authorities
- Presented information to the Presidential Commission of Inquiry on the Easter Sunday attacks, as instructed.

Violent extremism:

- Following the Easter Sunday attack, and its connection to ISIS ideology broadened the scope and relations of the Division, to reflect the role that Sri Lanka had become a part of the global efforts to Counter Violent Extremism arising from religious extremism.
- Division was part of the MOD led process committee to enforce local proscription of entities and individuals related to terrorist and violent extremism under relevant UN regulations
- Coordinated the receipt of funds from international organizations to work in the areas of Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism
- Coordinated training for SL officials in CVE, legislative drafting on CT, CVE issues, online radicalization etc, through diplomatic channels as well as with international bodies

Combatting narcotics:

- During the arrest of Makandure Madush and 30 others, the Division coordinated between the Mission and SL's security agencies in ensuring the smooth flow of information that facilitated arrest and questioning of all 31 arrestees upon return to Colombo
- Coordinated training in combatting drug related law enforcement for relevant officials

United Nations and Human Rights Division

United Nations and Human Rights Division

Sri Lanka's Permanent Missions / High Commissions / Embassies in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris, Rome, Nairobi, Bangkok and the Hague come under the purview of this Division in the context of multilateral work. The Division also coordinates activities with relevant line Ministries, UN Agencies in Sri Lanka, international & local human rights groups, and the civil society and media. The main areas of work of this Division, during the year 2019 included the following:

1. 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), New York, 24 September – 30 September 2019

The Ministry made both substantive and logistical arrangements for the participation of the Sri Lanka delegation headed by Secretary/Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SFR) at High-Level Segment of the 74th Session of the UNGA in September 2019. The SFR addressed the UN General Assembly on 30 September 2019. The delegation met with several high-ranking UN officials, on the sidelines of the High-Level Segment.

2. Reconciliation and human rights:

UN Human Rights Council:

- The Division, along with other stakeholders, continued to coordinate and assist the process undertaken by the Government to ensure progress on the implementation of the UN Human Rights Council resolutions 30/1 (2015), 34/1 (2017).

The progress achieved by Sri Lanka in 'Advancing Human Rights, Reconciliation, and Good Governance in Sri Lanka' was regularly updated and disseminated among relevant stakeholders, including Sri Lanka Missions abroad.

- Substantive and logistical preparations were made for Sri Lanka's participation at the 2019 sessions of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva: 40th Session (25 Feb – 22 Mar 2019), 41st Session (24 Jun – 12 Jul 2019) and 42nd Session (09 - 27 Sep 2019).
    - Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Geneva from 18 - 24 March 2018 in connection with the presentation of the Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Sri Lanka. The rest of the delegation consisted of Hon. Dr. Suren Raghavan (Governor of the Northern Province), Hon. Dr. Sarath Amunugama (MP), Mr. Ravinatha Aryasinha (SFR), Mr. Nerin Pulle (DSG/Attorney General's Department) and the officials of the Permanent Mission in Geneva.
    - The draft resolution 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka' (A/HRC/40/L.1), to which Sri Lanka signed up as co-sponsor, was adopted without a vote on 21 March 2019. Hon. M/FA made the GoSL statement at the adoption of the resolution.

- During the 40th Session held in March 2019, Sri Lanka made an intervention as the Country Concerned, following the presentation of the Report of the OHCHR on Sri Lanka by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on 20 March 2019 under Agenda item 2.
- Hon. MFA and the Sri Lanka delegation met with the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Under-Secretary General in charge of the UN Office in Geneva Mr. Michael Moller, Ambassadors and the Heads and Deputy Heads of UN and other International Organizations based in Geneva during the visit.
- During the time period from January- September 2019, Sri Lanka engaged with the Council by making 22 interventions and supported 28 thematic resolutions including the resolution on "Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka". Sri Lanka also supported 06 joint statements proposed by different groups of countries.

- In addition, the following statements/interventions were also made on behalf of Sri Lanka at the following fora of the UN Human Rights Council:
  - Statement as the Country Concerned at HRC 40 on 28 February 2019 on the Report of the IE on the Effects of Foreign Debt and other related International Financial Obligations of States on the Full Enjoyment of All Human Rights, particularly Social, Economic and Cultural Rights on his visit to Sri Lanka in September 2018;
  - Statement as the Country Concerned at HRC 40 on 1 February 2019 during the Interactive Dialogue with the SR on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism;
  - Addressing concerns expressed by the High Commissioner in her oral update as well as by other States in their interventions during the General Debate under Agenda Item 2 of HRC 41, regarding developments in Sri Lanka following the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks, the Sri Lankan delegation made an intervention clarifying/responding to the concerns raised in the above statements;
  - Statement during the General Debate under Agenda Item 2 of HRC 42, responding to a statement on Sri Lanka made by the UK on behalf of the core group (the UK, Germany, Canada, North Macedonia and Montenegro);
  - An intervention following the presentation of the follow-up report by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance on their country visits to Peru and Sri Lanka, on 11 September 2019.
- Sri Lanka presented the report containing conclusions and recommendations as the chair of the 2018 Social Forum on 13 March 2019.

UN Special Procedures Mandate Holders:

- Following the standing invitation extended by the Government of Sri Lanka to special procedure mandate holders since December 2015, the UN Sub

Committee on the Prevention of Torture (2-12 April 2019), UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association (15 - 26 July 2019), Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief (15 – 26 August 2019). This Division coordinated with the Secretariat of the Independent Expert, PRUN/ Geneva and relevant stakeholders to facilitate this visit.

3. UN Peacebuilding Fund:

- The Division engaged with the UN Peacebuilding Fund through following activities during 2019:
  - Extension of the Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) up to 30 September 2019 with no overall budget increase/impact (no-cost extension) in March 2019.
  - The Division facilitated the visit of Hon. Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Finance and his delegation for the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission Meeting in New York in 15-17 April 2019.
  - The Division represented the Ministry at the 10th Peacebuilding Board Meeting co-chaired by the Ministry of Finance and United Nations held at the Ministry of Finance, on 23 September 2019.

4. Universal Periodic Review (UPR):

- Sri Lanka engaged with the UPR of other countries, held in Geneva by delivering interventions for 17 countries during the 32nd, 33rd and 34th Sessions of the Working Group of UPR held in January 2019, May 2019, and November 2019 respectively.

5. Disarmament:

Keeping with Sri Lanka's longstanding commitment towards multilateral disarmament efforts, the Division continued to engage with the respective Sri Lanka Missions, regards Sri Lanka's participation in, and the Government's position on the disarmament meetings held in year 2019, including;

- The Meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW on Emerging Technologies in the area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) held from 25 to 29 March 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and Experts held from 5 to 8 February 2019 and the Inter-sessional meeting of the APMBC held from 22 to 24 May 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 9th Meeting of when State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions held from 2 to September 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, under Sri Lanka's Presidency.
- 4th Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention held from 25 to 29 November 2019 in Oslo, Norway.

- 24th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention held from 25-29 November 2019 in the Hague, the Netherlands.
- Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting for Asia-Pacific States Parties to the NPT in preparation for the 2020 NPT Review Conference held from 3 to 4 December 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Sri Lanka's participation in the First Committee which deals with Disarmament & International Security of the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly was coordinated by the Division, during which the SFR delivered a statement under the General Debate and had discussions with the UN High Representative on Disarmament Izumi Nakamitsu on 7 October 2019. Sri Lanka also made statements at the Thematic Debates and took the lead to introduce resolution on the "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space" with Egypt which was adopted by a recorded 175 Votes on 5 November 2019. 61 Resolutions were adopted by the Committee of which Sri Lanka supported 56 and co-sponsored 20.

The Division also facilitated the implementation of national commitments related to the Disarmament Conventions. In 2019 Sri Lanka submitted transparency reports under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Anti–Personal Mine Ban Convention and Sri Lanka's National Report under the Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The approval of the Cabinet of Ministers was also obtained on 19 March 2019, for enacting domestic legislation incorporating the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which Sri Lanka acceded in year 2018. A technical workshop, with the participation of all line agencies was organised on 31 January 2019 by the Division, in partnership with the ICRC in Sri Lanka with regard to incorporation of Convention on Cluster Munitions to domestic national legislation. The Division as a member of the Steering Committee for the National Authority for Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, participated at its meetings held in 2019, and extended the required assistance to coordinate with the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the Hague.

6. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

- The Division continued cooperation between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the relevant government agencies on the registration of asylum seekers and refugees and the resettlement of refugees and related issues.
- As at 31 December 2019, there were a total number of 221 cases and 361 persons as asylum seekers in Sri Lanka and a total number of 522 cases and 1,045 persons as refugees. The largest number of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Sri Lanka are from Pakistan. (Asylum Seekers as at 31 December 2019 was 283; Refugees as at 30 December 2019: 800).
- 160 refugees (81 cases) departed under the UNHCR resettlement process in 2019 (60 cases /100 persons to the USA, and 05 cases/ 22 persons to Canada, 05 cases/16 persons to Sweden, and 02 cases/02 persons to the Netherlands

and 04 cases/15 individuals to the United Kingdom, 03 cases/03 individuals to Finland and 02 cases/02 individuals to France)

- The Division facilitated the UNHCR to organize 02 relocation movements of 112 refugees and asylum seekers to Poonthottam relocation site in Vavuniya in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attacks in April 2019. This Division also coordinated 12 return movements of the relocated refugees and asylum seekers from Poonthottam relocation site to their rented accommodations in Colombo and Negombo in collaboration with the other governmental institutions.

7. Candidatures:

- The Division contributed to enhancing Sri Lanka's relations with the other UN Member States in the multilateral fora by supporting them at elections/exchanging Sri Lanka's votes for candidatures.
- The Division maintains a database on Sri Lanka's voting pattern at the elections to UN bodies.Sri Lanka's vote at the following elections were processed by this Division in 2019:
    i. Post of Director General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
    ii. Posts of Roster of Judges for the Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunal
    iii. Post of the 5th Executive Director of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP)
    iv. Post of External Auditor of the World Health Organization (WHO),
    v. Open Government Partnership Steering Committee (OGP SC)
    vi. Executive Council of the UN-HABITAT
    vii. Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW)
    viii. Director General of the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO)
    ix. Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC)
    x. Non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
    xi. UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
    xii. Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)
    xiii. Post of Deputy Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)
    xiv. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
    xv. President of the 74th UNGA
    xvi. Elections to the World Customs Organization (WCO)
    xvii. Elections to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
    xviii. Committee Against Torture (CAT)

xix. Elections to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
xx. Elections to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
xxi. Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
xxii. Council of the International Standardization Organization (ISO)
xxiii. Post of External Auditor of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
xxiv. Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)
xxv. Elections to the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)
xxvi. UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC)
xxvii. Human Rights Council (HRC)
xxviii. Executive Board of UNESCO
xxix. UNESCO Subsidiary Organizations Elections
xxx. United Nations Board of Auditors (UNBOA)
xxxi. Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)
xxxii. Elections to the Standing Commission of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC)

8. Multilateral engagement in socio-economic sphere

This Division coordinated matters related to socio economic initiatives in the UN and related UN agencies.

The Division coordinated the UN General Assembly Second Committee on Economic, Finance and Climate Change with PRUN/New York. The Committee adopted 52 resolutions and 3 decisions. Sri Lanka co-sponsored 50 of these Resolutions tabled by the G-77 and individual countries.

Further, the Division facilitated the participation of GoSL delegations at the related events and forums and coordinated incoming visits which are listed below.

Non Alignment Movement (NAM)

18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, Baku, Azerbaijan, 25-26 October 2019

- Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs led the Sri Lanka delegation to the 18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 25 to 26 October 2019 under the theme "Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of a contemporary world".
- Hon. Minister also took part in the Preparatory Ministerial Meeting to the Summit held from 25 to 26 October 2019, under the new NAM Chairmanship of Azerbaijan. The preparatory Ministerial meeting followed the Senior

Officials meeting which was held from 21 to 22 October. DG/UN & HR led the Sri Lanka delegation at this senior officials meeting.

UNDP

- The Division facilitated a meeting with Hon M/FR for Ms Kanni Wignaraja, Assistant Secretary – General and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Ms. Wignaraja is the highest ranking UN official of Sri Lankan origin at present.

UNESCO

- Facilitated the Sri Lanka delegation which attended the 40th Session of the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held from 12 to 27 November in Paris, France. HE the Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to the UNESCO, Mr.Daya S.J.Palpola headed the Sri Lanka delegation.
- The Division coordinated the 14th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) held from 09 to 14 December 2019 in Bogota, Columbia with the SLEMB/Paris and the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Cultural & Religious Affairs and facilitated the Sri Lanka delegation's participation. Sri Lanka is a member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage for the period of 2018 – 2022.

WHO

- Facilitated the participation of Sri Lanka delegation led by Hon. Minister of Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine at the following WHO events:

- 144th Session of the Executive Board of the World Health Organization held from 24 January to 1 February 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 72nd World Health Assembly held from 20 to 28 May 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 145th Session of the Executive Board of the World Health Organization held from 29 to 30 May 2020 in Geneva, Switzerland.

ILO

- Hon. Ravindra Samaraweera, Minister of Labour and Trade Union relations led the Sri Lankan delegation to the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) held from 10 to 21 June 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Sri Lanka ratified the Protocol 29 (P29) of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention on 10 April 2019.

ITU

- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum was held from 8 to 12 April 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. A delegation led by Hon. Ajith P. Perera, Minister of Digital Infrastructure and Information Technology participated at the event.

UNCTAD

- 22nd Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) was held from 13 to 17 May 2019 in Geneva. Minister of Science, Technology and Research, Hon. Sujeewa Senasinghe participated at this event.
- Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, Director, Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD visited Sri Lanka and met Minister of foreign Affairs, Hon.Tilak Marapana, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Secretary, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Resettlement of Protracted Displaced Persons, Co-operative Development and Vocational Training & Skill Development.

UNFPA

- The Nairobi Summit on "ICPD 25: Accelerating the Promise" was held from 12 to 14 November 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. This Division coordinated with the UNPFA/Colombo and Ministry of Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine regarding GoSL participation.

9. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- The Division coordinated SDG related matters with UN Agencies and line Ministries.
- The ECOSOC High level Political Forum was held from 9 to 18 July 2019 in New York under the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality". Mr. Udaya R N Senevitathna, Secretary to the President and Dr, M.M.S.B. Yalegama, Director General, Sustainable Development Council participated at the Forum along with the Mission officials.

10. Counter Terrorism Cooperation

Taking note of the priority of the country, the Division facilitated a number of counter –terrorism cooperation measures with the related UN agencies:

- Facilitation of dialogue between the national agencies and the delegation from the UN counter terrorism agencies, on a capacity building programme on Advance Passenger Information (API) system in May 2019. The visiting delegation represented a range of UN agencies, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the UN Office of Information and Communications Technology, the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, as well as the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the INTERPOL.
- Sri Lanka's participation at the African Regional High –Level Conference on Counter Terrorism and the Prevention of Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism, organised by the UN Office of Counter Terrorism and the Government of Kenya in July 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Chief of National Intelligence, and Acting Director Naval Intelligence participated at the meeting.
- The visit of and meetings for the UN High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos on 30 April 2019,

that took place in the wake of the Easter Sunday attacks. Mr.Moratinos while offering the condolences on the attacks, met with government and religious leaders during his visit.

11. UN Peacekeeping Operations

Sri Lanka has contributed to UN peacekeeping missions for more than 50 years and is committed firmly, to ensuring the best possible training and assessment for peacekeepers from Sri Lanka, in order to uphold the highest standards of peacekeeping operations. In keeping with this commitment, Sri Lanka works closely with the UN, to ensure continuous opportunity for Sri Lankan officers to serve in the UN peacekeeping missions.

In 2019, this Division coordinated Sri Lanka's representation with the UN in securing positions for Sri Lankan officers, and also to make highest level representation, including by H.E. the President, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as SFR, with the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Under–Secretary General for Department of Peace Operations to counter the allegations levelled against deployment of Sri Lanka Army personnel to UN Missions. Dialogue with the UN Department of Peace Operations continues to expand the representation by Sri Lankan officers both in the UN Headquarters as well as in field missions.

12. United Nations Office on Drugs & Crimes (UNODC):

This Division continued to facilitate the participation by line agencies in the UNODC meetings in the areas of drug trafficking, crime prevention, addressing corruption, maritime cooperation etc. The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) undertook a visit to Sri Lanka from 25 to 28 March 2019, to monitor and promote Sri Lanka's compliance with the provisions of the United Nations International drug control treaties. The INCB Mission held consultations with the Ministry of Justice & Prison Reforms, Defence, Foreign Affairs, Health Services, IGP, National Dangerous Drug Control Board (NDDCB), Police Narcotic Bureau, Customs, Import & Export Control, Prison Authorities & and the Department of Excise. The INCB has reviewed the findings of the Mission, and the conclusions and recommendations were forwarded to the Hon. Minister of Foreign Relations in July 2019.

Director/Operations of the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Ms. Miwa Kato undertook a visit to Sri Lanka from 28 to 30 November 2019. During her visit, Ms. Kato held meetings with Hon. Minister of Foreign Relations, Secretary to Ministry of Defence and other line agencies, focusing on cooperation between Sri Lanka and the UNODC on countering drug trafficking and terrorism in the region.

13. Issuance of letters of Credence for GoSL representation at the multilateral fora:

- In the year 2019, the Division prepared 55 letters of credence enabling delegations to represent Sri Lanka at international conferences and meetings.

14. Facilitation of visas:

- Facilitated the issuance of visas for conferences, workshops, meetings, seminars being held in Sri Lanka throughout the year. Number of visas facilitated are 1132 from 01 January to 31 December 2019.

15. Sri Lanka's contribution to the UN and related agencies:

- This Division coordinated and processed the respective payments to be made to the UN and UN agencies for Sri Lanka's membership at those organizations, conventions & peace keeping missions.

Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division

Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division

Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division (OA, E & CC Division) is tasked with promoting coordination and coherence of Sri Lanka's activities related to Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change, internationally. The Division coordinates projects and initiatives to increase Sri Lanka's overall interaction with other countries and organizations and with related authorities in Sri Lanka. Promotion of Sri Lanka as a platform for Ocean Affairs & Climate Change related dialogues/conferences/workshops, and assisting to develop an Oceans Policy for Sri Lanka are subject areas of this Division.

The Division whilst closely working with other government ministries, line agencies and stakeholders, represents the Ministry at international, regional and national levels and liaises closely with relevant government agencies as well as others as and when required to ensure that Sri Lanka benefits from international environmental regimes while adhering to commitments made. The Division also actively explores opportunities to identify and obtain technical and other forms of assistance to Sri Lanka, matching national requirements in coordination with respective line agencies. In doing so, the Division also considers diligently Sri Lanka's foreign policy considerations.

Further, it is responsible for the facilitating the process of granting clearances for foreign vessels entering Sri Lankan territorial waters, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the Continental Shelf for Marine Scientific Research (MSR).

The Division also acts as the Focal Point for Commonwealth Blue Charter (CBC) and CBC Action Group on Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods Action Group (MELAG) which is championed by Sri Lanka. The Division is working towards fulfilling Sri Lanka's leadership role in the Marine Ecosystems and Livelihoods Action Group (MELAG), to bring it to be one of the most active and effective Action Groups within a short span of time.

In addition, the Division is the Focal Point for Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (IORA-WGMSS).

The following were the key activities that the Division performed during the period under review:

Bilateral Relations

1. Sri Lanka and Australia concluded First Maritime Dialogue on 16 September 2019 (preceding the Third Round of Senior Officials' Talks held on 17 September), in Colombo which was organized by the Division. The Dialogue underlined the importance of working together to advance maritime safety and security and collaborating on blue economy related initiatives. The two countries undertook to explore avenues to engage in practical initiatives to strengthen regional architecture, such as the IORA and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONs), particularly focused on maritime safety and security (MSS), transnational crime, defense as well as blue economy.

2. The Division held initial discussions with Japanese Embassy officials on holding 4th Ocean Dialogue in October 2019 with Japan, which was subsequently postponed.
3. The Division worked closely, especially with the Embassies of China, Japan, South Korea, Norway, UK, Australia and France on bilateral cooperation on ocean affairs.

Multilateral Relations

Holding of Stakeholder Workshop to finalize the draft guidelines and regulations on Marine Science Research (MSR) and to establish the Martine Scientific Research Committee (MSRC), May 2019: The process was to consider the applications to conduct MSR in Sri Lanka's Territorial Sea, EEZ and on the Continental Shelf of Sri Lanka by foreign states/competent international organizations and to grant approval. The guidelines and the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the MSRC were finalized by end of 2019.

1. First Meeting of the IORA WGMSS on, 7-9 August 2019, Colombo:
    - As the Focal Point for WGMSS, the Division organized this meeting with support from the IORA Special Fund, Australian Government and the United Nations Organization for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), fulfilling its obligations as per IORA Action Plan for the period 2017 - 2021 as the lead country for the IORA WGMSS.
    - The Division, led by Director General/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Division, was instrumental in producing the Work Plan with clear activities, commitments incorporating the suggestions of all Member States which led to finalization of the Work Plan for two years and a Summary of Proceedings of the meeting.
    - The Meeting was preceded by a panel discussion on 'Emerging scenarios related to safety and security in the Indian Ocean" and was attended by officials and experts from 16 IORA member states (Iran, Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Oman, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Tanzania).

2. First Meeting of the MELAG, 07 – 09 October 2020, Negombo, Sri Lanka
    - The Division in collaboration with the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (MMDE) organized the above, to identify the current status, gaps in achieving sustainable mangrove ecosystems that supports livelihoods of coastal communities in the participating countries, while comparing the strengths and weaknesses across the different regions of the world; this was in order to formulate an Action Plan to achieve shared targets.
    - The meeting also consisted of a field visit to the Mangrove Museum in Pambala, mangrove nurseries and mangrove replanted sites with participants engaging in a mangrove saplings planting activity.

- Meeting was supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) of Australia.

3. IORA Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Ocean Sciences and Environment for the Indian Ocean Rim Countries :
    - Sri Lanka has undertaken a commitment to setup an IORA Centre of Excellence (CoE) on Ocean Sciences and Environment for the Indian Ocean Rim Countries around 2010 and a Cabinet Memorandum has been submitted subsequently in 2014. Ocean Affairs Division has supported the Economic Affairs Division in organizing a few workshops with the line agencies to facilitate setting up the CoE. However, the local agencies tasked with responsibilities have not been able to progress.
    - The Division took action to prepare a draft Cabinet Memorandum on shifting the proposed location of Centre of Excellence on Ocean Sciences and Environment for the Indian Ocean Rim Countries, a commitment undertaken by Sri Lanka in 2010. It was handed over to the EA Division as it comes under their purview.

Other initiatives involved/supported

1. Guided the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (MMDE) for the launch of UN Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management, 23-24 October 2019, in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This was part of the high level segment and Science – Policy – Political Dialogue and was in collaboration with the International Nitrogen Management System and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. Event culminated in adopting the Colombo Declaration to address excessive use of Nitrogen by halving the processes of excessive release of Nitrogen to the environment by 2030.
3. Organized the visit of the Commonwealth Secretary General on 4 November 2019 to a mangrove re-planting site maintained by a private sector cement manufacturing company together with a local NGO during her visit to Sri Lanka.
4. Coordinated with relevant line agencies for Sri Lanka to benefit from Commonwealth Blue Charter initiatives by joining other Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Groups. Accordingly, in 2019 Sri Lanka joined Action Groups on coral reefs, marine protected areas, aquaculture & blue economy. (Sri Lanka joined MEALAG and Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance – the action group on plastic marine litter, in 2018).
5. Working closely with the Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy with respect to activities of the International Solar Alliance.

6. Coordinating coordinated the process to identify a Sri Lanka government agency to hold responsibilities of Focal Point for the International Seabed Authority.
7. Coordinating Coordinated work related to proposed agreements with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) and International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) with the Ministry of Environment and Wildlife Resources (MEWR). Sri Lanka submitted a Letter of Intent on obtaining the membership of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) in December 2018 and accordingly, Sri Lanka gained Membership in January 2019. The Division facilitated this process.
8. Assisting the Sri Lanka Navy and the Sri Lanka Coast Guards on work related to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).
9. Providing inputs to various bilateral briefs on oceans, environment and climate related issues.
10. Circulating opportunities for project financing/technical cooperation/capacity building for environment-related (including oceans and environment-related and climate change) initiatives, through the Commonwealth Secretariat and bilateral partners.
11. DG/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change represented Sri Lanka as the co-convener of a session of the Australia – Sri Lanka Blue Carbon Technical Scoping Workshop organized by MMDE together with CSIRO Australia from 3 to - 4 October 2019.

Workshops/Conferences/Seminars

1. **Commonwealth Blue Charter (CBC) All Champions Meeting, London, the UK, 17 – 21 June 2019:** The Ministry of Foreign Relations was represented by DG/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change who led the Sri Lanka delegation and presented the progress Sri Lanka has made in mangrove conservation and the possible way forward for MELAG. As a result of networking during the meeting, cooperation was established between Allan Coral Atlas and the Ministry of Environment and Wildlife Resources resulting in a process to sign an Memorandum of understanding (MoU) for Sri Lanka to have free access to satellite data to monitor changes in coral reefs around Sri Lanka on a regular basis (the value of the collaboration would be over 100 million USD).

2. **The 9th Bi-Annual Committee of Senior Officials (CSO, Durban, South Africa, 19 - 20 June 2019:** the Division was represented by an Assistant Director (delegation headed by Director/Economic Affairs).

3. **The 3RD IORA Blue Economy Ministerial Conference, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 4 – 5 September 2019:** Was convened by the Bangladesh government and the IORA Secretariat. Minister of Foreign

Relations led the delegation. DG/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change was also a member of the delegation.

4. **2nd EU-India Maritime Security Workshop "Securing the Maritime Commons: India, the European Union and Indian Ocean Maritime Security", Brussels, Belgium, 18 - 19 September 2019:** Director of the Division attended.

5. **Our Ocean Conference 2019, Oslo, Norway, 23 – 24 October 2019:** The Ministry of Foreign Relations was represented by DG/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change for the Conference as a Member of the Sri Lanka delegation. This high level conference has unique system of encouraging countries to make voluntary commitments, and supporting processes to keep up with such commitments on actions and policies to ensure protection of oceans, responsible management of marine resources and sustainable economic growth.

6. **First Meeting of the Working Group on Blue Economy, Port Louis, Mauritius, 5 – 6 December 2019:**

7. **6th Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD), 25th Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) and 1st 7. IORA Expert Group Meeting on Academic, Science, and Technology Cooperation (EGMASTC), New Delhi, 12 – 13 December 2020:** All three (03) events were convened by the Government of India with the support of IORA Secretariat. The delegation was led by the Director of the Division and also a delegate from Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI) participated.

8. **UNFCCC-25th Session of Conference of parties (COP25), Madrid, Spain, 2 - 13 December 2019:** The Ministry of Foreign Relations was represented by DG/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change, who led the Sri Lanka delegation and delivered the Country Statement prepared in consultation with stakeholders' agencies. On the sidelines of the event, DG/Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change was invited to speak on Sri Lanka's way forward in tackling marine plastic litter at the COP 25 Japanese Government Pavilion and on Sri Lanka's efforts in mangrove restoration and protection as well as leading MELAG at the COP 25 WWF Pavilion.

Europe, Central Asia, European Union & Commonwealth Division

Europe, Central Asia, European Union & Commonwealth Division

The Europe & Central Asia and European Union & Commonwealth Division comprises of two geographical regions and covers work pertaining to Sri Lanka's bilateral relations with countries in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the inter governmental entities; European union and Commonwealth.

Key Activities

The scope of work of the Division is guided by Sri Lanka Government's foreign policy objectives, which are broadly as follows:

i. Promote, enhance and diversify bilateral ties covering cooperation on political, economic, social, security and cultural cooperation.
ii. Promote economic diplomacy to increase two- way trade flows and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), including tourism
iii. Secure development assistance for prioritized sectors of the Sri Lankan economy.
iv. Promote good relations with the diaspora communities of Sri Lankan origin resident in Europe
v. Promote Sri Lanka's image and interests in Europe and Central Asia
vi. Leverage bilateral support to promote Sri Lanka's interests in the EU and at other multilateral and regional fora (European Union, United Nations, etc.).
vii. Cooperate with countries in Europe and Central Asia, who are members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Commonwealth of Nations and within the G77+ China at the United Nations to promote shared interests, including South – South Cooperation, and address common challenges such as poverty, climate change, trade imbalances and food security.

Europe

A. Europe:

Territorial Coverage: 43

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Turkey.

Number of Resident Missions: 14

Austria, Belgium, France, Germany (Berlin & Frankfurt), Italy (Rome & Milan), Cyprus, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Turkey.

Number of Concurrent Accreditations: 23

Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia from Vienna; Luxembourg from Brussels; Spain from Paris; Switzerland, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro from Berlin; Holy See from Geneva, Albania; Greece, Malta, San Marino from Rome; Romania from Warsaw; Denmark; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania from Stockholm; Finland and Iceland from Oslo; Georgia from Ankara.

Austria

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria:

The Mission strengthened the policy of engagement in order to further enhance bilateral relations with high ranking persons in Austria.

i. Meeting with HE Dr Alexander Van der Bellen, Federal President of the Republic of Austria, at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna on 10 July 2019 at the presentation of the letters of credence by the Ambassador of Sri Lanka. Enhancing Austro-Lanka relations and further cooperation was discussed. Sri Lanka was introduced as a gateway to the Asian region considering its market access, geo strategic location, logistics and infrastructure.
ii. Meeting with Ms Gabriele Meon-Tschürtz, Director of the Asia-Pacific Division of the Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria on July 30 2019.
iii. Explored the possibility of holding Bilateral Political Consultations at the level of European Director (DG) in 2020.
iv. Meeting with Dr. Werner Fasslabend, President of Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy on 1 August 2019. Creating linkages with defence sector and think tanks was discussed. Trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and smuggling of illegal firearms in Balkan Peninsula and its impact on South Asia with the increase of extremism was discussed. Discussions on securing training opportunities for Defence Experts are presently under consideration.
v. Constant interaction with Federal Ministry of Justice on matters pertaining to Sri Lankan migrant workers, asylum seekers and repatriation of Sri Lankan nationals.

Multilateral relations

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Represented Sri Lanka and facilitated Sri Lankan delegations to major conferences, inter-governmental expert committees and meetings of the IAEA held in 2019.

Meetings were held with like-minded countries, the G-77 and China, NAM and the Middle East and South Asia group (MESA) in relation to matters of mutual interest.

i. Regular interaction with high ranking officials of Conference Management services, Nuclear safety, security and safeguard departments, Technical Cooperation programme and other important officials of the IAEA to secure capacity building, technical cooperation opportunities for Sri Lanka.
ii. Meeting with Mr. Cornel Feruta, Actg. Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the side-lines of presentation of credentials of the Ambassador on 23 August 2019.
iii. Secured IAEA's legal assistance to Sri Lanka in identified areas in particular treaty related work.
iv. Acting Director General was briefed on Sri Lanka's recent achievements in the nuclear sector and sought further assistance through technical cooperation programme of the IAEA for the period of 2020-2021.
v. Meeting with officials of the IAEA on Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (imPACT) Review Mission from 28 October to 2 November 2019
vi. Secured IAEA's assistance to support government efforts to decentralize the availability of nuclear medical facilities across the country and to upgrade and update existing radioactive sources and equipment.
vii. Facilitated the Sri Lanka delegation to the 63rd Regular Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) led by Hon. Champika Premadasa, State Minister of Power and Energy from 16 to 20 September 2019.
viii. Facilitated Hon. Minister's participation throughout and coordinated bilateral meetings with interlocutors and other delegations.

United Nations Office at Vienna/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNOV/UNODC)

Mission represented Sri Lanka's position at all major conferences, commissions (i.e. CND and INCB), inter-governmental working committees, working group meetings and workshops of the UNODC and interacted constantly with the major divisions of the UNODC;

i. Division for Operations (DO)
ii. Division for Treaty Affairs (DTA)
iii. Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs (DPA)
iv. Division for Management (DM)

Meeting with Mr. Yury Fedotov, Director General of the United Nations Office in Vienna (UNOV) and Executive Director of the UNODC on behalf of Mr. Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 19 September 2019 during the Credential presenting ceremony of the Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN.

i. Sri Lanka's role as a hub in the Indian Ocean region to effectively coordinate with the Member States in the spheres of prevention of drug and human

smuggling, maritime crimes and piracy, through the UNODC regional secretariat and way forward were discussed.

ii. Secured further support and assistance from the UNODC in capacity building, technical cooperation, sharing information and best practices. Director General was briefed on necessity of collective efforts in the fight against transnational organized crimes in order to promote socio-economic growth.

iii. Facilitated the visit of Mrs. Miwa Cato, Director/Division of Operations of the UNODC to Sri Lanka from 27 to 30 November 2019 in coordination with the relevant line agencies.

iv. Facilitation was extended for the following Sri Lankan delegations to the UNODC conferences, workshops and Inter governmental Working Groups/Committees.

   a. Participation of DG/CIABOC at the 10th IAACA Annual Conference and General Meeting;
   b. Participation of Senior State Counsel of Attorney General's Department as a Panellist for the 28th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) from 20 to 24 May 2019 in Vienna;
   c. Participation at the UNCTOC 9th Session: Working group on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and 6th Session: Working group on Smuggling of Migrants (SoM) from 9 to 13 September 2019;
   d. Participation of DG/CIABOC as a panellist to the 10th Session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Prevention of Corruption from 4th to 6th September 2019.

v. Organized a briefing to showcase Sri Lanka's approach and strategy towards elimination of corruption and it was attended by 17 state parties to the UNCAC.

vi. Facilitated the participation of Ms. Pabasara Weerasinghe, Assistant Director/NDDCB as an expert for the 62nd Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), 6th International meeting from 16 to 18 October 2019.

vii. Participation of Sri Lanka delegation to the 8th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 December 2019

viii. Represented Sri Lanka in G77 and China, NAM and Asia Pacific Group (APG) meetings and consultations

ix. Promoted Sri Lanka's interests by actively participating in the deliberations of the G77, NAM and the APG focused on global and regional issues.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRA)

i. Numerous meetings held with senior diplomats of like-mined countries on issues such as expansion of the UNCITRAL and reforms to Inter-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism to collect important information and to secure national interests at the UNCITRAL conferences and working group meetings.

ii. Facilitated following Sri Lanka delegations at the UNCITRAL Inter-

governmental Working Groups/Committees;

iii. Participation of Mr. Susantha Balapatabandi, Senior State Counsel of Attorney General's Department at the 38th Session of WG III (ISDS)

iv. Participation of Mr. Vikum Abrew, Deputy Senior State Counsel of Attorney General's Department at the WG VI Judicial Sale of Ships.

Closer interaction with the coordinators of six major working groups of UNCITRAL Secretariat namely;

Working Group I - Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
Working Group II - Arbitration and Conciliation / Dispute Settlement
Working Group III - Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform
Working Group IV - Electronic Commerce
Working Group V - Insolvency Law
Working Group VI - Judicial Sale of Ships

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

i. Meeting with Mr. Li Yong, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) during the Credential presenting ceremony of the Permanent Representative on 17 September 2019

ii. The Director General was briefed on success of UNIDO funded projects in Sri Lanka and sought for extended support for new and ongoing projects in large scale, covering the areas of capacity building, traditional food processing and environmentally friendly management of chemical wastage.

iii. Participation at Conferences and meetings of the UNIDO listed at the Calendar of events of the UNOV to represented Sri Lanka's position at major conferences of UNIDO as well.

Belgium

Bilateral Relations with Belgium

i. Hon. Minister of Justice and Prison Reforms Hon. Thalatha Atukorale participated at the 7th world Congress Against the Death Penalty in Belgium - 27th February – 01st March 2019. During the visit she exchanged views on prison system in both countries with Belgian Minister of Justice Hon. Koen Geens in February 2019 and sought technological assistance for prisons in Sri Lanka.

ii. The Head of the Mission (HoM) met with Ms. Regine Vandriesche, Director Asia & Pacific of MFA on 19th July 2019 and discussed the matters to further strengthen bilateral relations including commencement of the bilateral consultations, exchange of high-level visits and to revise existing agreements signed with Belgium.

iii. The HoM met with Mr. Bruno van der Plujm, Secretary General (SG) of MFA on 28th August 2019 discussed the commencement of first round of bilateral consultations, enhancing investments in Sri Lanka and ongoing increasing FINEXPO grant assistance for infrastructure development projects in Sri Lanka.

iv. During the meeting with Ms. Anick Van Claster, DG/ Bilateral Political Affairs on 24th September 2019, the HoM reviewed the overall bilateral relations including operationalization of the bilateral consultation mechanism, training programmes for diplomats offered by Belgium, technical assistance such as training programmes conducted by the Antwerp Port in the areas of narcotic detection and Antwerp Diamond center for vocational training and skilled migration to Belgium.

v. It was concluded during the discussions with the Belgium Foreign Ministry that on a reciprocal basis placement to be provided under diplomatic training centers to young diplomats from each country. The MFR Sri Lanka requested training opportunities in Digital Diplomacy, Environmental and Climate Diplomacy and related customized courses available under Belgium Training Institute for Sri Lankan Diplomats.

vi. The HoM met with the Ms. Cathy Berx, Governor of the Province of Antwerp on 07th November 2019 and discussed the possible opportunities for trade and investment between Sri Lanka and Belgium.

vii. The HoM met with Mr. Kristof Waresccot, Managing Director /Antwerp Port Training Center (APEC) and explored the possibility on obtaining scholarships for training programmes offered by APEC and a visit of Mr. Koen Cornily (Officer in Charge) to Sri Lanka to discuss further on proposed cooperation.

viii. An interaction with the MEP's of Belgium - Sri Lanka Parliamentary Friendship Group was held on 22th October 2019 to discuss political situations in Belgium and Sri Lanka and the possibility of reviving the Group and to go-ahead with the agreed programmes including the visit of Sri Lankan parliamentarians' reciprocal visit to Belgium.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investment

i. The Embassy together with the Export Development Board of Sri Lanka organized Sri Lanka's participation at the Seafood Expo Global (SEG) in Brussels from 07th – 09th May 2019. Six seafood exporters of Sri Lanka and representatives of EDB participated at the Expo. Sri Lankan companies were able to secure nearly $ 345,000 worth of confirmed orders.

ii. The Embassy in collaboration with the EDB organized Sri Lanka's first Fair Trade and Organic products promotional event in Belgium during the Fair Trade week of Belgium on 11thOctober 2019 in Brussels. Five Sri Lankan exporters of Fair Trade and Organic certified spices, coconut products, processed fruits and vegetables and tea participated at the promotional event which included an exhibition of Sri Lankan Fair Trade products, networking lunch and business match making (B2B) meetings. The Embassy arranged

forty-nine (49) B2B meetings for the Sri Lankan delegation.

iii. The Embassy together with the Sri Lanka Tea Board organized a Sri Lanka pavilion at the Horeca Expo in Gent from 17th – 21st November 2019 for the first time to promote Ceylon tea in Belgium. Three tea exporters from Sri Lanka and representatives of Sri Lanka Tea Board participated at the Expo. The Embassy organized three (3) B2B meetings between the Sri Lankan delegation and reputed distributors in Antwerp and Brussels. The Sri Lanka exporters were able to secure orders for value added tea.

iv. The Embassy met with officials of business Chambers, Federations, Product based Associations and potential importers and provided information on trade and investment opportunities available in Sri Lanka for their consideration.

Tourism Promotion

- The tourist arrivals from Belgium saw an increase from 14,616 in 2017 to 17,519 in 2018. It was expected to further surge in 2019, yet due to Easter Sunday attacks, the 2019 figure stood at 14,948.
- The Embassy, sponsored by the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), participated at the Sri Lanka Pavilion of the 61st Edition of the Brussels Holiday Fair 2019 held at the Brussels Expo from 07th – 10th February 2019. Six travel companies participated at the event.
- Photographic exhibition titled "So Sri Lanka" depicting Sri Lanka's myriad tourist attractions was held at the exhibition hall of the Brussels Press Club on 03rd and 04th February 2019.
- Conducted a Tourism Promotion Event at the Royal North Sea Yachting Club in Oostende, Belgium, during the annual Open Belgian Sailing Championships on 07th August 2019.
- Facilitated a familiarization tour for high profile delegation from Association of Belgian Travel Organizers (ABTO) with the collaboration of SLTPB in October 2019.
- Conducted a Tourism Promotion event at the Royal Belgium Golf Club on 04th October 2019. Over 150 guests attended the event.
- The Embassy together with SLTPB organized workshops in_Brussels (14th November 2019), Antwerp (28th November 2019) and Ghent (04th December 2019) in the Flemish speaking Flanders region to promote Sri Lanka as a tourism destination for travellers from Belgium.

Education

i. An MOU on Child Care and Child Development Studies was signed on 25th July 2019 in Sri Lanka between University of euven Limburg in Belgium (UCLL) and the National Institute of Social Development (NISD) of Sri Lanka with an aim of promoting academic and cultural collaboration between the two organizations.

ii. Initiated discussions with the International Department of Katholieke

Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven) to introduce student exchange programmes between KU Leuven and Sri Lankan Universities. The Embassy conveyed the necessary information to the University of Colombo and University of Sri Jayawardenepura.

iii. Explored the possibility of forging cooperation between Agro-Bio-Tech campus and University of Liege (Gembloux campus). The Embassy conveyed the necessary information to the Faculty of Agriculture of University of Peradeniya.

Cultural Relations

i. Organized events in collaboration with the Sri Lankan community to celebrate Thai Pongal in January 2019, Independence Day on 4th February 2019, Vesak sil programme in May 2019 and Christmas in December 2019.

ii. Participated in the cultural and religious events organized by the community with a view to promote activities by different communities of Sri Lanka.

Multilateral Relations – EU

Joint Commission and Working Groups

i. The 22nd meeting of the EU – Sri Lanka Joint Commission was held on 14th February 2019 in Brussels. Both sides discussed ongoing cooperation on integrated rural development, democratic governance, sustainable economic development, growth, trade and investments and expressed satisfaction at the overall performances of the ongoing projects. Several areas such as development of capacity of Sri Lanka in disaster preparedness and early warning systems, reinforcement of cooperation with IOTC, migration issues, and participation of Sri Lankan researchers and innovators in Horizon 2020 initiative, EU assistance for climate mitigation projects were identified for follow-up actions.

ii. The EU-Sri Lanka Working Group meeting on Development Cooperation was held on 13th February 2019 in Brussels. Both sides deliberated on the potential areas of cooperation identified by the Sri Lankan side. The EU shared information on the main guiding principles and elements for the next Multi Year Financial Framework from 2021 onwards.

iii. The 4th meeting of the Working Group on Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights took place on 30th August 2019 in Colombo. Matters related to minorities and measures to address hate speech, as well as radicalization and violent extremism were discussed. Progress on implementation of the zero-tolerance of torture was reviewed.

iv. The EU-Sri Lanka Working Group Meeting on Trade and Economic Relations Cooperation was held on 24th October 2019 in Brussels. The meeting proposed Sri Lanka to consider joining negotiations in particular on e-commerce, services domestic regulation, Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and

the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA). The issue of Sri Lanka reaching upper-middle income status and the relevant provisions of GSP Plus was discussed and confirmed that if Sri Lanka sustained the current income level for three consecutive years it will lose the GSP beneficiary status by 01st January 2023. The delegation discussed about the long pending Cross Regional Cumulation joint application submitted by Sri Lanka and Indonesia and the ongoing EU-Trade related assistance project in Sri Lanka as well as Sri Lanka submitted five new projects for the EU's consideration.

v. The HoM met with the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator Mr. Gilles de Kerchove on 03rd July 2019 and issues related to EU-SL Counter Terrorism Dialogue. EU – Sri Lanka Dialogue on Counter Terrorism was held from 12th – 15th July 2019 in Colombo. The Ad-Hoc Dialogue covered counter terrorism measures in place, countering radicalization and violent extremism, security cooperation, capacity building and the listing of the LTTE by the EU.

vi. The HoM met with the EU CO Chair Mr. Dan Roteenberg, Actg. Head of the Migration and return policy division (DG HOME) and discussed the activation of the updated version of the RCMS.

vii. The 5th EU - Sri Lanka Joint Readmission Committee meeting was held on 11th March 2019 in Colombo. Several issues relating to using RCMS system were addressed and the EU pledged to support the returnees through programmes coordinated by the IOM.

viii. The Department of Immigration and Emigration of Sri Lanka, IOM/SL and the Embassy participated at the e-RCMS training workshop conducted by IOM, DG HOME and EURCAP from 16th -17th October 2019. New version of RCMS was released on 01.11.2019.

ix. The Embassy continued to closely engaging with the European Parliamentary committees such as International Trade Committee, Foreign Affairs Committee, Human Rights Committee and South Asia Delegation.

x. The Embassy also continued its regular interaction with the Political Advisers of the Political Groups and their Assistants of the EU Parliament Groups and Committees as a second level involvement to strengthen the HoM's initiatives and engagements.

EU Proscription of Terrorist Organizations

i. The HoM met with relevant officials of the Terrorism Sanctions Policy Division of the EEAS and briefed them on the activities on the LTTE and provided necessary updates consistently.

ii. The European Council extended the ban on the LTTE for a further period of 06 months by the Council Decision no. CFSP/2019/25 of 08th August 2019 published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

iii. The Embassy had a meeting with Mr. David Geer, Head of Terrorism Sanction Division of EEAS on 18th July 2019 and discussed the issue of continued proscription of LTTE in the EU.

iv. The HoM met with Mr. Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust on 09th October

2019 in The Hague, and discussed matters related to establishing contacts for strong cooperation with Eurojust.

v. The HoM met Mr. Pierre St. Hilaire, Special Rep. of INTERPOL to the EU on 15th July 2019 and discussed INTERPOL's contribution and involvement in Counter terrorism efforts in Sri Lanka.

vi. As proposed at the meeting with the EEAS Managing Director for Asia & Pacific, Mr. Gunnar Wiegand, the Ministry of Defence of Sri Lanka forwarded a draft note on Military to Military cooperation between EU and SL was forwarded for the consideration of the Security and Defence Policy Div./EEAS.

Economic Relations with the EU

i. The Embassy facilitated obtaining clarifications on issues affected Sri Lanka under the Registered Exporter System (REX) in consultation and negotiation with the DG Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD) of the European Commission.

ii. The Embassy continued to monitor and advise Sri Lankan authorities on Rapid Alert System (RASFF) Notifications and the Notifications on Plant Health Interceptions (EUROPHYT), issued by the European Commission on retention & rejection of export consignments from Sri Lanka due to non-compliance of EU Standards.

iii. The Embassy conducted an analysis on the Notifications and sent a comprehensive report to the National Plant Quarantine Service (NPQS), Department of Commerce (DoC) and EDB proposing necessary actions. A decline in RASFF Notifications observed from 29 (2018) to 15 (2019). However, EUROPHYT Notifications have increased from 29 (2018) to 49 (2019).

iv. The Embassy liaised and facilitated to organize two (2) sessions of Sustained Training Missions in Sri Lanka in August (19th -23rd) and in November (18th to 22nd) 2019, conducted by the EU - Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) under the Better Training For Safer Food Initiative (BTSF) to train NPQSL Officials on integrated pest management, monitoring control, import requirements, sampling, inspections and other relevant areas.

v. The HoM and Sri Lankan business representatives participated at the Annual Fair-Trade Breakfast meeting at the European Parliament which was held on 10th October 2019 during the Fair-Trade week of Belgium. The HoM addressed the meeting sharing views on developing fair trade industry in Sri Lanka and sought assistance of the EU to increase exports of Fair-Trade products to the European region.

vi. The Embassy conducted five conference calls among Fair Trade Advocacy Office, WFTO Asia, DoC, EDB, NAPP Sri Lanka, and Department of Export Agriculture. Text of the Framework of Cooperation (FOC) on Fair Trade and a project proposal on EU technical assistance to develop fair trade products industries in Sri Lanka were finalized during the conference calls. The FoC is being processed for approval of the cabinet of Ministers.

vii. The Sri Lankan delegation submitted a project proposal on EU technical assistance to the representatives from the Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the European Commission (DG DEVO) at the Working Group meeting on Trade and Economic Relations Cooperation held in Brussels on 24th October 2019.

viii. The Embassy analysed the GSP Plus utilization and prepared a list of products which have high margins of preferences according to the GSP regime and shared this information with EDB, DoC and BOI to create awareness among the relevant exporters for necessary action. GSP Plus utilization was increased from 58% to 63% in 2019.

European Parliament Friendship Group

i. The Chair of the Friends of Sri Lanka Group and Member of the European Parliament Geoffrey Van Orden and Member of the European Parliament William Dartmouth visited Sri Lanka from 3rd – 7th January 2019. During their 5 day stay, the Parliamentarians held consultations with representatives of the Government, Opposition, Political Parties as well as officials. These meetings facilitated a forum to discuss issues of common interest relating to EU – Sri Lanka co-operation in a number of fields from GSP+, regional issues, governance and the rule of law, civil society issues and human rights amongst others.

ii. The HoM met the Chair of the Friendship group (MEP) Mr. Geoffrey Van Orden in Strasbourg on 17th July 2019 and explored the opportunities of reviving the Friendship Group in EU Parliament with New MEPs.

iii. The HoM attended the lunch of the new Friends of Sri Lanka Group on 18th July 2019 and briefed the Group on current developments in Sri Lanka and urged the need for continued interactions with MEPs to promote interests of Sri Lanka within the EU. Matters related to strengthen the Group after the departure of the UK MEPs under Brexit including selection of a competent Chair to the Friends of Sri Lanka Group and enlisting new members were discussed.

Bilateral interactions with the EU Commission and other EU institutions

i. The Embassy continued to maintain regular interactions with relevant Divisions of the European External Action Service (EEAS), Directorate General DEVCO, Directorate General for Humanitarian Assistance (DG ECHO) and Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) of the European Commission on follow up action on the ongoing projects and issues and explore new opportunities under available programmes.

Cyprus

Bilateral relations:

i. The Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Cyprus was formally opened in Nicosia, Cyprus on 28th February 2019 by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka Hon. Tilak Marapana and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus, Hon. Nikos Christodoulides. During the official visit of former Foreign Minister to Cyprus from 25-28 February 2019, a series of discussions were held with the President, the Foreign Minister, the Minister of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance of Cyprus and the business community on further strengthening bilateral, political, cultural and economic cooperation between the two countries.

ii. The Consulate has been able to identify key areas of cooperation as well as issues faced by the Sri Lankan community and the way forward through close working relationships established with senior officials of the government authorities including the Mayor of Nicosia, the Mayor of Limassol, the head of Cyprus Police, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investment:

i. Maritime and tourism sectors have been identified as the key areas of cooperation in the economic and the investment fronts.

ii. Vice President of the Cyprus Union of Ship Owners, Mr. Christos Chrysanthou, undertook a business visit to Sri Lanka in April, and exchange of similar visits are planned in the coming year. Further, Sri Lanka was invited for the first time to the Maritime Cyprus 2019 International Conference held in Cyprus from 6-9 October 2019, a key international/regional biannual event hosted by the government of Cyprus.

iii. Promotion of Sri Lanka in Cyprus as a travel destination commenced during the year. Three leading travel agencies in Cyprus Top Kinisis, Xenos and Louis Travel, established cooperation with leading travel companies in Sri Lanka and the Cypriot companies commenced advertising Sri Lanka in their promotional catalogues/sites targeting outbound tourism in 2019 and 2020.

iv. Reports from three expert public relation companies on the promotion of Sri Lankan tourism in Cyprus have been obtained, and the best strategies/proposals will be implemented in cooperation with relevant public and private partners in Sri Lanka and Cyprus.

v. On the invitation of the Ministry of Finance of Cyprus, a four-member delegation led by the Commissioner General of Inland Revenue successfully concluded the second round of negotiations from 29-31 October in Nicosiaon the Agreement of Avoidance of Double Taxation between the two countries.

Cultural Cooperation:

i. Following the reorganisation of the Sri Lankan cultural associations and groups scattered all over Cyprus under one umbrella, several traditional cultural performances have been successfully held in the main cities of Cyprus with cooperation of the Municipalities, Cyprus Police and Non-Governmental organizations.
ii. Close cooperation established with Buddhist and Catholic Associations enabled organizing several religious and cultural events showcasing rich cultural heritage and tourist attractions in Sri Lanka.

Labour Welfare

i. According to local statistics, around 6500 Sri Lankans are currently employed in the domestic, labour and semi-skilled sectors in Cyprus. During the initial discussions between Hon. Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka and the Minister of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance of Cyprus in February 2019, both sides agreed to continue close consultation on the early finalization of the Bilateral Agreement between Sri Lanka and Cyprus in the Field of Employment of Sri Lankan Manpower in order to strengthen orderly and ethical recruitment of Sri Lankan employees. The difficulties faced by low paid migrant employees under the current Social Insurance Scheme have been brought to the attention of relevant authorities and further consultations in this regard will continue to be held.
ii. Employee grievance handling systems have been improved to mitigate difficulties faced by Sri Lankan employees effectively and efficiently. The timely distribution of all relevant information on the local rules/regulations, welfare benefits, health and safety tips, consular matters etc. through social media, information leaflets and 24/7 dedicated help lines have been able to improve the living/working conditions of the Sri Lankan migrant employees to a greater extent. Individual consultations for 35 main employment agents and their co-partners have been held with a view to educate them on the ethical recruitment, labour/welfare regulations and effective handling of employee grievances in close contact with the partner organizations in Cyprus and Sri Lanka.
iii. Under the close partnership established with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) several migrant employees, including severely ill and disabled, were repatriated.

Czech Republic

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria concurrently accredited to the Czech Republic:

i. Close interactions with high ranking officials of Czech authorities maintained to promote and safeguard political interests of Sri Lanka. Intervened in

matters relating to Sri Lankan nationals in Prague with the support of Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka.

Cultural Activities

i. Participation at the "Czechs for Sri Lanka", Benefit Concert to honour the victims of Easter Sunday Bomb Attacks Sri Lanka
ii. Participation at the Concert of Martinu Filharmonic Orchestra Zin and mazzosopranist Marcela Cukrova held in Prague on Saturday 01 June 2019.

France

Bilateral Relations

Conferences/Summits

i. Visit of a Sri Lankan Delegation to attend a meeting on the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in January 2019.
ii. The Delegation comprising of officials from the Ministries of Foreign Relations and Defence as well as SLEMB/Paris met with their counterparts in France during the side-lines of the meeting.

Bilateral Agreements/ Protocol

i. A Delegation of the Government of Sri Lanka comprising of officials of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Department of Immigration and SLEMB/Paris carried out negotiations with France on the Draft Implementing Protocol to the EU-SL Readmission Agreement in January 2019
ii. These negotiations are vital to combat human smuggling, abuse of asylum procedures, terrorism and trans – boundary organized crime.

Bilateral Meetings

i. Breakfast Meeting of the Sri Lanka-France Friendship Group (Members of the National Assembly of France and the Officers of the Sri Lanka Embassy in France headed by H.E B.K Athauda, Ambassador) was held on the 26th of June 2019 at the Petit Hotel of the National Assembly.
ii. Initiated work relating to the formation of the Sri Lanka - France Friendship Group in the Parliament of Sri Lanka

French Agency for Development (AFD)

i. Dialogue between the Agency for Development (AFD) and Attorney General's Department of Sri Lanka in Paris, March 2019.
ii. The Credit Agreement was finalised.

Multilateral Relations

UNESCO Executive Board

The Permanent Delegation of Sri Lanka represented GoSL as a member of the Executive Board at the 206th Session of the UNESCO Executive Board in April 2019.

i. Acting under the authority of the General Conference the Board examines the programme of work for the Organization and corresponding budget estimates submitted to it by the Director-General.
ii. Memory of the World Programme (MoW) at UNESCO
iii. The Permanent Delegation of Sri Lanka is working on inscribing the 'Thripitaka' in the MoW Programme as soon as UNESCO restarts the MoW Programme after its Comprehensive Review.
iv. The Permanent Delegation of Sri Lanka represented at the 40th UNESCO General Conference in November 2019.

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Intergovernmental Committee Meeting

i. Representation at the Bureau International of Exposition (BIE)

Georgia

Bilateral relation

i. Ambassador met H.E David Zalkaliani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on 27th May 2019 Georgia and discussed on increasing the number of Sri Lankan students, issues on illegal Sri Lankan immigrants.
ii. Ambassador during the credentials ceremony with the President of Georgia H.E Salome Zourbichvili discussed ways and means to expedite holding of pending political consultations and cooperation on trade and tourism between the two countries.
iii. Ambassador met Actg. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Khatuna Totiadzec, Head of Protocol, Ms. Thea Vasdze, Director General of Asia and Pacific, Mr. David Kereselidze and exchanged the view on pending political consultation to be held in Georgia, signing of already finalized Agreements and MoUs, expedite the pending Agreements and MoUs. Further Mission was able to resolved immigration issues pertaining to students studying in Georgia during the detailed discussing had with the officials of Ministry of Internal Affairs, Immigration Border Patrol Police and Justice House.

Education

1. Ambassador met Professor Zurab Vadachkoria, Rector of Tbilisi State Medical University and exchanged views on student welfare and difficulties faced due to long delays obtaining visas for students. Also discussed establishment of

mechanism to bolster cooperation between Sri Lankan and Georgian Universities.

Slovakia

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria concurrently accredited to Slovakia:

The Mission maintained close connection with the senior officials of the government and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia particularly with Asia and Pacific and Protocol Departments.

i. Meeting with HE Mrs. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic at the presentation of the letters of credence by the Ambassador on 17 December 2019
ii. Meeting with Ambassador Roman Buzek, Political Director General of Slovak Foreign Ministry on 16 December 2019.
Resumption of bilateral political consultations between two countries was discussed.
iii. Regular interaction with Mr. Tomas Kudlacak, Asia and Pacific Department and Alexandra Janeckova of Protocol Department on matters pertaining to Sri Lanka

Cultural Relations/Tourism

i. Represented Sri Lanka at the 46th International Agricultural and Food Exhibition AGROKOMLEX 2019 in Nitra, Slovakia. High-end Sri Lankan agricultural products were showcased and backward linkages with the market players were established.
ii. Meeting with Director of the Slovak Chamber of Commerce (food, agriculture & forestry) and Mr. Peter Gabalec, Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka in Bratislava on 17 December 2019.Realization of full potential of trade in the sectors of food and agriculture and the establishment of B2B and B2C contacts were discussed.
iii. Meeting with Director of the Slovak Chamber of Commerce (travel & tourism) on 17 December 2019. Investment opportunities in travel, leisure and tourism sectors in Sri Lanka and linking B2B and B2C were discussed.

Germany – Berlin, with concurrent accreditation to Switzerland, Croatia, North Macedonia and Montenegro

Bilateral Relations

The Mission initiated and facilitated several high-level visits with the view to strengthen Bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and the host country/accredited countries, including the following:

i. Visit of Hon. John Amaratunga, Minister of Tourism, and Christian Religious Affairs to Berlin to attend the International Tourismusbörse (ITB).
ii. Visit of Hon. Sagala Ratnayaka, Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister and Minister of Ports & Shipping and Southern Development to attend the 4th German-Asian Business Dialogue.
iii. Visit of the Parliamentary delegation headed by Hon. Kumara Welgama to Berlin on an invitation extended by the German-South Asia Parliamentary Friendship Group.
iv. Visit of Hon.Thalatha Athukorala, Minister of Justice and Prison Reforms to attend a guest programme on 'Women's rights, remembrance culture, reconciliation'.
v. Visit of Hon. Nalin Bandara, Deputy Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade to attend the Anuga 2019.
vi. Study tour by the Defence Services Command and Staff College of Sri Lanka.
vii. Visit of Mr. Steffen Bilger, German Deputy Minister and Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure to Sri Lanka to attend the Sri Lanka – German Logistical Conference held in Colombo on 29 August 2019.

Switzerland

Bilateral Relations

i. Coordinated the 2nd Foreign Office consultations with Switzerland held in Bern on 3 May 2019.
ii. Held meetings with several senior officials from the relevant Federal Ministries and other important organizations to strengthen bilateral relations between the host country and the accredited counties.
iii. Meeting with the State Secretary P. Baeriswyl, State Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland for discussions on the alleged incident relating to a Swiss Embassy staff member in Sri Lanka.Sought support of the Government of the host / accredited countries for issues that are of interest to Sri Lanka.
iv. Followed up on the Court case on the assassination of the former Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar with the Higher Regional Court of Stuttgart, Office of the Prosecutor General, Foreign Office and the Ministry of Justice.
v. Lobbied with the governments of the host/accredited countries to continue EU listing of the LTTE and its affiliated organizations. Monitored & countered the propaganda activities of pro-LTTE groups operating in the host country/accredited countries.
vi. Arranged meetings between the Parliamentary delegation of Sri Lanka and officials of important Federal Ministries/institutes.
vii. Conducted the Honorary Consuls meetings in Essen and Munich on 7 May and 29 November 2019 respectively with the participation of all Honorary Consuls

of Sri Lanka in Germany/Switzerland.

viii. Appointed a new Honorary Consul for Sri Lanka in Radolfazell, with the jurisdiction over the government districts of Freiburg and Tübingen.

ix. Initiated the process to appoint Honorary Consuls for Sri Lanka in Croatia, Macedonia and Montenegro.

x. Attended screening of three Sinhala fiction films in Berlin, organized by a German journalist and made intervention in connection with the comments /misrepresentation of facts which could create a racial connotation on the conflict in Sri Lanka.

Multilateral Relations

i. Lobbing with the host/ accredited countries to secure their support for Sri Lanka's candidature in numerous world/ international organizations or bodies.

ii. Channelled various requests from the host/ accredited countries seeking support for their candidature in numerous world/ international organizations or bodies.

iii. Coordinated Sri Lanka's participation and representation at the UN agencies and other multilateral bodies in the host / accredited countries.

iv. Represented Sri Lanka at a Roundtable on Tackling Global Plastic Pollution-Ways towards an International Convention, organized by the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany held in Berlin on 15 October 2019.

v. Facilitated Sri Lankan's participation in COP 25 of the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Madrid, Spain, in coordination with the Climate Change Secretariat in Bonn.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investment

- Participated at the Embassy Day of the 14th Asia Pacific Week and hosted a business seminar on Sri Lanka as a potential investment destination.
- Engaged in promotion of exports, potential trade and service sectors through participation in targeted trade fairs including Anuga 2019, organization of sector-specific promotional events, and organization of inward and outward delegations for business to business meetings.
- Facilitated and coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at the Transport Logistics Fair 2019 held in Munich from 4-7 June 2019.
- Coordinated and facilitated Sri Lanka's participation at Productronica 2019, one of the world's largest biannual Trade Fairs in the fields of electronics and electrical manufacturing with respect to the innovative solutions and products held in Munich from 12-15 November 2019.
- Facilitated and Coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at 'Gem World', gem and jewellery fair held in Munich from 25-27 October 2019.
- Participated at 'Medica 2019 Diplomats tour', during the 'Medica', world's largest medical trade fair held in Dusseldorf from 16-19 November 2019.

- Facilitated Sri Lankan companies participations at Green Week 2019, one of the world's largest food and agriculture fair in Berlin.
- Initiated a project to create a Digital Platform for Sri Lankan exporters which will be a meeting platform with potential importers and to promote their products.
- Organized tea promotional events at the 4th German-Asian Business Dialogue and 'Das Schloss', one of the most attracted shopping malls in Steglitz during the Christmas period.
- Ambassador / Diplomatic Officials are often attending meetings with the business communities in the regions and economic centers in Germany to promote economic and trade interaction, including the following;
    - Luncheon with Dr. Gerd Muller, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development
    - Meeting with Mr. Andreas Hergenröther, of the Association of the German Chambers of Commerce & Industry regarding avenues of further strengthening trade relations between Germany and Sri Lanka.
    - Meetings with chambers of commerce of Germany and other accredited countries.
    - Meeting with the representatives of the Sri Lankan Airlines in Germany.
    - Meeting with tour operators in Germany.
- Participated at the Ambassador's briefing on the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue.
- Facilitated the participation of Mr. Amesh Wijesekara, Sri Lankan Fashion Designer at Berlin Fashion Week 2019.
- Mission coordinated the participation of Sri Lanka in major tourism fairs in Germany and accredited countries including International Tourismusbörse (ITB) – International Travel Trade Show and CMT in Germany and FESPO in Zurich, Switzerland.
- Participated Taruk Tourism Road show held in Berlin on 7th October 2019.

Cultural Relations

- Mission celebrated Independence Day, with two separate events for the Diplomatic corps and Sri Lankan Diaspora, in Berlin on 6th and 4th February respectively.
- The Mission took the initiative in organizing and participating at National, cultural & religious events, including Sinhala & Tamil New Year, Vesak, Ramadan. Deepavali and Christmas with the participation of Sri Lankan community.
- Held a series of commemorative events in remembrance of those who were died in the Easter attack. Eg: Cadle light vigil, Prayer sessions, opening of condolence books etc
- Attended and facilitated Katina ceremonies in Sambodhi Buddhist Vihara and

das Buddhistische Haus, Frohnau on 19th and 20th September 2019 respectively.

- Negotiated with the Sri Lanka Associations in Berlin on logistical arrangements in bringing in the sacred Bo sapling of the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi placed in the Potsdam Botanical Garden to the Frohnau temple.
- Gifted two Buddha statues brought from Sri Lanka to the Cambodian Ambassador in Berlin.
- Initiated negotiations with German authorities for the establishment of a dedicated cultural centre for Sri Lankans living in Germany, in coordination with the Sri Lanka Associations in Berlin.

  The Mission, in coordination with Sri Lanka Association in Berlin participated at the annual *Karnevel der Kulturen* 2019 (Carnival of Cultures) held in Berlin.
- Hosted the Ladies' College and St-Thomas students who visited Berlin on a student exchange programme with Gymnasium Isernhagen.
- Upgraded the official website of the Embassy with more user-friendly features and converted the social media platforms to a more interactive mode of communication with respect to Mission activities.

Labour Welfare

i. Initiated fact finding on the employment opportunities for Sri Lankans in the hospitality sector.

Germany – Frankfurt

Bilateral Relation

- Consul General attended a meeting on the 30th of September, 2019 with Mr. Peter Feldmann, Mayor of Frankfurt am Main at the City Hall in Frankfurt to discuss closer cooperation between the city of Frankfurt and the City of Colombo.

Public Diplomacy

- Interactions with the Sri Lankan community were held once a quarter to discuss issues and obtain their views to improve the consular services of the Post.
- A database on Diaspora was introduced and updated.
- The Mission website and the social media platforms are used extensively to keep the public informed of the important developments in Sri Lanka.
- The 71st Anniversary of Sri Lanka's Independence was organized at the Mission with participation of Sri Lankans living in the six Federal States in Germany.
- 'Ape Lanka' Programme held on the 30th March, 2019 in the city of Frankfurt helped to engage in public outreach with the Sri Lankan expatriate

community in Germany in the promotion of reconciliation.

- The Consular Corps., and the State Government Officials of the State of Hessen including the Sri Lankan Expatriate Community attended the Memorial Service organized by the Mission in remembrance of the Easter Sunday terror attacks.

Cultural Diplomacy

- The Mission faciltitated the Vesak Day Celebrations were held on the 25th of May, 2019 at the 'Mahamevuna' Temple in Frankfurt.
- The Day of Poson was celebrated at the Mission on the 16th of June, 2019.
- Consul General participated at the VaraLakshmi Pooja held on 15th of August, 2019 at the Sri Nagapooshani Amman Sri Lankan Hindu Kovil in Frankfurt on the invitation of the President and Trustees of the Kovil.
- Consul General as Chief Guest addressed the devotees who attended the Deepavali Celebrations at the Shri Katpaga Vinayagar Hindu Kovil in Frankfurt on the 27th of October, 2019.
- The Mission participated in the traditional 'Christmas Tea' on the invitation of the International Women's Club of Frankfurt e.V. (IWC) on the 11th of December, 2019.

Trade and Investment

- Germany is Sri Lanka's 3rd most important export market. Germany's main imports from Sri Lanka are textiles, rubber and tea, and main exports to Sri Lanka are machinery, electrical goods, chemical products and motor vehicles. For years already, Germany has recorded a trade deficit with Sri Lanka.

The Consulate General participated in the following Trade Fairs in Germany:

- Sri Lanka participated at the Ambiente 2019 International Trade Fair (on Giftware, Tableware and Interior Decoration items), held from 8th to 12thFebruary, 2019 at the Frankfurt Messe, Fairgrounds, Frankfurt am Main. Over 4,815 exhibitors from 95 countries participated.
- The Bio-Fach Trade Fair in Nuremberg was held from 13thto 16thFebruary 2019.The Consulate General assisted the Export Development Board in organizing the Sri Lanka Pavilion.
- Sri Lanka participated at the Transport and Logistics Fair 2019 in Munich, 4thto 7th June, 2019. The Export Development Board of Sri Lanka (EDB), in coordination with the delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka (AHK Sri Lanka), Sri Lanka Embassy in Berlin and the Sri Lanka Consulate in Frankfurt, organized a pavilion at the Transport Logistics Fair 2019.
- The ANUGA Trade Fair held from 5thto the 9thof October 2019.

- Coordinated the visit of Sri Lankan rubber product exporters to K-Fair in Dusseldorf from 16th – 19thOctober, 2019.
- Sri Lanka participated at the 'Productronica 2019', the world's leading Trade Fair for Electronics Development and Production. It was held from 12th – 15th November 2019 at the Messe München, Fairgrounds, Munich, Germany.
- The German - Sri Lanka Business Council (GSLBC) turned a new chapter on 4thOctober, 2019 and launched its new website www.gslbc.com by the Ambassador, Consul General and the President of the Business Council.

Tourism

- Germany has traditionally been one of Sri Lanka's most important source markets for tourism. Recent years have seen marked increases in the number of German tourists: 150,000 in 2019.

The Consulate participated in the following Tourism Trade Fairs:

- The Sri Lanka Pavilion at the ITB Fair was inaugurated by Hon. John Amaratunga, Minister of Tourism Development, Wildlife and Christian Religious Affairs. Over 75 Sri Lankan Companies participated at the ITB Fair, the world's leading travel & tourism show. The Consulate assisted the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB) to organize and participate at the IMEX Global Trade Fair in May, 2019 in Frankfurt. It is an annual Fair for incentive travel, meetings and events.
  Sri Lanka Tourism & Tea Promotion Event was conducted from 16th to 20thOctober, 2019 at the Frankfurt International Book Fair.

Hungary

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria concurrently accredited to the Hungary:

- Visit of Hon. Tilak Marapana, P.C, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Hungary from 14 – 15 June 2019
  Facilitated the visit of Hon. Minister to Hungary and coordinated bilateral meetings with Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary and high ranking officials from 14 – 15 June 2019.
  Developing friendly relations and exploring potential areas of cooperation were discussed. Consensus reached to activate the MoU on Political Consultations and Cooperation singed (*in June 2012*) between the Ministries of Sri Lanka- Hungary by resuming consultations in early 2020.
- Coordinated Sri Lanka Air Force and Ministry of Defence efforts to repair and recovery of MI- 17 SH helicopter stationed with SL Peacekeeping Mission in Central African Republic (CAR) through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

Trade of Hungary (Hon. Foreign Minister holds an important position at the national procurement committee of Hungary).

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Visit of Hon. Tilak Marapana, P.C, Foreign Minister to Hungary

i. Consensus reached to signing the bilateral "Economic Cooperation" Agreement to realize the full trade and investment potential between two countries (US $ 58.8 million of credit line by the Hungarian EXIM Bank, will facilitate Hungary-Sri Lanka Economic and Trade Cooperation).
ii. Explored areas of future cooperation in the wellness tourism and Ayurveda sectors
iii. Participation at the First Session of the Hungary-Sri Lanka Joint Economic Committee from 23-24 April 2019 in Budapest
iv. Developing closer ties with the Hungarian business and facilitation of free flow of goods through customs of both countries
v. Obstacles for furthering trade between two countries were identified and will continue to be addressed at the second round of consultations

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Visit of Secretary of Finance and Mass Media to Austria from 11-12 February 2019

  Facilitated the visit of Secretary of Finance and Mass Media to Austria from 11-12 February 2019 and coordinated with UniCredit Bank Austria AG to sign the loan agreement of the project of supplying Fire fighting Vehicles/Equipment for the Colombo Municipal Council under the Austrian Soft Loan.

- Coordinated following meetings with the Austrian authorities to further strengthen bilateral economic relations with Austria;

i. Meeting with Mr. Florian Frauscher, Director General of Industry Location, Innovation & Internationalization Division of the Federal Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs of Austria on 01 August 2019. Enhancement of economic relations between two countries, opportunities for innovative Sri Lankan products in the Austrian market and future opportunities for Austrian investors in Sri Lanka were discussed during the meeting. Also, it was proposed to hold regular meetings of B2B and B2C in future.
ii. Meeting was held with Mr. Clemens Machal, Regional Manager Asia/Oceania of the Federal Economic Chamber of Austria at the Embassy premises on 12 December 2019. Opportunities for Sri Lankan high end products in Austrian market and investment opportunities for Austrian investors in newly launched

infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka were discussed during the meeting.

iii. Secured opportunity for Sri Lanka to participate at the "Asia thinking strategically 2020" investment promotion event scheduled for January 2020 at the Federal Chamber. Sri Lanka will be 1 of 12 countries participating the said event.

iv. Held meetings on a regular basis and constantly communicated with officials at the WKO and provincial chambers to secure trade opportunities for Sri Lanka.

- Introduced Sri Lankan Tea, Coconut and rubber products to the Austrian market
- Numerous meetings were held with the WKO and Austrian business community to introduce Sri Lankan high quality tea, coconut and rubber related products. Secured several opportunities for Sri Lankan tea companies in Austria.

Cultural Relations/Tourism

- Participated at the Ferien-Messe Wien International trade fair for holiday, travel and leisure held from 10-13 January 2019 in Vienna
- 6 Sri Lankan companies from the hospitality, travel and wellness industry sectors participated under the Sri Lanka Pavilion. A Presentation on Sri Lanka as a tourist destination titled "Sri Lanka Perle des Indieshen Ozeans" (Sri Lanka pearl of the Indian Ocean) was held at the Travel Cinema Fair.
- Attended the Pongal Celebration organized by the Vienna Tamil Sangam on 19th January 2019.
- Participation at the memorial services conducted by Franz Scharl, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General of Vienna held at the St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna on 27 April 2019 to pay respect to the victims of the Easter Sunday terror attacks in Sri Lanka.
- Organized a Vesak Programme in coordination with Sri Lankan Community in Austria.

  Organized an Art Competition from 11 and 12 May 2019 for Austro-Sri Lankan community.
- Participated at the Cultural evening organized by Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka in Gratz on the occasion of Sinhala and Tamil New Year 2019.
- Participated at the Christmas celebration organized by the Vienna Tamil Sangam and Sri Lankan catholic community in Vienna on 21 and 25 December 2019
- Participated at the UNWG Bazaar December 2019 - Charity event - Promoted Sri Lanka cuisine, Ceylon Tea and eco-friendly handicrafts

Italy

Bilateral Relations with Italy and Accredited countries (Greece, Malta, Albania and San Marino)

- The Mission has maintained cordial bilateral relations with the Government of Italy and accredited countries during the corresponding period. Italy as a major player within the EU, the Mission has been in constant dialogue with the Italian government about maintaining the LTTE on the EU list of terrorist organisations. Italy has always extended support to Sri Lanka as a member of the European Union; towards the lifting of the ban on fisheries exports from Sri Lanka to Europe in 2016 and the formal restoration of the GSP Plus regime to Sri Lanka in May 2017. Italy has also played a major role in formulating the EU position within the UNHRC.
- Hon. Tilak Marapana, former Foreign Minister visited Italy on official visits from 1st to 3rd March 2019 and 09-11 October 2019 respectively. Hon. Minister had meeting with Hon. Manlio Di Stefano, Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy.
- Sri Lanka Consulate General office in Nicosia, Cyprus was officially opened on 28th February 2019.
- The Italian Government has indicated its willingness in granting a Euro 20 million soft loan under Italian development cooperation for the agricultural sector in Sri Lanka. Discussions between the two sides together with relevant line Ministries in Colombo was held during the corresponding period.
- The Mission has followed up a number of bilateral and multilateral treaties, agreements and conventions to be signed and ratified between Sri Lanka and Italy, i.e. Bilateral Air Services Agreement with Italy, Protocol with Italy on Implementing the Readmission Agreement with EU, IFAD Host Country Agreement, MoU on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation, which had been signed in 2007 and yet to be ratified by Italy.

Milan

Consulate General of Sri Lanka – Milan

- The Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Milan was officially opened for the public on 01.02.2016 and has Consular jurisdiction over 07 regions in Northern Italy (Lombardy, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Piedmont, Trentino-Alto Adige, Valle d' Aosta and Veneto). As at present, the main responsibility of this Consulate is to provide consular services to the Sri Lankans residing in the above regions in Northern Italy.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

This Mission facilitated the following events related to foreign investments during the year 2019

- The BIT International Travel Exhibition was held from 10th to 12th February 2019 at Fieramilano city in Milan, Italy. The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) sponsored the Sri Lanka Pavilion.
- The Consulate actively collaborated and participated in the "Sri Lanka Tourism Road Show" and B2B meetings, which were held on 08.02.2019 at Hotel Michelangelo Milan and the Tourism Promotional event held in Milan on 12.02.2019 and this occasion was utilized to have a lengthy discussion with the Italian trading partners on further promotion of business relations between Sri Lanka and Italy.
- The Consulate participated in the Milano Food City event which was held from 3rd to 9th May 2019 at Palazzo Bovara in Milan.
- On 25.05.2019 the Mission participated at a public programme conducted for the Sri Lanka Day of the Milano Arch Week, which was held at the Museum of Modern Art, at Triennale di Milano.
- A Sri Lanka Pavilion was on display at the 22nd International Architecture and Design Exhibition under the theme "Broken Nature", which was held at the Museum of Modern Art at Triennale di Milano, , from 1st March 2019 to 1st September 2019.
- With the intension of exploring investment opportunities, on 27 July 2019 Consul General made an observation visit to a Wood Factory ("Tabu") in Como, who have shown an interest to open a plant in Sri Lanka.
- A meeting was held on 9th November 2019 at the Consulate premises with selected representatives of the Sri Lankan community to obtain their ideas about the programme "involvement of overseas Sri Lankans as development partners"

Cultural Relations

- The 71st Independence Day celebrations were held at the Consulate premises on 04.02.2018.
- A Vesak Dana was conducted at the Consulate General premises on 11.05.2019, with the participation of Mahasangha and the Chief Monks of almost all the temples in the regions which come under the jurisdiction of the Consulate General.
- The Consulate assisted in the participation of the Sri Lanka team in the US ACLI World Cup 2019 football event held in Milan, with the intension of promoting sports among the SL community.

On 15th December 2019 the Consulate, in collaboration with 'Milan Kithunu Sangha', conducted the annual Christmas celebrations.

Major outcomes of the efforts undertaken by the Consulate

- A visible improvement in the quality and time management of the consular services provided to general public, in the process of offering day to day services.
- Streamline and expedite timely Issuance of Passports, Emergency certificates, Birth, Death, and Marriage Certificates, Police Reports and CITs in consultation with relevant Sri Lankan authorities.
- Provide adequate and correct information and documents to Sri Lankans those who seek assistance on various consular matters.

Malta

- The Mission facilitated the official visit of Hon. Karu Jayasuriya, Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka to Malta from 9th to 12th January 2019.
- Embassy followed up on Agreement on Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement between Sri Lanka and Malta and MoU on bilateral consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Malta and Sri Lanka.

Holy See

- The Mission facilitated the visit of Hon. Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs Tilak Marapana on 2nd march 2019 t and met with Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations of the States of the Holy See. Further, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the General audience of His Holiness Pope Francis granted to pilgrims and visitors and had the opportunity to offer special greetings ("Baciamano")on behalf of the President of Sri Lanka.

Greece

- Mission has followed up on Bilateral Air Services Agreement to be signed between Sri Lanka and Greece.

Albania

- Mission followed up on Agreement on Mutual Abolition of Visa Requirements between Sri Lanka and Albania.

Multilateral Relations

Rome Based Agencies (RBA): FAO, WFP, ICCROM & IFAD

- The Mission represented and participated in more than 60 meetings, committees, Intergovernmental Groups, Conferences and Council meetings at the FAO, WFP, ICCROM and the IFAD. During the period, the IFAD's Sri Lanka Country Strategy and Programme was reviewed. The IFAD has

provided financial assistance for 18 projects since Sri Lanka became a member of IFAD in 1977, to the value of US 302 million benefiting more than 2.9 million people and 614000 households. The IFAD Governors Council for Sri Lanka was led by the Head of Mission and the PR to the Rome Based Agencies of the UN.

- FAO has provided technical assistance to the relevant agencies in Sri Lanka to address the outbreak of Army worm known as the "Sena Caterpillar" and continuously engaged in monitoring the situation to stop spreading of the insect. Several Sri Lankan delegations attended the technical meetings of the FAO, facilitated by the Mission. Sri Lanka is the second country to receive funds and technical assistance under FAO- China South South Cooperation Tripartite Agreement project, with the funding of China valued over USD 1.1 million to improve production and commercialization of priority fruit value chains Sri Lanka. The project envisaged to uplift the livelihoods of small farmers and boost national food security.
- The Mission also actively participated in sharing information and providing the necessary inputs to the WFP assistance programmes related to the financial and technical assistance provided for the nutritional school meal and rice fortification programs, assistance to projects to build resilience of communities against the impact of natural disasters and climate shocks. Sri Lanka (Ministry of Education) confirmed with the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany to serve as the Co-leader with Brazil to the World Coalition on the pilot project on provision of healthier school meal. The Mission is facilitating the initiative in cooperation with the WFP country Representative in Sri Lanka.
- 31st General Assembly of ICCROM was in held in Rome from 30th-31st October 2019 and the Mission officials together with 03 members delegation arrived from Sri Lanka attended the General Assembly.

Cultural and Public Diplomacy

- Following the initiative of the Mission to establish one Sri Lankan Association comprising representatives of all Associations in Rome, the Mission held a Joint Meeting with all representatives to discuss future cultural and community-based events on 23 January 2019.
- A Dharma discussion on Theravada Tripitaka to gain the recognition of a national/cultural heritage, a UNESCO World Heritage was held on 24th March 2019.
- The Mission jointly organised New Year/Christmas celebrations with Sri Lanka Association in Italy on 6 January 2019.
- A programme on 'Diplomacy Education' Programme, Adoption of Italian Class of High School students who will study about Sri Lanka was held at the Mission on 5th April 2019.
- A religious ceremony from the Buddhist and Christian faiths attended a special ceremony to commemorate Poson and in remembrance of the victims

of the 21st April Easter Sunday bombings at the Embassy on 29.06.2019.

- A special event to commemorate the victims of the 21st April Easter Sunday bombings was held at Via Cassia, La Storta Cathedral, in Rome on 28.05.2019. Further, another special service to commemorate the victims of the Easter Sunday attack was held at Lauranthina Church in Rome on 07.07.2019 with the participation of His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo. H.E.the Ambassador and the staff attended the events.
- ASIATICA Film Festival 2019–20th Edition was held in Rome from 01st to 10th October 2019. 'Asandhimitta' a Sri Lankan film was screened at the festival in the competitive section to represent Sri Lanka along with other 07 International movies. Mission officials coordinated and participated the festival.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Italy was Sri Lanka's 5th largest export trading partner (4.4% export share) in 2019 with a total export of goods accounting to USD 526 Million compared to USD 577.68 Million in 2018 showing a 7.6 % drop (USD 44 Mn) in exports. The top export items were apparel (80%), Rubber products (9 %), seafood (6%), precious/semi-precious stones (3.6%). Sri Lanka's imports from Italy in 2019 was USD 307 million, showing a 3.5% drop (USD 11 Mn.) compared to USD 318 Million in 2018. The major items imported from Italy were machinery, fabrics, plastic articles. The trade balance has always been in favour of Sri Lanka.
- The Mission has promoted six Sri Lankan trade fairs /conferences and 8 Italian trade fairs among the potential buyers/ exporters. Sri Lanka participated in 3 trade fairs in trade and tourism sectors with around 45 exhibitors. Facilitated the EDB to organize Sri Lankan pavilion at the Genoa Boat show in September 2019 and 03 exhibitors were participated and several B2B meetings were organized with the potential buyers, associations, trade chambers etc.
- During 2019, more than 35 trade inquiries were served, 72 tender documents were circulated and given wide publicity among the trade chambers. One market study report was prepared. Two outward delegations from Italy and five inward delegations from Sri Lanka were facilitated in addition to 4 individual buyer visits to Sri Lanka.

Tourism Promotion

- Despite the Easter attacks in April, a total of 1,913.702 tourists visited Sri Lanka at the end of 2019 of which 36, 147 were from Italy. In 2018, 2,333,796 tourists visited Sri Lanka while 38, 379 were from Italy. Compared to the 19.6 % decline in total arrivals in 2019, Italy has shown a fall in arrivals by 5.8%, mainly, due to the extensive promotion carried out by the

Sri Lanka Tourism in Italy. (Italy has also issued a travel advisory to its citizens on 29th April 2019 to avoid unnecessary trips to Sri Lanka which was revised on 29th May 2019 to exercise utmost caution during the visits).

- The Mission with the assistance from the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau organized 2 road shows in Milan and Bologna in 2019 and carried out mega outdoor consumer promotional campaign with 36 digital screens, inside the Metro and Subway stations in Milan.
- In addition, organized Sri Lanka's participation at two major international trade fairs namely BIT Milan and TTG Incontri in Rimini with the participation of more than 20 exhibitors/visitors in each event and several B2B meetings were arranged along with press conference which was attended by more than 40 media, travel and web bloggers. During the period FAM tours were arranged for 3 journalists and two travel advertisements were published in the Italian Travel magazines.

Investment Promotion

- It is the 17th largest Foreign Investor in Sri Lanka. In 2017, FDI inflows from Italy was Euro 9.1 million and the existing investor Omegaline, a major manufacturer of lingerie in Italy and a subsidiary of the Calzedonia group which has over 4,600 shops in 42 countries including in Europe, USA, Japan, China and Korea has invested Euro 7.5 million in 2017 and signed an Agreement with the BOI in October 2019 for further investments of USD 24 million to upgrade the existing factory in Sandalankawa. Major investments from Italy in Sri Lanka are in clothing, footwear, leisure, and jewellery sectors which includes Calzedonia Spa (garments), Diefegispa(footwear), HQL Italia (footwear), Calzeficio Sabino Srlla (men's socks), CocciaD'Oro (Jewellery) and several Italian restaurants and guest houses in the down south area.

Employment Promotion and Labour welfare

- The Mission assisted the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau in securing employment opportunities for Sri Lankans among the labour recruiting agencies in Italy as per the bilateral agreement signed between the two countries in 2011. The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of the Italian Government assisted the Mission in clearing the Sri Lankan workers who were trained in 2014 by uploading their details for immediate recruitment. However, due to lack of sponsorship the project has been halted and expected to be cleared by early 2020. The Mission follows up with the SLBFE in this regard.
- Two largest trade unions/NGOs have broadened their assistance to the Sri Lankan community in Italy, by providing free legal assistance and other social welfare. CGIL: The Italian General Confederation of Labour is a national trade union centre in Italy. ACLI: The Patronato ACLI is an organisation of private law which carries out a non-profit public service since 1945. Its structure has

been created by ACLI, the Christian Associations of Italian Workers.

Consular Mobile Services.

- The Embassy has conducted mobile consular services in remote regions in Italy as part of its outreach Sri Lankan community to streamline and expedite consular services of the Embassy to the community members. These mobile services were beneficial for the large number of Sri Lankans residing at remote regions in Italy. 04 Consular Mobile Services were conducted in Bari, Messina, Florence and Palermo in 2019 and served in person over 1500 Sri Lankans living those regions.

Luxembourg

Bilateral Relations with Luxembourg

i. The Embassy coordinated the logistical arrangement for the visit of Minister of Finance Hon. Mangala Samaraweera to attend at the AIIB meetings from 12th -13th July 2019 in Luxembourg.
ii. During the audience the Ambassador had with HRH the Grand Duke for presentation of credentials, reminded the request of Sri Lanka for concurrent accreditation of Luxembourg to Sri Lanka by accrediting the Luxembourg Embassy in Delhi to Colombo. Accordingly accreditation announcement was made on 31st October 2019.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

i. The Embassy interacted with Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce and shared information related to investment potentials in Sri Lanka for circulation among the membership.
ii. The Embassy actively facilitated B2B contact Exports from Sri Lanka to Luxembourg have increased to Euro 61,519 in 2019 from Euro 10, 753 in 2018 in particular exports of apparel, gem and jewellery have increased considerably.

Tourism Promotion in Luxembourg

- Tourist arrivals from Luxembourg show steady increase with 761 arrivals in 2019 compared to 616 in 2017.
- The Embassy as sponsored by the SLTPB, organized the Sri Lanka Pavilion at the 27th edition of the Vakanz Tourism Fair (Vakanz salon du Tourisme) was held from 18th - 20th January 2019 in Luxembourg. A large number of Luxembourgish visitors patronized the pavilion and expressed interest in visiting Sri Lanka.
- The Embassy launched a tourism promotion campaign with a "Visit Sri Lanka" evening reception at the Betrange Tennis Club in Luxembourg on 27th June 2019.

The event was organized in collaboration with travel and tour operators in Luxembourg and Turkish Airlines. It was attended by over 150 Luxembourgish citizens and received a good response and reception.

Norway

The Sri Lanka Embassy in Oslo, Norway is accredited to Finland and Iceland

Bilateral Relations

- The Mission facilitated the official visit of Ms. Khamshajini Gunaratnam the Deputy Mayor of the City of Oslo paid to Sri Lanka and met with President Maithripala Sirisena on 4/6/2019.
- Ms Marianne Hagen the State Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway has announced Norway's contribution of NOK 60 Million (Rs 1242) for mine clearance activities, during her meeting with the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka on 5/3/2019.
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Tilak Marapana visited Norway for a conference on Sexual and Gender based Violence from 23 - 26 May 2019. He held a bilateral meeting with his Norwegian counterpart.
  The Mission facilitated the visit of Hon. Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Development P. Harrison and the delegation from 17 to 20 April 2019 and had fruitful discussions with senior officials of the Ministry of Fisheries, Norway.
- The Mission facilitated the Sri Lanka delegation headed by the Secretary of Ministry of Mahaweli and Environment, Mr. Anura Dissanayake to Norway given Norway's involvement in providing expert evaluation on Uma Oya project.

Finland

- The Mission facilitate the official visit of Hon. Minister of Digital Infrastructure Ajith Perera to Finland on 24/2/2019.
- The Mission facilitate a delegation headed by Ms. Wasantha Perera, the Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine have paid an official visit to Finland from 23 - 29 June 2019.

Multilateral Relations

- Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Tilak Marapana, Ms. Dhammika Semasinghe, Acting Director General of Europe and Central Asia undertook an official visit to Norway to participate in the International Conference on Ending Sexual and Gender based Violence in Humanitarian Crises.
- Mrs. Bimba Tilllekeratne, PC and Senior Legal Advisor to the Hon Prime Minister and Mrs. Hasanthi Dissanayake, Director General of Ocean Affairs,

Environment and Climate Change, MFR have visited Oslo to participate "Our Ocean 2019" International Conference from 23rd to 24th October 2019.

- A delegation from Sri Lanka comprised Ambassador/Permanent Representative & Consul General of the Permanent Mission in Geneva, Mr. A L A Azeez has participated the Anti- Personnel Mine Ban Convention which has been held in Oslo from 25-29 November 2019.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The SLASSCOM (Sri Lanka Association of Software and Services Companies) and of Sri Lanka and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed their intent to further collaborate in developing the information and Communication Technology sector for sustainable employment generation in the future and to bring about innovation through knowledge transfer programs.
- SLASSCOM and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs entered into a two-year agreement to foster collaboration in the ICT industry.
- A delegation from SLASSCOM to Helsinki, Finland on 28th June 2019 was facilitated by the Mission.
- The Mission facilitated a trade delegation from the National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka led by Secretary General Mr. Shiham Marikar to Oslo from 13 to 16 June 2019. The delegation included owners from the IT, coconut, fruit, vegetables, spices, horticulture, poultry, livestock, and renewable coir sectors.
- Sri Lanka Government entered into an agreement with two energy companies in Norway and France to carry out a two-year oil and gas exploration exercise in the Eastern sea basin.
- The Mission facilitated a business delegation of 31 members of Young Sri Lankan Entrepreneurs to visit Helsinki from 7 to 9 September 2019.

Tourism

- The Embassy participated in the annual Tourism Travel Fair in Oslo from 11 to 13 January 2019.
- The Ambassador attended the International tourism/cultural Festival in Kristiansand.
- The Embassy participated at a meeting organized by Emirates Norway, to update travel companies of the measures taken by the Government of Sri Lanka to promote the tourist industry following the Easter Sunday attacks.
- The Embassy together with LOT Polish Airlines, celebrated the commencement of LOT's direct flight from Warsaw to Colombo in November 2019.
- The Embassy has held a meeting which coincided with the visit of Mr. Merril Fernando, a winner of the Business for Peace Award in Oslo in 2015. The event was attended by travel companies, travel writers, Ambassadors and representatives of Airlines.

Cultural Relations

- Ambassador and the staff of the Embassy have participated in the special puja held at the Hindu Kovil in Oslo to celebrate Thaipongal on 15/1/2019.
- 71st Independence Day of Sri Lanka was celebrated at the Embassy in Oslo on 4th February 2019.
- His Majesty King Harald V of Norway, Hon. Erna Solberg Prime Minister of Norway, the Bishop of Oslo among other Bishops, Reverends of all faiths, members of MFA Norway and Ambassadors have participated the service led by the Bishop of Oslo on 26th April 2019 to commemorate the victims of the Easter Sunday bomb attack in Sri Lanka.

Poland

Bilateral Relations

- Sri Lanka and Poland share a long-standing friendly relationship, marked by political contacts, economic and cultural engagement. Diplomatic relations were established in 1957, leading to the opening of the Sri Lanka Embassy in Warsaw in 1999.
- During the meeting following the presenting the Credentials by the new Ambassador on 9th January 2019, President Dudaassured his government's full support for the promotion of economic relations, tourism and education-related cooperation, political and cultural cooperation between Poland and Sri Lanka.

Visit of Hon. Maceij Lang, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland to Sri Lanka on 4-7 November 2019

- During the visit bilateral political consultations were convened.
- The Warsaw - Colombo thrice weekly air link by Polish LOT airlines was launched.
- Poland -Sri Lanka business forum organized by the National Chamber of Commerce of Poland (KIG) and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (*5 November 2019*).
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) and the Polish Chamber of Commerce (KIG) was signed.
- The Conference on 'Discovering Central Europe and the Asia-Pacific' was organized by the Universities of Colombo and Warsaw at the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the Colombo University (*6 November 2019*).

Signing of Memorandum of Understanding on political consultations

- During the consultations both Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing a mechanism of political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Sri Lanka and Poland. This MOU focused on prospects of development of bilateral relations in the future.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The Mission facilitated a Sri Lankan trade delegation to Poland on 25-26 April 2019 led by Mr. S.T. Kodikara, the Secretary of the Ministry of Strategic Development & International Trade and Chairperson of Export Development Board Mrs. Indira Malwatte.

  The visit helped to strengthen the trade relations between Sri Lanka and the region. Total bilateral trade with Central European countries was $810 million in 2019 with its total exports being $388 million and imports 422 million.

Business Forum and B2B Meetings in Warsaw

- The Embassy in Warsaw and the Polish Chamber of Commerce organized the Business Forums and B2B Meeting programme on 25 and 26 April in Warsaw.
- More than 40 Polish companies attended the Business Forum and more than 40 B2B meetings were conducted.

It was identified that the Central European market is more affordable and reachable market for Sri Lanka and the delegation was afforded with the opportunity to develop business sales leads, joint ventures, and distributorships in both countries.

Following Economic activities were also held

- Facilitated and provided assistance for SL Companies to participate at the Euro Gastro Exhibition 22 - 23 March 2019.
- Participated at the World Food and Drinks Trade Exhibition in April 2019 in association with Sri Lanka Tea Board.

Tourism promotion

- Tourism Consumer promotional events in May in Poland. The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau of Ministry of Tourism, in coordination with the Embassy conducted a mega tourism promotional event which consisted of comprehensive and informative presentations and workshops, proactive interaction between Sri Lankan and Polish tour/travel agents, Q&A sessions and raffle draws and cultural performances. The event was held by the Vistula River from 31st May until 2nd June and attracted 10,000 visitors over three days.

- Participated in the 27th International Travel Show. The Embassy in association with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotional Bureau participated in the 27th International Travel Show-TT Warsaw which was held from 21 to 23 November in the Palace of Culture and Science. Sri Lanka was represented by 15 leading tour companies.

Cultural Relations

- On January 15, 2019, the Embassy participated in the Annual Meeting of Students of the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw. Independence Day Celebration - The Embassy celebrated Sri Lanka's 71stIndependence on February with the participation of Diplomatic Community and Sri Lankan community at Polonia Palace Hotel. On 01st April 2019, the Embassy hosted at the Chancery a Group of 17 University Students of "Action Diplomacy project" organized by the Foreign Affairs Club of Warsaw University of School of Economics which is dedicated to furthering the knowledge of diplomacy, business and geopolitics among the brightest students of Polish Universities.
- The Embassy also celebrated the Vesak Festival in May along with the Sri Lankan community in Poland.
- The Embassy participated in the International Day of University of Social Science and Humanities.
- The Embassy participated in the "Clean up the World" Programme organized by "Our Earth Foundation" on 28th September 2019.
- The Embassy together with the Sri Lanka community in Poland celebrated the Deepavali festival at the Chancery on 26th October 2019.

Labor Welfare

- Coordinated and arranged repatriation of a Sri Lankan detainee from Poland under protocol of re-admission.
- Consular assistance was provided to the Sri Lankan community in Poland and Romania regarding the certification/attestation/authentication of their legal documents by the Polish & Romanian authorities.
- Forwarded Polish & Romanian job orders to the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment.

Romania

Bilateral Relations

Visit of Hon. Tilak Marapana to Romania on 8th - 10th September 2019

- Foreign Minister Hon. Tilak Marapane has reaffirmed the Government's commitment to advance and consolidate the Sri Lanka- Romania bilateral relationship, during his visit Romania.

- Hon. Tilak Marapane visited Romania from 08 -10 September 2019. He reaffirmed Sri Lanka's commitment to further advance and consolidate its longstanding bilateral ties with Romania when he met the Romanian Secretary of State for Bilateral Global Affairs Monica Gheorghita on 9th September.
- The talks reviewed bilateral interests in the political, economic, educational, cultural, security, regional and multilateral spheres. Romanian State Minister requested the GOSL to reciprocate their diplomatic gesture by opening a mission in Bucharest. Hon. Tilak Marapane stated that he will consider it positively.

Multilateral Relations

- Bilaterally and in the international fora, Romania and Sri Lanka have a sustained cooperation. The two states consult and cooperate within the UN framework, supporting each other's candidature, as well as in other international organizations.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Territorial coverage: 11

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

Number of Resident Missions: 01

Russia

Number of Concurrent Accreditations: 09

Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Uzbekistan from Moscow, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan from Tehran, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan from Islamabad and Ukraine from Ankara.

The Russian Federation

Russia and 04 accredited Countries (Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Uzbekistan)

Bilateral Relations

Meetings and Official Engagements of H. E. the Ambassador:

- During the period from January to December 2019, former Ambassador Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka conducted the following meetings in bilateral format or in the framework of major multilateral events (international conferences, meetings of high level officials of Russian and other Governments), as well as a number of academic lectures outreaching to larger audiences at several Universities, Russia's highest Military Academy, and policy research institutions. These meetings, speeches and participation in events contributed to the promotion of Sri Lanka as major regional player in South Asia and in global frameworks, underscoring the potential Sri Lanka possesses for developing bilateral relations with Russia, with Greater Eurasia countries, and in regional structures (such as SAARS) and in interaction with ASEAN. In the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka, the focus of bilateral interaction of former Ambassador Jayatilleka had a major shift to bilateral cooperation in security, military and military technical cooperation with key Russian Government stakeholders in this sphere. Academic outreach was also focused greatly on regional policy and global security studies.

Meetings list:

- Meetings with Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs (4),
- Directors of Geographical and Functional Departments (10),
- MFA Spokesperson/Director of Information & Press Dept (1);
- other senior diplomats under Director level (3);
- former Minister of Foreign Affairs (1);
- former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (1);
- former Ambassadors to Sri Lanka (3)

In total, 23 meetings.

Meetings with senior officials OGD and Parliament:

- Hon. Senator - Chairman of Federation Council (upper chamber of the Parliament) Committee for International Affairs (1);
- Hon. Senator – Deputy Chair of the Federation Council Committee for International Affairs (1);
- Hon. Senator – First Deputy Chair, Federation Council Committee on Economic Policy (1);
- Hon. Senator – Chair of Federation Council Commission on Information Policy and Interaction with Media (1);
- Hon. MP - Chair, Duma Cttee for Education & Science; President, POLITY Foundation (1);
- Hon. MP - Member of State Duma (lower chamber of Parliament) Committee for International Affairs (1);
- 1st Deputy Minister of Defence – Chief of General Staff (1),
- Deputy Minister of Defence in charge of International Cooperation (several meetings in various formats throughout the year); Commander in Chief of Russian Land Forces (1);

- Director of Federal Service for Military Technical Cooperation (1);
- Deputy Secretary, Russian Security Council under the President of RF (1);
- former Prime Minister of Russia (1);
- former Director of Foreign Intelligence Service (1)

In total, 12 meetings.

- Meetings with senior political party members (2)
- State media / Russia Today Editor-in-Chief (1)

In total, 3 meetings.

- Meetings with Directors of political and macroeconomic research think tanks: in total, 28 meetings.
- Lectures delivered at higher academic (universities) and prominent research institutions in International Affairs, Military Strategy, Regional Studies, as well as speeches in high level international conferences – in total, 15 lectures / speeches.
- Bilateral meetings with other Ambassadors – in total, 33 meetings.
- Articles published in Russian media – in total, 6 major articles (not including short media interviews / comments).

GRAND TOTAL: 114 meetings + 6 major articles.

Bilateral Visits:

- The Embassy arranged number of Ministerial visits with the coordination of the Russian Authorities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the relevant line Ministries in Sri Lanka in 2019 and facilitated for protocol, logistical and other arrangements. Information is as follows;
- The Embassy facilitated for a Ministerial Sri Lankan delegation, headed by Hon. Niroshan Perera, State Minister of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, Northern Province Development and Youth Affairs, who participated in the Third BRICS and SCO Student Spring International Festival and Education Forum, which took take place in Stavropol city from 04 to 09 June 2019. Four members of the journalist group took part in the II Forum of Young Journalists from BRICS and SCO countries. One Sri Lankan representative participated in the XXVIII International Beauty and Talent Contest "Queen of Students – 2019", and one contested in the International Music Competition "Universality". Five-member dancing group entertained the audience with their traditional Sri Lankan performance at the International Creative Project "Art Hall" and during the closing ceremony. All participants from Sri Lanka were awarded with Diplomas.
- The Embassy arranged a visit of the Parliamentary delegation for the participation in the II International forum "Development of Parliamentary" held on 01 - 02 July, 2019 in Moscow, Russia. Accordingly, the Sri Lankan parliamentary delegation, headed by Hon. Arjuna Ranatunga, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation and comprising Hon. Nimal Siripala de Silva, MP, and Mr. Dhammika Dassanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament

participated in the event. The forum was also attended by Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachchi, MP, Hon. Namal Rajapaksa, MP, Hon. Kanchana Wijesekara, MP and Hon. Kanchana Jayaratna, Chairman of Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council.

- As a result of the discussions held between the Mission and the officials of the Education Ministry in Russian Federation in order to enhance the bilateral cooperation between two countries an invitation was sent by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation to the Minister of Education of Sri Lanka. On behalf of the Minister of Education of Sri Lanka Dr. D.M. Jayantha Balasooriya, Director of Education (Policy & Planning) of the Ministry of Education participated at the Ministerial Summit on WorldSkills 2019 Kazan in Republic of Tatarstan, Russia on 22 - 24 August 2019. Officials of the Embassy coordinated with the Russian Authorities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the organizers of the "WorldSkills Conference 2019" in order to make the necessary protocol, logistical and other arrangements.
- Hon. Justice B.P. Aluwihare, P.C. Judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka visited Russia in order to participate at the International Conference on Compulsory Execution «Enforcement: the Current State and Development Vectors» which was held in Moscow, Russia from July 31 – August 03, 2019. Officials of the Embassy coordinated with the Russian Authorities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, organizers of the event and other relevant authorities and made the necessary protocol, logistical and other arrangements.
- A delegation of National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka headed by Secretary, Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the a delegation of Sri Lanka Consumer Cooperative Societies Federation headed by Secretary, Ministry of Cultural & Arts Affairs & Information Technology of the North Western Province visited Moscow, Russia in order to participate at the "International Cooperative Council Forum" which was held from 19-22 September 2019 in Moscow, Russia. Officials of the Embassy coordinated with the Russian Authorities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the organizers of the "International Cooperative Council Forum - 2019" in order to make the necessary protocol, logistical and other arrangements.
- On September 25th President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin addressed the Congress of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (XXIII INCOSAI), held in Moscow for the first time in the history of the Organization. The event was attended by more than 600 delegates, representing 168 audit institutions from all over the world, who gathered to exchange opinions on the value of information technology for the development of public administration and the role of the Supreme Audit Institutions in the achievement of national priorities and goals. Sri Lanka was represented at the XXIII INCOSAI at the highest level by Auditor General of Sri Lanka, Mr. W. P. C. Wickramaratne and Deputy Auditor General, Mr. P. L. K. Perera. Necessary Protocol assistance for the Sri Lankan delegation was given by the officials of the Embassy.

Extension of service of Hony. Consuls:

Kursk - On 29 August 2019 made necessary arrangements for the extension of the service of Mr.MohomedChahin as Hony. Consul of Sri Lanka in Kursk, Russian Federation for a further period of two years.

Armenia - On 12 September 2019. Made necessary arrangements to send the request for the extension of the service of Mr.SergisTarverdyan as Hony. Consul of Sri Lanka in Armenia, for a further period of two years.

Education Affairs

- Embassy communicated with the Ministries of the Government of the Russian Federation regarding the possibility of further cooperation to develop bilateral relations between our two countries.
- Specifically, the Mission met with the officials of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation to discuss the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Research of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Science, Technology, and Innovation.
- As a result of the Mission's coordination with the relevant Russian authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation informed of the readiness of the Russian Side to consider the matter of allocating additional scholarships for the training of Sri Lankan students within the unclaimed quota of the plan for admission of foreign nationals.
- Embassy officials met with officials of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation to discuss the opportunities of further expansion of cooperation in the tertiary/vocational education sectors between the two countries.
- Furthermore, the Mission requested information from the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Healthcare, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Sports etc. regarding future Forums / Events in the relevant fields, which can help develop cooperation between the two countries. Some information on such events that Sri Lanka can also participate in, provided by the Russian side, was shared with the Sri Lankan authorities.
- On April 10-13, 2019, Embassy officials participated at the Moscow International Education Fair (MIEF), the largest event in the field of education, the global forum and the largest exhibition of new educational technologies in Russia.
- Held a meeting between the Officials of the Embassy and Head of the Department of International Cooperation of the South Ural State University of Russian Federation and discussed the possibilities of enhancing the education cooperation with the SUSU.
- The Embassy officials participated at the graduation ceremony of foreign students in the Moscow Automobile and Road Construction State Technical University (MADI).

Cultural Relations

- On April 16, the Embassy of Sri Lanka in the Russian Federation celebrated the Sinhala and Tamil New Year that was observed by Sri Lankan people all over the world on April 14.
  On 18 May, 2019 the Embassy of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in the Russian Federation celebrated Vesak with the participation of Embassy officials and representatives of the Sri Lankan student community in Moscow.
- Embassy assisted and participated in the following cultural events which were organized by the university students in order to showcase Sri Lankan culture.
- On April 13, 2019 Sri Lankan students organized the "Sri Lankan Night 2019" at the Kursk State Medical University (KSMU).
- On 16 April 2019, The National Research Moscow State Construction University (NIU MGSU) hosted the "Day of Nationalities at NIU MGSU".
- Sri Lankan Cultural Day at House of Friendship which was held in 08 August 2019.
- Participated at the 59th Birthday celebration at People's Friendship University (RUDN) which was celebrated in the Kremlin Palace. Sri Lankan students also performed in the event.
- Sri Lankan Cultural Week at the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia with the support and guidance of the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Moscow, in commemoration of the 71st anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence.
  Made arrangements of the cultural event of the International Army Games 2019 which was held in Moscow in order to showcase the Sri Lankan culture and the cuisine.
- Made arrangements to showcase the Sri Lankan cuisine in the Winter Bazaar which was organized by the International Women's Club (IWC) in Moscow on 30 November 2019.

Defence Relations

- Main Highlights of Defence section with respect to Bilateral Military Cooperation between Russia and SL in 2019.
- There were 10 delegations from SL to Russia who participated in various events and conferences as well as on official visits to promote military relations
- There were 10 delegations from Russia who participated in various conferences and exercises in SL as well as on official visits to promote military relations
- 35 SL military personnel underwent training in the Russian Federation in 2019
- 20 SL Army personnel including the Deputy Chief of Staff of the SL Army took

part in the International Military Army Games held in the Russian Federations.

- 09 SL Army personnel including the Deputy Chief of Staff of the SL Army took part in the International Military Army Games held in the Belarus.
- There were over 32 official meetings held between the Counsellor (Defence) as well as other embassy officials and other SL Delegations (during the visit of delegations to Russia) during this time.
- There were over twenty (20) advertising materials with respect to military equipment which would be of interest to the SL Military were forwarded to the SL MoD.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investment

Bilateral Economic Relations

- Interacted with the Federal Agency for Tourism in Russia on requesting the removal of travel advisory published about Sri Lanka.
- Negotiated with the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance on removal of the fumigation process which was imposed after the "kapra betel" issue for the plant and plant quarantine products imports to the Russian Federation.
- Interacted with the Ministry of Economic Development on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between Sri Lanka and Russia which was signed during the H.E. the President's visit to Russia on 2017.

Organizing Sri Lankan participation in Trade Fairs

- Five tea trading companies namely; Unitrades (Pvt) Ltd, A.F. Jones Exporters Ceylon (Private) Limited, Ceylon Fresh Tea (Pvt.) Ltd., U.H.E. Exports (Pvt) Ltd, Ceylon Tea Land (Pvt) Ltd along with Sri Lanka Tea Board have participated at the PRODEXPO 2019 exhibition which was held from 11 to 15 February 2019.

  With the assistance of SLTB, the TPU of the Embassy of Sri Lanka participated at the Coffee & Tea Russian EXPO 2019 which was held from 13 to 15 March 2019.
- The TPU of Embassy of Sri Lanka, with the assistance of the Sri Lanka Tea Board, organized the Sri Lanka Tea Board stall at the Coffee Tea Chocolate Festival 2019 which was held from 24 to 25 August 2019 at Park Sokolniki in Moscow. During the event, a master class on "Ceylon Tea – Pure Enchantment in a Cup" was conducted by Ms. Anastasia Kovalenko, Tea Promotion Assistant of TPU Moscow in the seminar room of the fair for the visitors.
- During the Cultural event which was organized in parallel to the Army Games from 3 to 17 August 2019, Sri Lanka culture, products and tourism. Sri Lankan products, cultural items were showcased and tourism and tea

information brochures were disseminated and serve tea at the Sri Lanka stall.

- Along with the SLTB, five Sri Lankan Tea companies have participated at the World Food Moscow 2019 which was held from 24 to 27 September 2019 in Moscow.
- For the first time, Sri Lanka Tea Board has participated with two other Sri Lankan Tea companies at the Peterfood 2019, St. Petersburg from 19 to 21 November 2019.
- On November 30, 2019 Sri Lanka Embassy participated at the Winter Bazaar – a charity fundraising event, organized by the International Women's Club of Moscow. The Sri Lanka Embassy organized two stalls – one with traditional souvenirs, Ayurveda cosmetics, and Ceylon tea, and another with traditional Sri Lankan food items.

Sri Lanka's Participation at other events

- Press conference has been organized with the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the Russian Federation; Secretary, Ministry of Plantation Industries; Chairman, Sri Lanka Tea Board; Director General, Sri Lanka Tea Board; Consultant (Promotion), Sri Lanka Tea Board; Director (Promotion), Sri Lanka Tea Board and Chairman, Colombo Tea Traders Association for the launch of the Global Campaign of Ceylon Tea on 25 September 2019 in Moscow. There were 45 media houses representations during the discussion.
- A Gala evening of the Ceylon Tea Global Campaign was organized for celebrate the launch of the Global Campaign of Ceylon Tea on 25 September 2019 with the presence of the high level officials of Sri Lanka and Russia as well as tea traders of Sri Lanka and Russia.
- Mr. M.A. Thajudeen, Additional Secretary (SME & Textile Development), Industry and Commerce participated at the 5th Forum on Small Business of the SCO and BRICS Countries from 26 to 27 September 2019 in Ufa, Russia and the arrangements have been made to his participation through the Embassy of Sri Lanka.
- On 11 October, Hon. P. Harrison, Minister of Agriculture, Rural Economic Affairs, Irrigation and Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development pay courtesy call on his counterpart, Hon. Minister of Agriculture in the Russian Federation and also met with the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Trade in the Russian Federation. Further Hon. Minister visited the 21stRussian Agricultural Exhibition "Golden Autumn-2019" will be held from 9 to 12 October 2019 on the territory of the VDNH on 12thOctober and met with the Russian fertilizer and pesticide companies.
- Tea Tasting Sessions were organized in Lenta Supermarkets in Moscow and St. Petersburg to make aware about the Ceylon Tea Brands available in the hypermarket as well as to make aware about the lion logo to the general public.
- Under the Economic Diplomacy Program of the Ministry of Foreign Relations,

the Embassy of Sri Lanka in the Russian Federation in collaboration with the SLEDB, along with the Federal Customs Service and the Federal Service for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Surveillance of the Russian Federation organized a Webinar session on 10 December 2019.The primary objective of this event is to raise awareness among Sri Lankan exporters on Customs Procedures, Rules and Regulations in the Sector of Plant and Plant Origin Products and Fishery Products Imports to the Russian Federation.

Tourism Promotion Events

- Parallel to Sri Lankan Cultural Week, which was organized by the students of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN) at the premises the university made a presentation on the subject, "Tourist potential of Sri Lanka: Prospects for development" in Russian language by Mr. Ranjana Senasinghe, to the postgraduate student of the RUDN Hotel Business and Tourism Institute. The presentation was based on the information provided by the Embassy in coordination with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.
- The Sri Lankan tourism and travel sector was represented by 13 companies with Mrs. Madubhani Perera, Marketing Director of the SLTPB, and Ms. Sasika Jayaweera, Assistant Marking Director of the SLTPB participated at the MITT Exhibition which was held from 12 to 14 March 2019.
- On March 15 and 18, 2019 Sri Lankan Tourism Promotion Bureau organized the road show in Moscow and St. Petersburg with the assistance of the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Russia, to promote Sri Lanka as a top tourist destination in the Russian market. A promotional presentation was conducted by an official of the SLTPB and Several B2B meetings were held in the sidelines of this event.
- Same structure was followed in St. Petersburg Road show on 18 March 2019 with the participation of 15 Sri Lankan companies and around 30 Russian tour operators and agencies.

  The embassy organized and assisted the Sri Lanka's participation at the OTDHK Leisure exhibition 2019 which has been held from 10-12 September 2019 with the leadership of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.
- 23rdGeneral Assembly of UNWTO Make the logistical arrangements to the visiting Ministerial delegation to St. Petersburg from 11 to 14 September 2019 Investment Promotion
- On March 20, 2019, with the invitation of Ms. Valentina Makeeva, Chief executive officer of the Con Pro LLC, the organizer of the Seminar "The Investment attractiveness of Sri Lanka," the trade section of this Mission, made a substantive presentation of the country and its investment opportunities in different spheres. There were 6 Russian investors in this discussion and also who are interested in invest in Sri Lanka.

Sweden

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Sweden concurrently accredited to Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia,

Bilateral Relations

1. H.E. the Ambassador visited the following countries of concurrent accreditation to present the Letters of Credence and met the Heads of States together with high level dignitaries. During the discussions, Ambassador exchanged views on matters of bilateral importance and updated the Sri Lanka Foreign Policy developments. During these meetings, Ambassador proposed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Political Consultations with all the countries accredited to this mission.
    i. Republic of Estonia - May 2019 - Her Excellency Mrs. Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Republic of Estonia, Mr. Lauri Kuusing, Foreign Policy Adviser to the President, Secretary-General of MFA Mr. Rainer Saks, Undersecretary for Political Affairs Mr. Paul Teesalu, and Ms. Ingrid Amer, Director of Division for Asia Division.
    ii. Republic of Lithuania – May 2019 - Her Excellency Ms. Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Neris Germanas and Ms. Diana Mickevičienė, Director of Asia Department.
    iii. Republic of Latvia – September 2019 –His Excellency Egils Levits, President of the Republic of Latvia, Ms Dagmãra Beitnere Le-Galla, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Mr. Andris Pelšs, State Secretary of the MFA Latvia.
    iv. Kingdom of Denmark – October 2019 - Her Majesty the Queen Margrethe II, State Secretary for Foreign Policy, Mr. Jesper Møller and Mr. Thomas Lehmann, Head of Asia Division

2. H.E. the Ambassador made representations with the following high level dignitaries to maintain cordial relationship and obtain necessary assistance for development projects in Sri Lanka.
    i. Ms Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs Kingdom of Sweden
    ii. Mr. Johan Molander, Ambassador, Grand Master of Ceremonies of Royal Court
    iii. H.E. Carl-Fredrik Graf, The Governor of Östergötland County
    iv. H.E. Björn O. Nilsson, The Governor, Norrbotten County
    v. Hon. Mayor Nordström, Norrbotten Region
    vi. Hon Mayor Lars Vikinge, Linkoping City Council
    vii. Ambassador Ms Fredrika Ornbrand, Coordinator of Counter Terrorism Unit, MFA/Sweden
    viii. Discussed with Hon Åsa Coerands (MP) regarding the establishment of Sri Lanka – Sweden Parliamentary Friendship Group

ix. H.E. the Ambassador and the Diplomatic Officials has made approximately 15 representations with Diplomatic and other organizations in Sweden and countries accredited to the Mission.

x. Ambassador met following Ambassadors and Diplomatic representatives based in Stockholm to promote Sri Lanka among the Diplomatic Community in Stockholm.

xi. Egypt, Australia, Latvia, South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Algeria, Czech Republic, India, Switzerland, Italy, Israel, Ukraine, Cyprus, Croatia, China, Malaysia, Estonia, Greece and Lithuania, Russia

3. The Embassy facilitated participation of two Navy officials for a training program conducted at the World Maritime University in Malmo. The Embassy informed Sri Lanka about 8 training programs extended by Swedish Army in 2019.
4. The Embassy facilitated to arrange higher education opportunities for Sri Lankan University Academics through UGC with Swedish Agriculture University in Uppsala.
5. Discussions has initiated with Stockholm University to arrange joint academic and professional programs for senior public sector officials who are dealing with e-Governance project management.
6. The Embassy arranged to initiate Sri Lankan Academic and Professional Forum in Sweden together with most of Sri Lankan origin Academic and Professional community.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

Events (Trade and Investment)

- The Embassy organized a trade and investment promotional event on 3rd March in partnership with the Norbotten Chamber of Commerce in Lulea, Sweden. Swedish companies in IT sector, apparel sourcing and food products participated at the event.
- A Business Breakfast Seminar was organized by the Embassy at the Muktell Science Park in Eskilstuna on 30th April with the participation of the company representatives of the Science Park. The event followed with a meeting with the Business Sweden representative in Eskilstuna.
- Business Breakfast Seminar was organized at the Embassy in partnership with the Sweden Sri Lanka Business Council on 28th May to promote IT sector of Sri Lanka. Approximately 15 Swedish entrepreneurs were present at the event.
- A business matchmaking event on IT sector organized by the International Trade Centre was held in Stockholm on 21st May. 7 Sri Lankan IT companies participated for a total of 84 business matchmaking meetings. H.E. the Ambassador gave an address at the event.

- A delegation of 5 Sri Lankan exporters lead by the National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka visited Sweden on 11th June. The Embassy organized a business matchmaking event by inviting the relevant Swedish companies.
- A B2B trade event was organized by the Embassy on 19th September to present the processed food products of four (4) Sri Lankan export companies. The event was attended by interested Swedish companies.
- The Embassy, in partnership with Sri Lanka Association of Software and Service Companies (SLASSCOM) organized business networking events in Stockholm and Linköping, Sweden for the visiting Sri Lankan IT companies on the 1st and 2nd October.

Events (Tourism)

i. A Sri Lanka evening was organized at the Embassy on 08th February for the Swedish tour operators and travel writers to provide information about Sri Lanka tourism.
ii. The embassy, in partnership with SLTPB organized Sri Lanka participation at the Tourest, Estonia on 08-10 February, Tallin, Estonia. 6 Sri Lankan DMCs exhibited at the Fair.
iii. The embassy, in partnership with SLTPB organized Sri Lanka participation at the Danish Travel Show on 22-24 February, Herning, Denmark. 7 Sri Lankan DMCs exhibited at the Fair.
iv. The Embassy participated at the inauguration of the TUI charter flight from Lulea to Sri Lanka on 1st March. The event was attended by the Mayor of Luleä.
v. Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion B2B event was held on 13th March in partnership with Emirates, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Sweden Chapter and with the participation of Swedish and Sri Lankan travel companies to promote Sri Lanka tourism.
vi. The Embassy of Sri Lanka together with the Sri Lankan restaurant "Taste of Sri Lanka" promoted Sri Lanka tourism and Sri Lankan cuisines at the Malmö Festival on 09-10 August.
vii. The Embassy of Sri Lanka organized 'An Evening with Swedish Friends of Sri Lanka', which was held on 29th of August. The purpose of the event was to renew and strengthen the ties between Sweden and Sri Lanka and to develop a network for promoting business interests including ICT, clean tech and Sri Lankan exports.
viii. The Embassy in partnership with Emirates and Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Sweden Chapter organized an interactive session on Sri Lanka tourism for the Swedish travel companies and travel writers on 04th September at the Embassy. The purpose of the event was to update the Swedish travel industry representatives about the

security situation in Sri Lanka and the importance of promoting Sri Lanka as an attractive travel destination for Swedish travelers.

ix. The Embassy, in partnership with the LOT Polish Airlines organized an interactive session on Sri Lanka tourism for the Swedish travel companies and travel writers on 22nd October at the Embassy. The purpose of the event was to promote Sri Lanka tourism as well as to introduce the LOT Polish Airlines which inaugurated direct flights to Sri Lanka from Warsaw on 3rd November for the winter season.

x. The embassy, in partnership with SLTPB organized Sri Lanka participation at the PATA Worldwide Workshop on 30-31 October in Denmark. The event was attended by a large number of Danish travel companies.

xi. Sri Lanka stand was organized at Travel News Market, Sweden on 7th November with the participation of Five (5) Sri Lankan DMCs. This is the only B2B travel fair held annually in Sweden.

xii. The Embassy, in partnership with LOT Polish Airlines organized an interactive session on Sri Lanka tourism for the Danish travel companies and travel writers on 14th November at the Asia House, Denmark.

Meetings (Lists attached at Annex III)

- Number of meetings (Trade and Investment) - 28
- Number of Meetings (Tourism) - 30

Cultural Relations

1. 71st National Independence Day in Sri Lanka was celebrated by the Embassy on 04th February for Sri Lankan Communities in Stockholm with other races and religions.
2. The Embassy celebrated 71st Independence Day of Sri Lanka at the Embassy premises with the participation of more than 120 Diplomats and business contacts in Sweden.
3. Multi Religious blessings were arranged together with Sri Lankan Community in Sweden to commemorate victims of Easter Sunday attack in Sri Lanka.
4. The Embassy staff hosted an Alms Giving for persons who observed 'Sil' at the Stockholm Buddhist Vihara to celebrate the Wesak festival in May 2019.
5. The Embassy staff hosted Deepavali Festival at the Ganesh Temple of Stockholm in October 2019.

Serbia

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria concurrently accredited to the Serbia:

Extended assistance for Sri Lankan students and migrant workers stranded at the Serbian reception centres in coordination with IOM Serbia and Serbian Foreign Ministry.

to the Mission facilitated the visit of Hon. Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe and Mr. Dhammika Dasanayake, Secretary-General of Parliament, Sri Lanka delegation to the 141st Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) from 11 to 19 October 2019.

Facilitated Sri Lanka delegation to the 141st Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) held in Belgrade from 11 to 19 October 2019 and organized meetings with Hon Speaker of Parliament of Serbia and high ranking officials of Serbian government with the support of Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka in Belgrade.

Slovenia

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria concurrently accredited to the Slovenia:

- Meeting with Mr. Dejan Židan, the President of the National Assembly of Slovenia on 13 November 2019

  Furthering friendly relations, enhancing relations between parliament delegations and other matters of mutual interest were discussed.

Regular interaction with high level officials of the Slovenian government

- Meeting with Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Food
- Promotion of high quality Sri Lankan products in Slovenian market, increasing trade volume of agricultural products and knowledge sharing on bee's honey, olive oil and wine production were discussed.
- Meeting with the State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development & Technology.
- Promotion of bilateral trade volume and creating opportunities for B2B and B2C were discussed. The meeting paved the way to secure a visit of the Slovenian Minister of Economic Development and Trade along with a business delegation to Sri Lanka in 2020.

Labor Welfare

Repatriation

- Facilitated the repatriation of two Sri Lankans stranded in Kmjuca Refugee Camp in Belgrade, Serbia to Colombo on 15 January 2019.

Switzerland

As the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka accredited to the UN Office in Geneva and to other international organizations based in Switzerland, the primary responsibility of this Mission lies in the area of multilateral relations spanning across the disciplines of development, human rights, humanitarian affairs, migration, science and technology, peace, security, and disarmament affairs.

The Mission also serves as the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Geneva exercising consular jurisdiction over 13 cantonal divisions[1], delegated to this Post from Sri Lanka Embassy in Berlin-Germany, while the rest of 13 cantons comes under the purview of the Sri Lanka Honorary Consul in Zurich. This enables the Mission to provide consular support for about 1500 persons every year.

Human Rights

Human Rights Council

HRC40

Hon. MFA visited Geneva from 18 - 24 March 2019 in connection with the presentation of the Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Sri Lanka, as mandated by Human Rights Council Resolution 34/1. The rest of the delegation consisted of Hon. Dr. Sarath Amunugama, MP, Hon. Dr. Suren Raghavan, Governor of the Northern Province, Mr. Ravinatha Aryasinha, Foreign Secretary and Mr. A. Nerin Pulle, Deputy Solicitor General.

Hon. MFA delivered the GoSL statement under Agenda Item 2 following the presentation of the Report of the OHCHR on Sri Lanka, by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, H.E. Michelle Bachelet, on Wednesday, 20 March 2019 under Agenda Item 2 of 40 HRC. The draft resolution *'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka' (*A/HRC/40/L.1), to which Sri Lanka signed up as co-sponsor, was adopted without a vote on 21 March 2019. Hon. M/FA made the GoSL statement at the adoption of the resolution.

The Mission made logistical arrangements for the participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the delegation at the 40 Session of the UNHRC.

During Hon. MFA's visit to Geneva for the 40 HRC, the Mission facilitated bilateral meetings for Hon. MFA and the Sri Lanka delegation with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Under- Secretary General in charge of the UN Office in Geneva Mr. Michael Moller. A meeting was also arranged for the Hon. Governor of the Northern Province with representatives of the ICRC head office in Geneva.

On 21 March, Heads and deputy heads of UN and other International Organizations based in Geneva, Ambassadors to the Human Rights Council and other representatives had an opportunity to meet Hon. M/FA and other members of his delegation at a dinner
meeting organized by the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva at a venue provided courtesy the World Intellectual Property Organization.

The Permanent Mission prepared and delivered the Statement of Sri Lanka as the 'Country Concerned':

- at the Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert (IE) on on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, following the presentation of the report by the IE on his visit to Sri Lanka in September 2018; and
- at the individual Interactive Dialogue with the The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, following the presentation of the report by her predecessor on his visit to Sri Lanka in July 2017.

As the Chair of the Social Forum 2018, H.E. A.L.A. Azeez, PRUN/Geneva presented to HRC40 the report of the Social Forum for 2018. Sri Lanka made an intervention during the general debate following the presentation of the Report.

HRC41

Addressing concerns expressed by the High Commissioner in her oral update as well as by other States in their interventions during the General Debate under Agenda Item 2 of HRC41, regarding developments in Sri Lanka following the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks, the Mission made an intervention clarifying/responding to the concerns raised in the above statements.

HRC42

Responding to a statement on Sri Lanka made by the UK on behalf of the core group (the UK, Germany, Canada, North Macedonia and Montenegro) during General Debate under Agenda Item 2, the Mission delivered a statement on behalf of the GoSL during the General Debate under Item 2.

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance presented a follow-up report on the visits to Peru and Sri Lanka on 11 September 2019. Sri Lanka made an intervention during the Clustered ID following the presentation of the report by the Working Group.

In addition to the above, at the 3 HRC Sessions held during the period under review, HRC 40 in March, HRC 41 in June and HRC 42 in September, and Sri Lanka engaged with the Council as outlined below;

- Interventions made: 6 interventions at HRC 40, 7 interventions at HRC 41, and 9 interventions at HRC 42, including interventions at the adoption of the UPR Outcomes of China and Malaysia (HRC 40), Afghanistan, Cyprus, New Zealand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam (HRC 41) and Norway, Portugal, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Ethiopia and Qatar (HRC 42)
- The above includes GoSL statements made under Item 7 on 'Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories' during all three HRC sessions in 2019.
- Sri Lanka references: References made to Sri Lanka by the High Commissioner, panelists, States and NGos were reported to the Ministry on a daily basis.
- Resolutions: GoSL supported 04 thematic resolutions and the resolution on "Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka" at HRC 40, 13 thematic resolutions at HRC 41, and 10 thematic resolutions at HRC 42, following comprehensive observations and recommendations made by the Mission on resolutions presented at each session.
- Thematic joint statements: Sri Lanka supported 04 joint statements proposed by different groups of countries during HRC 41, and 02 joint statements during HRC42.

Mission also covered and reported on 03 NGO side events hosted by Diaspora and other civil society groups during the HRC 40, 01 during HRC 41, and 05 in HRC 42.

Treaty bodies

Mission provided inputs/ suggestions and participated actively during the following treaty body reviews of Sri Lanka held during this year;

- Consideration of Sri Lanka's initial report under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, briefed the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the 21c May 2019. Mission officials participated in the oral review, preparation of the subsequent written responses and all coordination matters related to the review.

Visits by Special Procedure mandate holders and Treaty Bodies

During the period under consideration, the Mission coordinated with the Ministry and the relevant Secretariats on the following requests for Country visits:

- The Sub-Committee on Prevention of Torture from 02-12 April 2019
- Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association from 18-26 July 2019
- Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief from 15-24 August 2019

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

- The Mission engaged with the UPR of other countries, held in Geneva by delivering interventions for 05 countries (Afghanistan, Cyprus, New Zealand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam), during the 32nd Session of the Working Group of UPR, 06 countries (Brunei Darussalam, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Norway, Portugal and Qatar), during the 33rd Session, and 06 countries (Egypt, Fiji, Iran, Iraq, Italy and Kazakhstan), during the 34th Session of the UPR 3rd cycle held in January 2019, May 2019, and November 2019 respectively.

Humanitarian Affairs

The Mission participated in the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent from 9 - 12 December 2019 under the theme "Act today, shape tomorrow" and delivered a statement which reiterated Sri Lanka's commitment to IHL and appreciated the work of the ICRC and the IFRC.

The Mission maintains regular contact and coordination with the UNISDR Office in Geneva and participated in the regular meetings held in Geneva on the outcome document of Sendai Framework for Action 2015-2030, and discussions on the 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the UNISDR Support Group meetings.

Mission participated at the UNHCR Executive Committee Meeting on 7 October 2019 to review the work of the Standing Committee of the preceding year and to establish its programme of work for the next year.

Mission also participated at the UNHCR Pledging Conference in December 2019 for the announcement of voluntary contributions to the UNHCR Programme for the next year and made a contribution of US $ 15,000 for the 2019 UNHCR Global Appeal in continued appreciation of the role and contribution of UNHCR.

i. Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)
Mission participated in the Global Compact on Refugees, the main objectives of which are to ease the pressure on host countries, enhance refugee self reliance, expand access to third country solutions and support the conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

ii. Global Refugee Forum

PRUN delivered a statement at the Global Refugee Forum, hosted by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees which was held from 16 - 18 December 2019, focusing on the importance and relevance of the GRF which provides the opportunity for countries to take stock of the present refugee situation and strengthen international response, focusing on arrangements for responsibility and burden sharing, education, jobs and livelihood, energy and infrastructure and protection capacity. Regular meetings have enabled the sharing of information and improvement of coordination and communication which proved to be particularly useful in the aftermath of the tragic events of Easter Sunday in April 2019.

Migration

In view of the significant contribution by labour migrants to Sri Lanka's economy, and the need to ensure that they enjoy the development benefits of migration, the Mission has continuously maintained a proactive role on migration related issues. The Mission has also maintained close relations with IOM and benefited from technical assistance from IOM.

The Mission attended the 25th Session of the IOM Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance held from 31 October - 1 November 2019.

The Mission has been following discussions pertaining to the selection and appointment of a second Deputy Director General (on operational matters and on administration) to strengthen the top management of the IOM, as well as meetings of the Working Group established by Resolution 1383 adopted on 29 November 2019 during the 110th session of the IOM Council, with the mandate to formulate recommendations on the IOM DG's proposal for Constitutional amendments required for the selecting and appointing of an additional Deputy Director General.

i. Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD)

- Mission made preparations for the Twelfth GFMD Summit to be held in Quito, Ecuador from 19 - 22 November 2019. However, due to political unrest in Ecuador, the Summit was postponed to 20 - 24 January 2020. The GFMD Dialogue on implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) was held during the GFMD Summit.

Colombo Process

- The Mission actively participated in the Colombo Process 13th Ambassadorial Level Meeting on 1 February 2019 and the 14th Ambassadorial Level Meeting on 30 September 2019, under the Chairmanship of Nepal.
- PRUN expressed support for the continued engagement of the Colombo Process in the Global Compact for Migration, particularly emphasizing that it was important to take elements from the GCM into the CP so

that the enriched, globally endorsed perspectives on labour migration could feed into the Colombo Process and strengthen it further. Similarly, the CP should both contribute towards and benefit from the International Migration Review Forum. The Colombo Process engagement in Global Frameworks related to migration and the next Senior Officials' Meeting.

Regional Consultative Processes (IDM/GRCP)

- Mission participated in the International Dialogue on Migration session from 16 - 17 October 2019 on the theme "Unlocking the potential of youth to respond to the new challenges and opportunities of migration". PRUN made an intervention at the Panel discussion on "Boosting young people's potential for development through diaspora engagement"

Bilateral consultations in the area of migration;

- The Mission has been liaising with Swiss Development Cooperation and met the representatives of the SDC/Bern and Colombo offices in Geneva and held bilateral consultations.

Intellectual Property

Significant benefits continued to accrue through the implementation of the GoSL-WIPO 10 Point Action Plan, negotiated by the Mission with WIPO ahead of the November 2013 visit of Dr. Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO to Sri Lanka. Throughout year 2019, the Mission actively engaged with the stakeholders to arrange meetings and ensure coordination between the stakeholders for effective implementation of the 10 Point Action Plan.

- The Mission was instrumental in securing funding for the participation of Sri Lankan experts in the WIPO meetings including 39 Session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) in March 2019 and 41 Session of the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT) in April 2019.
- In addition, through proactive engagement with the Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific of the WIPO Secretariat and the Asia and the Pacific Regional Group of Member States of the WIPO, the Mission secured funding for Sri Lankan participants at the 14 Session of the Advisory Committee on Enforcement in September 2019 and the second WIPO Intellectual Property Judges Forum in November 2019 in Geneva.
- Ambassador A.L.A. Azeez led the Sri Lanka delegation to the 59th series of WIPO General Assemblies from 30 September 2019 and delivered the General Statement on behalf of Sri Lanka on the same day.
- At the 24th Session of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property, from 18 – 22 November 2019, WIPO Secretariat presented the

Evaluation Report of the Project on Intellectual Property, Tourism and Culture. Dr. Sampath Punchihewa of Sri Lanka presented the Summary of the Study on Intellectual Property in Tourism and Culture in Sri Lanka. The Mission made necessary arrangements and made appropriate interventions following the presentations.

- Following a request from the Sri Lanka Export Development Board, the Mission officially made a request to WIPO on 18 March 2019 for an extension of the IP and Tourism project through financial and technical assistance of WIPO for the proposal on Branding of Wellness Tourism Sector through an Effective Certification Mark System for Competitive Advantage in response to WIPO's offer of the extension of the IP and Tourism Project.
- The Mission met relevant officials and continued to follow up on Sri Lanka's initiative to accede to the Madrid Protocol.

Science and Technology

The Mission coordinated and organized the participation of the Minister of Science, Technology and Research Hon. Sujeewa Senasinghe in the 22nd Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) held from 13 to 17 May 2019 in Geneva. During the Session, Hon. Minister addressed the High-Level Roundtable on "The Impact of Rapid Technological Change on Sustainable Development". During the visit, Hon. Minister also met with the Director, Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD Ms. Sirimanne.

The Mission continued to engage closely with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) to further enhance bilateral cooperation following the signing of an Expression of Interest (EoI) Agreement on 25 June 2015 and the International Cooperation Agreement (ICA) on 8 February 2017.

- The Mission making use of the presence of the Minister of Science, Technology and Research organized a visit to CERN and its experimental facilities. During the visit to CERN, the Hon. Minister held a bilateral meeting with the Director for International Relation of CERN, Ms. Charlotte Warakaulle which provided an excellent opportunity for discussing further collaboration with CERN. It was agreed that the ongoing Sri Lanka-CERN cooperation could be further enhanced by involving other technical universities including in the engineering and information technology fields in the coming years.
- Sri Lanka hosted the second South Asian High Energy Physics Instrumentation Workshop (SAHEPI) from 20-21 February 2019. The Mission has closely coordinated and assisted the Organizing Committee in Sri Lanka (Ministry of Science, Technology and Research, University of Colombo and University of Ruhuna) and the CERN in the lead up to the Workshop.

- As a result of the close engagement which has been developed over the years, Sri Lanka received for the 4th consecutive year, the opportunity for 4 undergraduate students specializing in physics in universities of Jaffna, Colombo, Ruhuna and Sri Jayawardenapura to participate in the prestigious "Summer Student Programme" in 2019.
- The Permanent Mission participated at the CERN's debriefing on South Asian DPL Community on CERN's second South Asian High Energy Physics Instrumentation Workshop on Detector Technology and Applications (SAHEPI-2) on 13 September 2019. The debriefing was participated by CERN officials, Permanent Representatives and Diplomatic Officials of South Asian countries in Geneva. During the debriefing Ms. Charlotte Warakaulle, Director for International Relations briefed the delegations in Geneva regarding the successful SAHEPI-2 held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from February 20 and 21 February 2019 and thanked the Sri Lankan Government and the various parties who were involved in convening the event.

Health

While technical cooperation matters with the WHO are dealt directly through the WHO country and regional offices, the Permanent Mission is also regularly engaged in the programmes at the headquarters level, primarily on discussion related to the setting of global health policies, and also to provide visibility to Sri Lanka's success in the health sector. Among some of our recent such engagements are,

- Being an Executive Board Member of the WHO, the Mission facilitated two visits of the Minister of Health and the delegation from the Ministry of Health for the 144th and 145th EB Meetings held in Geneva from 24 January- 1 February 2019 and 29-30 May 2019 respectively. Sri Lanka continued as one of the three vice-chairs of the EB representing SEAR for a term of 1 year elected in May 2018.
- The Mission facilitated the visit of the Minister of Health and the delegation of the Ministry of Health for the 72nd session of the World Health Assembly (WHA 72) from 20-28 May 2019 in Geneva and Commonwealth Health Ministers' meeting on 19 May 2019 and 12th NAM Health Ministers' meeting on 21 May 2019.
- Sri Lanka co-organised side event titled "Patient Safety and Quality of Care in the face of emergencies and extreme adversity: A prerequisite to achieve Universal Health Coverage" with the Governments of Qatar and the UK on 21 May 2019 on the sidelines of the WHA 72 in Geneva, which was graced by Dr. Tedros, Director General of the WHO.
- Sri Lanka co-organised a side event titled "Experiences on addressing NCDs risk factors and determinants" with the Governments of Uruguay, Finland and Russia on 20 May 2019 on the side-lines of the WHA 72 in Geneva, which was graced by Dr. Tedros, Director Genral of the WHO.
- A High-level Meeting of Health on Universal Health Coverage was held in New York during the General Assembly in September 2019. The Mission

conveyed the outcome of the briefings held in Geneva with respect to this meeting.

- The Mission facilitated the visits of experts to Geneva for the meetings with regard to the Second Phase of the High-level Commission on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) for which H.E. the President has served as one of the co-chairs.
- Continuing that Co-Presidency of High Level Commission on non-communicable diseases, Sri Lanka has been charged with the Co-Chairmanship of Working Group II titled 'Making the Global Push for Universal Health Coverage' (UHC) in 2019 as part of the second phase of the work of the Commission. A publication has been issued by the WHO at the end of the second phase of the Commission.

Labour

- The 108th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) was held from 10-21 June 2019. The Mission facilitated the visit of the Minister of Labour and Trade Union Relations, Hon. Minister Ravindra Samaraweera and the Sri Lanka delegation for the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva. The Mission coordinated the Programme of the Hon. Minister, and also facilitated in preparing the interventions in coordination with the officials of the Ministry of Labour and the Department of Labour at the following events which were held parallel to the ILC :
    - National Statement delivered by the Hon. Minister of Labour on 17th June 2019
    - Meeting of the NAM Labour Ministers held on 17th June 2019.
- The Mission also facilitated in arranging a bilateral meeting for Hon. Minister of Labour with the Mr. Almahdi W.A. Goodino, Minister of Labour and Capacity Building of Libya on the sidelines of the ILC.
- The Mission also facilitated Secretary/Labour to meet with Ms. Tomoko Nishimoto Assistant Director General and Regional Director Asia and Pacific of the ILO to discuss on further strengthening bilateral cooperation with the ILO.
- The meeting between Mr. A. Wimalaweera, Commissioner General of Labour and Mr. B. Vasanthan, Snr. Asst. Secretary with Ms. Veronique Basso, Legal Specialist, Int. Labour Standards Department (NORMES) and Mr. Horacio Guido, Director of the Application of Standards with regard to the representation made by the Flight Attendants Union (FAU) under article 24 of the Constitution of the ILO, alleging non-observance by Sri Lanka of the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) and the Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95) was also coordinated by the Mission.
- Sri Lanka ratified the Protocol 29 (P29) of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention on 10 April 2019.

Telecommunications/ICT

- In addition to the regular coordination maintained with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Geneva and the national focal points i.e., Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) and the Ministry of Digital Infrastructure & Information Technology, the Mission also engaged with the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2019 held from 08-12 April 2019.

Disarmament

- The highlight of the year was Presidency of Sri Lanka in the 9th Meeting of States Parties (MSP) to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) which concluded its deliberations in Geneva on 4 September 2019. The MSP, chaired by the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, marked the culmination of a year-long process of oversight and review of the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and of guidance and advocacy for the universalization of the Convention and its norms, and the prohibition of use, production, stockpile and transfer of cluster munitions. Sri Lanka's election to the Presidency of the 9th MSP had been facilitated by the wide recognition among the international community, of its strengthened commitment to humanitarian disarmament, as manifested by its accession to the CCM and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in 2017 and 2018 respectively. During Sri Lanka's Presidency, a number of progressive measures were taken to advance the key objectives of the Convention. Sri Lanka's engagement with states parties and non-state parties contributed towards building consensus on several critical issues in the area of humanitarian disarmament. States parties and observer states, in their national statements, appreciated Sri Lanka's leadership to the convention processes immediately following its accession to the Convention in 2018, recalling Sri Lanka's long-held tradition of steering disarmament processes in the multilateral fora.
- Throughout the year the Mission actively participated in the deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in its plenary meetings as well as informal consultations on different Programmes of Work and Draft Decisions proposed by different presidencies. The Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka addressed a panel discussion at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, where the need for making determined efforts towards achieving concrete progress in nuclear disarmament through the preservation of existing disarmament architecture; and substantive negotiation and finalization of instruments on CD's agenda items, through fast-tracking the adoption of a Programme of Work was stressed. Sri Lanka also addressed the High Level Segment of the Conference to highlight the importance of building on the momentum achieved by the CD in 2018 commencing from Sri Lanka's Presidency.

- PRUN and the Mission provided input and recommendations for Sri Lanka's engagement at the UNGA First Committee in New York.
- Represented Sri Lanka in the Group of 21 (The NAM Member States of the Conference on Disarmament).
- The Mission facilitated the timely submission of Sri Lanka's transparency reports under the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The Mission also liaised with the Ministry regarding compliance with reporting requirements under other disarmament conventions that Sri Lanka is party to.
- PRUN/Geneva assumed Chairmanship of the 2020 States Parties' Meeting of the Biological Weapons Convention on 6 December 2019.
- Facilitated the participation of the GoSL delegation in the International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and Experts (held from 5 to 8 February 2019) and the Inter-sessional meeting of the APMBC (held from 22 to 24 May 2019).
- PRUN led the Sri Lanka delegation to the APMBC Review Conference which was held in Oslo from 25 to 29 November 2019.
- The Mission organised a side event titled 'Towards a mine-free Sri Lanka in 2020: Challenges and Prospects for Partnerships' on the sidelines of the Intersessional Meeting of the APMBC held from 22 to 24 May 2019. At the event, experts in mine action, humanitarian disarmament and human rights appreciated the remarkable progress achieved by Sri Lanka in mine clearance, mine risk education and victim assistance. The event drew representatives of international organisations, implementing partners and the donor community, in addition to several mine action experts, academics and diplomats.
- PRUN delivered a statement at the Meeting of High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons held from 13-15 November 2019. Sri Lanka also participated in the Meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) held from 25 to 29 March 2019.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

- The Mission coordinated and organized a meeting on 17 June 2019, between the Sri Lankan delegation including Mr. Chinthaka Lokuhetti, Secretary of Ministry of Science, Technology and Research and Mr. Angel Gonzalez Sanz, Chief, Science, Technology and ICT Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics at United Nations Conference on Trade Development (UNCTAD) regarding the proposed Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review in Sri Lanka by UNCTAD.

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

The Mission played an active role in negotiating and facilitating a first training program on Effective leadership and Negotiation in Multilateral Diplomacy" conducted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The module on Negotiation Skills was held from 27 - 28 November 2019 and the module on Leadership Skills was held from 29 - 30 November 2019. Thirty members of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service participated in the training programme which comprised of simulation exercises on multilateral diplomacy focussing on leadership and negotiation.

Mission also engaged in discussions to work towards finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNITAR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, to enhance cooperation, training opportunities, skills development study visits and training for Government officials.

The visit to Geneva of Mrs Pamela Deen, Director General of the Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute, in this regard, was also facilitated by the Mission.

Environment and Climate Change

As the Geneva focal point, the Mission facilitated coordination among the relevant GoSL authorities and Environment and Disaster Risk Management (DRR)-related organizations based in Geneva including UNEP, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), Partnership for Green Economy (PAGE) and Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), to discuss on ways to enable Sri Lanka to benefit from the capacity building, technical assistance and training opportunities.

- The Mission facilitated the coordination of the focal points of Basel, Stockholm, Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions at the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment with the Secretariat of the aforementioned Conventions, on Sri Lanka's compliance with these instruments.
- The Mission participated the Fourteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-14), the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP- 9) and the Ninth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC-COP- 9) which were held back to back from 29th April to 10th May 2019, in Geneva facilitating the participation of Ms. S.L.D.K. Wijayasinghe, Director, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment.
- The Mission facilitated the visit of Hon. Sandith Samarasinghe, Member of the Parliament and the delegation in order to participate the Eighteenth

Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CITES – COP-18) which was held in Geneva from 17-28th August 2019.

- Mission participated in the Third Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury held from 25 - 29 November 2019 and facilitated the participation of Ms. S.L.D.K. Wijayasinghe, Director, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment.

Counter Terrorism, Strategic and Security Policy

The Mission has maintained contact and engaged with the Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP). GCSP has continued to offer scholarships for Sri Lankan participants.

The Mission facilitated the visit of Dr Khalid Koser, Executive Director of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) to Sri Lanka from 27 - 30 August 2019. Dr Koser met with the Hon Tilak Marapona, Minister of Foreign Affairs on 29 August 2019. The possibility of obtaining GCERF expertise in preventing violent extremism (PVE) was discussed with relevant stakeholders during the visit.

The Mission also engaged with the GCERF and facilitated the process of Sri Lanka obtaining approval as a partner country of the GCERF. PR and Ms Mahesha Jayawardena, Acting Deputy Director, International Security and Counter Terrorism of the Ministry particpated in the Governing Board Meeting of the GCERF on 21 November 2019.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

The Mission facilitated the participation of Dr. Harsha De Silva, Minister of Economic Reforms and Public Distribution at an expert consultation in the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Geneva in September 2019 to help develop indicators for democratic parliaments.

Candidatures

Mission engaged in the following elections / candidatures, providing recommendations on GoSL support to be extended:

- Election to the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held on 17 th October 2019 during the 141st IPU Assembly Belgrade, Serbia.
- From 03-14 June 2019, the Mission took part in the following elections to the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) for the term 2019-2023,
    - Post of Secretary General
    - Post of President and three Vice Presidents
    - Members of the Executive Council

- The Mission took part in the election of members to the Standing Commission of Red Cross and Red Crescent held on 11 December 2019 in Geneva.
- The Mission took part in the election to appoint a Deputy Director General (DDG)/International Organisation for Migration (IOM) held on 21 June 2019 at the Special Session of the IOM Council.

Visit of Judges of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal

The Mission facilitated the visit of the f 06 Judges from the Supreme Court and 06 Judges from the Court of Appeal to Geneva from 12- 15 August 2019 and conducted a familiarization briefing on the practical aspects of the prevailing international Human Rights mechanisms centred in Geneva.

Cultural Diplomacy

The Mission organized an interactive scholarly discussion on the significance of the Tripitakaya as a world heritage, at the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva.

The 71st Anniversary of Sri Lanka's Independence was organized by the Mission and celebrated on 9th February 2019 at the World Intellectual Property Organization with the participation of over 250 members of the Sri Lankan community in Switzerland.

An inter-faith religious service was organized by the Mission and the House of Religions, Bern on 28 April 2019 to pay tribute, honour and invoke blessings on the victims of the Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka.

The Mission participated in the annual Charity Bazaar organized by the UN Women's Guild on 03 December 2019 in Geneva.

Turkey

Activities undertaken by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Turkey concurrently accredited to Georgia and Ukraine:

Bilateral relations

i. The Mission in order to promote the Sri Lanka's interests and increase bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and Turkey undertook several initiatives. Besides Ambassador's regular interactions with the senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of National Education (Turkish Chair of the JCETC) and the other Government Ministries and agencies the Ambassador with a view to expedite Joint Committee on

Economic and Technical Cooperation meeting (JCETC) to be held in Colombo had series of meeting with Minister of National Education of Turkey, H.E Ziya Selcuk (Turkish Chair of the JCETC), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, H.E Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, H.E Yavuz Selim Kıran, H.E Sedat Onal ,Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and H.E Gonca Yilmaz Batur, Deputy Minister of Trade. In principally considered to propose a set of dates to hold the JCETC in late April or early May 2020. (However due to Covid -19 pandemic situation postponed indefinitely) Further, Mission initiated mechanism to enhance cooperation with the Turkey-Sri Lanka Parliamentary Friendship Association in Turkish parliament. Ambassador had several meetings with H.E. Ahmet Hamdi Camli, (MP of ruling AK party), Chairman of the Turkey-Sri Lanka Parliamentary Friendship Association and established a joint action plan enhance friendly bilateral relations between the two countries.

Bilateral Political Consultations

i. First Session of Political Consultation between Sri Lanka and Turkey was convened on 10th May 2019 in Sri Lanka as a new road map for enhanced the cooperation in prioritized sectors between Sri Lanka and Turkey. The Consultations focused on in the tourism, trade and investment, security, science and technology, culture and higher education sectors. The consultations also focused on the need for Turkey and Sri Lanka to pursue shared economic interests and address common challenges such as, terrorism, at regional and multilateral platforms.

Education and International cooperation

i. A series of discussions were held with Prof. Dr. M. A. Yekta Saraç, President of Council of Higher Education, Chairman of Maarif Foundation, Chancellors and Rectors of major Universities in Turkey to establish cooperation in the field of the higher education between Turkey and Sri Lanka, joint research, student and academic research

Cultural relations

Events and interaction with Sri Lankan community

i. The Mission organized Sri Lankan food festival in Hilton Hotel, Ankara from 4th – 9th February 2019 parallel to the Independence Day of Sri Lanka.
ii. Sri Lankan culinary show demonstration held at the official residence of Ambassador.
iii. The Mission participated actively at the World Food Istanbul Fair 2019,11thKalecik Karsai Grapes Harvesting Festival held in September in Kalecik, Turkey.

iv. 03rd Ekmek Festival (Bread Festival) held in Cankaya, Ankara, the exhibition of Turkey- Asia Relations organized by the Department of Inᵗᵉrnational Relations of the Yildirim Beyazit University in November

v. 28ᵗʰDMEDD annual Charity Bazar organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spouses' Solidarity Association of Turkey in December.

vi. The Mission organized series of Sri Lankan cultural performances by the dancing troupe "Sri Lanka Narthana Nikethanaya" at the prominent shopping complex in Ankara in order to promote Sri Lankan from 14th to 17th November 2019 coincide with the Expo travel Ankara.

The Mission facilitated the participation of Sri Lankan students from some rural areas in Sri Lanka at IFMA Youth World Championships 2019 IFMA (International Federation of Muaythai Association) in Antalya, Turkey, October 2019.

Georgia

Events and interaction with Sri Lankan community

i. The Mission assisted Sri Lankan Students Association of Tbilisi state Medical University to organize annual "Ceylon Ball 2019" cultural and musical show in Tbilisi on 7th December 2019.

Ukraine

Interaction with Sri Lankan community

i. During the visit of Second Secretary and Consular officer had a interactive meeting with the Sri Lankan community living in Ukraine on their welfare and their problems and conducted first mobile service in Kyiv, Ukraine on 12th October 2019 for the Sri Lankan living in Ukraine

Labor and Community Welfare

i. The Mission compiled a comprehensive database of all the Sri Lankans Turkey and accredited countries Georgia and Ukraine including the migrant workers.

Ukraine

Bilateral relations

i. During the last quarter due to the active effort by the Mission, Ukrainian authorities agreed to revisit the unilateral measure took on export of animal products from Sri Lanka to Ukraine. Cordial relations were took place within this year. In order to resolved the problem of human smuggling and illegal migration from Sri Lanka to Ukraine and smoothen the interaction between the Ukrainian authorities.

Agreements/MoUs

i. Agreement on visa exemption for Diplomatic and official passports between the Sri Lanka and Ukraine was signed on 29th September 2019 in order to enhance the bilateral relations between the two counties and facilitate the entry of diplomatic and official passport holders.

Turkey

i. The Ambassador during a meeting with H.E. Ayşe Kardas Ergezen, Deputy Minister of Family Labor and Social Services was able to get a clear idea about employment opportunities available for Sri Lankans in Turkey and also resolved issues pertaining to illegal migration from Sri Lanka. Further meetings were held with Director General of Department of Immigration, Head of Turkish Police and Head of Police Intelligence on the illegal migration by Sri Lankan ton Turkey and human smuggling activities. A joint working group comprising of the Mission diplomatic officers and Department of Immigration of Turkey was established to expedite bureaucratic procedures of repatriation and curb illegal migration. Further, the Mission had series of meeting with the foreign employment recruitment companies in Turkey to regularize their recruitments, to obtain firsthand information on their Sri Lankan counterparts and provide a detailed awareness on the procedures/guidelines of the SLBFE.

Ukraine

i. The Second Secretary and Consular officer of the Mission during the consular visit to hold a mobile service in Kiev, Ukraine was able to resolved issue pertaining illegal Sri Lankan migrants detained in Ukraine. After their visit, established joint mechanism to ease bureaucratic delays in repatriating detained Sri Lankans in Ukraine and drastically reduced Sri Lankans entering Ukraine illegally.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investment

Tourism

i. Tourist's arrivals from Turkey to Sri Lanka have been increased by 16.7% comparing with 2018 and it stood at 4,972. At the same time, Sri Lankan's visiting Turkey has been also increased by 47%, comparing with year 2018 and it stood at 7,530. Following main activities have been performed by the Mission to increase the number of Turkish tourists to Sri Lanka; Organizing tourism promotional events including Sri Lanka's participation at the 04th EXPO Travel Ankara travel and tourism fair from 14-17 November 2019. 07 Sri Lankan travel trade companies participated and Mission arranged B2B

meetings and also an interactive networking session with prominent Turkish travel trade players/ association/journalists at the Embassy, "Colombo meets Istanbul" a networking event with the participation of travel trade community in Turkey & Sri Lanka with the collaboration of Turkish Airlines. Mission continued to interact with Mr. Bilal Eksi, CEO/General Manager of Turkish Airlines prominent Turkish travel trade players, Qatar Airways, Turkish Travel Agents Associations to promote Sri Lanka in Turkey and include Sri Lanka as their holiday destination in their promotional materials. Further media familiarization programmes were arranged. Prominent journalist namely Ms. Ebru Erke of Food & Beverage, Turkish newspaper Milleyet visited Sri Lanka with the assistance of the Embassy and gave publicity via various electronic, print & social media on Ceylon tea, Ceylon Cinnamon and the beauty of Sri Lanka. Accelerated the image building via Turkish TV channels, print media and social media platforms i.e Instagram, Twitter, Facebook were carried out especially during the 04th quarter of the year. Mission assisted prominent tourism related Turkish media personal to Sri Lanka and published very positive and received wider publicity on touristic sites in Sri Lanka Ceylon tea trails.

Trade

i. Sri Lanka's exports to Turkey have been marginally decreased by 2% comparing with 2018. However due to the robust engagements in the last quarter with main importers, Trade Chambers, Sri Lankan exporters associations, the trade between two countries has been increased during the last quarter. (2019 exports from Sri Lanka was 97.84 Mn USD as per Turkish Customs data). Further, the exports of teas and rubber sectors have been increased by 20% & 14% respectively during the period under consideration. (Value for Teas in last quarter of the year was 10,894,614 USD as per Turkish Customs records). 03rd and final quarter the Mission was able to negotiate with the Turkish authorities and mitigate to delays of clearing Sri Lankan shipments in Turkish ports. In order to promote Sri Lanka's trade in Turkey following main activities were carried out by the Mission; Sri Lanka's participation at World Food Istanbul fair in September 2019 with the participation of 07 Sri Lankan companies and the Mission arranged B2B meetings for the participants, actions taken for reinvigorate the Business Council and increased the number of members (04 new members) to "Turkey – Sri Lanka Business Council" under Turkish Foreign Economic Development Board (DEIK), Sri Lanka's participation at the 88th Izmir International fair with the participation of then Deputy Minister of Industry & Commerce in September 2019, arranged Business networking events to promote trade/ investment in the main cities in Turkey i.e. Istanbul, Denizli, Eskisheir, Manisa, Rize, Trabzon, Izmir, expedited the processes of finalization of pending Agreements/ MoUs on Customs cooperation, Double Taxation, Investment promotion, Agriculture Cooperation, Cooperation in Standards, in order to sign these MoUs / Agreements early 2020, cooperation between

SME promotion agencies, regular interactions with Trade Chambers, respective Government agencies, business community.

Investment

i. Total Turkish Investment in Sri Lanka from 2010 to 2019 period stands for 2.91 US$ and noted new investments has been reported during year 2019 period. However, Mission took initiatives to promote Sri Lanka's investment interest. Reason for the negative trend is due to non-existence of Avoidance of Double Taxation and prevention of tax evasion on income and property or Investment promotions.

Ukraine

Tourism

i. Tourist's arrivals from Ukraine to Sri Lanka have been marginally decreased by 4% (Year 2018:36,515 were reported while year 2019: 35,051 tourists arrivals reported). However, following main activities have been conducted by the Mission to increase the number of Ukrainian tourists to Sri Lanka. Organized Sri Lanka's participation at 25th edition of Ukraine International travel & tourism fair in March 2019 with the participation of 05 Sri Lankan travel trade companies and Mission arranged B2B meetings with prominent Ukrainian players. Regular interactions with prominent travel, trade players, Airlines, Travel Agents Associations were carried out.

Trade

i. Sri Lanka's exports to Ukraine have been increased by 8.3%. (25.26 USD Mn to 27.36 USD Mn). Due to the active efforts by the Mission Ukrainian authorities have confirmed their willingness for signing Agreement on Establishment of an intergovernmental Joint Commission on Trade & Economic Cooperation and Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and prevention of tax evasion on income and property. The Mission constantly engaged with private sector, Government officials promote Sri Lanka's trade interest in Ukraine.

Investment

i. No investments have been recorded from Ukraine in Sri Lanka basically due to non-existence of Avoidance of Double Taxation and prevention of tax evasion on income and property or Investment promotions. Therefore, the expedited the process of signing of Agreement on Joint Commission on Trade & Economic Cooperation & the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and prevention of tax evasion on income and property.

Georgia

Tourism

i. Tourist arrivals from Georgia to Sri Lanka have been decreased by 18% (2018-697 were reported while 2019, 565 tourists arrivals reported). Regular interactions with prominent travel, trade players, Airlines, Travel Agents Associations were carried out to promote Sri Lanka in Georgia.

Trade

i. Total trade, exports and imports between Sri Lanka and Georgia stands for substantially very low amounts when compare with Turkey and Ukraine. Sri Lanka's exports to Georgia have been decreased by 10% compare with previous year (2018). (5.10 USD Mn to 4.58 USD Mn). In order to enhance bilateral economic relations the Ambassador and the President of Georgia had detailed discussion to find out a mechanism for cooperation in promoting trade between the two countries. Further had bilateral discussions with the senior officials Ministry of Trade Development and International Economic Relations and Enterprise Georgia, Presidents of Trade Chambers and prominent Georgian importers to identify specific sectors and product that could be potential. The Mission constantly engaged with private sector, Government officials promote Sri Lanka's trade in Georgia.

Investment

i. No investments have been recorded from Georgia in Sri Lanka due to the fact that Georgian Government discourages investing in other territories than within Georgia. However, Mission has been continuously engaging with respective authorities and private sector to promote Sri Lanka's interest.

United Kingdom

Bilateral Relations

- During the period under review, the High Commission maintained cordial relations with the United Kingdom.
- The High Commission closely monitored the political and economic developments in the UK including on BREXIT during the period under review and provided regular updates/briefings to relevant authorities in Colombo including the dispatch of political reports.

High Level visits to United Kingdom by Sri Lankan deligations

- Eight Members of the Sectoral Oversight Committees, headed by Hon Ajith P Perera MP, and 2 officials of the Sri Lanka Parliament visited the UK from 2nd– 4th July 2019 to attend a training session.
- A delegation led by Secretary/Foreign Affairs attended the Global Conference for Media Freedom 2019 co-hosted by the UK and Canada in London from 10th to 11th July 2019.
- A Parliamentary delegation headed by Speaker Hon Karu Jayasuriya visited the UK from 07th to 09th and 12th to 15th January 2019. During this visit, the Speaker met with the Mark Field MP, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and addressed the House of Common and the House of Lords.
- Hon. Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Finance and Mass Media visited the UK from 18th to 21st January 2019 during which he met Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Commonwealth Secretary-General.
- Hon Vijayakala Maheswaran, State Minister of Education visit ed the UK to attend the World Education Forum (WEF) and to participate at the Commonwealth Education Ministerial Action Group (CEMAG) in London from 20th to 24th January 2019.

High-Level Visits to Sri Lanka by United Kigndom delegations

- Minister for Security and Economic Crime, Rt Hon Ben Wallace visited Sri Lanka on 03rd May 2019, following the Easter Sunday attacks. He met President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe during the visit.
- Lord Ahmed of Wimbledon, Minister of South Asia, UN and Commonwealth visited Sri Lanka from 01st to 03rd October 2019. During the visit, he met Foreign Minister Tilak Marapana, The leader of the TNA R Sampanthan MP and religious leaders.

Briefing the Parliamentarians and Officials

- The Mission engaged with the Members of the UK Parliament both in the House of Commons and House of Lords, including Members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Sri Lanka (APPG-SL)and desk officials of the South Asia Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office during the period of review.

Assessing the Policies of Major Political Parties in the UK

- The Mission attended the Conferences of the Labour Party and the Conservative Party held in 2019reported to the Ministry.

- The High Commission engaged and interacted with various Sri Lankan diaspora community organisations and professional organisations.

Multilateral Relations

- The High Commission coordinated with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as well as multilateral institutions based in the UK, i.e., IMO and the Commonwealth Secretariat concerning cooperation on multilateral issues.

Commonwealth

CHOGM 2020

- The High Commission continued to liaise with the Chief Executive of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2020 and the officials of the Rwanda CHOGM Office and High Commission on CHOGM in Kigali, which now stands postponed.

Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Group for Mangrove restoration

- The Mission liaised with the Commonwealth and the Member States of the above action group. As the champion country for Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods (MELAG) the Mission supported the Ministry to organise an event in October 2019 in Sri Lanka with the participation of member countries of MELAG to share best practices, adopted the Terms of Reference and an Action Plan.

Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Meeting

- Secretary/Foreign Affairs attended the 19th Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (CFAMM) held at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London on 10 July 2019.

Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting held in Colombo

- The Mission liaised with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Ministry of Justice to organise the above meeting in Sri Lanka in November 2019.

Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting held in London

- The Mission facilitated a visit by a Sri Lanka delegation headed by the Secretary/MODSIT to participate at the Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting held in London on 10th October 2019.

Commonwealth Election observer Group

- The Mission facilitated a visit by a delegation of the Commonwealth Observer Group headed by Mr. Prosper Bani, former Ghanaian Minister of Interior to observe the Presidential Election in Sri Lanka on the invitation of the Election Commission from 10th to 21st November 2019.

Regional workshop on Preventing Violent Extremism

- In association with the Commonwealth and the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka, the High Commission facilitated A Regional (Asia) Capacity Building Workshop on Preventing Violent Extremism through Education held in Colombo in July 2019.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

Trade between the countries

- Sri Lanka achieved an export figure of US$ 998Mn for year 2019. It is an increase of 2% of the exports from Sri Lanka compared to the previous year. 80% were apparel, made up textile articles followed by footwear, rubber finished products, electronic& electrical products, edible fish products, tea, coconut-based products, etc: In 2019 investment performance from UK stood at US$ 157.30Mn it is an increase of 126% compared to the previous year. The increase is due to a foreign loan obtained for a property development project.

Trade/Investment Promotional Events Organized

- The Roundtable presentation on 'Investment and Trade Opportunities in Sri Lanka' for the British – Sri Lankan business community, on 02nd September 2019 an outreach programme to build the relationships with the Diaspora not had previously engaged with the Mission, The 'Sri Lanka Investment Forum 2019 on 09th October 2019 at the London Stock Exchange attended by more than 70 UK companies in the areas of ICT, pharmaceutical, financial services, apparel, education & vocational training and value added manufacturing and the 'Sri Lanka ICT Promotional Roundtable' on 10th October 2019 in Manchester are some of the main events organized by the Commercial Section of this Mission. The Mission also assisted Research Intelligence Unit (RIU) to organize an event in London on 27th June 2019 to promote the Sri Lankan real estate market among the Sri Lankan community in the UK and assisted the Friends of Sri Lanka Association in UK to organize a Sri Lanka Gin and Arrack tasting event at the High Commission to promote tourism.
- The Commercial section met many buyers and potential investors, served more than 200 trade inquiries by both UK and Sri Lankan parties and connected number of exporters of Sri Lanka to the potential buyers in UK. Also, attended to number of investment proposals by UK parties interested in investing in Sri Lanka.
- Further, facilitated participation at the International Food & Drink Event (IFE) 2019, London held from 17th- 20th March 2019 at ExCel, London, International Jewellery London (IJL) 2019 held in Olympia, London from 01st to 03rd September 2019 and organized a Sri Lanka trade promotional event in parallel to 71st Independence Day diplomatic reception.

- Organized meetings for visiting Sri Lankan Ministers and dignitaries to meet counterparts and senior officials in UK to discuss about strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties specially in a situation where UK leaves EU and developed a dialogue with the Department of International Trade (DIT) UK on post- Brexit trade relations between Sri Lanka and UK and reported/ updated the capital with the developments.
- The Commercial Section facilitated Sri Lanka's participation/ represented Sri Lanka at the assemblies and meetings of Commonwealth Secretariat, International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPCF) and International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO).

Tourism Promotion

- 198,776UK tourists visited Sri Lanka in 2019, recording a 21.8%drop in the actual tourist arrivals from UK compared to 2018. The main reason for the drop was the Easter Sunday attacks in April 2019.The High Commission made representations to the UK Government and engaged with the UK travel trade in the effort to relax the travel restrictions imposed by the UK Government on Sri Lanka following the incident. The UK Government relaxed the travel advisory on Sri Lanka on 06th June 2019.
- Considering the importance of promoting tourism soon after the relaxation of the adverse travel advisory, the SLHC, London facilitated 'Sri Lanka Revival' tourism launch held on Tuesday 16th July 2019 in London which is a coordinated effort by The Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) and its members Travel Gallery and Experience Travel Group, the Sri Lankan tourism industry, and supported by the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB).
- The Commercial section assisted SLTPB in organizing/ participating 'Destinations London' Travel Show, London from 31st January – 02nd February 2019, 'National Wedding Show Birmingham' from 01st- 03rd March 2019, facilitated a broadcasting interview with former Sri Lankan Cricket captain and MCC Chairman Mr. Kumar Sangakkara at the High Commission premises held on 17th October 2019 as a part of Sri Lanka's Premier Partnership at WTM 2019, and Sri Lanka's participation at World Travel Market (WTM) 2019 from 04th – 06th November 2019 in London.
- For the first time at the WTM Sri Lanka was promoted as a wellness tourism destination. This Mission in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB) facilitated participation of 05 companies promoting wellness packages.

Cultural Relations

- The Mission continued to maintain relations with Buddhist temples, other religious institutions, and associations with a view to promoting Sri Lankan Culture in the UK.

- The Mission organized the annual Pirith Chanting and Heel Dhana at-the High Commission on 16 to 17th May 2019, annual Iftar Celebrations on 22nd May 2019, Deepavali festival on 25th October 2019, and annual Christmas Celebrations on 16 December 2019.
- The Mission discussed with the British Library Officials regarding future collaboration in the digitalisation of Tripitaka manuscripts from Sri Lanka kept at the British Library in London.

Positive Image Building through Media Engagements and Social & Web Media

- The Mission disseminated information on events, promotional work on trade, investment, culture & tourism, consular information and information on important developments in Sri Lanka on its social media accounts. In 2019, the Mission has tweeted/ retweeted 341 posts on Twitter, posted/shared 139 posts on Facebook and uploaded 100 posts on the website.
- The Mission monitors UK media reportage on Sri Lanka on a daily basis (UK print and electronic media) and sent daily media reports to the Ministry as well as other relevant Missions and line agencies as appropriate.

Educational Relations

- Considering the importance of enhancing bilateral educational relations between Sri Lanka and the UK, the Mission participated at various educational events, exhibitions and meetings organized by the education institutions and authorities in the UK.
- Since the UK is one of the most popular destinations among Sri Lankan students to pursue their higher education, there is a large student community in the UK. The Mission, with collaboration of various stakeholders took measures to assist Sri Lankan students in the UK.
- As a result of the discussions held with the Authorities of the University of Wolverhampton and the University of Loughborough, the SLHC/London secured two scholarships for Sri Lankan students.

Defence Relations

- The focus of the defence cooperation was to promote and enhance bilateral defence relations between the UK and Sri Lanka and enhance our affiliations with British Regiments by engaging with the defence authorities of the United Kingdom. This was done through exchange of training opportunities, courses and field exercises, defence visits and seminars. Promoting training/events conducted by the security forces of Sri Lanka was also done as a part of sharing knowledge.
- Had monthly meetings with the MOD South Asia desk during the period under review and managed to increase the number of training opportunities for Sri Lanka in UK as follows:

i. 2018 Sri Lanka Army 05
Sri Lanka Navy 10
Sri Lanka Air Force 04
Total 19

ii. 2019 Sri Lanka Army 12
Sri Lanka Navy 07
Sri Lanka Air Force 12
Total 31

In addition to above figure, 04 Officers visited UK for seminars/visits.

- Sri Lanka Army entered a team for the Exercise Cambrian Patrol for the first time in 2019, the team did well and obtained a Bronze Medal. A team of Royal Navy senior Officers took part in Galle Dialog in Sri Lanka.
- British DA based in Colombo conducted number of UK Defence programmes in Sri Lanka. He was helpful in obtaining courses on Sri Lanka's requested during the period under review. DA in Colombo conducted following number of programmes in Sri Lanka:

  Visits 2 –Chairman Defence Equipment Sales Authority and UK Cyber Security Ambassador.
  Ships visit 1 – HMS MONTROSE
  Exercises 2 – Ex BERSAMA LIMA 2019. Ex SPEAR Disaster Management exercise.
  Courses 2 –Managing Defence in Wider Security Context.
  Exclusive Economic Zone course

Positive Image Building of Sri Lanka and Countering pro-LTTE Propaganda Activities in the UK

- Six submissions were made to the FCO, Home Secretaries Office on the display of LTTE flag and other insignia on UK soil with the explanation of how it violates UK Counter -Terror Act of 2000.
- Met Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP, Minister of State for Security and Economic Crime in May 2019 with the High Commissioner and presented a dossier containing the LTTE propaganda activities and use of flag drawing attention to UK's Counter Terror Act of 2000.
- Met Mr Dean Haydon QPM, Deputy Assistant Commissioner-Senior National Co-ordinator–Counter Terrorism Policing on 22nd July 2019 and hand over a dossier on the LTTE Flag and briefed about the activities of pro-LTTE organisations in the UK.
- The Mission continues to monitor pro-LTTE diaspora activities in London and report them to Colombo. During the year 2019 there were 22 protests, 30 indoor meetings/events/commemorations, 05 petitions/letters and 01 movie screening activities have taken place in London and the UK.
- Over 16 complaints were made during the year to the Metropolitan Police on display of LTTE insignia and activities of pro-LTTE groups, based on the

violation of the UK Counter-Terrorism Act.

- In addition to the complaint made by the High Commission, the mission got the assistance of the Sri Lankan community to complain to the Police and local government authorities to prevent/stop pro-LTTE activities taking place.
- Met UK Counter Terrorism Police (SO 15) Officers, Metropolitan Police and Diplomatic Police number of times on pro-LTTE activities.

Monitoring of Extremist Activities Including Radical Elements in the UK

- Maintained contacts with UK Counter Terrorism Police (SO 15) and International Crime Coordinating Centre (ICCC) of the Metropolitan Police on matters concerned to Sri Lanka. However, privacy laws of UK and non-availability of formal accreditation to the British Intelligence system prevent gaining accesses to certain information.

Engagement with Key Think Tanks in the UK

- Minister, Counsellor Defence obtained memberships at the Chatham House and Royal United Service Institute (RUSI) and registered member of International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS). Attended events held at the London School of Economics and Kings College London which had reference/relevance to Sri Lanka and took part Question and Answer sessions

North America Division

North America Division

United States of America

1. Bilateral Relations

- Hon. Tilak Marapana, Minister of Foreign Affairs undertook his first official visit to the US from 15th - 18th May 2019 on an invitation of the US Secretary of State. He was accompanied by Senior Officials including the Secretary, Foreign Affairs.
- During the Hon. Minister's visit, the 3rd US-SL Partnership Dialogue was convened on 16th May 2019 at the US State Department, which reviewed the entire gamut of relations and discussed further strengthening of cooperation in areas such as promotion of trade, investment, tourism, maritime domain awareness, defence cooperation, economic assistance, intelligence-sharing and counterterrorism, open Government partnership programs for Parliamentarians and Officials and scholarships, training and capacity building for Government Officials, military personnel and others.
- On the sidelines of the Partnership Dialogue, the Hon. Minister met with the US National Security Advisor, John Bolton, members of the Congress and US Government Officials and representatives of think tanks, Government and private sector, Sri Lanka American community and etc.
- As a follow-up to the outcomes of the Third Partnership Dialogue, the North America Division coordinated and convened the US- Sri Lanka ICT Dialogue at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 12 December 2019 with the participation of a US delegation.
- As a parallel new initiative, the Division also convened three preparatory meetings for the US-Sri Lanka Agriculture Dialogue and the US-Sri Lanka Science and Technology Dialogue with the Officials of the US Embassy and representatives of the relevant line agencies/Ministries for the Dialogue to be scheduled in 2020.
- The Ministry facilitated the visit and discussion of Ambassador Alice Wells, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for South & Central Asian Affairs in the State Department who visited Sri Lanka in August 2019 and met with H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and others.
- Ms. Laura Stone, Director/South Asia, US Department of State visited Sri Lanka for a familiarization visit and engaged in discussions with Senior Ministry Officials on 31st October 2019.
- Visits were undertaken to the USA in 2019 by Hon. Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Finance, Hon. Dr Harsha de Silva, Minister of Public Distribution & Economic Reforms, Hon. Ananda Kumarasiri, Deputy Speaker, Hon. Eran Wickremaratne, State Minister of Finance,

and Parliamentary delegations under the US Open Government Partnership, and familiarization tours of Judges and Prosecutors.

- The Division monitored matters relating to the draft Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact (MCC). The Division also reported on the dialogue with MCC Officials in Washington DC to relevant Sri Lankan Authorities. The draft MCC continues to be under review by an Experts' Committee appointed by the Cabinet. The Division will facilitate with available documentation to the Review Committee as and when required.
- The Division finalized and conveyed to the US Embassy in Colombo, on 1st February 2019, Sri Lanka's submission to the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report 2019 following the finalization of the draft by the National Taskforce on Anti-Human Trafficking (NAHTTF).
- The Division finalized and conveyed to the US Embassy in Colombo, on 2nd December 2019, "Interim Report Sri Lanka - summary of the progress on the 2019 TIP report Prioritized Recommendations" following the finalization of the draft by the NAHTTF.
- The Division also represented meetings of the NAHTTF with a view to preparing/finalizing Sri Lanka's submission to the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report 2020.
- The Embassy worked closely with the relevant US Government Agencies, namely: Departments of State, Defence, Commerce, Justice, National Security Council, USAID, and Congress members in both chambers, and Congressional staffers to promote bilateral relations.
- Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Washington DC presented credentials to H.E. the US President, Donald Trump on 08th of July 2019. He briefed him on Sri Lanka's continuing efforts to build relationships of confidence and trust among its diversified communities, and the importance of having a robust multi-dimensional relationship with the US including strengthening trade and economic ties, widening people-to-people contacts and promoting international and regional peace and security.
- The Embassy engaged the US Congress and Congressional staffers to apprise them on SL–US relations and matters of bilateral interest, especially in view of political developments since Presidential elections on 17th November 2019.
- The Embassy also initiated steps to revive the Congressional Caucus for Sri Lanka aimed at the reinvigoration of bilateral relations and promotion of closer engagement with the US. The Embassy continued to monitor the Chamber and Committee activity and proposed legislations being discussed; monitor hearings by the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees on issues relevant to Sri Lanka.

- The Embassy Officials regularly reached out to and interacted with Officers at US Government departments, institutions, bilateral and multilateral aid cum donor agencies, advocacy groups, business chambers, think tank community, media offices, US–SL friendship groups and community organizations and groups.
- The Embassy liaised very closely with the US Government, media, well-wishers and community members in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday attacks in order to canvass their goodwill and support in favour of Sri Lanka, and to organize multi-religious, social, commemorative activities, solidarity gatherings, community-based prayer vigils, interfaith services and etc. aimed at promoting peace, harmony and solidarity among Sri Lankans in the US.
- The Embassy is in regular contact with Sri Lankan Buddhist temples and other places of worship, SL Associations and the Sri Lankan–American community in an effort to mobilize them to positively contribute to SL–US relations. The Embassy is also assisting them to lobby their respective representatives in the Congress in favour of Sri Lanka and for the promotion and projection of Sri Lanka's image and interests in their respective States. The Embassy also sought to mobilize the Sri Lankan community at events organized by some Diaspora groups with vested interests, in order to provide a counter narrative to misleading and inimical statements.
- The 71st Anniversary of Sri Lanka's Independence was celebrated on 04th February 2019 at which Ambassador Alice Wells was in attendance as the Chief Guest.
- Consul General (CG)/Los Angeles had meetings with the City Mayors, Deputies, OFM Regional Director - US Department of State Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and US Agencies to apprise them of the efforts taken by the Government of Sri Lanka towards the development process.
- CG attended meetings with the Deputy Mayor of Pasadena City Council, Los Angeles and Committee Members in setting up of a Sister City Program between the two cities of Kandy and Pasadena, Los Angeles.
- Discussions were held by CG/Los Angeles with the Director and the management of the Organization of Direct Relief based in Santa Barbara to implement a medical aid program. A proposal submitted by the Direct Relief Organization was forwarded to the Health Ministry, Sri Lanka for consideration.
- As a fraud prevention initiative, on a request made by the US Embassy, the North America Division coordinated the provision of specimen travel and identity documentation, with a view to extending partnerships to prevent illegal migration, trafficking and smuggling.
- The Division facilitated the issuance of 831 visas for the US Officials attending official programmes in Sri Lanka for Maritime training,

Consultations with the US Embassy, to conduct technical and training programmes/conferences and workshops, and to support Humanitarian Aid programmes.

2. Defence and Security Cooperation

- Facilitated discussions with the visiting US Government delegation to consider the draft text of the Visiting Forces Agreement.
- Ex - US Coast Guard Cutter Sherman was acquired through the US Excess Defence Articles Programme and transferred to Sri Lanka and Commissioned in Sri Lanka as SLNS Gajabahu in 2019.
- Sri Lanka Embassy in Washington DC continued to engage with the Department of Defence on policy matters related to Defence Cooperation and enhancing Military to Military cooperation.
- Proposals from the GoSL were forwarded and action commenced to procure a Coastal Defence Radar System to the Sri Lanka Navy and an Air to Ground Data link to the Sri Lanka Air Force from the $ 39.5 million grant allocated to Sri Lanka under the 'Foreign Military Financing' programme.
- The US Government commenced the process for providing two Maritime Patrol Aircraft to the Sri Lanka Air Force through the '333 Financing' programme.
- Professional Education and Training of the tri services personnel were continued through the 'International Military Education and Training' (IMET) and Indo Pacific Training Programme funds. 363 personnel were given Education/Training in the US and in other countries and in Sri Lanka during 2019
- Enhanced cooperation with the Counter Terrorism Bureau (CTB) of the Department of State, especially after the Easter Day Bomb attacks in Sri Lanka and the CTB offered a set of proposals to enhance counter-terrorism/extremism capabilities of Sri Lanka.
- Missions participated in several programmes and discussions on Counter Terrorism, Counter Extremism and Money Laundering, organized by different organizations including the Near East South Asia Center (NESA Centre) and the National Defence University in Washington DC.
- The Division facilitated the visits of US ships USNS Millinocket from 16-26 April 2019, USS Spruance from 18 – 23 April 2019 and Research Vessel R/V Sally Ride from 20 May to 19 August 2019.
- The Mission facilitated the Joint Combat Exchange Training/Balance Style from 13 June to 05 July 2019, and the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) in April 2019.

3. Multilateral Relations

- Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, State Minister of Finance, led Sri Lanka's delegation to the World Bank/IMF Spring meetings from 8th to 13th April 2019. The delegation also met with Ambassador Alice Wells, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs and MCC Officials.
- Secretary to the Treasury, Dr R.H.S. Samaratunga accompanied by the Governor, Central Bank of Sri Lanka represented Sri Lanka at the IMF Annual Spring Meeting of Finance Ministers at the IMF Headquarters in Washington DC in September 2019. On the sidelines of the IMF Annual Spring Meeting, the Commonwealth Finance Ministers and SAARC Finance Ministers Meetings were held at the IMF Headquarters in Washington DC.

4. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

USA is the largest export destination of Sri Lanka with a share of 26.3% of its total exports in 2019. Total exports from Sri Lanka to the US in 2019 amounted to US$ 3141 Mn. out of which US$ 195.5 Million worth of goods came under the US GSP scheme. In 2019, exports from Sri Lanka to the USA increased by 2.8% from US$ 2675.0 million in 2018 to US$ 2749.9 million in 2019.

- The 13th Joint council meeting under the USA–Sri Lanka Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) was held on 19th and 20th June 2019 in Colombo. The Joint Council meeting provided a forum for a trade policy dialogue on market access, investment, intellectual property rights, capacity building, technical cooperation, labor relations and livelihood improvement.
- The Embassy organized six promotional campaigns to promote apparel and tea and coordinated organizing Sri Lanka's participation at two trade fairs to promote apparel in 2019. Forty-four market surveys and special reports were prepared on commercial matters to the Sri Lankan industry.
- The Embassy had one hundred and ten business meetings on trade and investment promotion and served seventy-three inward and outward trade inquiries. The Embassy handled twelve inward and outward trade complaints and successfully resolved two of those received from Sri Lanka.
- The Embassy coordinated ten inward and outward individual visits and two inward delegations and one outward delegation on commercial matters.
- Eighteen investment promotion meetings were held during 2019.
- The total number of tourist arrivals during the year from the US to Sri Lanka were 68,832. Tourist arrivals slowed down in 2019 due to the Easter Sunday attacks. Some tourism promotion activities planned in the middle of the year were cancelled due to the Easter Sunday attacks.
- The Embassy coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at one promotional exhibition at the beginning of the year and four promotional programmes at

the end of the year. Six meetings were conducted with six Tour Operators on tourism promotion. CG/Los Angeles arranged meetings with Tour Operators in California to promote Sri Lanka's tourism among US travelers.

- The Embassy coordinated the Government of Sri Lanka's appeal at the Court of Appeal in the Federal Circuit against the US Government on imposition of the Countervailing Duty on import of Off Road Tyres from Sri Lanka to the US. The US Government subsequently withdrew the case because of the strong submissions made by Sri Lanka.
- The Embassy conducted meetings with the US Department of Treasury and the US Department of State on matters relating to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) designation of Sri Lanka in the 'grey list'. As a result, the US Treasury Department rendered maximum support to remove Sri Lanka from the Grey List under the FATF regulations.
- The Embassy had continuous meetings and follow up actions with the US treasury Department, the Office of the Foreign Asset Control and the US State Department on the settlement of debt on the purchase of crude oil from Iran and settling of installments of the loan taken to build the Uma Oya Multipurpose Development Project in Sri Lanka.
- Consul General (CG)/Los Angeles organized a Tea Promotion Event on 7th February 2019, a Ceylon tea tasting and promotional programme at the Annual Diplomats Diversi Tea Gala 2019 on 25th April 2019, Sri Lanka Promotion at 93rd Annual World Trade Week on 2nd May 2019, Ceylon Tea Promotion at the World Tea Expo from 11 - 13 June 2019, Ceylon Tea Networking Breakfast Meeting – 2019: in parallel with the Sri Lanka National pavilion at the World Tea Expo, Tea Tasting Event at Sri Lanka Day Expo – 2019 in July 2019 in California, and a Networking Breakfast Meeting to promote Spices/Coconut Kernel Products at Hotel Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas on 18th October, 2019.
- CG also coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at Natural Products Expo West from 5-9 March 2019 and Supply Side West – 2019 trade exhibition in Las Vegas in October 2019, where seven Sri Lankan companies participated, in order to further promote spices and related products to the US market, in association with the Sri Lanka Consulate General and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (SLEDB). The EDB has confirmed that the exhibitors have received US$ 505,000/- worth orders of spices and coconut kernel products.
- During the period under review seven market reports were prepared by CG/Los Angeles and sent to the Sri Lankan Government Agencies/private Sector entities and over 60 trade inquiries were attended.
- CG carried out FDI promotional focus briefings with corporate sector conglomerates, multinational firms, leading entrepreneurs and potential businessmen and FDI promotion at the 93rd Annual World Trade Week Kick-off Celebration organized by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce in May 2019.

- CG arranged a four-member team of potential US investors to visit Sri Lanka, who had discussions with the Hon. Minister of Megapolis and Western Development regarding the Port City Development project.
- CG held discussions with the President of the Center for Global Trade & Foreign Investment to identify a prospective developer from the USA for the proposed Export Processing Zone/Industrial Park at Bingiriya; and Managing Director of M/s. Stax, a global management consulting firm in Colombo, to help increase the IT/Innovation exports from Sri Lanka to USA.
- CG represented a meeting with the Deputy Mayor and Director of International Trade and Investment of the City Office and Senior City Office Executives, Los Angeles and sought their support in attracting potential US investors from the agencies under the LA City Office supervision to invest in Sri Lanka.

5. Education, Religious and Cultural Relations

- The Division followed up on the implementation of the MoU between the Ministry of Education and Peace Corps on the deployment of Peace Corps Volunteers to Sri Lanka. DG/North America met with Ms. Kris Besch, Head of Peace Corps Sri Lanka on 25th September 2019
- The Division facilitated the securing of two research grants from the USA for the Kotalawela Defence University, focused on Dengue and Tuberculosis.
- The Embassy organized week-long religious activities on the theme of "Thripitakabivandana" to promote the Thripitaka, as a UNESCO world heritage in the four main Buddhist temples in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia.
- The CG organized "Thripitakabhiwandana" Program with the assistance of the Dharmavijaya Buddhist Viharaya, Crenshaw Blvd, Los Angeles. PRUN/New York organised a similar programme at New York Buddhist Vihara which included a Buddha Pooja, Dhamma Sermon and an Almsgiving.
- To promote Buddhism among US nationals, the Embassy in collaboration with the International Buddhist Association of America (IBAA), organized a Dhamma Study Programme at the Chancery premises. Embassy staff participated in cultural and religious activities organized by Hindu temples, Catholic churches and Islamic mosques throughout the year.
- The Embassy participated at the 10th Annual cultural programme organized by the South Asian American Employee Association of the US Department of State showcasing Sri Lankan traditional Kandyan drums on 01 August 2019.
- The Embassy organized VIP receptions, and participated in the Chef Challenge, Winter National Embassy Showcase held at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C and the Embassy Adoption Programme 2019, engaging with US schools and educational institutes to create awareness about Sri Lankan culture and education among the youth.
- Embassy staff assisted and participated in Sri Lanka Day organized by the Sri Lanka Association of Washington D.C., the "6th Annual Peterite Cricket

Carnival", musical shows, and stage dramas organized by Sri Lankan Associations in Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia and other cultural and religious events held by community organizations in California, Nevada, Florida, West Virginia, New York and New Jersey.

- The Embassy participated at the South Asian Studies Association Annual Conference - March 3, 2019 - Promoting SL Culture & Tourism in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Foundation, and at the Sinhala & Tamil New Year Celebration community event organized by Sri Lanka America Association in Southern California.
- CG organized The Jeweled Isle – Art from Sri Lanka, a 7 months long Exhibition. The exhibition included Reading and Panel Discussions of Sri Lankan Authors, Lectures and Discussions of Contemporary Architecture of Sri Lanka.
- The Consulate General organized "The Beauty of Sri Lanka" Photographic Exhibition – in September 2019 together with Sri Lanka America Photographic Art Society.
- The Consulate General made inquiries with the Netflix Network team for the possibility of including Sri Lankan Documentary Movies to the Netflix Network. Discussions were held to submit "The Frozen Fire", a Sri Lankan film directed by Anuruddha Jayasinghe nominated for an Oscar in 2019, into the Netflix network. As a result, Netflix has positively responded and requested for Submissions Release for their consideration.
- Events were organized by the PRUN for the Sri Lankan Community on the National Day in New Jersey, and at the Mission premises to celebrate, Ifthar, Deepavali and Christmas.
- In June, Sri Lanka's Permanent Mission in New York participated at the UN Bazaar with traditional Sri Lankan food and handicrafts being on display and for sale. In March, a cultural event to promote Sri Lankan sarees was held at the Mission.
- On the passing of the Chief Prelate of the New York Buddhist Vihara, the Mission in New York assisted in the funeral arrangements and carried out a tea service for those paying homage.

6. Labour Relations

- A report on job opportunities, regulations/issues and other information prepared by CG was forwarded to the Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training of Sri Lanka enabling Sri Lankan professionals to find suitable job opportunities in the USA.

Canada

1. Bilateral Relations

- Consultations continued with the Canadian High Commission in Colombo on the finalization of the Air Services Agreement between Sri Lanka and Canada.
- The text of the MoU on Bilateral Consultations Mechanism between Sri Lanka and Canada was finalized by both Parties in 2019 and further steps are to be taken for signature.
- The High Commissioner (HC) regularly briefed senior politicians at federal, provincial and municipal levels, senior Government Officials and other opinion makers at formal meetings, seminars, discussions and other events, on important developments in the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka and the initiatives taken by the Government of Sri Lanka on key national issues.
- HC attended several meetings with Officials of Global Affairs Canada and other key institutions, such as Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Treasury Board of Canada and Digital Government, Women and Gender Equity, Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI), and the Department of Justice, Canada, among others.
- Four Honorary Consuls for Sri Lanka in Montreal, Calgary, Halifax and New Brunswick were appointed on 04th March 2019.The HC coordinated the visit of a Sri Lankan delegation headed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Official Languages from 17 – 28th February 2019, as part of Canada's development assistance programme in Sri Lanka. The delegation had meetings with Canadian Officials and Canadian Parliamentarians.
- The HC coordinated the visit of a four-member delegation from the Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka from 5th – 8th March 2019 for a familiarization visit on Peacekeeping.
- The High Commission coordinated the visit of a thirteen-member delegation led by Hon. Thalatha Atukorale, Minister of Justice and Prison Reforms for the Open Government Partnership Global Summit 2019 held from 29 – 31st May 2019 in Ottawa.
- The HC coordinated the visits of Hon. Chandrani Bandara, Minister of Women and Child Development to British Columbia, Vancouver from 01st to 06th June 2019, and Hon. Arjuna Ranatunga, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation and a delegation to attend the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Election from 25th – 27th September 2019 in Montreal, Quebec.
- The HC coordinated the visits of a delegation from the Bank of Ceylon, from 18th to 19th October 2019 and the visit of Dr. Hiran W Jayewardene, Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Corporation (IOMAC) from 02nd to 04th November 2019
- The HC coordinated Mutual Legal Assistance between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Justice, Canada.

- The HC coordinated a one-week training programme by Ambassador (Rtd) David Devine of Canada for the Sri Lanka Foreign Service Officers in coordination with the Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute (BIDTI) and the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI) in April 2019. To enhance the training capacity of the BIDTI with assistance from the Canadian Foreign Service Institute, action has been initiated to finalise a MoU between the BIDTI and the Canadian Foreign Service Institute.
- Consul General/Toronto (CG) briefed Lieutenant Governor of the Ontario Province, Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Heads of Ministries and Department Heads of Training Colleges and Universities on important development projects in Sri Lanka and the initiatives taken by the Government on key national issues.
- With regard to Private Bill Nos. 94, 97 & 104, the Consul General met MPP Norm Miller, Assistant to the Premier of Ontario, MPP Aris Babikian, MPP Amarjot Singh and Mr. Anish Dwivedi, Director of External Relations and Intergovernmental Affairs of the Office of the Premier. CG also coordinated with Committee Clerks of the Standing Committees and offices of various MPPs on this subject.
- CG had meetings with Mayor Frank Scarpitti of Markham City, Mayor Bonnie Crombie of Mississauga City, Mayor Dave Barrow of Richmond Hill City, Mayor Dave Ryan of Pickering City, and conveyed Sri Lanka's position and requested avoiding proclamations on Genocide. A meeting was also held with Mr. John Argue, Coordinator for Sri Lanka of the Amnesty International Canada concerning human rights developments and the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka.
- The Consul General met with the Peel religion Chief Nishan Duraiappah regarding training opportunities for Sri Lankan police officers.
- The CG arranged a meeting to discuss bilateral cooperation between the Seneca College and Sri Lankan higher education entities in Colombo in 2019. Mr. David Agnew, President of Seneca International visited Colombo, Sri Lanka on 13th January 2019 for a meeting with SLIDA to initiate the process to sign an MoU with Seneca. The Asian Aviation Center, Sri Lanka, and Seneca have entered into a partnership to promote Seneca programs in Sri Lanka and to advise and guide prospective students to study at Seneca.
- The HC was represented at 13 events organized by Canadian Government institutions inter alia Accreditation Seminar by Global Affairs Canada on 7th February 2019 in Ottawa, networking luncheon meeting with Vice President and Chief Economist of Export Development Canada, the Open Government Partnership Global Summit from 29-31 May 2019 at Shaw Centre in Ottawa and luncheon meetings hosted by the Asia Pacific Heads of the Group and Commonwealth Heads of the Diplomatic Group and Asia Pacific Queen's Ambassadors' Forum by Dean of the Asia-Pacific Group and other HoMs.
- The High Commissioner (HC) participated as the Chief Guest at the Women in Management (WIM) Awards 2019 in Toronto from 28th – 29th March 2019. During this visit, he met with Hon. Ted Arnott, Speaker of the Legislative

Assembly of Ontario, Mr. Randy Ambalavanar, leading businessman and project investor in Sri Lanka from Toronto, and Chief Priests of Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu and Catholic institutions in Toronto.

2. Multilateral Relations

- The High Commission facilitates matters related to the ICAO, which has its headquarters in Montreal in Quebec. The High Commissioner presented Credentials to the Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as the Sri Lanka Representative to ICAO at the ICAO Secretariat in Montreal, Quebec on 19th February 2019.
- Hon. Arjuna Ranatunga, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation and a delegation attended the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Election at the 40th Session of ICAO Assembly from 25th – 27th September 2019 in Montreal, Quebec.

3. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

The export target set for 2019 from Sri Lanka to Canada was USD 232 million. The High Commission and the Consulate General in Toronto achieved USD 322.27 million which was above the set target and is a 10.6% increase when compared to 2018 (i.e. USD 291.395 million).

- The HC in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tea Board hosted the first ever Ceylon Tea and Cake Dansala on 24th May 2019 and a promotion of Ceylon Tea was organized at the Diversity Champion Awards ceremony on 22nd November 2019.
- A Sri Lankan delegation consisting of representatives from ten Sri Lankan companies participated in the Grocery Innovations Canada Exhibition in Toronto on 22nd October 2019.
- CG handled 345 trade inquiries and one trade complaint, and 3 market information reports were prepared. The sectors promoted by CG include Gem & Jewellery, Dehydrated Fruits and Vegetables and Medicinal Herbs, Frozen Food, Apparel/Men's Cotton Shirts and Towels, Natural Spices, Coconut Products, Ceylon Tea/Specialty teas, Greenhouse, Nursery and Floriculture Production, Coir products/coco-peat, Canadian importers of Biscuits, Chocolates & other confectionary items.
- HC and CG coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at the SIAL Canada 2019 Food and Beverage Sector International Exhibition in Toronto, from 30th April – 2nd May, 2019 together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Export Development Board (EDB), Sri Lanka Tea Board and the Department of Commerce.'
- The CG coordinated with the BOI and other line agencies to set up several of 8 meetings for potential investors with relevant Officials in Colombo during 2019.

- Ni-Met Metals Inc, a Canadian company involved in the production of metal related products, commenced a scrap-metal recycling project at the Trincomalee – Kappalthurai Industrial Estate, which was approved by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, with an investment of CAD 35 million.
- The HC operated the Sri Lanka booth at the Travel and Vacation Show which was sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism Development, Wildlife & Christian Religious Affairs from 30th to 31st March, 2019 in Ottawa.
- The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, in collaboration with the HC, participated at the International Tourism and Travel Show in Montreal from 25th to 27th October 2019.

Cultural Relations

- HC attended the New Year blessing ceremonies organized by religious institutions in Ottawa on 01st January 2019, Sri Lankan community Festive Dinner Dance on 05th January 2019, Thai Pongal celebrations on 12th January 2019, All-Night Pirith Chanting Ceremony and the New Year Blessing Ceremony on 13th April 2019 and the Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebrations on 14th April 2019.
- The 71st Anniversary of Independence was celebrated at the Official Residence of the High Commissioner in Canada and the Toronto City Council on 4 February 2019. A Diplomatic Reception was held on 11th February 2019 with Hon. Donald Bobiash, Assistant Deputy Minister/Asia Pacific, DFATD Canada as the Chief Guest.
- The HC organised the "Tripitaka" ceremony on 16th March 2019 with Prof. Noel Salmond, Associate Professor of the Carleton University, Ottawa as the Guest Speaker.
- Acting High Commissioner visited the Hilda Jayewardenaramaya Temple, following the vandalization of the Buddha statue at the temple premises on 16th April 2019 and offered assistance to the resident monks. The High Commission also assisted with issues concerning Buddhist temples including taking up such matters with the relevant authorities.
- HC participated at the International Development Week (IDW) Conference 2019 on 09th February 2019 at the University of Ottawa, inaugural Sinhala Heritage Day and New Year reception on 27th April 2019, Vesak programme on Parliament Hill organized by Hon. Chandra Arya, Member of Parliament on 18th May 2019, two other annual Vesak programmes on 26th May 2019, 24th Annual Parliament Hill Eid Festival by the Association of Progressive Muslims of Canada on 13th June 2019, St. Anthony's Church Feast "Kochchikade in Ottawa" organized by the Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa on 15th June 2019 and Vas Aradana/Rainy Retreat ceremony on 22nd July 2019 at the Ottawa Buddhist Vihara and a fund-raising event hosted by the Heads of Missions Spouses Association on 11th June 2019 with Sri Lankan traditional food items.

- The HC participated at the Annual General Meeting of Ontario Sri Lankan Pensioners Association (OSPA) in Toronto on 27th July 2019. During this visit, H.E. the High Commissioner also participated at the Sri Lankan Day at Midland by Canada Sri Lanka Catholic Association on 28th July 2019.
- HC participated at the Award Ceremony for the Tri City Cricket Tournament on 04th August 2019, the Cultural Friendship Event by Montreal Buddhist Society in Montreal, Quebec on 11th August 2019, Sri Lanka Day organized by the Consulate General Office in Toronto on 08th September 2019 and a Food Fair organized by the Ottawa Buddhist Vihara on 22nd September 2019, International Food Fair organised and held at DFATD (Global Affairs Canada) on 13th November 2019 and at the Ottawa Musical Night 2019 organized by the Sri Lankan community at Kailash Mital Theatre on 02nd November 2019.
- The HC organised a Mass and a memorial service including interfaith observations on 28th April 2019 to pay tribute to the victims of Easter Sunday attacks at the Good Shepherd Church, Orleans. The CG organized a Mass and service at Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Catholic Church and participated in several vigils organized by the Sri Lankan Associations on the same.
- HC participated at the Bharatanatyam Arangetram as a Chief Guest on 12th October 2019 and the Six-a-side Cricket Tournament by the Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa (SLCAO), on 18th August 2019.
- HC hosted the Annual Katina ceremony of Ottawa Buddhist Vihara on 19th October 2019, attended Dhamma Sermons organized by Ven. Nagoda Saddhaloka Thero at the Ottawa Theravada Buddhist Vihara in Orleans and Ottawa Buddhist Vihara on 22nd October 2019 and participated at the Annual Katina ceremony organized by the Hilda Jayewardenaramaya Buddhist Monastery on 26th October 2019.
- HC attended the Hindu Heritage Day on Parliament Hill organized by Hon. Chandra Arya, Member of Parliament on 30th November 2019, participated as a Chief Guest at the Jegatheeswaralaya Fine Arts Centre's Annual Day Celebration at Kailash Mittal Theatre, Carleton University on 01st December 2019 and at the Christmas with Christ programme organized by Ottawa Sri Lanka Catholic Prayer Group on 21st December 2019.
- CG organised the annual Christmas celebrations on 22nd December 2019 at the Good Shepherd Church, Orleans, participated at the Sinhala & Tamil New Year Celebrations organized by the Sri Lanka-Canada Association of Toronto (CSLA) on 21st April 2019 and contributed and Participated in the Annual Vesak and Poson Celebrations, annual prize giving ceremonies in May at main Buddhist temples in Toronto, and organized "Thripitakabivandana" in three main Buddhist Temples in Toronto.
- CG, together with Toronto Police Community Partnership and Engagement Unit and the Toronto Police Cricket Club, organised a 'Sri Lanka Day' on 08th September 2019 at the Toronto Police Perceval Cummins Cricket Field in Scarborough, Toronto.

4. Labour Welfare

- The HC has responded to 15 queries and requests for assistance on employment opportunities, authenticity of offers of employment, credibility of employers/ companies and migration prospective.
- The HC and CG assisted prospective Sri Lanka nationals seeking employment in Canada through agents, by verifying the bona-fide of job offers. The CG assisted Sri Lankans employed by Canadian companies regarding their welfare and continued its interactions to create awareness among potential employers and employment opportunity facilitators.

Latin America and Caribbean Division

Latin America and Caribbean Division

Introduction

During the period under review, the Latin America & Caribbean (LA&C) Division as well the Missions coming under the purview of the LA&C Division worked towards the enhancement of political, economic and cultural relations as well as people-to-people contacts between Sri Lanka and the countries coming under the purview of the LA&C region.

Territorial Coverage: 33
Brazil, Cuba, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Commonwealth of Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St.Kitts and Nevis, St.Vincent and Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Resident Missions in the region: 02
Brasilia – Brazil
Havana – Cuba

Concurrent Accreditation:

Brasilia, Brazil	-	Argentina, Colombia, Paraguay, Suriname
Havana, Cuba	-	Commonwealth of Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Venezuela
Washington D.C.	-	Trinidad & Tobago
PRUN/New York	-	The Bahamas

i. Bilateral Relations:

During the period under review, the Division worked towards the enhancement of Sri Lanka's bilateral relations in the political, economic and cultural spheres, as well as people-to-people contacts, in close coordination with Sri Lanka's Missions in the LA&C region, resident LA&C Missions in Colombo, as well as concurrently accredited LA&C Missions based in New Delhi.

The official visit of the State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Vasantha Senanayake to Cuba for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations (25-29 June 2019), to Panama (30 June 2019), and to Venezuela (3–6 October 2019) helped elevate bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and these countries during the period under review.

The LA&C Division facilitated a working visit for the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs for Asia, Middle East and Oceania of Venezuela, Ruben Dario Molina to Sri Lanka from 24 to 28 August 2019.

During the period under review, Sri Lanka also established diplomatic relations with Nicaragua on 15 May 2019, with Saint Lucia on 25 June 2019, and with Barbados on 28 June 2019, with the signing of Agreements between the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in New York and counterparts of the three countries.

During the period under review, the following non-resident Ambassadors-designate to Sri Lanka presented Credentials to H.E. the President of Sri Lanka:

- H.E. Daniel Chuburu, Argentina on 06 May 2019
- H.E. Clemencia Ucros, Colombia,
- H.E. Ariel Galindo,El Salvador,
- H.E. Dr. David Pollard,Guyana on 01 February 2019,
- H.E. Juan Monsalve,Chile,
- H.E. Coromoto Calderan, Venezuela on 03 October 2019.

Brazil

i. Brazil is one of the two most important countries in the LA&C region. During the period under review, bilateral political relations were maintained with Brazil and with countries concurrently accredited to Sri Lanka through our Embassy in Brazil, i.e., Argentina, Colombia, Paraguay and Suriname. The Sri Lanka Embassy in Brazil maintained high level contacts with the Foreign Ministry and other Ministries and Departments of the host country, as well as with those of concurrent accreditation. The Ministryalso engaged with other countries in the region including Chile, Peru, Guyana, Uruguay, and Bolivia on numerous matters of mutual interest including furthering economic cooperation, with the auspices of the Sri Lanka Embassy in Brasilia.

ii. The Ministry as well as the Embassy coordinated preparation for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Brazil which falls in 2020. Towards this end, the Sri Lanka Embassy in Brasilia carried out discussions with the Brazilian Foreign Ministry to organize a series of commemorative events. This included the convening of the first round of bilateral political consultations between Sri Lanka and Brazil in the second half of 2020 in Brasilia in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) entered into in 2011 between the Sri Lanka Foreign Ministry and the Brazilian Foreign Ministry on the establishment of a mechanism for political consultations. A proposal was also submitted for an exchange of high-level visits at foreign ministerial level in commemoration of the 60th anniversary in 2020.

iii. Ambassador/Brasilia H.E.M.M.Jaffeer participated in the inauguration ceremonies of the newly elected Presidentsof Brazil H.E. Jair Bolsonaroand Argentina H.E. Alberto Fernández on 01 January 2019 and on 10 December 2019, respectively.

iv. Ambassador/Brasilia presented Credentials tothe Heads of State of the Republic of Paraguay on 23 April 2019 and Colombia on 12 September 2019,and held a number of meetings with relevant authorities to discuss the expansion of Sri Lanka's bilateral relations with those countries.

v. The LA&C Division worked on the formalization ofconcurrent accreditation of the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brazil to Bolivia and to Guyana, for which the concurrence of the two countries is pending. The concurrent accreditation of Uruguay through the Sri Lanka Embassy in Brasilia was formalized following approval from the Uruguayan authorities.

vi. The Embassy in Brasilia engaged actively with the network of Honorary Consulates in Brazil, i.e., 'Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Bahia' and in other countries in South America, i.e. Buenos Aires-Argentina, Bogotá-Colombia, Paramaribo- Suriname, Santiago-Chile and Lima-Peru.

vii. The Ministry as well as the Embassy in Brasilia followed up on the agreements/MoUssigned with Brazil as well as with concurrently accredited countries in the fields of education, scientific and technical cooperation, agriculture, visa waivers, etc.

Cuba

i. Cuba continues to be important for Sri Lanka given longstanding historical relations, and the strategic role played by Cuba in multilateral fora. The LA&C Division and the Sri Lanka Embassy in Havana continued to maintain close and friendly relations with the Government of Cuba during the period under review, with the further strengthening of relations through the positive engagement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba and other Government bodies. The Embassy also maintained regular discussions with the Cuban political leadership to update on new developments in Sri Lanka.

ii. The Sri Lanka Embassy in Havana in coordination with the LA&C Division organized the following activities to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Cuba which was marked on 29 July 2019:

- Official visit of the State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Vasantha Senanayake to Cuba from 25-29 June 2019 to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Sri Lanka and Cuba.
- During the visit, the State Minister held bilateral discussions on issues of mutual interest with the Cuban Minister of Foreign Affairs Bruno Eduardo Rodriguez Parrilla as well as the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba Marcelino Medina Gonzalez.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations (LKI) and the Raul Roa Garcia Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba was signed at the bilateral meeting. The MoU is expected to develop the academic and scholastic cooperation and research initiatives between the two Institutes.
- Participation of the State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka as well as the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba in a discussion organized in association with the 'Cuban Institute of Friendship with the People' (ICAP) to mark the 60th anniversary.
- During the visit, the State Minister planted a mahogany tree at the Che Guevera Memorial in Santa Clara,Cuba on 28 June 2019 to signify everlasting friendship and cooperation between Sri Lanka and Cuba.
- Organizing of a food festival by the Sri Lanka Embassy in Havana at Grand Hotel Manzana Kempinski in association with Mount Lavinia Hotel with the participation of celebrity Chef Publis Silva on 28 June 2019.
- Visit by a Cuban delegation of journalists from 'Prensa Latina News Agency' in Cuba in November 2019 to produce a documentary entitled "60 years of flourishing friendship". The project was supported by the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.

iii. The Sri Lankan Government donated USD 50,000 to the Cuban Government for reconstruction following the devastation caused by the tornado that struck Cuba on 27 January 2019.

iv. The LA&C Division finalized concurrent accreditation of the Commonwealth of Dominica, Haiti, Honduras and Panama through the Sri Lanka Embassy in Havana.

El Salvador

i. Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Cuba H.E. Ratnapala Liyanagamage, concurrently accredited to El Salvador attended the Presidential Inauguration Ceremony in El Salvador on 03 June 2019 representing the Government of Sri Lanka.

ii. Discussions took place in 2019 to arrange a study visit on Research on Chronic Kidney Disease (CKDu) in the farming communities of Sri Lanka by El Salvador, and as a first step, a medical team from El Salvador is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka in 2020.

Dominican Republic

i. Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Cuba H.E. Ratnapala Liyanagamage, concurrently accredited to Dominican Republic, presented Credentials to the Head of State of the Dominican Republic on 10 October 2019.

ii. Sri Lanka's proposal to sign an Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for diplomatic and official passports between Sri Lanka and the Dominican Republic was conveyed to the Dominican Republic side, and the Department of Immigration & Emigration of Sri Lanka conveyed its concurrence to the proposed Agreement. The matter is under process.

Venezuela

i. The LA&C Division arranged the visit of the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs for Asia, Middle East and Oceania of Venezuela, Ruben Dario Molina to Sri Lanka from 24 to 28 August 2019. During the visit, Vice Minister had bilateral discussions with the State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the higher officials of the Ministry.
ii. The State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Vasantha Senanayake paid an official visit to Venezuela on 03 - 06 October 2019. During the visit, the State Minister paid a courtesy call on the President of Venezuela H.E. Nicolas Maduro. The State Minister also met with the Minister of the People's Power for Tourism and Foreign Trade Félix Plasenciaand Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela Ruben Dario Molina during the visit.
iii. Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Cuba H.E. Ratnapala Liyanagamage, who is concurrently accredited to Venezuela, presented Credentials to the Head of State of Venezuela on 18 July 2019.
iv. Ambassador Ratnapala Liyanagamage participated in the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordination Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Venezuela in July 2019 representing Sri Lanka as Head of the Sri Lankan delegation.

Panama

i. For the first time in its history, Sri Lanka received an invitation to participate at the Inauguration ceremony of the newly elected President of Panama, and the State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Vasanatha Senanayake represented Sri Lanka at the Inauguration Ceremony of the new President H.E. Laurentino Cortizo on 30 June 2019

The Bahamas

i. Sri Lanka extended its condolences to the Government of the Bahamas on the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian in October 2019. The hurricane severely affected people's lives as well as the tourism industry and the economy of the Bahamas.
ii. On the recommendation of Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, the tenure of Sri Lanka's Honorary Consul in the Bahamas Mr. Ravindra Jesubatham was extended for a period of two years w.e.f. 14 June 2019.

1. Multilateral Relations:

i. The LA&C Division closely coordinated with the UN Division in the Ministryon support to and from countries in the LA&C Division in regionaland multilateral fora.

ii. The Division paid special attention to furthering Commonwealth links with Caribbean countries which are also members of the Commonwealth (i.e., the Bahamas, Jamaica, Dominica, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, among others), given shared heritage and special links.

iii. The Division paid close attention to LA&C countries who are members of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), and part of ALBA.

iv. Sri Lanka maintained close relations with Brazil in the multilateral fora as a member of G-20, BRICS, and a regional power.

v. The Ministry coordinated closely with the Cuban Mission in Colombo and the UN Division with regard to support to and from Cuba within regional and UN processes such as NAM and HRC.Sri Lanka continued its support to Cuba on the UNGA annual Resolution titled, "necessity on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the USA against Cuba", as per Sri Lanka Government's standard position.

vi. The Ministry coordinated with the UN Division (and respective Missions) on Sri Lanka's support for the following candidatures:

- Candidatures of Brazil and Venezuela to the Human Rights Council (HRC), 2020-2022;
- Candidatures of Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic and Uruguay to the UNESCO Executive Board, 2019-2023;
- Candidatures of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru and Paraguay to the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), 2019-2022;
- Candidatures of Argentina, The Bahamas, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama and Peru to the Council of International Maritime Organization (IMO), 2020-2021;
- Candidatures of Brazil and Peru to the Executive Council of the World Meteorological (WMO), 2020-2023;
- Candidatures of Colombia, Nicaragua and Panama to the ECOSOC, 2020-2022;
- Bolivian candidature to the Committee Against Torture (CAT), 2020-2023;
- Jamaican candidature to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 2020-2023;

2. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments:

i. The LA&C Division in coordination with the Department of Commerce and other line agencies identified initiatives to be implemented with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba and Mexico to enhance bilateral trade relations, and identified specific products to be exported to those countries based on their respective market requirements. A concept paper in this regard was prepared in consultation with the Department of Commerce.

ii. The following trade, investment and tourism promotion activities and events were organised by the Sri Lanka Embassy in Brazil with the support of relevant line agencies in Sri Lanka and in Brasilia:

- A trade and tourism promotion event was organised in Sao Paulo with the support of the Chamber of Commerce of Sao Paulo (ACSP) and the Sao Paulo Travel Trade Association (ABAV), which paved the way to establish links with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Associations of Brazil.
- Four Sri Lankan companies representing coconut products and essential oil participated in the "APAS-2019", the largest consumer fair in Brazilduring 6-9 May 2019 in Sao Paulo.
- Sri Lankawas represented at the "Super Minas trade show"on 15-17 October 2019 in the state of Minas Geraisin Brazil.
- Sri Lanka's representation at the Brazil Tea Festival from 06-07 December 2019 in Brasilia helped Sri Lankan tea companies to establish trade links with Brazilian tea importers and business partners.
- A ten-day familiarization programmefor six Brazilian travel and tour companies was organized in September 2019 with the support of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.
- Initiated close coordination with the Chambers of Commerce in Colombia, and Suriname to identify suitable importers and trade opportunities.

iii. The following trade, investment and tourism promotion activities and events were organised by the Sri Lanka Embassy in Cuba with the support of relevant line agencies in Sri Lanka and Havana:

- A trade delegation led by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board participated in a Round Table Business Meeting convened with Import Agencies of Cuba on 25-29 June 2019, as part of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations celebrations.
- Facilitated a business meeting between 'Sri Lanka Yaden International pharmaceutical company' and the Cuban pharmaceutical sector in October 2019 to discuss potential collaboration.

- Facilitated the signing of an Agreement between Dankotuwa Porcelain and a distributor in Cuba for the distribution of Dankotuwa Porcelain products in the Caribbean region.
- Introduced a potential distributor in Panama to Dankotuwa Porcelain PLC.
- Maintained close contact with large apparel conglomerates in Sri Lanka, i.e. MAS and Brandix with business interests in the Caribbean region.

iv. Sri Lanka maintained cooperation with the Bahamas in the shipping and maritime sectors given the latter's strong credentials in these spheres.

3. Cultural Relations:

Brazil

i. With a view to showcasing Sri Lankan culture and tourism in the Latin American region, especially in Brazil, the Embassy participated in various cultural promotions and charity events organized by the Brazilian Federal Government, Brazilian cultural institutes and diplomatic Missions. Sri Lanka was represented at the cultural festival "Gastronômico do Grupo AOLA-2019" organized by the Asia-Oceania Ladies Association-AOLA.

ii. In a 30-minute TV interview aired by "TV Supren I Brasilia", Ambassador Jaffeer highlighted the historical, cultural links between Sri Lanka and Brazil, forged through the Theosophical Society in Brazil (TSB), co-founded by the well-known theosophist Buddhist revivalist Colonel Henry Steel Olcott.

Cuba

i. Cooperation in the field of education between Sri Lanka and Cuba continued in 2019. The Cuban Government continued to offeran annual scholarship to qualified Sri Lankan students to study medicine in Cuba, provided through the Ministry of Higher Education in Sri Lanka.

ii. Discussions continued between Sri Lankan and Cuban authorities with regard to the provision of capacity building and training in bio science, Nano-technology, as well as high tech R&D for Sri Lankan professionals in the field of medical research as Cuba has developed lab tests and R&D in medicine and has found new treatments, especially for lounge cancer and diabetes.

iii. A proposal was initiated to conduct a capacity building programme for the staff of the Institute of Cuban Radio & Television (ICRT) with the Sri Lanka Media Training Institute and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka. This is likely to be followed up in 2020.

4. Labour Relations:

i. The Ministry looked after the welfare of Sri Lankans including Sri Lankan employees based in LA & C countries,through the two resident Missions in Brazil and Cuba, and through Sri Lanka's concurrent accreditation. These included the extension of consular services, especially for stranded Sri Lankan citizens,including illegal immigrants to the region.

ii. The Sri Lanka Embassy in Cuba provided support to Sri Lankan students and Sri Lankan employees living in Cuba and in neighbouring countries in the Caribbean region including in Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos, on the basis of proximity.

South Asia and SAARC Division

South Asia and SAARC Division

Introduction

- The South Asia & SAARC Division deals with matters pertaining to bilateral relations with seven South Asian countries; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan, and also deals with matters pertaining to South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- During the review period, the Division was tasked to keep a track on the geopolitical and socio-economic developments in the region while providing inputs for high level political engagements. It also guided the Sri Lanka's foreign policy on these countries in the political, economic, security, education and social spheres. Technical Cooperation, development assistance, investment relations, tourism and cultural promotions through both bilateral and regional engagements.
- In relation to SAARC, during the review period, this Division played a pivotal role in assisting Ministry's departments, Divisions, institutions of Sri Lanka to attend and conduct SAARC related meetings in accordance with norms and procedures of the SAARC forums. It also handles the subject of SAARC visa for Sri Lankan officials and delegates who are attending SAARC related meetings, as well as, visas for other entitled categories of persons.

Background of the Geographical Representation:

- Diplomatic Representations, Sri Lanka maintains 06 Resident Missions (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Afghanistan), and also has 01 Deputy High Commission in Chennai and 02 Consulates General in Mumbai and Karachi. At present, Sri Lanka does not have a Resident Diplomatic Mission in Bhutan nor accreditation. Sri Lanka has appointed Honorary Representations in Chittagon (Bangladesh), Thimpu (Bhutan), Lahore and Peshawar (Pakistan)
- With regard to the South Asian Resident Missions in Colombo, there are 06 Missions; i.e Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan. Also, India maintains Consulates General/ Assistant High Commissions in Jaffna, Hambantota and Kandy. Also, there are two Honorary Consul Representations in Sri Lanka – Bhutan and Pakistan respectively.
- The SAARC Cultural Centre is based in Colombo.

Afganistan

i. Bilateral Relations

- Discussions are in progress to finalize the following Agreements:
    - MoU on Political Consultations
    - Air Service Agreement
    - MoU on Visa Waiver for Diplomatic and Official Passports

- Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons
- Defence Agreement

- Discussions are ongoing to collaborate and focus on the identified priority sectors on cultural cooperation, education, sports, economic cooperation and science and technology.
- Discussions are also in progress to attract medical tourism from Afghanistan.
- Consultations are ongoing to assist Afghanistan on human resources development by providing scholarships under the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Presidential Scholarships and KDU.
- To further strengthen the cooperation in the education sector, discussions are in progress for early conclusion of the MoU between Kabul University and University of Colombo.

ii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Discussions have been made on the export of Sri Lankan tea to Afghanistan.
- Discussions are in progress to follow up the negotiations of MoU on Promotion and Protection of Investments.

iii. Cultural Relations

- Discussions are ongoing for the establishment of Joint Committee for the implementation of MoU on Culture Co-operation between Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.

iv. Labour Welfare

- Negotiations are in progress for the holding of the Joint Committee for the implementation of MoU between Sri Lanka and Afghanistan concerning the Employment of Manpower in Afghanistan.
- Discussions are in progress for the implementation of the Nurses Capacity Building Agreement which was signed between the two countries.

Bangladesh

i. Bilateral Relations

- Visit by Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs to attend the 03rd Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) from 03rd to 05th September 2019. During the visit, bilateral meetings were held with Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and the discussions were focused on strengthening Sri Lanka – Bangladesh relations.
- Visit by Hon. Minister of Higher Education to attend the Asia – Pacific Education Conference on 12th December 2019. During the visit, bilateral discussions were held with Hon. Minister of Higher Education of Bangladesh

with the aim of enhancing the cooperation and expand the mutual investments in the field of education.

- Discussions are ongoing to hold the 04th rounds of Sri Lanka – Bangladesh Political Consultations at the Foreign Secretary Level in Sri Lanka early 2020.
- Discussions are ongoing in extending cooperation to curb terrorism, violent extremism, radicalization on any religious or societal pretext to work together to counteract all such challenges in both countries and beyond. As a result, it was agreed to work towards convening a broad-based dialogue on tolerance, inclusion and pluralism in 2019.
- Discussions are ongoing to recognize the potential for collaborative partnership between the private sectors of the two countries, particularly in high-end apparel and textiles, information technology and related knowledge industry, religious and eco-tourism, gems and jewellery and precious metal, agriculture and agro-processing, fisheries–livestock–dairy–horticulture, health management, infrastructure development and construction, pharmaceuticals, energy and power.
- Facilitated scholarships for Sri Lankan students to pursue higher studies in Bangladesh, in consultation with the line agencies in Sri Lanka. (*There are approximately 350 Sri Lankan students studying in Bangladesh, mainly in MBBS Programmes.)*
- Discussions are ongoing to finalize at an early date for the following Agreements/MoUs:
    - Agreement for the Value Addition and Transshipment in Apparel Sector
    - Agreement on Coastal Shipping
    - MoU on mutual Mutual-cooperation in Shipping Business
    - MoU on Youth Development
- Discussions are ongoing to seek the possibility in order to collaborate in the health sector, especially in the pharmaceutical industry in Bangladesh.
- Discussions are ongoing to purchase fertilizer including organic and non-organic fertilizers from Bangladesh to develop the agriculture sectors.
- Discussions are ongoing to conduct nurses training programmes for Bangladeshi nurses, including assisting with nurses training institutes.

ii. Multilateral Relations

- Sri Lanka has extended its support to Bangladesh's candidature in 2019 at ECOSOC for the term 2020-2022 and for the post of Deputy Director General of International Organization for Migration (IOM), for the term of 2019 – 2024 (Candidature of Mr. Shahidul Haque).

iii. Economic Relations and Investment Cooperation:

- Discussions are ongoing to seek the possibility to negotiate Bangladesh – Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement *(as a follow up to H.E. the President's visit to Bangladesh in 2017).*
- Negotiations are ongoing to hold the 06th round of the Joint Economic Commission in 2020.
- Facilitated discussions to see the possibility of exchange of genetically modified seeds and expand the capacities in inland fisheries.
- Discussions are ongoing for early finalization of the agreements on Customs Cooperation, Avoidance of Double Taxation, and Promotion and Protection of Investments between the two countries.

iv. Cultural Relations

- In order to deepen people – to – people contacts and cultural exchanges, this Division facilitated Bangladesh High Commission in Colombo to hold a range of events including fine arts, feature films, saree, music, cuisine, and the International Mother Languages Day etc.

v. Labour and Welfare Relations

- In the context of the sizable presence of Sri Lankan workers and professionals in Bangladesh across manufacturing and service sectors, discussions are ongoing to ease the visa processes.

Bhutan

i. Bilateral Relations

- Discussions are in progress for the establishment of a Resident Mission in Bhutan.
- Discussions are also in progress to focus attention in identified sectors of cooperation in education & human resources development, health, aviation and cultural spheres.
- Currently around 200 Bhutanese students have been studying in different Sri Lankan universities in various disciplines, including MBBS, Dental Science degrees at the universities of Colombo, Kelaniya, Peradeniya and KDU. The Division facilitated Bhutanese students in securing Presidential Scholarships, KDU and other Buddhist related scholarships to pursue their studies in Sri Lanka.
- Negotiations are ongoing to seek the possibility of concluding a MoU on training of Bhutanese nurses to enhance the cooperation in the health sector.
- With the aim of enhancing tourism cooperation, both countries are looking at the possibilities of signing the Air Services Agreement at an early stage.

- Discussions are in progress for the finalization of Agreement on Exemption of Visas for Official and Diplomatic Passports.
- Division has been in consultation with the concerned authorities to reduce the visa fee for the Sri Lankans who are visiting Bhutan for tourism purposes.

ii. Cultural Relations

- Division assisted in strengthening Sri Lanka – Bhutan Buddhist relations.
- Considering the common cultural and religious heritage, both countries are seeking the possibility to negotiate and finalize a cultural cooperation programme.

India

i. Bilateral Relations

- During 2019, a number of high level visits took place between the two countries, prominent among them were two Presidential visits, from Sri Lanka and two Prime Ministerial visits; one from India and the other from Sri Lanka. The most important high level bilateral visit was that of H.E. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, newly elected President of Sri Lanka to India from 28 to 30 November 2019, during which India extended two lines of credit; $ 400 million and $ 50 million to Sri Lanka.
- The other important high-level visit was that of Hon. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India who undertook a visit to Sri Lanka on 9 June 2019 to express solidarity in the wake of the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks and the visit was also his first overseas outreach, after being reelected as the Prime Minister.
- The Authorities of India and Sri Lanka agreed for a currency swap of US$ 400 million and the deferment by a month for the payment of US$ 434 million to the Asian Clearing Union (ACU).
- The FITS Aviation Ltd. of Sri Lanka commenced to operate air services between Sri Lanka and India in 2019. Also, the Alliance Air of India started air services operation between India and Sri Lanka in 2019.
- Matters pertaining to Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) and of consular nature assisting Sri Lankan nationals in India were actively pursued in 2019. Interactions also included, among others, meetings with relevant stake holders in India on the issue of voluntary repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from the State of Tamil Nadu.
- Division in coordination with the Sri Lanka Deputy High Commission in Chennai facilitated 972 refugees returns through the UNHCR Refugee Repatriation Programme in 2019.
- Together with Sri Lanka's diplomatic representatives in India and line agencies of Sri Lanka, facilitated training for approximately 600 military officers from Sri Lanka Army, Navy and Air Force in India. The annual joint

Maritime Naval exercise, SLINEX 2019, between Sri Lankan and Indian Navies was held at Visakhapatnam for a week commencing 7th of September 2019.

- Division in collaboration with the Deputy High Commission in Chennai assisted in the release and repatriation of 113 Sri Lankan fishing vessels along with fishermen that drifted to Indian coastal areas. Also, facilitated in Indian requests in release, repatriation, auctioning/destroying the Indian fishing vessels which were in the custody of Sri Lanka.
- Facilitated the 06th Annual Defence Dialogue between India and Sri Lanka which was held in Colombo from 08 to 09 April 2019. Further, Indian government has offered 6 US$ Million grant to establishment of Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Sri Lanka and Cabinet approval has been granted on 09th October 2019.
- Coordination of Sri Lanka's joining with the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) initiated by the Government of India, and also 02nd International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (IWDRI) held from 19 to 20 March 2019.
- Division facilitated signing of an MoU for Refurbishment of Auditorium and Construction of Building Complex at Swami Vipulananda Institute Aesthetic Studies, Eastern University.
- Facilitation of signing a MoU between India and Sri Lanka on Gainful occupation for Family members of a Diplomatic mission or Consular Post on 05th March 2019.

ii. Multilateral Relations

Division coordinated with the UN Division in extending GoSL support for the following candidatures of year 2019:

- Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), for the term 2020-2021;
- Executive Council of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), for the term 2019-2023;
- Executive Board of the UN Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT), for the term 2019-2023;
- Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, for the term 2019-2021;
- Candidature of Hon. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Youth Affairs & Sports of India, to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Foundation Board for the term 2020-2022;
- Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for the term 2019-2022;
- Candidature of Mr. Pranab Kumar Das for the Post of Director/Compliance and Facilitation of the World Customs Organization (WCO);
- Candidature of Dr. Ramesh Chand for the post of Director General of the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO), for the term 2019-2023. (India withdrew its candidature later.); and

- Candidature of Mr. Rajiv Mehrishi for the post of External Auditor of the World Health Organization (WHO).

iii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- India has ranked as the 3rd largest export destination for Sri Lanka while remaining as the largest import sourcing destination for Sri Lanka in 2019. In the year 2019, total exports from Sri Lanka to India stood at US$ 759.37 Million while total imports from India to Sri Lanka stood at US$ 3,830.82 Million.
- The Palali/Jaffna Airport is upgraded as Sri Lanka's third international airport and was inaugurated in October 2019 after 40 years of time lapse. Flights from Bangalore, Cochin, Mumbai and Hyderabad are expected to operate. The Chennai-Jaffna flight service commenced on 17 October 2019.
- During 2019, 16 Indian investments were attracted to Sri Lanka by the active involvements of the High Commission in New Delhi which was facilitated by this Division, in the fields of compressors, warehousing & amp, logistics, manufacturing of toys, health, mini hydropower, power, restaurant chains, animal feed, computer memory modules & amp, mini drones, tires for heavy vehicles, IT education, travel management, fireworks manufacturing unit, warehousing facility, etc.
- Sri Lanka participated in 228 tourism, trade and commerce activities in India during 2019. Out of the 8 outward trade, investment delegations that had been organized and facilitated by the Mission were delegations representing major Chambers of Commerce in India, namely, the Confederation of Indian Footwear Industries (ClFl) and Indian Footwear Components Manufacturers Association (IFCOMA), Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Powerloom Development and Export Promotions Council (PDEXCIL), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and the Federation of Indian Exporters Organization (FIEO) among others.
- For the review period, total tourist arrivals from India amounted to 355,002, which in fact since the Easter Attacks India topped the number of tourists to Sri Lanka.

iv. Cultural Relations

- Sri Lankan students availed a number of scholarships offered by the Indian Government to study in India during 2019. Under the Indian Technical and Economic cooperation (ITEC) Programme of the Government of India, 402 slots were allotted to Sri Lankan government officials and others to follow short term training prgrammes in various fields in 2018 – 2019. Out of that Sri Lanka has utilized 393 slots.
- The Government of India offered 190 scholarships for Sri Lankan students under numerous schemes to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Indian Universities in 2019.

- The construction of the Indian Cultural Centre in Jaffna under Indian financial assistance has already been completed in 2019.
- The Sri Lanka – India Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2019-2023 is expected to be finalized in 2019, also concurrence is awaited from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.
- Facilitated to promote Buddhist diplomacy. Sri Lanka proposed to develop Bhopal in Madya Pradesh of India as a Buddhist pilgrim's site.
- Commemorative stamps and first day cover issued by the Sri Lanka Post were presented to the Chief Post Master General of the State of Tamil Nadu by the Deputy High Commission in Chennai to mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahathma Gandhi.

v. Labour Welfare

- MoU between the Government of India and Government of Sri Lanka on Gainful occupation for Family members of a Diplomatic mission or Consular Post signed on 05th March 2019.
- Negotiated with relevant line agencies regarding the proposed Social Security Agreement between India and Sri Lanka to amend EPF act accordingly.

Maldives

i. Bilateral Relations

- During the review period, following visits were coordinated/facilitated by this Division in consultation with the line agencies, and Sri Lanka High Commission in Maldives.
- State Visit of H.E. Ibrahim Solih, President of Maldives to Sri Lanka from 3 to 6 February 2019, to attend as the Guest of Honour at the 71st Anniversary of Independence. During the visit, bilateral discussions were held with H.E. the President to further strengthen the political, trade, economic and cultural ties and work together to promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.
- Visit of Hon. Ahmed Khaleel, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Maldives to Sri Lanka as a Special envoy of the H.E. the President of Maldives, 21-22 April 2019. (To convey solidarity to Sri Lanka during the Easter Attack)
- Meeting between Hon. Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister and Hon. Karu Jayasuriya, Speaker on 8 May 2019, to discuss ways and means to establish parliamentary friendship groups.
- Official Visit by Hon. Ranil Wickramesinghe, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka to Maldives from 02 to 04 September 2019. During the visit, Hon PM had discussions with H.E. the President, and other high-level dignitaries to further strengthen the existing bilateral cooperation and people- to –people contacts between the two countries. Hon PM addressed the Maldivian Parliament – People's Majlis and chaired the Indian Ocean Conference 2019 (IOC). Also following agreements were concluded: MoU for Vocational Training and

Youth Development, Agreement on the facilitation of Visa Arrangements, MoU on Cooperation in the area of Social Protection and MoU on Education Cooperation.

- Official visit by Hon. Abdulla Shahid, Foreign Minister of Maldives from 04 to 07 December 2019. Bilateral discussions were held with H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka. During the discussion both Foreign Ministers agreed for early conclusion of outstanding bilateral instruments in the cultural, economic, trade, investment and security spheres, and agreed to convene Sri Lanka – Maldives Joint Commission in the first quarter of 2020.
- Following visits were also facilitated: Visit by Hon. Faiszer Mustapha MP., from 09 to 12 February 2019; Visit by Hon. Ahmed Khaleel, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Maldives as a Special Envoy of the President of Maldives, 21-22 April 2019; Visit of Former President of Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed and 65 MP's to Sri Lanka in May 2019 to show their solidarity with Sri Lanka and visit by Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa from 01 to 03 July 2019.
- Discussions are in progress to hold the 4th session of Sri Lanka – Maldives Joint Commission.
- Negotiations are ongoing to finalize the following agreements: Immigration Matters & Cooperation; Mutual Assistance on Custom Matters; MoUs on Technical Cooperation towards Development of Water and Sewerage Sector, MoU Repatriation of Human Remains, MoU on Archiving Corporation, MoU Heritage Conservation and Archaeology; Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters; MoU on Health Sector Development; Extradition Treaty.
- During the review period, this Division facilitated 36 scholarships from General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University to Maldivian Cadets Officers in 2019.
- Division coordinated with Sri Lanka High Commission in Male to obtain training facilities for diving to Sri Lankan defence personnel.
- Division facilitated with the line agencies in Sri Lanka to seek the possibility of Maldivian nationals to undergo organ transplant surgery, including kidney and liver at Sri Lankan hospitals.
- Division facilitated in expediting the allocation of suitable land for new Chancery Building in the Diplomatic Enclave at Hulhumale by the Government of Maldives.
- The discussions are in progress to hold the 03rd round of the Trilateral Maritime Security Cooperation Initiative between India, Sri Lanka and Maldives.
- Facilitated Meetings for SLTC with leading Higher Education providers of Maldives for establishing a sub campus of Peradeniya University.
- Facilitated the visit of Hon. Bandula Gunawardhana, Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovations to the Maldives from 19 to 20 December to sign a MoU between the Ministry of Higher Education of Maldives and Sri Lanka Technological Campus (SLTC).

ii. Multilateral Relations

- During the review period, following Maldivian candidatures were supported by Sri Lanka: Intergovernmental Coordinating Council of the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) of UNESCO, for the term of 2019-2023.

iii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Re-established negotiations between the Health Ministry and State Pharmaceutical Cooperation in Sri Lanka and State Trading Organization (STO) in Maldives for procurement of medicine to Maldives.
- During the review period, tourism arrivals from Maldives have been recorded as 60,278.
- Discussions were held with the Maldivian High Commission on a regular basis to reinvigorate economic cooperation with the involvement of the private sector.
- Discussions are ongoing to hold the Sri Lanka – Maldives Joint Commission and the sub commission on tourism, fisheries, as effective mechanisms.

iv.Cultural Relations:

- Discussions are in progress to finalize the MoU on Cultural Cooperation.

v.Labour Welfare

- Discussions were facilitated to find ways and means to relax the restrictions on remittances for Sri Lankan workers in Maldives (Limitation has been imposed by the Maldivian government that only US$ 200 per month can be sent to Sri Lanka).
- Facilitated transfer of Maldivian prisoners from Sri Lanka to Maldives.

Nepal

i. Bilateral Relations

During the review period, following events, visits were facilitated and followed up by this Division.

- Facilitated the issuance of Joint Commemorative Stamp on 27 December 2019 on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of Sri Lanka – Nepal diplomatic relations.
- Hon. Madhav Kumar Nepal, former Prime Minister and Senior member of the Communist Party Nepal, CPN (UML) visited Sri Lanka from 09 to 14 July and had discussions with Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe to further strengthen bilateral relations and to collectively overcome the social and economic challenges faced by both countries.

- H.E. the President was invited to attend "Saagarmatha Sambaadh" Conference to be held in Kathmandu in 2020, and also declare opening of Anandakuti Viharaya.
- Division held consultations with its counterparts with the aim of holding the first rounds of Sri Lanka – Nepal Joint Commission in Sri Lanka in 2020, which had been pending since 2009.
- Division facilitated the signing of MoU with the Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University on 30 August 2019.
- Facilitated negotiations to conclude an MoU on Science & Technology and to share Sri Lanka's experience in Ayurvedic & indigenous medicine education at a proposed visit by a Nepali delegation led by the Secretary, Science & Technology of Nepal in early 2020. Also seeking the possibility to set up a similar education facility in Nepal.
- Division facilitated 20 scholarships extended by the SLIIT to Nepali students to pursue their studies in Sri Lanka.
- As a follow up action, on the signed MoU on Cooperation in Youth Development in 2018, action was taken for exchange of youth delegations in April/May 2019. Also, Sri Lanka participated at the 13th South Asian Games in Nepal, 2019.
- Following agreements are in progress for conclusion: Renewal of Cultural Agreement, Prisoners Transfer Agreement, MoU on Higher Education, MoU on Tourism.

ii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Nepal as an emerging market for inbound tourism, approximately 50,000 Sri Lankan pilgrims visited Lumbini and Buddhist sites.
- Discussions are underway for resumption of direct flights by Himalayan Airlines between Kathmandu and Sri Lanka. Also, due consideration has been given to seek the possibility for Sri Lankan Airlines to fly to Kathmandu in order to provide a boost to tourism and trade cooperation between two countries.
- Provided assistance for a visit by a trade delegation from the Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Chitwan from 04 to 07 November to meet Sri Lankan entrepreneurs. The visit resulted with a signing of a MoU with Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

iii. Cultural Relations

- Visit by Hon. Minister of Buddhasasana to Nepal from 27 to 30 June 2019. During the visit, Hon. Minister held meetings with Hon Prime Minister & Hon. Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, and State Minister of Culture, Tourism & Aviation. During the visit, Hon. Minister also visited, Lumbini, Dutugemunu Pilgrims Rest, and Sri Lanka funded Anandakuti Viharaya and Rathomachindranath Temple.

- Division facilitated the reconstruction of Anandakuti Viharaya and Rathomachindranath Temple, which were devastated by the 2015 Nepali earthquake. Follow up to H.E. the President's visit to Nepal, this Division requested on the progress of the Lumbini Master Plan Development for GoSL to consider assisting the Nepali government.
- Division assisted in signing the MoU between Lumbini Buddhist University and Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy on 07 November 2019.
- Division assisted in bringing cultural relics to Nepal, which were handed over to the Rt. Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of Nepal on 10 November 2019.

iv. Labour and Welfare

- Assisted in repatriation (incoming and outgoing) stranded Sri Lankans/Nepalis due to overstay and requested waivers from the relevant authorities of penalty fees and fines.

Pakistan

i. Bilateral Relations

- Under the facilitation of Parliamentary Exchange Programme, six Parliamentarians from Sri Lanka attended the 5th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Asia Regional Conference, held from 29 July to 2 August 2019 in Islamabad.
- Division facilitated Under the Pakistan Sri Lanka Higher Education Cooperation Programme, 1000 seats were allocated for Sri Lankan students, spanning for five years on full scholarship basis in Pakistan.
- Division facilitated the Giving Sight foundation of Sri Lanka for donating 65 human eye corneas to the Government of Pakistan as a part of bilateral health cooperation.
- Division facilitated for a training course for twenty senior officials from the Sri Lanka Administrative Service offered by the Education School of Public Policy of Pakistan.
- Discussions are ongoing for the finalization of the MoUs on Defence Cooperation, High Education and Maritime Cooperation.
- In 2019, the Tri-Services of Pakistan offered 622 Military Training Vacancies for the Armed Forces of Sri Lanka. The tri-services of two nations collaborated through visits of high-level military delegations, joint military exercises, seminars and sports exchange programmes.
- Division assisted in holding the 05th annual Defence Dialogue from 5 to 7 November 2019 in Pakistan.
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, H.E. Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi paid a two day visit to Sri Lanka from 2 to 4 December, 2019.

Discussions were focused on the areas of trade cooperation, Defence, intelligence sharing, tourism, higher education, and cultural cooperation.

- Negotiations are ongoing to hold the 06th round of the Foreign Office Consultations in 2020.

ii. Multilateral Relations

- Sri Lanka supported Pakistan's election to the Executive Board of UNESCO for the term 2019-2023 in November 2019 in Paris.
- Sri Lanka supported the Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO for the term 2019 – 2021.

iii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Pakistan is the second largest trading partner of Sri Lanka in the SAARC region and currently negotiations are ongoing to reinvigorate the Free Trade Agreement with Pakistan which was concluded in 2005.
- Discussions are ongoing to hold the 12th session of the Sri Lanka – Pakistan Joint Economic Commission to be held in Pakistan early 2020.
- Negotiations are ongoing to finalize the MoU on Tourism Cooperation between the two countries. In 2019, there had been around 14,655 tourist arrivals from Pakistan to Sri Lanka.
- Negotiations are at initial stage to identify areas of cooperation for the Pakistan Grant of credit facility of US$ 200 Million. (Livestock, housing, science and technology and the road network).
- Mr. Merrille Goonetillake, Addl. Sec. (Technical) of the Ministry of Power and Energy met with Mr. Tauseef H. Farooqi, Chairman, and National Electric Power Regulatory Authority of Pakistan to explore the possibilities of investment in the energy sector in both countries.

iv.Cultural Relations

- Negotiations are ongoing to draw a plan of action to implement the existing MoU in the field of Cultural Relations between two countries signed in 2016.
- Discussions were initiated for the organizing of cultural exchange programme between the two countries with the aim of concluding year 2020.

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) 2019

During the review period Division assisted in coordination of the following:

- SA & SAARC Division submitted the nomination of Mr. Esala Weerakoon, Senior Additional Secretary/H.E. the President of Sri Lanka for the post of Secretary General of SAARC to the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu on 25 June 2019.

- A delegation led by the Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Development, Irrigation and Fisheries & Aquatic Resources Development attended the Fourth Meeting of the SAARC Agriculture Ministers in Thimphu on 27 June 2019. The Meeting adopted the "Thimphu Statement on Agriculture and Rural Development" and the Statement on "Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)".
- Mr. K.A. Vimalenthirarajah, Director General of Fiscal Policy, Ministry of Finance in Sri Lanka was appointed as the Chairperson of the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) Board for two years at the Thirty First Meeting of the SDF Board held in Colombo from 23 to 24 August 2019.
- A delegation led by Minister of City Planning, Water Supply and Higher Education attended the Third Meeting of SAARC Ministers of Education/Higher Education in the Maldives on 10 October 2019. During the Meeting, the Malé Statement on "Education/Higher Education" and Education 2030: SAARC Framework for Action have been adopted.
- Mr. A.M.J. Sadiq, Additional Secretary, Bilateral Affairs (West and Legal), Ministry of Foreign Relations, Sri Lanka was appointed as the Chairman of the Governing Board of the SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) for a period of two years at the Tenth Meeting of the Governing Board of the SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) held in Lahore, Pakistan from 30 to 31 October 2019.
- H.E. the Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Nepal, together with two senior officials of the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, participated in the Sixth Meeting of the SAARC Inter-Governmental Group on Transport in Kathmandu on 19 November 2019. The meeting reviewed the progress of SAARC Agreements on Motor Vehicles, Railways and Air Services; SAARC Regional Multi-modal Transport Study; and SAARC Cargo and Passenger Ferry Service.
- Division attended the 57th Session of the SAARC Programming Committee in Kathmandu from 19 to 20 December 2019 for discussions to formulate the Plan of Action for year 2020 and to approve the calendar activities and the budget for the year 2020.
- Division facilitated the SAARC Cultural Centre (SCC) to successfully conduct about 11 activities/programmes in 2019 in coordination with the all SAARC countries and the SAARC Secretariat.
- Under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme, this Division facilitated to issue around 627 visas from 01 January to 31 December 2019 for the entitled persons.
- Division coordinated with the relevant Government Ministries and other institutes on the respective payments to be made to the SAARC agencies for Sri Lanka's membership in respective agencies.
- In addition to the above, SA & SAARC Division made substantial and logistical preparations for Sri Lanka's participation in the following major SAARC programmes/activities held in 2019;
- Second Meeting of the SAARC Seed Bank Board, New Delhi, 17 January 2019.

- Tenth Meeting of the SAARC Food Bank Board, Islamabad, 21-22 January 2019.
- Ninth Meeting of SAARC Working Group on Energy, Islamabad, 08-09 April 2019.
- Third Meeting of the Core Group of SAARC Immigration Authorities and Visa Experts, Kathmandu, 18 April 2019
- Thirteenth Informal Meeting of SAARC Finance Ministers, Nadi, Fiji, 02 May 2019.
- Twelth Meeting of the Committee of Heads of University Grants Commissions/Equivalent Bodies, Kathmandu, 30-31 May 2019.
- Fourth Meeting of SAARC Council of Experts of Energy Regulators (Electricity), Male, 10-11 June 2019.
- SAARC-ADB Fourth Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II), Kathmandu, 24-25 June 2019.
- Ninth Meeting of the Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, Thimphu, 25 June 2019.
- Seventh Meeting of the SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers' Forum, Islamabad, 23-24 July 2019.
- Thirteenth Meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Dhaka, 15-16 October 2019.
- Eleventh Meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC Cultural Centre (SCC), Galle, 16-17 October 2019.
- Fourteenth Informal Meeting of the SAARC Finance Ministers, Washington D. C., 17 October 2019.
- Tenth Meeting of the Governing Board of the SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO), Lahore, 30-31 October 2019.
- Eighth Meeting of the Governing Board of South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO), Dhaka, 05-06 November 2019.
- Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC), Kathmandu, 20-21 November 2019.

East Asia & Oceania Division

East Asia & Oceania Division

Countries covered:
Australia, People's Republic of China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Samoa,Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

Number of Resident Missions:
Four (04) (Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea)

Number of Consulates:
Four (04) (**Australia** – Sydney, Melbourne, **China** – Shanghai, Guangzhou)
Concurrent Accreditations:
Australia (Canberra) :Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu
China : Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia

No. of Multilateral / Regional Organizations:
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the Bali Process

Main areas of work of the East Asia Division are as follows:

i. Formulating Foreign Policy guidelines for Sri Lanka in relation to countries in the geographical region.
ii. Advising Sri Lanka Missions based in the geographical regions on policy decisions of the government and provide guidance to promote and project Sri Lanka's image positively within their countries of assignment.
iii. Guiding Sri Lanka Missions based in the geographical region to actively engage in economic diplomacy, public diplomacy and extending assistance to resident Sri Lankans and citizens of Sri Lanka.
iv. Facilitation/arrangement/undertaking of visits of dignitaries to/from Sri Lanka.
v. Facilitation of signing of bilateral Agreements/MoUs with countries and organisations in the region.
vi. Coordination of activities related to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Bali Process and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia.
vii. Maintaining close and cordial relations with Foreign Missions of East Asia region based in Colombo.
viii. Advising different Divisions within the Ministry on political developments in the region and their implications

1. Bilateral Cooperation

i. Facilitated visit of Mr. Kentaro Sonoura, M. P. and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan (15 to 16 February 2019)

ii. Organized the visit of H. E. Maithripala Sirisena, former President to attend the Asian Civilization Dialogue Conference held in China (13th - 16th May 2019). During this visit, H.E. the President met with H.E. Xi Jinping, President of China, H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier and H.E. Wang Yang, Chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

iii. EOD (Explosive Ordinance Disposal) equipment Military Protocols,No.20l78-025-ivll7 and the Emergency Command and Communication system, Military Protocols, No.20l8B-025-ivll7 were signed during the visit

iv. Facilitated the visit of Hon. Peter Dutton, Minister of Home Affairs of Australia (03 – 04 June 2020), Major General Craig Furini, Commander of Australia's Joint Task Force, Operation Sovereign Borders (03 September 2019) and H. E. Paul Foley, Australia`s Ambassador for Counter Terrorism & Countering Violent Extremism to Sri Lanka (30 September - 10 October 2019)

v. Hon. Ms. Toshika Abe, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and Dr.Hiroto Izumi, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan visited Sri Lanka (5th July 2019)

vi. Convened the Third Round of Senior Officials' Talks between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) in Colombo (on 17th September 2019)

vii. Facilitated the visit of H.E. Mr. Chen Min'er, Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Chingqing Municipal Committee (17th to 19th September 2019) and Ambassador Wu Jianghao, Special Representative of State Councilor & Foreign Minister of China (02 December 2019)

viii. Coordinated arrangements for H. E. Maithripala Sirisena, the President and the first lady'sparticipation at the enthronement ceremony of new Japanese Emperor Naruhito (22 to 23 October 2019) in Tokyo.

ix. Facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Sri Lankan Presidential Taskforce for Prevention of Chronic Kidney Disease and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO) on a Cooperative Programmed on Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Aetiology (CKDu), (4th November 2019) and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Scientific and Technical Cooperation between Geological Survey and Mines Bureau (GSMB) of Sri Lanka and Geoscience Australia (GA) (5thNovember 2019)

x. Facilitated the visit of H. E. Toshmitsu Motegi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan (13 December 2019)

2. Regional Cooperation

2.1 Bali Process

Sri Lanka is a member of the Bali Process

Sri Lanka's participation in Bali Process Workshops/Seminars/Events during the period, are given below:

i. Bali Process Technical Experts Group on Returns and Reintegration (TEC-RR) Meeting (12 to 13 February 2019)
ii. Bali Process Task Force on Planning and Preparedness (TEPP)(14 to 15 February 2019)
iii. Bali process Training Workshop on Identification and Protection of Victims of Trafficking for Consular Officials (12 to 13 March 2019)
iv. Bali Process Working Group on Trafficking in Persons (TIPWG) and Annual Meeting (18 to 20 June 2019)
v. 14th Ad Hoc Group Senior Officials' Meeting (22 to 23 July 2019)
vi. The Bali Process Comprehensive Approaches for Addressing Irregular Movement by Sea, Roundtable and Table Top Exercise (20 to 22 August 2019)
vii. The Bali Process Border Management Roundtable and Table Top Exercise – Risks and Emerging Issues in People Smuggling and Trafficking in Person by Air (22 to 24 October 2019)

2.2 Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

Sri Lanka gained full membership of CICA on 15 August 2018, and Sri Lanka's engagements are as listed below

i. Director, East Asia Division attended the CICA Senior Officials Committee (SOC) Meeting which was held in Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan, (18 – 19 April, 2019)
ii. Coordinated arrangements for the participation of H. E. Maithripala Sirisena, former President at the 5th Summit of the Conference on Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in Dushanbe, Tajikistan (13-15 June 2019)
iii. Ambassador of Sri Lanka to China attended the CICA Senior Officials Committee (SOC) Meeting which was held in Chongqing City, China (18 – 19 December, 2019)

2.3 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

Sri Lanka is a Dialogue Partner of SCO since 2009 and has applied for Observer status of the Organization. Sri Lanka's engagement with the SCO are as listed below.

i. Facilitated the delivery of a statement at the High Level Special event on the theme, 'UN & SCO: cooperation to promote peace, security and ability; preventing the linking of terrorism with organized crime and its financing through drug trafficking' (on 19 November 2019) by the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in New York.

1. Australia

Sri Lanka furthers its diplomatic presence through three resident Missions/Posts in Australia, namely the Sri Lanka High Commission (SLHC) in Canberra, the Consulate General in Melbourne, and the Consulate General in Sydney.

I. Canberra

a. Bilateral Relations:

i. The Third Round of Senior Officials' Talks between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) was held in Colombo(17th September 2019).

ii. Australian Home Affairs Minister Hon.Peter Dutton visited Sri Lanka to strengthen cooperation on countering transnational crimes (03-04 June 2019).

iii. A delegation for countering people-smuggling and human-trafficking led by Commander of Australia's Joint Task Force, Operation Sovereign Borders, and Major General Craig Furini visited Sri Lanka (03 September 2019).

iv. H. E. Paul Foley, Australia's Ambassador for Counter Terrorism & Countering Violent Extremism visited Sri Lanka (30 September - 10 October 2019).

v. The Government of Australia declared (23 September 2019) under section 15 (1) of the Charter of the United Nations Act 1945 that the proscription of the LTTE in Australia will be continued until 17 September 2022.

b. Multilateral Relations:

i. The High Commission lobbied for the removal of Sri Lanka from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Grey List of High Risk Third Country with Anti -Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Strategic Deficiencies with the Australian authorities.

ii. Engaged with International Organization for Migration (IOM) Australia, Coordinator and Advisor for New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific to facilitate voluntary return of overstayed persons in Australia including Sri Lankans to their countries of origin and process of their post-repatriation resettlement and reintegration programmes (on 03rd October 2019).

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments:

i. Second session of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) between Sri Lanka and Australia was held in Colombo (17 September 2019).

ii. Sri Lanka Festival- 2019 was held for the 4th consecutive year with 4,400 participants with a view to showcase Sri Lanka as an attractive destination for tourism, trade and investment (09 November 2019).

d. Defence and Security Cooperation:

i. The Sixth Meeting of Australia-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter People Smuggling and other Transnational Crime was held in Canberra (11th October 2019).

ii. Inaugural Strategic Maritime Dialogue between Sri Lanka and Australia washeld in Colombo (16 September 2019).

iii. INDO-PACIFIC ENDEAVOUR 2019 (IPE 19), the Australia's largest ever Defence engagement activity with Sri Lanka was held with the participation of more than 1000 Australian service personnel (from 23-29 March 2019).

iv. A 15 member delegation from Defence Services Command and Staff Collage visited Australia on a study tour (from 01-13 September 2019).

v. Meeting with Major General Craig Furini, Commander Joint Agency Task Force, Operation Sovereign Borders of the Australian Border Force was held focusing on ongoing collaborative engagement between Sri Lanka and Australia in the areas of Countering People Smuggling and other organized Transnational crimes (29th October 2019).

e. Science and Technology:

i. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Sri Lankan Presidential Taskforce for Prevention of Chronic Kidney Disease and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO) on a Cooperative Programmed on Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Aetiology (CKDu), was signed (4th November 2019).

ii. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Scientific and Technical Cooperation was signed between Geological Survey and Mines Bureau (GSMB) of Sri Lanka and Geoscience Australia (GA) (on 5th November 2019).

f. Education:

i. A high profile academic delegation from the University of Sri Jayawardanapura (USJP) visited Canberra and explored opportunities for collaborative academic and research partnership with Canberra based leading Australian Universities (from 16-19 December 2019).

g. Cultural Relations:

i. As a part of its constant engagement with overseas Sri Lankans, the High Commission organized cultural promotional events such as Sinhala Tamil New Year, Vesak, *Iftar* and Eid, Deepavali and Christmas celebrations during the year 2019.

ii. The annual cricket encounter for the Major General Anton Muthukumaru Trophy played between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australia (DFAT) team and the team of the High Commissions of Commonwealth countries based in Canberra was held at the Mint Oval, Deakin, Canberra (on 17th March 2019).

iii. ICC T20 World Cup Organizing Team comprising of Mr. Nick Hockley, General Manager, Government Relations & Host Cities of ICC T20 World Cup 2020 accompanied by Mr. Sam Watson, General Manager and Mr. Luke Wiman, Host City Manager, visited the High Commission (on 24th September 2019).

II. Melbourne

a. Bilateral Relations

i. Facilitated the visit of Hon. Karunarathna Paranawithana, Deputy Minister of Skills Development & Vocational Training (from 11th – 14th February 2019).

ii. Meeting with H.E. Linda Dessau, Hon. Governor of Victoria (on 28 June 2019).

iii. Engaged with following key political leaders during the period under review:

- Hon.Daniel Andrews, MP, and Premier of Victoria
- Hon.Collins Brooks MP, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria
- Hon. Shaun Leane MLC, and President of the Legislative Council of Victoria
- Hon.Michael O'Brien, new state Leader of the Opposition & Shadow Minister for Small Business
- Hon.Jason Wood MP, Federal Member for La Trobe
- Hon.Philip Dalidakis, MP, and Member for Southern Metropolitan Region
- Hon. Bruce Atkinson MLC, Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region & Member of the Legislative Council, Parliament of Victoria.
- Hon. Craig Ondarchie, MP, State Member for the North Metropolitan Region
- Hon. Richard Wayne, MP, Minister for Planning, Housing and Multicultural Affairs
- Hon. Neil Angus, MP, Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs
- Hon. Dr. Samantha Ratnam MP, Parliamentary Leader of the Victorian Greens
- Rt. Hon the Lord Mayor Sally Capp

i. Facilitated the visit of Hon. Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Finance (from 29th April-07th May 2019).

ii. Meeting with Ms. Susan Coles, Actg. State Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) (on 16th May 2019).

iii. Meeting with Mr. Trent Smyth, Secretary of Consular Corps, and Victoria (on 24th May 2019).

iv. Meeting with Mr. Alastair Roff, Executive Director/ Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA), Victoria (on 20th June, 2019).Facilitated the visit of Mayor of the Colombo Municipal Council, Hon. Rosy Senannayake (from 6th-11th July 2019).

v. Facilitated the visit of a group of Sri Lankan Mayors (from 18th -23rd August 2019).

vi. Facilitated the Overseas Study Tour of Defence Services Commander & Staff College (DSCSC) (from 01st-13th September 2019).

vii. Facilitated the visit of H.E.J.C.Weliamuna, the High Commissioner (from 13th – 15th October, 2019).

viii. Meeting with Ms. Louise Haddad, Senior Case Worker of Homeward Return Programme, authorized agency in Australia to assist return of "unlawful non-citizens" (on 23rd October 2019).

ix. Participated in the "No Money for Terror" Ministerial Conference on Counter Terrorism Financing (from 07th-08th November 2019) and facilitated participation of Mr.A.K.D.D.D. Arandara, Director (Legal), Ministry of Finance.

b. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

i. Facilitated a session on "The role of Diaspora in Business" at the Monash University (on 18th January 2019).

ii. Participated in the DFAT Diplomatic Academy presentation on Business Literacy and Engagement with presentations by Austrade and Monash University (on 22nd March 2019).

iii. Held regular interactions with the following with a view to promote trade, tourism and investment:
- Minister of Jobs, Innovation and Trade
- Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (Efic)
- Australian Trade & Investment Commission (Austrade)
- Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs and Transport & Resources of the Victorian Government
- Aus-Lanka Business Council Inc.
- Other business entities from selected sectors

iv. Organized first group meeting with representatives of Sri Lanka Community Associations & prominent individuals in order to introduce "One Village One Product (OVOP) "& "2000 New Exporters' Development Programme" under Economic Diplomacy Programme (on 02nd November 2019).

v. Participated in the Round Table Discussion on Trade and Investment, and diaspora communities in Victoria (on 20th November 2019).

vi. Participated in the 6th International Conference on Business Management 2019 Opening Ceremony (on 12th December 2019).

c. Cultural Relations

i. Organized Independence Day celebration (on 04th February 2019).
ii. Organized a series of events for the Thripitakabhivandana Programme at Keysborough Dhamma Sarana Viharaya and Mahamewnava Buddhist Meditation Centre.
iii. Facilitated the celebration of Sinhala & Tamil New Year Festivals in collaboration with Cultural Associations at Dhammasarana Temple, Keysborough and Melbourne University (10th April 2019).
iv. Participated in Vesak, Ifthar, Eid and Christmas celebrations organized by Community Associations & Universities.

d. Tourism Promotion

i. Participated and conducted a stall for Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau at the Sri Lankan Festival (on 14th April 2019).
ii. Participated in the MICE roadshow organised in Melbourne by Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (on 03rd September, 2019).
iii. Engaged with key interlocutors including outbound tour agencies and event organizers to strengthen collaborations for tourism promotion.

e. Education

i. Facilitated the International Study Programme of Monash University and Sri Jayawardananapura University (on 14th January 2019).
ii. Participated in Skype meeting with the officials of Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (SLINTEC) (on 09th April 2019).
iii. Organized a meeting between prominent Sri Lankan academics of Universities in Victoria and H.E.J.C.Weliamuna, the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Australia (on 15th October 2019)
iv. Regular engagements with leading academia, universities to explore opportunities for collaboration in the education sector.
v. Participated in key events organized by universities and academic institutions including CQ University International stakeholder lunch, Victorian International Education Award Ceremony and Australian Computer Society (ACS) re-imagination thought Leader's Summit.

III. Sydney

a. Bilateral & Defence Relations

i. Meeting held with the Liaison Officers of Engagement and

Intervention Unit of the New South Wales Police (on 7th May 2019) to discuss about the events organized organized by LTTE elements in Sydney.

ii. Arranged a Briefing on services provided by the NSW Police for community safety (15th May 2019)

b. Economic Relations

i. Organized a Networking Meeting with selected Sri Lankan Businessmen and the Community Association Members in Sydney to encourage engaging in the economic development activities in Sri Lanka under the Economic Diplomacy Programme (EDP) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A presentation on the One Village One Product (OVOP) and the 2000 New Exporter Development Programme (NEDP) was made to the invitees.

ii. Organized Sri Lankan Pavilion at the Fine Food Australia (from 9th to 12th September 2019) in collaboration and coordination with the Coconut Development Authority (CDA) and the Sri Lanka Tea Board (SLTB)

iii. Organized a Country Pavilion at the CeBit Australia (from 29 to 31 October 2019) in collaboration with the Export Development Board (EDB) and the *Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA)*

iv. Under the Economic Diplomacy Programme (EDP) of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, organized a B2B Networking meeting with Australian companies for a visiting Sri Lankan IT Delegation (on 30th October 2019) with a view to connect the Australian and Sri Lankan companies in the ICT Sector to enhance the bilateral trade relations and to showcase Sri Lanka's knowledge services industry for collaboration between Sri Lankan Australian companies

v. Arranged familiarization and field visits to Macquarie University and the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) for the visiting Sri Lankan delegation to get information on updated technology usage in Australia.

vi. The Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB) in collaboration with the Consulate General office organized a Sri Lankan MICE Destination Promotion (on 5th September 2019)

vii. The Sri Lanka and Australia Chamber of Commerce (SLACC) together with Consulate General office and Gilbert and Tobin Lawyers organized a Business Networking Event to explore business and investment opportunities in Sri Lanka (on 1st October 2019)

c. Cultural Relations

i. Organized a series of Dhamma Discussion under the Thripitakabhivandana Programe.

ii. Conducted a silent vigil by Dr. Anthony Fisher (Archbishop of Sydney) at St. Mary's Cathedral (26 April 2019) in memory of victims of the Easter Sunday attacks

2. China

I. Beijing

The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Beijing is concurrently accredited to Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Mongolia.

a. Bilateral Relations

High level visits facilitated

i. Visit of H. E. Maithripala Sirisena, former President to attend the Asian Civilization Dialogue Conference held (from 13th - 16th May 2019). During this visit, the former President met with H. E. Xi Jinping President of China, H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier and H.E. Wang Yang, the Chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)

ii. During the visit, two protocol agreements were signed for promoting closer cooperation in the field of defence

iii. Visit of Hon. Navin Dissanayake, former Minister of Plantation Industries (from 25th -27th April 2019) to attend the 2nd Belt and Road Forum and to sign MoU with Hainan Provincial Government

iv. Visit of Hon. Malik Samarawickrama, former Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade to China (from 1st to 3rd July 2019) to attend the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of New Champion.

v. Visit of a parliamentary delegation led by former Member of Parliament Hon. Nimal Siripala De Silva visited China (from 14th to 21st July 2019)

vi. Visit of Hon. Ajith Mannapperuma, former State Minister of Mahaweli Development and Environment to attend the Symposium on Forest Cooperation in Asia-Pacific Region and 2019 Forestry Planning Network in China (22-24 July 2019)

vii. Facilitated the visit of Ambassador Wu Jianghao, Special Representative of State Councillor & Foreign Minister of China to Sri Lanka (02 December 2019).

b. Promotion and projection of positive image of Sri Lanka and Public Diplomacy

H.E. the Ambassador represented Sri Lanka at 36 key events organized by Chinese interlocutors including the following:

i. Tourist Promotion Conference organized by the Travelzen International Travel Services Company, Shanghai (from 19th – 20th February 2019) in Shanghai

ii. The Opening Ceremony of 2019 China Liyang Tea Festival &Tianmu Lake Travel Mart and the opening ceremony of China –Sri Lanka friendly tea garden in Liang City (from 9th – 12th April 2019)

iii. The Asian Civilization Dialogue Conference (from 15th -16thMAY 2019) in Beijing
iv. Visit to Asia Agro Exposition Park in Yancheng City (from 15th -17th April 2019)
v. The first "One Belt and One Road" Culture International Summit Forum at Xiangyuan, Changzhi Municipality of Shanxi Province (from 6th -8th September 2019)
vi. The First Annual International Forum of Higher Education held (from 11th -13th October 2019) in Lanzhou
vii. The 7th International Festival of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (from 17th -22nd October 2019) in Chengdu, Sichuan Province cosponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of PRC, Sichuan Provincial Government, UNESCO and the China National Commission for UNESCO.
viii. The Key Industry Investment Cooperation and Global Procurement Promotion organized by Yunnan Trade delegation of 2019 China International Import Expo (on 6th November 2019) in Shanghai.
ix. The 2019 International Aviation Supply Chain ("IASC") Leadership Summit (on 6th and 7th November 2019) in Shanghai, China
x. The First China-Sri Lanka Communication and Cooperation Forum (from 6th-9th December, 2019).
xi. Meeting with Yan Jue Vice President of Buddhist Association of China and discussed about further cooperation and exchanges (on 14th December 2019).
xii. Attended a tourism promotional event held in Fujian Province and delivered a speech on "Tour to Sri Lanka"
xiii. Met Mr. Xu Hangtian, Director of the Asia Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (on 20th August 2019) and met Mr. Zhang Yang, Counsellor of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China (on 21st August 2020) and discussed about mutual bilateral cooperation and holding of political and consular consultations.

i. Engagement with Regional & Multilateral Organizations

i. Maintained close contacts with the BOAO forum.
ii. Maintained close contacts with the Secretariat of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Beijing and attended regular meetings of SCO.
iii. Maintains close contacts with UN and other international agencies in Beijing.
iv. Maintains regular contacts with the Secretariat of International Network of Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) in Beijing and attends meetings/ events organized by the INBAR Secretariat.
v. The International Medical Innovation and Cooperation Forum by The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Good-Neighborliness,

Friendship and Cooperation Forum (from 26th -29th May 2019) in Fangchenggang, Guangxi

vi. The Fourth Kunming SCO Marathon (on 01st December 2019) in Kunming.

vii. Represented Sri Lanka at the Senior Official Committee Meeting (SOC) of (CICA) (from 17-20 December 2019) in Chongqing Province and made a presentation on Sri Lanka's Confidence Building Measures.

viii. The Third Conference of the CICA Non-Governmental Forum (from 18th -19th December 2019) in Chongqing.

ii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

Promotion of Bilateral Trade Initiatives

i. Meeting with Chengdu, Sichuan Province China Council for Promotion of International Trade CCPIT to increase Sri Lanka Sichuan Trade Investment. Participated at the 10th South Asia Sichuan Business Promotion Round Table Conference.

ii. Meeting with National Gemmological Technology Administrative Center of Natural Resources Ministry of China

iii. Participated at the South Asian Commodity Fair with 100 Exhibiters in Kunming from (10thto 14th June 2020). Director General of Commerce and Deputy Minister of International Trade attended the event. Sri Lanka was one of the guest Country where a special eye-catching Sri Lanka Pavilion promoted "Colombo Port City "and main export products such as gems, tea, coconut, red rice, handicrafts.

Introduction of new products

Made initiatives to promote Sri Lanka fisheries products in China. An MOU between Sri Lanka and General Administration of Customs is proposed to eliminate non-tariff barriers in fisheries exports.

Expansion of market share of existing products

Promoting Gem and Jewellery and increasing the number of Sri Lankan Exhibitors in China. The Embassy has identified more than 15 specialty Trade fairs in this regard and more than 12 Sri Lankan Exhibitions have participated

Organization/Participation of Trade fairs

i. China Western Expo September
ii. Hangzhou Luxury Expo January
iii. Shenzhen Tea Expo –March (UBM)
iv. Shanghai Jewelry
v. Dalian Jewelry Show –April
vi. Kunming –June South Asian Commodity Fair
vii. Beijing-September Gems
viii. 2nd China International Import Expo Shanghai CIIE
ix. Beijing Gem and Jewelry Show Beijing December

x. Hangzhou Tea Expo December
xi. Global Logistic Alliance Conference Shenzhen
xii. Sri Lanka Investment Forum –Chengdu
xiii. China International Furniture Expo
xiv. Central China Changsha Import Expo (promoted Sri Lanka Tea)
xv. Western China Trade and Investment Expo Nanchang China
xvi. China National Pharmaceutical Machinery Expo -Chongqing China
xvii. Global Black Tea Conference, Xiamen
xviii. Qingdao Trade Fair
xix. Luxury Expo Shanghai
xx. Round Table at China Western Expo Chengdu

Ceylon tea promotional activities conducted by the Tea Promotion Unit

According to the Sri Lanka Customs statistics, direct exports from Sri Lanka to China during 2019 were 11.87Mkg at a value of approximately 50 million. It reflected an increase of 30% in volume terms over same period of 2018 and value increased by 15.53% or USD 6.74 million.

i. The Unit participated in the following tea promotional events:
   - Yibin International Tea Conference
   - Annual Keemun Black Tea Festival
   - Asian Tea Alliance Meetings.
   - Quanzhou Maritime Silk Road Expo 2019
   - Beijing Tea Expo
   - Chinese Tea WORLD expo
   - China International Food Safety Technology & Innovations Expo SIAL China Trade
   - Rizhao Tea Fair
   - Jasmine Tea Conference in Nanning
   - China – Arab Expo, Yinchuan
   - 7th Sichuan Agricultural Expo
   - The World Black Tea Evaluation competition held at Yingde city, Guangdong Province (Sri Lanka black tea samples won 30 places at the competition)
   - XIAMEN Tea Fair
   - 2nd China International Import Expo(CIIE)
   - Food Hospitality China fair 2019
   - Global Tea Fair 2019, Shenzhen
   - Tea Trade Fair of the 5th China Tea Industry Conference, Chibi City
   - The 15th China Tea Industry Economic Conference
   - The 2019 World Black Tea Quality Evaluation Competition ,Yingde city

ii. Initiated discussion with an investor to develop online Ceylon Tea Platform and investor capability evaluated after visiting warehouse, packing plant, distribution channels.

iii. Facilitated meeting between Hon. Minister of Plantation Industries and Mr. Zhang - CEO, Benny Tea Co. to discuss proposed tea industry investment in Sri Lanka.
iv. Facilitated meeting between Hon. Minister of Plantation Industries and China Agriculture Minister during "Road and Belt" Summit in Beijing.
v. Arranged factory visit for Mr. J.A Ranjith, Secretary of the Ministry Plantation Industries at Fuzhou, Fujian.
vi. TV interview done with Rizhao Dazongwang TV, Guangbo TV, Xiangcun TV-Shandong Province.
vii. Arranged Benny Tea Group Ceylon Tea Tour with Dartry Tea factory, Kelani Valley Plantations, Maskeliya Plantations, Akbar Brothers (Pvt) Ltd.
viii. Arranged meeting with Hon. Minister of Plantation Industries and CEO of the Benny Tea Co.
ix. Interviews highlighting unique features of Ceylon Tea during Xiamen Tea Fair with Fujian- Xiamen Daily, Fujian Daily TV Interview -Xiamen TV
x. Interviews highlighting unique features of Ceylon Tea during 2nd CIIE fair-Shanghai-News CCTV
xi. Visit to tea factories and tea plantations in Guizhou Province to gain knowledge of Chinese CTC tea production, Orthodox tea production, high value organic tea production.
xii. Represented Sri Lanka at the International Tea Corporation Organization (TG20+), Yibin, Sichuan Province
xiii. Attended the 6th South Asia EXPO (from 12th to 18th June 2019) in Kunming, China, with 104 Sri Lankan Exhibitors
xiv. The EDB organized the Sri Lanka National Pavilion at the Country Exhibition of the CIIE from (5-20 November 2019), with the participation of the Sri Lanka Tea Board, Coconut Development Authority, Sri Lankan Airlines and the EDB to showcase the strengths of the country in the spheres of trade, investment and travel and tourism.

Addressing Market Entry barriers

i. Met with the General Administration of Customs China with regard to quarantine issues faced by Ornamental Fish Exporters of Sri Lanka
ii. Promotional Events were conducted in Chengdu and Kunming Guangzhou, Nanchang, Chongqing, Qingdao Beijing Provinces.
iii.

Formation of Business Councils

i. Supported Sri Lanka to resolve challenges pertaining to the formation of the APTA Chamber of Commerce.

Investment Promotion

i. Discussions held regarding promotion of Sichuan Investment to Sri, especially in the areas of Infrastructure, Housing, Agricultural Machineries, Traditional Chinese Medicine, IT, Textiles and Electronics, Food and Lanka Restaurants.

- Visited Hebei Province and met with potential investors in the Field of Bio Fertilizer, Solar Power, Egg Production and facilitated their visit to Sri Lanka.
- Participated at a Seminar at China Academy of Sciences to Promote Sri Lanka as an Investment Destination under the Belt and Road Initiative. Sri Lanka opportunities under B&R ".
- An Investment forum was organized in collaboration with BOI to boost investor confidence in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday bombings with the participation of close to 100 Chinese business people.
- Sri Lanka, the Theme Country for 2019, attended the 6th South Asia EXPO (from 12th to 18th June 2019) in Kunming, featuring Sri Lanka as a major investment and tourism destination highlighting Colombo Port City – the Hub of South Asia.
- Facilitated a seminar hosted by "Marina Square" at the Embassy with more than 50 Participants.
- Participated at the CIFTIS May China International Fair for Trade in Services where Sri Lanka won the best International pavilion award. Further seminar was held outlining Investment opportunities in Sri Lanka Especially in The Colombo Port City.
- CGTN Live program on Promoting Colombo Port City to promote Colombo Port City.
- Participated at the China International Pharmaceutical Machinery Expo in Chongqing China promoting opportunities in the Pharmaceutical Sector in Sri Lanka.
- An investment promotion event was held under the Economic Diplomacy Program unveiling the vision of H.E. the president 'Sri Lanka vistas of Prosperity and splendour' with the participation of 100 potential investors.
- Facilitated a Chinese Investment Delegation led By Dr. Wang Xinbing to Sri Lanka. Delegation met with Sri Lanka Tourist Board and BOI.
- Met with SINOPEC one of the Fortune 500 Companies in China and discussed investment in Sri Lanka and facilitated their visit to Sri Lanka.

Tourism Promotion

i. During the period under review, proactive measures were taken to promote Sri Lanka as a safe destination to travel as the tourist arrivals from China fell drastically owing to the Easter Sunday attacks.

ii. Organized Sri Lanka's participation at IBTM China – the Incentive Business Travel & Meetings Expo for the seventh consecutive year. MICE segment was promoted vigorously by organizing FAM tours to Sri Lanka with the support of SLCB.

iii. Sri Lanka Convention Bureau organized a familiarization tour from China to Sri Lanka (from 12-18 October 2019) with the participation of a 10-

member MICE delegation comprising leading MICE companies and journalists in Beijing.

iv. Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), together with the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Beijing, Sri Lankan airlines offices in Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai, teamed up at the Chengdu International Tourism Expo (CITE 2019) and Kunming Travel Expo, which were held (from 28 November-30 November and 14th to 18th November 2019) 10 travel industry stakeholders from Sri Lanka joined the promotional activities.

v. Had meetings with the Kunming TV and the Kunming and Sichuan Provincial Tourism Authority to seek cooperation to promote bilateral tourism between Kunming and Sichuan and Sri Lanka.

vi. In conjunction with the exhibition, Sri Lanka Tourism also held a special media briefing for Chinese and International media outlets (on June 17 2019) at the China World Hotel in Beijing with a participation of over 60 media outlets and 40 representatives from airlines and travel agencies.

vii. Sri Lanka tourism participated in the Beijing International Tourism Expo (BITE) 2019 and also received the award for the 'Best Organization' at the Beijing International Tourism Expo (BITE) 2019.

viii. Participated at the Fuzhou Travel and Tourism Fair

ix. Facilitated Chongqing Air Line Operations to Colombo

Official Development Assistance

i. Coordinated and facilitated initiatives for EXIM Bank funded projects in Sri Lanka with the External Resources Department of Sri Lanka.

ii. Facilitated the signing of loan agreements for the following two key projects in Sri Lanka to be funded by the Beijing based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

iii. The Reduction of Landslide Vulnerability by Mitigation Measures Project: US$ 110 million.

iv. Colombo Urban Regeneration Project. The total cost of this project is estimated at USD 287 million.

v. Supported and facilitated the disbursement of EXIM Bank funds to Colombo Kandy Highway project.

iii. Cultural Relations

i. 06 Sri Lankan cultural awareness programmes/ handicraft activities for Chinese students were organized during the period under review.

ii. A Cultural promotional event named "Art of Craft: The Sri Lankan Handicraft Day" was organized with the collaboration of INBAR at the Horticultural Expo in Yanqing, Beijing (on 08th August 2019) with the participation of around 150 guests

iii. Attended the following International Cultural Promotional events to showcase Sri Lankan culture and heritage:

- Asian Civilization Exhibition (13thMay 2019) by displaying the replica of Trilingual Inscription obtained from National Museum of Sri Lanka
- The Splendour of Asia Exhibition by providing wood carvings of a Sri Lankan Artist (10-15 May 2019)
- 2019 World Artisans Exhibition held in Xian (from 26-29 May 2019) by providing Sri Lankan paintings
- Foreign Diplomats' National Costume Show (on 29th January 2019).

iii. Following Buddhist religious activities were organized at the Embassy premises with the participation of Sri Lankans and Chinese well-wishers:
- Dhamma Sermon (on 22 March 2019) to celebrate the National Thripitaka Week
- Vesak celebration (on 18th May 2019)

iv. H.E the Ambassador witnessed the signing of the MoU on Establishing a Friendly Cultural Relationship between Shengtong Temple of Shandong Province, China and Bodhi Raja Viharaya in Sri Lanka (29thOctober 2019).

v. 16 discussions were held with BAC, PDC, INBAR and other organizations/agencies to explore the possibility of obtaining assistance for Sri Lankan cultural promotions.

vi. Facilitated participation of 03 cultural delegations at key events in China.

vii. Education

i. 13 scholarship opportunities were obtained for Sri Lankan students. Of these, 10 scholarships were from BUCEA and 03 were from the Tsinghua University for International Master of Public Health for professionals.

ii. 14 discussions were held with 06 universities to seek the possibilities for obtaining scholarships for Sri Lanka including BUCEA, Tsinghua University, CFAU, BIT, EPU, and BFSU.

iii. Coordinated arrangements for 02 Educational Fairs including Western China Educational Fair 2019 held in Chengdu in May and Chongqing in June with Sri Lankan institutes and Chinese organizers.

iv. Provided consultations to the Sri Lankan students in China on 51 occasions and took necessary actions in relation to their queries, appeals etc. in a timely manner by contacting the relevant Chinese Education authorities.

g. Defence

i. Facilitated the visit of the Commander of the Navy to attend events celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the People Liberation Army (PLA) Navy in Qingdao in (April 2019).

ii. In July 2019, China gifted OPV P625 (a ship), which arrived in Colombo (a delegation headed by Navy Chief of Staff visited China for the Handing over Ceremony).
iii. In September 2019, a People Liberation Army team participated in the "Exercise Cormorant Strike-2019" in Sri Lanka.
iv. In September 2019, facilitated the visit of Defence Services Command and Staff College Delegation to China.
v. For the year 2019-2020, the PLA provided 227 training vacancies for Sri Lanka military Officers and other ranks to study in the Chinese Military Institutes.
vi. Long Logistics Management Course No5 from SL Navy visited China on a study tour (from 18th to 29th October 2019)
vii. 9th Beijing "Xiangshan" forum was held from 20th to 21st October and SL Army Chief of Staff with a delegation attended the forum.

II. Guangzhou

a. Bilateral Relations

i. Attended the annual 'GDFAO Night' to develop a good rapport with the Guangdong Foreign Affairs Office and Consular Corps (on 21st January 2019).
ii. Attended a reception hosted for all Consul Generals in Guangzhou, to meet with Mr. Wen Guohui, Mayor of Guangzhou, to facilitate communication between the Guangzhou leadership and the Consular Corps in Guangzhou (on 28th February 2019).
iii. Visited Shaoguan City and met with Secretary of the Municipal Committee of Communist Party and Vice Mayor of the city (from 13th-14th March 2019).
iv. Visited Zhongshan City in Guangdong province (on 26th April 2019), to meet with senior officials of the city and visit significant establishments including the Harbin Institute of Technology (leading intelligent equipment manufacturing park) and Shenzhen-Zhongshan, which will connect the two major cities in the Pearl River Delta in China.
v. Met the Governor of Guangdong province (on 09th July 2019), to discuss exchanges and partnerships between Guangdong Province and other states.
vi. Met with Mr. Liu Baochun, Director General and Ms. Liu Liu, Director of Guangzhou FAO (on 02nd September 2019) at a luncheon meeting and discussed mutual cooperation to enhance bilateral relations including the existing relations between Guangzhou city and Hambantota to progress further.
vii. Facilitated the visit of Ms. Lei Chunmei, Vice Chairman of the standing Committee of Fujian Provincial People's Congress to Sri Lanka (from

5th -7th December 2019). The Delegation met with the Secretary General of the Sri Lanka parliament and discussed cooperation in areas of investment, tourism, tea, Buddhist culture, between Fujian and Sri Lanka.

b. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

Promotion of Tourism

i. Participated with the former State Minister of Tourism Development, Wildlife and Christian Affairs, Hon. Ranjith Aluwihare, and SLTPB, at the Guangzhou International Travel fair (GITF) held (from 21st – 23rd February 2019). Sri Lanka was honoured with the "Guest Country" status.

ii. Organized the Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshow in Xiamen, Fujian Province (25th February 2019) with SLTPB

iii. Met with Mr. Wu Guoxiang / Senior Vice President, International & Cooperate Relations Division of China Southern Airlines to seek tourism cooperation for further promoting Sri Lanka to Chinese tourists (28th February 2019)

iv. Participated at the Asian Cuisine Festival with a stall, designed and decorated by the Consulate, displaying pictures of food, Ceylon tea, tourist sites, natural beauties and some Sri Lankan handicrafts (from 15th -23rd May 2019)

v. Met with Mr. Chen Qiuyan, Director-General, Mr. Luo Jun, Deputy Director-General and other officials of the Guangdong FAO and briefed on Sri Lanka returning to normalcy and to lift the travel advisory (on 19th June 2019)

vi. Participated at the China International Small and medium Enterprises Fair (CISMEF) (from 24th-27th June 2019)

vii. Met with Mr. Wang Yiyang, Director General and other officials of the Department of Culture and Tourism of Guangdong (on 05th August 2019), to discuss and seek support to revive tourism in Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday bombings.

viii. Initiated and coordinated the participation of Sri Lanka, for the first time, in the Guangzhou World Agriculture Exposition (from 05th -07th September 2019), through EDB. Four Sri Lankan food and tea companies participated at the fair.

ix. Participated with Sri Lankan Airlines and Guangdong Sunshine Holiday International Travel Agency Co.LTD, in the China (Guangdong) International Tourism Industry Exposition (CITIE) held (from 30th 01st September 2019) in Guangzhou.

x. Followed up with Nanfang Daily (official Guangdong Communist Party newspaper), and took action to correct misinformation reported in a news article captioned 'Sri Lanka is free of visa and tourism fever has

jumped 71 percent", which appeared on 02nd August, 2020.

Trade and investment Promotion and related matters

i. Met Mr. Yang Yong, President of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade Guangzhou Committee (CCPIT) (on 22nd March 2019), to seek further cooperation in trade and business between the two countries.

ii. Met with the President of Guangdong CCPIT (on 28th March 2019), to discuss arranging a Sri Lanka Trade/investment seminar/forums with the assistance of the CCPIT.

iii. At the Greater Bay Area Aquatic Products Exchange meeting held (on 29th March 2019), met with seafood companies, catering outlets, fish trading companies in Guangzhou and provided with information on Sri Lanka seafood export products, their suppliers and other related information.

iv. Met with Ms. Zhang Liping, Deputy Counsel-Director, Ms.Aileen Xu, Director, International Affairs Department and other officials of Guangzhou Municipal Commerce Bureau (on 11th April 2019) and invited a Chinese trade delegation to visit Sri Lanka to meet with relevant Sri Lankan officials to further trade and investment cooperation between the two countries.

v. Guangdong Eagle Coin Haibao Foods (a tin food company) met with Consul General on 12th April 2019, to visit Sri Lanka to look at possible importers of their products to Sri Lanka.

vi. Several Sri Lankan companies (in the tea, latex products, handicrafts, gem & jewellery) with the attendance of the State Minister of Tourism Development, Wildlife & Christian Religious Affairs, Hon. RanjithAluwihara participated at the 21st Maritime Silk Exposition and The Cross-Straits Fair for Economy and Trade (from 18th -22nd May 2019) in Fuzhou City in the Fujian Province.

vii. On 23rd May 2019, made a presentation on 'Ceylon tea, Sri Lanka's gift to the world' at the Guangzhou Tea Mall.

viii. Met Guangzhou Bureau of Commerce (on 10th July 2019), to further strengthen cooperation on trade, investment, tourism, education, culture etc. with the countries alongside the 'Maritime Silk Road' and enhance relations with corresponding Guangzhou sister city in Hambantota.

ix. Attended the Opening Ceremony of the 16th China ASEAN Exposition (CAEXPO) held (from 20th -21st September 2019) in Nanning, in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and also visited the Sri Lankan gem exhibitors who participated at the fair

x. Participated at the Food2China Exposition (from 19th 21st September 2019), by organizing the participation of Lion beer Brewery (Ceylon) PLC at the stall.

xi. Participated with Sri Lankan Airlines and Guangdong Sunshine Holiday International Travel Agency Co.LTD, in the China (Guangdong) International Tourism Industry Exposition (CITIE) held (from 30th September-1st October 2019) in Guangzhou.

xii. Coordinated with the EDB, the visit of a 5 member delegation, including Vice Secretary General, Mr. Zeng Zhong from China –ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) Secretariat to Sri Lanka (from 14th-17th November 2019).

The Consulate also undertook the following during the period under review:

i. Assisting Sri Lankan companies to enter the Chinese market
ii. Disseminating information of trade fairs/trade information to relevant authorities in Sri Lanka for participation.
iii. Transmitting tender documents to relevant Chinese authorities
iv. Intervening in trade disputes
v. Providing information Sri Lankan and Chinese buyers/suppliers to interested parties

c. Cultural Relations

i. Met the following Chief priests of Chinese Buddhist Temples in Guangzhou, to discuss on enhancing existing cultural cooperation between Sri Lanka, the Consulate and the temples.
   a. Ven. Yao Zhi, Chief Priest of Dafo Buddhist Temple
   b. Chief Priest of Nanhua Buddhist temple
   c. Chief Priest of Jingang temple.
   d. Chief Priest Ven. Ming Sheng, of Guangxiao temple
ii. Participated and facilitated the get-together (on 13th April 2019) organized by the Sri Lankan students of the Sun Yat Sen Medical University and Jinnan University, at the Sun Yat Sen University, for the Sinhala and Tamil New year.
iii. Participated at the Vesak ceremony organized by Ven. Paranagama Gnanawimala at the Jingang temple (on 18th June 2019).
iv. On the request of Ven. Paranagama Gnanawimala, thero, Coordinator for Buddhist Affairs between Sri Lanka and Guangzhou City, assisted and facilitated the transportation of a 3 feet, granite Buddha statue from Sri Lanka to Guangzhou which was received on 19th December 2019
v. Participated at the China Sports Culture & Sports Tourism Expo (from 28th-30th November 2019) in association with GD Great Scenery International Travel Service Co. Ltd,

III. Shanghai

a. Bilateral relations

i. Continuous engagement and meeting with Mayor/Vice Mayor of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang and Hunan Province. Meeting with officials of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang and Hunan Province throughout the year.

ii. Meeting with the Secretary General of Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (on 29 August 2019).

iii. Participation at the 8th World Forum on China Studies in Shanghai (from 10-11 September 2019) and submitted a report on China's political, economic and technological trajectory for the next 15 years.

iv. Participation at the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Shanghai (21 November 2019) and submission of report

v. Participation at the briefing held by the Mayor of Shanghai (on 9 December 2019).

vi. Submitted reports on the following:
- Regular economic and political reports
- China's National Defence in the New Era
- China's top 500 Fortune Companies
- Belt and Road on ICT Industry with observations and recommendations
- China International Import Expo (CIIE) with an analysis

b. Economic Relations and Foreign Investment Promotion

i. Participation at the World Hangzhou Entrepreneurs International Trade Forum held (on 7th January 2019). Arrangements were made for several entrepreneurs to visit Sri Lanka for investment opportunities.

ii. Participation at Ceylon Tea promotion with SIAL Expo (from 14to 16 May 2019). Sri Lanka Tea Board and several Sri Lankan tea companies represented Sri Lanka at the event.

iii. Facilitated participation of 04 Sri Lankan companies at the 2019 China Yiwu Imported Commodities Fair and International Friendship Exhibition and Touring Exhibition held (from 21 to 24 May 2019).

iv. Facilitated participation at the 'Belt and Road Branded EXPO' in Shanghai (from 31 May to 2 June 2019). Around ten (10) Sri Lankan companies related to tea, gem, handicraft and coconut products participated in this EXPO.

v. Participated at the Foreign Consul Visit to Zhejiang (23-26 July 2019) and made a presentation on Sri Lanka's business opportunities at the Hangzhou Federation of Chamber of Commerce (on 25 July 2019).

vi. Meeting with the Executive Director of China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai (on 6 August 2019).

vii. Visit to Zhejiang Province (on 14 August 2019) and meeting with the high level officials at the Foreign Affairs Office of Zhejiang, Department of Commerce and China Council for Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) of the Zhejiang Provincial Government.

viii. Meeting with Vice President of Shanghai Dragon Cooperation (on 20th August 2019).

ix. Meeting with the Chairman of China Council for Promotion of International Trade of Shanghai (on 26 August 2019).

x. Participation at Sri Lanka promotional events in Nanjing (on 17 September 2019).

xi. Supported an event where Sri Lankan products, tea and gems as well as tourism promotion in Wenzhou (from 26-29 September 2019).

xii. Meeting with Mr. Jack Shi, leading businessman in Shanghai and discussed future cooperation between his company and Sri Lanka (on 25 September 2019).

xiii. Facilitation of a visit by Apparel Industry business delegation to Shanghai (from 25-28 September 2019).

xiv. Meeting with the officers at the Foreign Affairs Office in Shanghai (on 16 October 2019).

xv. Participation of 2019 China Anhui High quality Agricultural Products and Agricultural Industrialization Trade Fair in Hefei (from 10-11 October 2019).

xvi. Meeting with the Foreign Affairs Office, CCPIT and Department of Commerce in Nanjing (17 October 2019).

xvii. Arranged a B2B meeting in collaboration with the CCPIT Shanghai (on 4 November 2019).

xviii. Facilitation of Sri Lanka's participation at the 2nd China International Import Expo (CIIE) (from 5-10 November 2019) and the national pavilion management (from 12-20 November 2019).

xix. Meeting with government officials at the Quzhou Municipal Government (on 10 December 2019).

xx. Meeting with government officials of the Ningbo Municipality (on 13 December 2019).

xxi. Meeting with the officials at the Shanying International Trading Cooperation (on 17 December 2019) and forwarding an investment proposal worth of 200 million USD.

xxii. Meeting with the DG of Shanghai Foreign Office (on 17 December 2019).

xxiii. Delivered a statement (on 21 December 2019) at the 2019 International Symposium of Belt and Road International Industry and inauguration of International Research Center of Tea Science at the University of Zhejiang, Hangzhou.

c. Tourism Promotion

i. Organised a networking event for travel agents in Shanghai and journalists (on 11 September 2019).
ii. Participation of International Day in Hangzhou (on 5 September 2019).
iii. Met with Travel Agents in Hangzhou with a view to enhance tourism from China to Sri Lanka.
iv. 2019 Shanghai World Travel Fair (SWTF) was held (from 18 to 21 April 2019). Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau in collaboration with the mission made a strong promotion for Sri Lanka tourism.
v. Attended Tourism Roadshow (on 23rd April, 2019) with Sri Lanka Tourism Bureau in Shanghai.

d. Connecting with the Chinese Media

i. Televised interview to Global Times Shanghai News Room (on 20 September 2019).Interview on Sri Lanka China cooperation with regard to agricultural industry (14 October 2019).
ii. Interview at the International Channel Shanghai (on 22 October 2019).

e. Education, Science, Cultural and Technology Cooperation

i. Cultural promotion with Shixi Primary School in collaboration with Shanghai Yunkai Education Training Co. Ltd. in January 2019. Under this program, around 300 Chinese students, teachers and parents visit Sri Lanka annually.
ii. Hangzhou – Sri Lanka Academic Exchange Program – promotional event in Huzhou was held (on 11th April 2019). Around 1,000 Chinese and Sri Lankan students, teachers visit their sister-schools in China and in Sri Lanka annually under this exchange program.
iii. Participated at the 2019 Shanghai International Sister Cities Youth Camp (on 18 July 2019).
iv. Meeting with the Chairman of OBORCLOUD (on 23 July 2019).
v. Meeting with the medical team at the Renaissance Hospital in Shanghai (on 21st October 2019).
vi. Participationat the Belt and Road Union on Information Communication Technology Industry (ICT) Cooperation (on 12 November 2019).
vii. Meeting with the officials at the Shanghai Science and Technology Commission (on 20 December 2019).
viii. A visit to Alibaba Campus (on 30 December 2019).
ix. Attended a meeting with education sector officers and schools in Hangzhou government (on 31 December 2019).

f. Maritime Affairs

i. Reporting on the Joint Advanced Marine and Ecological Studies in the Bay of Bengal and eastern equatorial Indian Ocean (on 19 September 2019).
ii. A visit to the Second Institute of Oceanography in Hangzhou (on 19 November 2019) and subsequent report on the Maritime projects undertaken at the Institute.

3. Democratic Pepole's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

a. Bilateral Relations

i. Bilateral relations with DPRK has been maintained in a cordial manner.
ii. The Ambassador of DPRK based in Beijing, paid a courtesy call on the Ambassador of Sri Lanka in China concurrently accredited to the DPRK (on 14th January 2019) and engaged in discussion covering matters of mutual interest and consular matters.

4. Japan

a. Bilateral Relations

i. Mr. Kentaro Sonoura, M. P. and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan, visited Sri Lanka (from 15 to 16 February 2019) and met with Sri Lankan government leaders to further promote bilateral relations between the two countries.
ii. Hon. Sagala Ratnayake, former Minister of Ports & Shipping and Southern Development visited Japan with Mr. Kavan Ratnayake, Chairman Sri Lanka Ports Authority in April 2019 and met both Private and Government officials (including the Minster of Justice of Japan) to further develop of relations and explore new business opportunities with Japan.
iii. Hon. Harin Fernando, former Minister of Telecommunications. Foreign Employments & Sports visited Japan in June 2020 for enhancing collaboration in employment opportunities from Japan. During this visit both Governments signed a Memorandum of Corporation (MOC) to secure employment opportunities for Sri Lankan workers.
iv. Japanese State Minister of Defense, Mr. Kenji Harada, visited Sri Lanka in July 2019 to discuss defence cooperation between the two countries. Both Ministers signed a 'Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges' during the visit.
v. Hon. Malik Samarawickrama, former Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade visited Japan in September 2019 with BOI officials to promote Sri Lanka as an attractive business destination for investment.

vi. Coordinated the annual study tour of the tri forces delegation of the Defense Services Command and Staff College Sri Lanka in September 2019.

vii. His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, former President and First Lady attended the enthronement ceremony of the new Japanese Emperor Naruhito (from 22 to 23 October 2019).

viii. His Excellency, Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan visited Sri Lanka (on 13th December 2019) for strengthening mutually rewarding relations and diversified cooperation between the two countries.

b. Multilateral Relations

i. On the request of the Embassy, Japan as a member country of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) supported the removal of Sri Lanka from the FATF Grey List at the plenary

ii. During the period under Sri Lanka review, Sri Lanka supported Japanese candidatures to 11 UN and other international bodies.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

i. Facilitated the visit of former Minister of Digital Infrastructure and Information Technology, Hon. Ajith P. Perera to Japan along with a 08 members IT business delegation and engaged in series of promotional activities.

ii. Facilitated the visit of the Governor of the Central Bank and other leading official to Japan for promoting of the proposed US$ 500mn 'Samurai Bond' issuance.

iii. During the period of under review, Sri Lanka's merchandise exports to Japan have grown around 25% compared to the year 2018. This is the largest exports value ever recorded by Sri Lanka to Japan. In 2019, Sri Lanka's negative trade balance with Japan has contracted to around 50% compared to 2018.

iv. At the end of the year 2019, FDIs from Japan were recorded at US$ 31.8mn. Japan has moved from 13th in 2018 to 10th FDI source of Sri Lanka in 2019.

v. Organized/ facilitated three (03) business related delegations to Sri Lanka and seven (07) delegations to Japan.

vi. Eight (08) investment/business promotion seminars and visits were undertaken to Yamanashi, Tokyo, Niigata and Saitama.

vii. Organized/facilitated eight (08) single country product events i.e. Sri Lanka Festival in Japan, Five (05) Ceylon Tea Seminars, Ceylon Tea Festival in Nagoya, Sri Lanka IT Event.

viii. Supported Sri Lanka's participation at four (04) major international trade fairs in Japan during 2019.

ix. Arranged seven (07) private company visits and arranged B2B with around 50 Japanese companies.

x. Supported around fifteen (15) company level introductions from Japan to Sri Lanka on export inquires. Responded to around fifty (50) trade and investment related inquiries and attended three (03) trade complaints during the year 2019.

d. Tourism

i. Made representation to the Government of Japan to relax the travel advisory imposed after the Easter Sunday attack from level-2 (refrain from non-essential travel) to level-1(exercise sufficient caution).
ii. Participated in the Sri Lanka Festival organized by the Sri Lanka Business council in Japan under the patronage of the Embassy in August 2020.
iii. Participated in the Annual Tourism Exhibition organised by the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) in October 2019 together with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.

e. Cultural Relations

i. Participated at various cultural events organised in Japan with both international and local participants. These were organized by Japanese Government, Prefectural governments and non-government organizations across Japan.
ii. Conducted 11 Cultural awareness/exchange programs for Elementary & Middle School children, Community groups and senior citizens.
iii. Participated in events organized by host cities Summu, Hashima and Maebashyto welcome Sri Lankans athletes in parallel to 2020 Olympics.

4. Mongolia

Necessary instructions were provided to the Honorary Consulate of Sri Lanka in Mongolia in order to provide consular assistance to the Sri Lankans residing in Mongolia.

5. Republic of Korea (RoK)

a. Bilateral Relations:

i. During the period under review, the Embassy maintained affable relations with the relevant Korean Ministries and its affiliated bodies, Korean institutions, business entities, as well as with the political leadership in the Republic of Korea (RoK), including Members of the National Assembly, with a view to enhancing existing friendly bilateral relations between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Government of RoK.
ii. Followed up on the implementation of President Moon's New Southern Policy which includes engagement with the South Asian region including Sri Lanka.
iii. The 10th RoK-SAARC Partnership Seminar held (on 20 September 2019) organized by the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the support of Korea National Diplomatic Academy, and was attended by SAARC officials in

relevant countries including Ms. Thiloma Abayajeewa, Deputy Director/SAARC Division of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the latter was a panelist).

iv. Dr.Ganeshan Wignaraja, the Executive Director of Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute attended the Korea Foundation Programme for Distinguished Guests in Foreign Policies and Security (from 7-13 April 2019).

v. Participated in the launch of the Korea-South Asia Inter-Parliamentary Diplomacy Forum, an initiative of the Speaker of the National Assembly of the RoK to strengthen Inter-Parliamentary Diplomacy with selected South Asian countries where members of the Parliamentary Friendship groups of five select countries in the South Asia i.e. Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the Republic of Korea were invited as the initial members.

b. Economic Cooperation:

i. Engaged with senior interlocutors of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Korea Exim Bank - Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) with regard to development cooperation on a wide spectrum including infrastructure, governance, education, industry, fisheries, energy, agriculture, human resource development and public administration.

ii. Is in close coordination with the Saemaul Globalization Foundation (SGF) in Korea and also with the branch office in Colombo which has developed four villages as pilot villages in Sabaragamuwa Province (Pitiyegama, Pahalagama, Hewadiwela and Walpola) providing technical knowledge with introducing income encouraging products.

c. Defence Cooperation:

Coordinated with defence related institutions in Sri Lanka and RoK for training/exchange programs under ongoing collaboration. Accordingly, the Embassy and facilitated a comprehensive overseas study tour program for 2 weeks for a 16-member delegation from the Defence Services Command and Staff College, Sapugaskanda in September 2019.

d. Environment, ICT and Science Cooperation:

i. Enhanced collaboration with the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STEPI) with regard to Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) cooperation with relevant institutions in Sri Lanka including the Ministry of Science, Technology and Research and the Coordinating Secretariat for Science, Technology and Innovation (COSTI).

ii. Initiated negotiations to obtain assistance from STEPI for Tech City master planning project in Colombo, which started in 2017 to provide comprehensive all-encompassing eco-system for innovation. Accordingly,

the Mission arranged a meeting for Additional Secretary Mr. Madhava Vaidyarathne and the delegation from the Ministry of Megapolis & Western Development in February 2019 and also a delegation from STEPI visited Sri Lanka to discuss further cooperation on K-Innovation program and Tech city project in March 2019.

iii. Engaged with the Korean Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST) to strengthen marine scientific and technological capacity building & research collaboration with NARA and other GoSL institutions. Accordingly KIOST prepared a new project concept paper for the establishment of Digital Library of Marine Science and Technology in NARA, a project worth of 3 Million USD under Korean ODA assistance.

iv. Mayor of Kurunegala Municipal Council Mr. Thushara Sanjeewa attended at Global Cooperation Forum of the Korea Climate Technology 2019, organized by Ministry of Science and ICT and Green Technology Center of Korea which was held from 24-26 July 2019 in Seoul.

e. Education Cooperation:

i. Supported continuing collaboration in the field of education between the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka and the Gwangju Metropolitan Office of Education.

ii. Facilitated a visit of Additional Secretary (Development) and a delegation from the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka to this effect.

iii. Under the MOU between the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka and the Gwangju Metropolitan Office of Education, 19 ICT teachers and 6 education officials from Sri Lanka were offered training by the Gwangju Metropolitan Office of Education for two weeks in parallel with the visit.

iv. Continued to advise and engage with the Sri Lanka Students' Association in the Republic of Korea (SLSA) including hosting of the 9th Annual General Meeting held at the Embassy on 29 September 2019 which the SLSA provides a platform for Sri Lankan students in the Republic of Korea to interact with one another, streamline and disseminate scholarship and other opportunities.

v. Under the MoU on Mutual Cooperation in Learning, Development and Research signed in September 2017 between Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) and KDI School of Public Policy and Management, 30 Senior Public Officials participated at the Study Tour Programme organized by KDI School in collaboration with Ministry of Public Administration and Disaster Management in Sri Lanka (from 21-25 February 2019).

f. High-level visits to the RoK from Sri Lanka:

i. Visit of Hon. Dilip Wedaarachchi, former State Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development (from 23-30 June 2019) on the invitation of the Korean Government to participate in the 2019 Port Expert Workshop in Busan.

ii. Visit of Hon. Lucky Jayawardena, former Minister of City planning, Water Supply and Higher Education (from 4-7 September 2019) to attend the Korea International Water Week 2019.
iii. The Commander of Sri Lanka Air Force Air Marshal Sumangala Dias (from 13-17 October 2019) visited Korea to attend Seoul International Aerospace and Defence Exhibition 2019.
iv. Visit of Hon. Rajith Keerthi Thennakoon, former Governor of Southern Province (29 May 2019) to participate in the ITOP International Policy Seminar.

g. Multilateral Relations

i. Coordinated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as with other Korean Government institutions and multilateral institutions based in ROK, i.e., Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Green Growth institute, relevant Embassies, with regard to cooperation on multilateral issues.
ii. During the period under review, coordinated and confirmed GoSL support for the candidatures of ROK to the post of Director, Capacity Building Directorate of the World Customs Organization (WCO).
iii. Continued to engage with the GCF with regard to climate change cooperation. The project proposal of *"Strengthening climate resilience of subsistence farmers and agricultural plantation communities residing in the vulnerable river basins, watershed areas and downstream of the Knuckles mountain range catchment of Sri Lanka"* which was initially submitted in June 2018, was successfully processed during the year 2019 and USD 39.775 million was approved by the GCF Board in February 2020.
iv. Sri Lanka became a member of the Global Green Growth Institute (on 13 January 2019) as the 30th Member Country of GGGI. 8th Session of the Assembly and the 12th Session of the Council of GGGI were held in October 2019, during the Global Green Growth Week 2019. Mr. Ariyarathne Hewage, Consultant (Policy) of the Ministry of Environment and the Leader of the Sri Lankan delegation was elected as an Expert a Non-State Actor to serve on the Council for the period 2020-2021.

h. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments:

i. Maintained cordial relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Korea, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy and other relevant line Ministries, agencies and affiliated bodies as well as the private trade-related institutions such as Korea Importers Association (KOIMA), Korea International Trade Association (KITA), Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), Korea Agricultural Machinery Industry Cooperative (KAMICO), Korea Federation of Textile Industries (KOFOTI), etc. during the period under review.

ii. Organized Sri Lanka pavilions at the following events with a view to promote trade, investment and tourism of Sri Lanka in the RoK in year 2019.

- International Horticulture Goyang Korea-2019 exhibition, (from 26th - 29th April 2019) with the participation of four Sri Lankan exporting companies
- Seoul International Tourism Industry Fair (SITIF) (from 6th-9th June2019).The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau won the "*Best Folklore Performance Award"* at the SITIF for outstanding performances by the Olaboduwa Dancing Academy.
- Korean International Tourism Show (KITS 2019) (from 15th-18thAugust, 2019)
- 22nd Busan International Travel Fair (BITF), (from 05th -08th September, 2019)
- Seoul Friendship Festival 2019 (from 31st August to 1st September, 2019)
- The Insadong International Culture Expo 2019, (from 29thAugust - 2nd September 2019)
- The Itaewon Global Village Festival, (from 12th-13th October 2019)
- Sri Lanka participated as the "*Featured Country"* at the high-profile Migrants' Arirang Multi-Cultural Festival (MAMF), (from 25th–27thOctober 2019)
- Facilitated to obtain a free booth for the Green Natural Corporation at Seoul International Tourism Industry Fair (SITIF) (from 6th- 9thJune 2019)

i. Promotion of Tea

The Korean Chaebol Lotte Group transferred "www.ceylontea.com" domain name to the Sri Lanka Tea Board, which was owned by the Group since 1997.The Korean Chaebol presented the domain name to the Sri Lanka Tea Board free of charge as a result of series of successful discussions had with the Embassy of Sri Lanka in the RoK in consultation with the Sri Lanka Tea Board.

j. Business Delegations to Sri Lanka:

i. 3-member delegation of Korean importers of fresh flowers & Cut foliage (January/February 2019)
ii. 12-member delegation from the Federation of Korean Tea Masters Society (March 2019)
iii. 05 member delegation for the feasibility study under the MOU on cooperation in the development of aids to navigation (January 2019)
iv. 03 member delegation from the power & energy company Kepco ENC (Nov. 2019)

k. Investment Forum

i. Organized an Investment Promotion Programme in Seoul (from 19-22 February 2019) in collaboration with the Board of Investment (BOI) of Sri Lanka, under the Economic Diplomacy Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka.
ii. A large number of B2B meetings, sessions and negotiations have been organized with a number of high-profile corporates and companies in the RoK.

l. Cultural Relations:

i. Organized the 71st Anniversary of Independence of Sri Lanka in the Ansan City (on 6 February 2019) with the support of the Sri Lankan community in the RoK.
ii. Organized the Sri Lanka parade at the Annual Lotus Lantern Parade organized by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism parallel to the Vesak celebrations in May 2019 with the support of the Sri Lankan Temples and the community in Korea.
iii. Organized a parade in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Students' Association in the Republic of Korea (SLSA) at the Itaewon Global Festival in October 2019.
iv. Conducted an array of food, culture, tourism and parade, amongst others, at the Seoul Friendship Festival in August 2019.
v. A Sri Lanka booth promoting the country's many cultural and tourist attractions was arranged by the Embassy at The Foreign Workers' Festival 2019 organized by the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea) from 8th and 09th of September 2019.

Cooperation with Sri Lankan and Korean Buddhist Temples in ROK:

i. Facilitated and participated in the annual Katina ceremonies and other religious festivals organized by the Sri Lankan Buddhist Temples.
ii. Conducted 3 Mobile Consular and Welfare Services in parallel with these religious festivals where there was a large gathering of Sri Lankans.
iii. Continued engagement with the 9 (nine) key Sri Lankan Temples in Korea

m. Labour welfare (employment & welfare):

Continued close coordination with relevant Korean agencies such as the Ministry of Employment and Labour of Korea and the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD) with regard to the welfare of Sri Lankan workers in Korea under the EPS. The number of employees that arrived in RoK from 1st January to 31st December 2019 was 3590 i.e. Manufacturing –2795, Fishery - 756, Construction - 39.

i. **Employment Promotion:** One Hundred fifty (150) companies were visited and offered with appreciation plaques and souvenirs as an employment promotion strategy during the period under review.

ii. **SLBFE Registration:** A total revenue of Korean Won (KRW) 4,497,500 [Sri Lankan Rupees 686,424.30] was collected as the SLBFE registration fee under the SLBFE Act, from 1st January to 31st December 2019.

iii. **Awareness Programs:** Conducted five (5) "Diriya Maga" Awareness and Counselling programs in different regions of Korea for Sri Lankan employees in collaboration with the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD) and Support Centers for Migrant Workers during the period under review.

iv. **Information on Safety Measures:** Disseminated information on safety measures to be followed by Sri Lankan employees to avoid industrial and other accidents, with special attention on the manufacturing and fishery sectors.

v. **Compensation:** Facilitated the payment of compensation for 11 deceased Sri Lankan workers during the period under review which amounting to a total payment of KRW 374,675,774 (Appr. SLRs. 68 million).

South East Asia Division

South East Asia Division

Countries covered: (11) Countries
Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia,Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Timor Leste.

No. of Resident Missions:(07) Countries
Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

Concurrent Accreditations:
Australia (Canberra) – Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Samoa and Solomon Islands.
Sri Lanka High Commission in Singapore – Brunei Darussalam
Sri Lanka Embassy in Thailand – Cambodia, Laos

No. of Multilateral / Regional Organizations covered: ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN related matters

The main areas of work of Southeast Asia Division are as follows:

i. Formulating Foreign Policy guidelines of Sri Lanka in relation to the countries in South East Asia.
ii. Advising Sri Lanka Missions in Southeast Asia on the policy decisions of the government and guide them to promote and project Sri Lanka's image positively in their countries of assignment.
iii. Guiding the Sri Lanka Missions in Southeast Asia to actively engage in economic diplomacy, public diplomacy and extending assistance to expatriate Sri Lankans.
iv. Facilitation/Arrangements of visits of dignitaries to/from Sri Lanka.
v. Facilitation of signing of bilateral Agreements / MoUs with countries and organisation in Southeast Asia.
vi. Coordination of activities related to ARF
vii. Maintaining close and cordial relations with Foreign Missions of Southeast Asia, based in Colombo.

Regional Cooperation

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF):

Sri Lanka is a "participant" country of the ARF and in the process of obtaining a Sectoral Dialogue Partnership with the ASEAN. Sri Lanka actively participated at the following events of ARF.

- Facilitation of visit by Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka to the ARF held in Thailand on 2nd August 2019.
- Facilitated the participation of Hon. Minister of Economic Reforms and Public Distribution at the launch of the 'ASEAN and WHO-SEARO Network for Road Safety Legislators', and Sri Lanka's unanimous election to the same as the Vice Chair on 9 August 2019.

ASEAN:

Negotiations are in progress to obtain the ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner (SDP) status for Sri Lanka by further strengthening engagements with ASEAN and its member countries.

Facilitation of FTAs with ASEAN member states:

Negotiations for Thailand-Sri Lanka FTA are in progress since the first quarter of 2018.

Discussions for establishing FTAs with Malaysia and Indonesia are in progress.

- Facilitation of scholarships for ASEAN member states :Facilitatin of 03 months long training programmes for Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia by Sri Lanka Navy on Asymetric Warfare (to be commenced in May 2020) , with further possibility of conducting tailor-made programmes for other member states of ASEAN.
- Facilitation of VBSS Courses offered by the Sri Lanka Navy together with UNODC to ASEAN member states.
- Facilitated to secure 10 slots for ASEAN member states to follow the) Diploma in Diplomacy & World Affairs XXII conducted by the BIDTI.
- Allocation of 50% Presidential Scholarship for ASEAN Member countries
- Provision of of Fee Reduction Scholarships for undergraduate degree programmes and Special Scholarships for ASEAN member countries by the National Institute for Business Management Scholarships
- Provision of 05 full scholarships and 10 partial scholarships by Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT) for ASEAN Member States

i. Allocation of scholarships by the Ocean University of Sri Lanka

for the areas of ICT, Sustainable Coastal and Marine Ecotourism, Coastal Zone Management, Maritime Transportation.

Vietnam

Bilateral Relations

- Facilitated the official visit of the Hon, Gamini ayawickrama Perera, Minister of Buddhasasana and the Sri Lanka delegation to attend the UN International Vesak Celebrations in Viet Nam from 12 – 14 May.
- Ambassador-designate was invited by the Voice of Viet Nam Journey Channel for an interview on the bilateral relationship between the two countries.
- Facilitated the visit of a Delegation from Sri Lanka Police as per the invitation received by the Ministry of Public Security of Viet Nam to

enhance the defence cooperation between the two countries on17 September.

- Visit by the Sri Lankan Ambassador to Nghe An Province for the International Workshop on "Ho Chi Minh's Legacy for Vietnamese Cultural Diplomacy" from 28 - 29 October.
- Courtesy calls by Ambassador with Deputy Minister of National Defence and Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang, Chief of the General Staff of the People's Army, H.E. Dr. Vu Chien Thang, Chairman of Government Committee for Religious Affairs, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Huy Tang, Vice Chairman of the Central Commission for External Affairs, H.E. Mr. Nguyễn Quốc Dũng, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Multilateral Relations

- Participated and shared the thoughts at the International Conference on "China's Belt and Road Strategy and the Regional Countries" organized by the Viet Nam Institute for Indian and Southwest Asian Studies on 15 July 2019.
- Participated at the Asi@Connect launching ceremony organized by the EU delegation to VN in collaboration with the Ministry of Science and Technology of Viet Nam.

Economic Relations

- Ambassador and the Sri Lankan delegation participated in the 02nd Sub – Committee Meeting on Trade between Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, held in Ha Noi from 03 -04 October.
- Sri Lanka Embassy attended 04 trade promotional visits organized by Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce & Industry (VCCI) to several provinces in Viet Nam for the promotion of bilateral economic cooperation.
- Ambassador met with Mr. Nguyen Quang Vinh, Secretary General of VCCI on 05th November to discuss promotion of trade and investment cooperation between the two countries.

Tourism Promotion

- Facilitated the opening of the Tea Avenue Riverside by Empire Teas (Pvt) Ltd. Sri Lanka in Ho Chi Minh City on 04 January
- Sri Lanka Embassy ceremonially opened the Sri Lankan Artwork on the Ha Noi Mosaic Wall on 22 January
- Failitation of a visit by 04 representatives from VOV Journey Channel to Sri Lanka for a fam tour sponsored by SLTPB from 12th -16th

August. Their articles were later on published in websites and social media platforms in the months of September and October.

- Embassy organized an interactive session with outbound tour operators in Ha Noi with the support of the two representatives from Tour Blue (Pvt) Ltd and Tropical Asia Tours (Pvt) Ltd on10 September.
- Sri Lankan Embassy participated in the Charity Bazaar to promote Sri Lankan tourism opportunities in Viet Nam on 17 November.
- Embassy had a meeting with the Chief Editor of Wunderlust Tips Magazine, to discuss on publishing an article on Sri Lanka in their prestigious high-end magazine next year on 05 December.
- Participated and contributed for the Viet Nam Travel and Tourism Summit 2019 held on 09th December.

Cultural Relations

- Embassy organised various activities with the participation of Sri Lanka expatriate community during the review period.
- Participated in cultural activities organised by the Vietname organisations.
- Facilitated to donate Buddha statues to the Tam Chuc Pagoda, during a side line event of UN International Vesak Day celebrations on 15 May.
- The Embassy participated at the cultural performance, "Melodies of the City for Peace" organized by HAUFO and Sri Lankan students in Viet Nam on 26th October.
- The Embassy participated in the Ha Noi Run for Peace for the 05th consecutive year organized by the Hanoi Moi Newspaper and HAUFO on 29 September.
- The Embassy facilitated the traditional dance performance by Sri Lankan Students in Viet Nam at the International Food Festival organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam on 08 December.

Thailand

Bilateral Relations

- Facilitation of the visit by Hon. Minister of Buddhasasana in February 2019 at the occasion of the coronation of HM the King Rama X. During the visit a sacred bo sampling of Sri Maha Bodhi was gifted to mark the event and it was enshrined in Ayuththaya by the Thai Prime Minister at an official visit.
- Facilitated 15 bilateral meetings to Thailand and accredited countries, with high level dignitaries

- The Mission coordinated 02 Ministerial level visits byHon. Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Tourism & Wildlife Affairs to Thailand.
- Facilitated the visit by Thai group of experts under the technical assistance which resulted in successful conduct of a trial rain making exercise.

Multilateral relations:

- Embassy facilitated 10 delegations from Sri Lanka to the events/activities/meetings/fora of UNESCAP, ASEAN, ACD, ARF, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) during review period.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investmen

- Three (3) VIP delegations visits to promote bilateral economic relations had been facilitated by arranging meetings with heads of Thai institutions. Further, assistance was provided for Sri Lankan delegations of the Department of Commerce to attend the 54th, 55th and 56th SCM of APTA and to the Thai delegation to attend to the 3rd SCMTRM in Colombo.
- Facilitated for MOUs signed with Sri Lanka and Thai institutions and liaised with PAT, TNSC, DEPA, INFOFISH, BOI Thailand, GIT, SACICT , TCC & BOD and private companies to promote Sri Lankan trade events and coordination of delegations.
- Embassy facilitated and organized Sri Lanka's participation at the "Digital Thailand Big Bang 2019", 64th Bangkok Gem and Jewelry Fair, Food and Hotel Thailand 2019 exhibitions to promote trade, in ITC, Gem &Jewellery, and Food & Beverages sectors respectively. The highest Sri Lankan export figure to Thailand is recorded in 2019, amounting to USD 97.44mn and Sri Lanka's imports were USD 437.94mn in the same year.
- Embassy promoted investment opportunities for Sri Lanka at number of events and meetings as well as by facilitating the delegation from BOI to have 5 meetings/seminars with reputed Thai organizations and 4 Thai companies. Sri Lanka has received USD2.754mn FDI from Thailand in 2019.
- The Embassy promoted tourism by facilitating a visit by the Hon. Minister of Tourism and the participation of SLTPB with Sri Lankan travel agents at TITF and Thaifex trade fairs in Bangkok.
- During the review period two FAM tours for Thai travel agents were facilitated.
- Facilitated the request by SLTPB to translate "So Sri Lanka" brochure and the content of the "Buddhist Microsite" to Thai language
- (During the review period , Sri Lanka has received 9,861 Thai tourists from Thailand)

Cultural Relations and Public Diplomacy

- The Embassy organized 06 special events to celebrate the National Day, Sinhala and Tamil New Year, Vesak, Ramazan, Deepavali and Christmas with the participation of Sri Lankan community and well-wishers of Sri Lanka.
- A special memorial event was organized in commemoration of Easter Sunday Attacks for the Sri Lankan community with a special Mass held at the Holy Redeemer Church.
- The Embassy organized 02 events to promote Sri Lankan culture and cuisine, and participated at the Annual Luncheon organized by the International Women's Club of Thailand and Thai International Travel Fair.to showcase Sri Lankan cuisine and culture The Embassy successfully participated at the 9th Thai Silk Fashion Extravaganza, with the participation of Sri Lankan designer Ms. Darshi Keerthisena, promoting Sri Lankan Batiks and designs.
- The Embassy organized Sri Lanka's participation at 02 charity eventsof , Red Cross Diplomatic Charity Bazaar and YWCA Diplomatic Charity Bazar. During these events Ceylon Tea, Ceylon Cinnamon and precious/ semi-precious gems and jewellery were promoted.

Cambodia

Bilateral Relations:

- Facilitated in organizing the State Visit by H.E. the President Maithripala Sirisena to Cambodia from 07th -10th August 2019. During the visit, an MoU on Bilateral Political Consultation between Cambodia and Sri Lanka and an MoU between the Colombo Chamber of Commerce and Cambodia Chamber of Commerce were signed.

Issuance of Press Releases following all key bilateral meetings and events in addition to regular Political Reports.

Facilitated 15 bilateral meetings to Thailand and accredited countries, with high level dignitaries.

Singapore

i. Facilitation of political, economic, trade and cultural exchanges including high level political visits.

- The Sri Lanka High Commission, Singapore coordinated the Visit of H.E. Maithripala Sirisena to Singapore from 23rd – 25th January 2019.
- Facilitation of visit by Hon. S. Iswaran, Singapore's Minister of Communications and Information and Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations to Sri Lanka in March 2019.
- Hon. Thalatha Atukorale, Minister of Justice and Prison Reforms visited Singapore to attend the Signing ceremony and High-Level

Conference on Mediation and International Dispute Resolution in August 2019.

- The High Commissioner paid a courtesy call on Hon. S. Iswaran, Minister for Communications and Information and Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations of Singapore in July 2019, Hon. Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Singapore on 13 September 2019 and Hon. Edwin Tong, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law in October 2019 on various issues of bilateral interest.
- The Mission facilitated Internal Security Department of Singapore's interactions with the relevant Sri Lanka authorities in extending the Government of Singapore's support following the Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka.

ii. Details of the reports and assessments generated and follow up actions with tangible and intangible results

- Preparation of detailed report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka together with follow up actions, following the visit by H.E. the President to Singapore in January 2019.
- The visit by Hon. S. Iswaran, Singapore's Trade Relations Minister was arranged after the high-level discussions in January 2019, with a view to follow up effective implementation of the FTA and to discuss on any concern with regard to the Agreement.
- Facilitation of short-term to medium-term training opportunities for Sri Lankan officials in the fields of Education, Urban Planning and Development, Land Transport, Civil Aviation, Port Management, Disaster Management and Emergency Preparedness, Sustainable Development, Trade and Tourism Promotion and Information & Communication Technology.

iii. Details of the events facilitated to promote political, social and cultural interests

- The Mission facilitated Exposition of Sacred Buddha Hair Relics in Singapore to mark the Vesak Festival 2019.
- The High Commission in collaboration with several Associations/Organizations of Sri Lankan expatriates namely, Ceylon Sports Club, Lanka Lions Cricket Club, Singapore- Sri Lanka Business Association, Singapore Sinhala Association, Ceylon Tamils' Association, Singapore Sinhala Buddhist Association and Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple organized a memorial event on 4th May 2019 to pray for the victims of the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka.
- The High Commission, for the first time, joined the Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association (LISHA) of Singapore, in its 60-day celebration of Deepavali Utsavam that kicked off on 7 September 2019, with the Light-up Ceremony and Street Parade. A dance troupe

from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, comprising of 22 artistes performed at the event.

iv. Details of the events/forums attended to represent Sri Lanka in foreign countries and international organisations:

- The Mission represented and facilitated the participation of a High-Level Delegation from Sri Lanka led by H E the President at the third session of UN Environment's Forum of Ministers & Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific took place from 23 - 25 January 2019.
- The Mission facilitated the participation of Sri Lanka Navy at IMDEX Asia, Asia-Pacific Flagship Maritime Defence Exhibition – 2019 held in May 2019.
- The Mission in coordination with the International Institute for Strategic Studies facilitated Sri Lanka's participation at IISS Asia Security Summit: Shangri-La Dialogue 2019 held from 31 May 2019 – 2 Jun 2019 in Singapore. Several bilateral high-level meetings were arranged for the Sri Lanka delegation on the side-lines of the Forum.

v. Promotion of Trade, Foreign Investment and Tourism

- Sri Lanka Singapore Business Council (SLSBC) delegation comprising 26 companies visited Singapore from 21st to 23rd August. The High Commission coordinated the programme with the SLSBC and the relevant organizations in Singapore.
- A networking session with the members of the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) was organized and .an MOU was signed with SICCI & SLSBC to strengthen the relations between two parties.
- Organised Sri Lanka Pavilion & Trade Promotional Booths at key Trade Fairs; to promote Sri Lankan National Brands (Ceylon Tea, Ceylon Spices,Gem & Jewellery, ICT & Boats & Ships)
- Facilitation of Sri Lankan Food Festival at Mandarin Orchard from 13th to 15th February 2019;
- Sri Lanka Pavilion was organised by the High Commission at Fintech Festival (SFF) from 11th to15th Nov 2019 under the Economic Diplomacy Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Twelve ICT & FinTech companies participated at the conference and the trade fair, and engaged in networking and other parallel forums. Further a networking reception was also organised by the High Commissioner for the delegation and key industry personals.

Forums, Awareness Programmes to promote FDIs

- Investor Forum 2019 on 21st May, 2019 in Singapore - The Colombo Stock Exchange in collaboration with the High Commission organized "Invest Sri Lanka" forum in Singapore along with B2B session with leading Sri Lankan listed companies. State Minister of Finance, Hon.

Eran Wickramaratne and Governor of Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Dr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy attended the forum.

- The Mission arranged media coverage with a special interview with Channel News Asia emphasizing "what will Sri Lanka be doing to bring back investor confidence aftermath of Easter Sunday Attack".

Tourism Promotion:

- Participation at NATAS Travel fair held from 22nd to 24th February 2019. The event was organised with six companies from SL namely Aitken Spence, Esna Holidays, Club Waskaduwa Beach Resort & Spa, Madulkelle Hotels and Lodges (Pvt.) Ltd, Theva Residency and Ballys Colombo along with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau.
- FAM tour on MICE Promotion with six MICE outbound agents including journalists was organised from 9th to 13th Sep 2019.
- Articles published on digital media such as TTG Asia, beyond escapes, travel voice, travel wirenews to promote "Safe to visit Sri Lanka "campaign.

Number of activities organised to facilitate and promote foreign employment opportunities

- In 2019, the Mission coordinated with employment agencies based in Singapore to secure about 3000 job opportunities for Sri Lankans. The labour section has received 64 job orders in 2019.

Indonesia

Bilateral Relations

In the context of cooperation between Election Commissions, Mr. Mahinda Deshapriya, Chairman and Mr. R.M.A. Hameed, Coordinating Secretary of the Sri Lanka Election Commission and Ambassador Dharshana M. Perera participated in Indonesia Election Visit Program for Indonesian Concurrent Election held from 15-18 April 2019, as invited by the General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia.

Under the MoU between Sri Lanka and Republic of Indonesia on Cooperation against Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Chemical Precursors, a three member team from the STF and police of Sri Lanka participated at the Technical Training on Integrated Interdiction held in Bogor from 25th February to 05th March, organized by the National Narcotic Board.

Multilateral Relations

- The Ambassador represented Sri Lanka at the 12th Bali Democracy Forum from 5th – 6th December 2019 in Bali, Indonesia.
- The Ambassador represented Sri Lanka at the Second Ministerial meeting and preceding Senior Official meeting of the Archipelagic and

Island States (AIS) Forum from 31 Oct – 01 Nov 2019 in Manado, Indonesia.

- The Ambassador represented Sri Lanka at the Regional Conference on Digital Diplomacy which was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 10th September 2019 and the Regional Symposium on Women Peace and Security organized by the ASEAN Secretariat on 22 August 2019.
- The Ambassador and Minister Counsellor/Defence of Mission participated in Jakarta Geopolitical Forum III on 26th September 2019.

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The Embassy organized Sri Lanka pavilion and facilitated participation of a number of Sri Lankan companies at the Tourism Fair "ASTINDO 2019 from 22 – 24th February 2019.
- A FAM tour was organized to Sri Lanka from 31st July – 3rd August with assistance from Thai International Airlines for a group of prominent Indonesian travel agents.
- Mission commenced media strategy to promote Sri Lanka as a tourism destination in Indonesia including using social media in Bahasa Indonesia from August 2019.
- Mission participated in Women International Club's Charity Bazaar from 11th – 14th November 2019.

Cultural Relations

- Embassy facilitated Sri Lanka team with Sri Lankan community participation in the 3rd Football for Peace international event organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia on 21st September 2019.
- A Photographic Exhibition entitled "Enchanting Sri Lanka" comprising photographs depicting cultural heritage and national beauty of Sri Lanka was organized at the National Library in Jakarta.
- The Embassy organized monthly public diplomacy events focusing on aspects of Sri Lankan culture including cookery demonstrations for students from universities in Indonesia.

Defence Cooperation

Key outcomes included:

Arrangements to conduct of 4th Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting on Counter Terrorism in Sri Lanka as host nation, in liaison Indonesian Authorities, National Agency for Combating Terrorism (BNPT) and Chief of National Intelligence of Ministry of Defence Sri Lanka.

Training opportunities for Sri Lankan military personnel in Indonesia

i. Secured 02 placements for Army Officers for 60th & 61st intakes of Regular Education Program 2019/2020 at LEMHANAS, Indonesia.
ii. Under the Mutual Cooperation had between Indonesia & Sri Lanka, arranged a training capsule for a team of 3 from Sri Lanka Police and STF officers, on Technical Training on Integrated Interdiction of Narcotics at Training Centre, National Narcotics Board of Indonesia (BNN).
iii. Offered 02 Scholarships for officer cadets of TNI for Degree Programmes in KDU for 2019.

Myanmar

Bilateral Relations

- The 3rd Session of the Joint Commission on Bilateral cooperation between Sri Lanka and Myanmar was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw on 11th April 2019. The following were achieved as outcomes of the matters discussed during the Joint Commission meeting.
- 15,000 genetically improved Teak seeds were donated by the Government of Myanmar in view of developing agro forestry on 12th December 2019 at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation of Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw.
- A five feet white marble Buddha Statue was donated to the Government of Sri Lanka by the Sacred Shwe Dagon Pagoda.
- The Mission coordinated a goodwill mission of two Sri Lankan Naval Ships, "Sayura" and "Nandimithra" including 320 crew members to Myanmar from 01st to 04th September 2019.

The Mission coordinated the following courtesy calls by H.E. the Ambassador on the following Union Ministers of the Government of Myanmar on 08th August 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw. The discussions were mainly focused on parliamentary cooperation, strengthening religious and cultural ties and promoting social welfare cooperation between the two countries

- Hon. Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of the Parliament (Amyotha Hluttaw) in Myanmar
- Hon. (Dr.) Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of the Government of Myanmar and
- Hon. Thura U Aung, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture of the Government of Myanmar

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

The Embassy represented Sri Lanka at the first BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (1st BAMM) and the First BIMSTEC Senior Officials Meeting on Agriculture (1st SOM – A) were held in Nay Pyi Taw from 11th to 12th July 2019 organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar. The Meeting was

held under the theme of *"Farming for Prosperity Sustainable Agriculture, Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition"* and

- In view of promoting Sri Lanka's Tourism through our own traditional foods, an event of food promotion under the theme of "TASTE OF SRI LANKA" was organized by the Mission on 24th November 2019 at Park Royal Hotel, Yangon, with the participation of the diplomatic community, Myanmar business personnel and members of the Sri Lankan community. The event was also used to promote Sri Lanka's application to the ASEAN as a Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
- The Mission coordinated the visit of Chamber of Young Lankan Entrepreneurs (COYLE) of Sri Lanka to Myanmar from 26th to 30th November 2019 in view of exploring new business opportunities in the country for mutual benefit.
- The Mission attended the Invest Myanmar Summit – 2019 jointly organized by the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) held from 28th to 29th January 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw. The Summit mainly focused to provide a platform for positional business opportunities in Myanmar for the international and local investors' businesses community.

Cultural Relations

-The Mission coordinated several cultural/religious visits to and from Myanmar.

-A cultural show was organized with a professional dancing team from the Ministry of Provincial Education Sabaragamuwa in line with the commemorations of the 71stAnniversary of Independence Day of Sri Lanka at WYNDHAM GRAND Hotel in Yangon on 04th February 2019.

-The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Yangon in collaboration with the Sri Lankan community in Myanmar organized a special charity programme for the distribution of dry rations to 500 families in Hlaing Thayar Township in Myanmar to mark the Poson Full Moon Poya Day on 16th June 2019.

Philippines

Bilateral Relations

- During the period under review the Embassy has mainly focused on initiating co-operation in potential sectors such as tourism, trade, agriculture and culture etc.
- Facilitated and organised the State Visit of Sri Lanka by H.E. the President Maithripala Sirisena, to the Philippines from 15th to 19th January 2019. It is the first State Visit to Philippines from Sri Lanka during 58 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. During the visit following 05 MoUs/Agreements were signed and the Embassy took action to complete the

internal procedures to implement them early, with the expectation of formation of a Joint Committee for that matter.

- MoU between Department of National Defense of the Philippines and Ministry of Defense in Sri Lanka
- MoU on Cooperation in Agriculture, Fisheries and Related Fields between the Philippines and Sri Lanka
- MOU on Academic Cooperation in Higher Education between the Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines and Ministry of Higher Education and Highways of Sri Lanka
- MOU between the Ministry of Tourism Development, Wild life and Christian Religious Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Department of Tourism of the Republic of the Philippines.
- MOU between Sri Lankan Council for Agricultural Research Policy (SLCARP) and University of the Philippines Los Banos to Promote Linkages on Agricultural Research Institutions at National and International Level and arrange Post-Graduate Training for Agriculture Scientists.
- Arranged a High Level Visit by the Philippines Technical Cooperation Council of the Department of Foreign Affairs in the Philippines on Training Need Assessment during the week 1st to 7th December 2019.

Bilateral Relations

Trade

-With a view to generating new potential areas in trade and investment, the Embassy organized a business networking session between the Sri Lanka-Philippine Business Council (SLPBC) and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce (PCCI) on the 21st of October 2020. A 15-member the SLPBC delegation met with their counterparts in the sectors of construction, tourism, logistics, manpower recruitment, service providers, information technology, agriculture and food products, IT/BPO and education, to enhance business links.

-Participated in the Manila Fame 2019 from 17-19 October 2019 with a delegation comprising 14 members under the theme "Sri Lanka-a Proud Heritage of Craftsmanship" in cooperation with the Sri Lanka Export Development Board.

-Embassy showcased "Ceylon Teas" at the 52nd International Bazaar in November 2018 in partnership with George Steuarts in the Philippines Basilur Tea and Dilmah.

Tourism Promotion

-Sri Lankan Embassy participated at the "Philippines Travel 2019", a 3-day travel and tourism promotional event in 8 – 10 February 2019 in Manila.

-In collaboration of with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, the Embassy took part in "World Travel Expo 2019", a 3-day promotional event from 25 – 27 October 2019 in Manila under the theme "The Next Travel Destination for Filipinos".

Multilateral Relations

- Having discussed with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the Embassy facilitated for the Department of Agriculture and the IRRI to work with the Department of External Resources to seek foreign donor agency assistance in terms of financial resources to implement the Sri Lanka – IRRI Collaborative 5 year Work Plan 2019-2023 between Department of Agriculture and the IRRI.
- The Embassy was able to secure a considerable number of training programs conducted regionally, internationally and customized short term programs to Sri Lanka.

Cultural Relations

- A diplomatic reception was organized entitled "Strengthening relations through cultural and food diplomacy" on National Day of Sri Lanka in 2019.
- The Embassy organised events to mark the festivals of Vesak and Christmas.

Malaysia

Bilateral Relations

- Facilitated the visit by Mayor of Colombo from 18th -19th February to participate in the Asian Regional Conference on "Women's Political Leadership: Creating Positive Change", held at the Parliament of Malaysia. On the sideline of the Conference, bilateral meetings with Minister of Defenceand the Mayor of Kuala Lampur too were arranged
- Facilitated the visit by Hon. Ajith Perera, Minister of Digital Infrastructure and Information Technology from 06th -08th March to attend the UNDP organized programme of "Digital for Social Innovation Incubator Facility". During the visit bilateral meetings were held with the Malaysian Ministers of Entrepreneurship Development and Communications & Multimedia. Also a visits to Global Innovation Creativity Centre (MaGIC), MIMOS and MDEC of Malaysia were facilitated to discuss on potential collaborations with Sri Lanka.
- Facilitated the visit by Hon. Ranjith Aluvihare, State Minister of Tourism and Christian Religious Affairsto visit Malaysia's premier and annual travel fair of MATTA Fair (Malaysian Tour and Travel Agents Fair) held in Kuala Lampur in October 2019. Sri Lanka's participation at the Fair was facilitated by the High Commission in collaboration

with the SLTPB. The highlight of the Sri Lankan stall was the promotion of sustainable tourism, and 13 high-end destination management companies of Sri Lanka participated at the event.

During the review period, the following Meetings too were held:

- Meeting with H.E. Tan Sri Dato' Mohamad Ariff Bin Md Yusof, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Malaysia
- Meeting with Hon. Darell Leiking, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia
- Meeting with Hon. Darell Leiking, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia

Trade and Economic Relations

- Participated at the Malaysian International Food & Beverage Trade Fair (MIFB 2019)
- Held negotiations with regard to the proposed Free Trade Agreement with Malaysia.
- Facilitated important trade delegations from Malaysia to Sri Lanka
- Arranged mini arts and crafts exhibition at the High Commission.
- Arranged Tourism promotional events, business promotional events and labour promotional events.

Defence Relations

- Facilitated defence delegations and training programs.

Africa Division

Africa Division

Activities of the Division

1. Coordination of Sri Lanka's bilateral relations with African countries.
2. Co-ordination of bilateral visits of H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister, Hon. Foreign Minister and other Cabinet Ministers, MPs and Senior Officials of the Government of Sri Lanka.
3. Preparation of Speaking Notes and Country Briefs for high-level visits and credential ceremonies.
4. Preparatory arrangements for inward and outward visits for VVIPs and VIPs.*(Details indicated under respective Missions)*
5. Follow up for the early conclusion of pending MoUs/Agreements.
6. Preparation of Cabinet papers and obtaining Cabinet approval for MoUs / Agreements.
7. Preparation of Condolence Messages, National Day Messages, Toasts and Felicitation Messages etc. from H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Foreign Minister.
8. Coordination of internal meetings and Courtesy Calls by African Ambassadors/ High Commissioners based in Colombo.
9. Preparation of Action Plan, Performance and Budget Reports etc. for the African region.
10. Coordination with Sri Lanka Missions abroad, Overseas Missions in Colombo from the African Region and line Ministries/Departments and other agencies on day to day activities.
11. Monitor and coordinate activities of the African Union Commission.

Territorial Coverage

a) 54 Countries – South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Libya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan, Republic of Sudan, Somalia, Ghana, Senegal, Gabon, Cape Verde, Sao Tome & Principe, Equatorial Guinea, Burundi, Niger, Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Liberia, Mauritania, Chad, Cameroon, Togo, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Seychelles, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic.

Out of 54 independent states in the African continent, Sri Lanka has established formal Diplomatic relations with 45 countries to-date and action has been already initiated to establish formal Diplomatic Relations with other 09 countries in Africa.

The Division is following up on establishing relations with the remaining 09 countries.

b) Sri Lanka has established 06 Resident Diplomatic Missions in the African Continent in the following capitals.

- Sri Lanka High Commission in Pretoria/South Africa
- Sri Lanka High Commission in Nairobi/Kenya
- Sri Lanka High Commission in Abuja/Nigeria
- Sri Lanka High Commission in Victoria/Seychelles
- Sri Lanka Embassy in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia
- Sri Lanka Embassy in Cairo/Egypt

c) There are four Diplomatic representations from the African Continent in Colombo:

- High Commission of the Republic of South Africa
- Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- High Commission of the Republic of Seychelles
- Embassy of the State of Libya

d) Concurrent Accreditations :

- Sri Lanka High Commission in **South Africa** (8)– Angola, eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- Sri Lanka Embassy in **Egypt** (3) – Libya, Eritrea, Republic of Sudan
- Sri Lanka Embassy in **Ethiopia** (3) - South Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti
- Sri Lanka High Commission in **Nigeria** (11) - Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Mauritania, Mali
- Sri Lanka High Commission in **Kenya** (5) – Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania
- Sri Lanka High Commission in **Seychelles** (1) – Madagascar

e) Africa Union

Sri Lanka obtained Accreditation Status of the African Union as a non-African State with effect from April 2014, with a View to further strengthening Sri Lanka's relations with African countries. Accordingly, Sri Lanka Embassy in Addis Ababa was established in February 2017.

f) Honorary Consul Representation

Sri Lanka has Honorary Consul Representations in Malawi, Mauritius, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa (Durban and Cape Town) Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Zambia.

1. Nigeria

i. Bilateral Relations

- Facilitation of training for 10 Nigerian military personnel to follow Defence courses in Sri Lanka and two Nigerian senior military officials at the Colombo Defence Seminar 2019.

ii. Multilateral Relations

- Sri Lanka extended its support for the Nigerian candidate for the post of President at the UN General Assembly in 2019.
- Facilitation of visit by the Nigerian delegation led by Hon. Attorney General to Sri Lanka to attend the Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Group for Mangrove Restoration Meeting and the Law Ministers' Meeting held 07-09 October 2019.

iii. Economic Relations & Foreign Investment

- Sri Lanka High Commissioner held discussions with Abuja Chamber of Commerce & Industry for the promotion of identified Sri Lankan products including, tea, garments, processed food and boats.
- Sri Lanka High Commissioner met with National Coordinator of the Gemstones Miners & Marketers Association of Nigeria for the promotion of gem & jewellery industry.
- Sri Lanka High Commission extended institutional support for the establishment of a Sri Lankan Ayurvedic clinic in Abuja.

iv. Cultural Relations

- Sri Lanka High Commission facilitated the cultural events at the Sinhala & Tamil New Year, and made representations at the major cultural events of Asian Film Festival, International Mother Languages Day and International Art & Craft Exhibition etc.

v. Labour Welfare

- Extension of consular assistance to the Sri Lankan workforce in Nigeria and concurrently accredited countries.
- Sri Lanka High Commission promoted the recruitment of Sri Lankan skilled workers in the fields of agriculture, industry and hospitality.
- Provision of assistance by Sri Lanka High Commission to Sri Lankan crew members of oil tanker MT Zeebrugge who were detained by the Nigerian Navy.

2. South Africa

i. Bilateral Relations

Relations with South Africa and Accredited Countries

- During the review period, Sri Lanka High Commission held 16 meetings with the authorities of South African Government i.e. Department of International Relations, Department of Trade and

Industry, Department of Defence, Department of Small Business Development and Department of Science and Innovations for the promotion of bilateral relations.

- The High Commission facilitated the donation of ZARA 50, 000 by Waters Living Church in Durban, to the Zion Church of Sri Lanka to assist the child victims of Easter Sunday Attack.
- Coordination of donations to school children for the celebration of Nelson Mandela Day.
- Facilitation of the first-evervisit by a Sri Lankan delegation to South African Defenceestablishments during 01- 13September, 2019. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations.
- Discussions were held to establish inter-university relations between Sri Lankan and South African universities together with the assistance from Sri Lankan academics in South Africa.

Relations with other Diplomatic Missions and international organizations in South Africa

- Participation atthe eventsof : workshops, Conferences, Seminars and cultural, organized by other Diplomatic Missions, international organizations (EU, UN, IOM, PAN African Parliament) and think tanks based in Pretoria.
- Facilitation of consular assistance by the High Commission to a Sri Lankan who was stranded in South Africa to return back with the support of IOM Pretoria.
- Delivery of opening remarks by the High Commission at the NAM Training Centre organized by the Department of Science and Innovations.

ii. Multilateral Relations

- Participation at the Indian Ocean Rim Association related meetings and events organized by South Africa.
- Participation at the Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of the Draft Protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment matters, Mining, Agriculture, construction (MAC Protocol).

iii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investment

- The High Commission arranged B2B meetings for Sri Lankan coconut products exporters during their visit to South Africa.
- The High Commission organized "So Sri Lanka" one week tourism promotional campaign in Menlyn Shopping Mall in Pretoria from 19-25 March 2019, with the participation of Sri Lanka National Cricket team at the opening ceremony.
- The High Commissionarranged a Skype discussion between the Tourism Promotion Bureau of Sri Lanka and the Outbound Tour

Operators of South Africa to increase tourist arrivals from South Africa.

- The High Commission in collaboration with the Department of Commerce of Sri Lanka participated at the Global Trade Show of Networking & Matchmaking South Africa (GTS) held from 29-31 July, 2019. Key promotional items were: Ceylon Tea, biscuits, cosmetics & Ayurvedic products, coconut doir & rubber based products, textiles, food etc
- The High Commissioner arranged a Ceylon Tea Promotional event at the Official Residence under the theme of "Tea with High Commissioner" for the members of the International Diplomatic Spouses Association (IDSA) Pretoria, followed by a traditional Sri Lankan lunch.
- The High Commission represented Sri Lanka at the Annual International Bazaar organized by the IDSA and promoted Ceylon tea.
- The officials of the High Commission had several meetings with various business entities in South Africa on promotion of Sri Lankan products and expanding business relations between two countries.
- The High Commission facilitated the participation of Sri Lankan Coconut industries to the SAITEX.
- Sri Lanka was represented by the High Commission together with a borat company at the Cape Boat Show, one of the biggest Boat Shows organized in South Africa for leisure and gaming.

iv. Cultural Relations

- Attendance of High Commissionat the Puja Ceremony held by the Thai Theravada Temple in Midrands and at the Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony organized by the Thai Temple.
- Participation of High Commission at the cultural event organized by the IDSA

3. Ehiopia

i. Bilateral Relations

In order to enhance Sri Lanka's bilateral relations with Ethiopia and the countries accredited, regular meetings were held by the Ambassador with Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and briefings with Ambassadors of Djibouti, Somalia and South Sudan. Also had engagements with Addis Ababa based Ambassadors.

Following meetings were held with the counterparts.
Regular

Conduct of regular interactions (by Ambassador) with journalists, opinion & policy makers, think tanks and political leaders for the promotion of Sri Lanka's image

- Ambassador during his visit to Mekelle, capital of Tigray region from 04-06th October 2019, had meetings with the regional President and senior officials.

ii. **Multilateral Relations**

- Conduct of meetings with the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and the Commissioners of the African Union Commission (AUC) to brief them on socio- political developments in Sri Lanka in order to have a broader engagement with the AUC.
- Representation of Sri Lanka at the Opening & Closing Ceremonies of the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Commission held in Addis Ababa from 10th -11th February, 2019.
- Facilitation and participation at the workshop to promote South – South Cooperation on Renewable Energy in Addis Ababa under the patronage of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Water, Irrigation, and Energy of Ethiopia on 31st July 2019.
- Participation of Ambassador as a special guest to address the symposium on Joint Labour Migration Programme by the African Union Commission held on 29 October 2019.
- Facilitation of the official visit by Mrs. Wasantha Perera, Secretary to the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine to Addis Ababa to attend the FAO/WHO/AU International Food Safety Conference from 12th- 13th February, 2019.
- The Embassy also engaged with the AU Partnership Group, South Sudan Ambassador's Group and UN-AU partnership Group and meetings of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).
- Ambassador had consultations with the Director, UNESCO for Africa to look into the possibility of concluding an Agreement on Cooperation in Tourism and Culture between Sri Lanka and AU, under the auspices of UNESCO.
- Facilitation of the visit by Hon. Vijitha Berugoda, State Minister of Women and Child Affairs at the seminar on 'Global Summit to Tackle Online Child Sexual Exploitation' organized by the AU from 11-12 December 2019.

iii. **Economic Relations and Foreign Investment**

- In order to enhance Sri Lanka's Trade, Economic and Investment relations with Ethiopia, Embassy held regular meetings with officials / agencies in Ethiopia and the African Union.
- Embassy arranged an 8-member delegation representing Sri Lanka's construction industry to participate at the 16th Ethio-Con Construction Exhibition held in Addis Ababa from 24th-27th September, 2019.
- Embassy in collaboration with the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce & Sectoral Associations and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB) hosted a B2B forum on 19th November 2019 in Addis Ababa for Sri Lankan companies on the sidelines of World Export Development Forum (WEDF) 2019. Representatives from Sri Lanka were: Nestle Lanka PLC, Wilkins Spence Packaging Lanka (Pvt) Ltd., Tea & Hearb Co. (Pvt). Ltd and Synex Group of companies.
- Attendance of Ambassador as a special guest at the official launch on 20th November 2019 of the 19th Edition of the International Trade Centre (ITC) flagship event, World Export Development Forum.

iv. **Labour Welfare**

- The Mission held its first ever mobile consular service at the Hawassa Industrial Park with the participation of over 350 Sri Lankans on 29 September 2019.
- Four (04) Sri Lankan nationals who were under detention in Ethiopia since 2014 were released in March 2018 and all of them were repatriated to Sri Lanka without any cost to Government of Sri Lanka or their NoKs.
- During a visit by the Ambassador to Mekelle, capital of Tigray region on an invitation extended by the President of the region to Asia Pacific Ambassadors from 04th – 06th October 2019, it was agreed by the regional President to provide more employment opportunities to Sri Lankans in Tigray region.

4. Egypt

i. **Bilateral Relations :**

- Presentation of credentials by H.E. Mrs. Renuka Damayanthie Rajapakse His Excellency Abdel Fattah El – Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt on 2nd December 2019 at the Presidential Palace in Cairo
- The First Session of the Bilateral Political Consultations between Sri Lanka and Egypt was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt on 12th December 2019 at the Foreign Secretary level. In addition to the

bilateral political consultation meetings, the following events were taken place on the sidelines.

- The Foreign Secretary addressed a representative group of scholars at the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA) in Cairo on 11th December 2019, presided over by H.E. the Ambassador Mounir Zahran, Chairman of the ECFA on the theme 'Sri Lanka – Egypt Relations and Strengthening Sri Lanka's Relations with the African Continent'. Simultaneously a special Ceylon Tea corner was arranged at the venue, with a view to further promoting Ceylon Tea in Egypt.
- The Foreign Secretary had an interview with Ms. Taghrid Hussein, the President of Nile TV International, a cable network that broadcasts across Africa, on the operationalization of the "Revitalized Africa Policy" seeking to enhance Sri Lanka's cooperation in the political, economic and cultural spheres across Africa.
- The Foreign Secretary had two interviews with two journalists of the Egyptian national newspapers; Al Ahram and Al Akbar, in view of strengthening the Sri Lanka's bilateral, economic and trade relations with Egypt.
- Business metting at Official Residence with the participation of Foreign Secretary and members of the Egyptian business community.

- Facilitation of the visit by officials of the Ministry of Agriculture for three (03) month Egyption government funded training programme at the Egyptian International Centre in Agriculture (EICA) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land reclamation of Egypt.
- Facilitated the visit by Mr. Nilanth Ilangamuwa, Senior Manager, Sri Lanka Ports Authority and Mr. Dananjaya Edirisinghe, at the World Youth Forum in Sharm El-Sheik in Egypt, in December 2019, hosted by H.E. the President of Egypt.
- Facilitation of the visit by Mr. V. Sivagnanasothy, Secretary/ Ministry of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Rehabilitation, Re-Settlement Northern Development and Youth Affairs together with a Director; Ms. Vaidehi Anushyanthan, at the National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) Conference in Hurghadain October, 2019
- Facilitation of the visit by Hon. Ranjith Madduma Bandara, Minister of Public Administration, Disaster Management and Rural Economic Affairs of Sri Lanka in April 2019. During the visit , meetings were held with Hon. Hala Al-Saed, Minister of Planning, Monitoring & Administrative Reforms in Egypt
- Meeting held with Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka in Tunisia Mr. Mustafa Trabelsi H.E. the Ambassador in February 2019.

ii. **Multilateral Relations :**

- Participation of Sri Lanka Embassy at the montly gatherings of the Asian Ambassador's Group in Egypt to discuss matters pertaining to Asian region.
- H. E. the Ambassador participated at the 20th International Conference for the Leaders of Higher Education Institutions in the African Continent held in July 2019, in Cairo, Egypt.

iii. **Economic Relations & Foreign Investments :**

- The Embassy organized Sri Lanka's participation at international day celebrations and youth fairs stalls in four (04) occasions as mentioned below.
  - British University in Egypt
  - October 6th University
  - Pharaohnic Village (twice)
- Embassy facilitated a 03 member delegation from the DSI Tyres (Pvt) Ltd to visit Cairo Embassy for business promotion purposes, and positive response was received for the exporting Motor Bicycle and three wheeler tyres in Egypt.
- A 02 member delegation from J.B. Enterprises (Pvt) Ltd, visited Egypt to meet with the Egyptian companies who are interested in importing coco peat from Sri Lanka.
- Embassy participated at the Annual Bazaar organized by the Asian Diplomats Spouses Association (ADSA). Promotional items at the Bazzar: Ceylon Tea by Dilmah, Sri Lankan cuisine, hand woven bobbin lace. Danicing items were promoted by the Sri Lankan children in Egypt.
- A business networking session for Egyptian businessmen was heldat the Embassy as a first step towards conducting a buyer seller meeting in February 2020. 25 Egyptian companies participated as interested buyers of importing Ceylon Tea, Coconut products, seafood, spices and rubber products.
- The Embassy officials visited Port Said Governorate, Egypt and did a Market Survey on the demand for Ceylon Tea in the area, particularly for the El Salam Ceylon Tea Brand of Soudanco Company. The report on the survey was forwarded to Sri Lanka Tea Board, and the Ministry of Foreign Relations.
- The Embassy responded to a large number of trade inquiries, assisted to resolve trade disputes, of Egypt and Sri Lanka and met with prospective buyers in Egypt on regular basis, in order to promote Sri Lankan export products in Egyptian market.

iv. **Cultural Relations :**

The following festivals were celebrated by the Embassy with the participation of Sri Lankan Community in Egypt;

- Thai Pongal Festival was held with the preparation and the partaking of Pongal Rice and traditional Hindu decorations and rituals.
- The National Day was celebrated with three (03) functions: Flag hoisting ceremony with the participation of embassy staff and the Sri Lankan community,Cultural Show at the Egyptian Institute of Music in Cairo for the diplomatic corp offcials of the government & other dignitaries, the National Day celebrations at Conrad Cairo Hotel with the participation of diplomats, Government representatives and the business community. The events were graced by the performances of the cultural troupe of Sri Lanka Air Force. Holding of Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebrations with the participation of the Sri Lanka community at the Official Residence of the Ambassador.
- The Vesak festival was celebrated at the Embassy with the participation of Venerable Lunugamvehera Narada Thero and was attended by the Sri Lankan community as well as diplomats from Buddhist countries.
- The Ifthar ceremony was hosted at the Embassy with the participation of Sri Lanka community.
- A dancing troupe from Sri Lanka Navy, consisted of thirteen (13) artistes, was participated at the 07th session of the International Festival of Drums and Folklore Arts from 20th to 27th April 2019, organized by the Ministry of Culture, Egypt. Separate items too were performed at the Embassy for the Sri Lankan community.
- The Christmas Eve and the Christmas Service was celebrated at the Mission with the participation of Fr. Jude Amila Fernando from the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, on 24th and 25th December, 2019.

v. **Labour Welfare :**

- The Embassy provided consular assistance to Sri Lankans staying in Egypt to repatriate to Sri Lanka during the clearance procedure at the Department of Immigration in Egypt, to exit the country without any punishment except a fine imposed for overstaying.
- Provision of consular assistance to two groups of stranded Sri Lankans in Alegeria who had become victims of human trafficking around Mediterranean area. The assistance was provided in collaboration with the IOM and relevant Embassies in Cairo.
- Facilitation of assistance to Sri Lankan workers for the renewal of SLBFE registrations, medical assistance and intervention in times of distress.

- Conduct of religious programmes on every Poya Day for Buddhists and conduct of a mass for every Good Friday for the Catholic/Christian community as a part of community engagements.
- Embassy facilitated a transfer of a Sri Lankan who was given life imprisonment, following lengthy discussions with relevant Egyptian authorities, in an absence of an Extradition Treaty.

5. Seychells

Bilateral Relations:

- High Commission facilitated donation of 02 patrol crafts built by Sri Lanka Navy as a gesture to strengthen cooperation in defense and maritime cooperation, leading to a similar request by the Seychelles Coast Guard on payment basis.
- As a part of zoological cooperation, High Commission carried out consultations to obtain 02 treasured tortoises from Seychelles to the National Zoological Garden of Sri Lanka as a gift.
- Facilitated the proposal to provide training for Seychelles security forces and police. (Approval is awaited from the Seychelles government)
- Facilitated the discussions with the Seychelles Government to obtain a suitable plot of land in Victoria for the construction of the Sri Lanka High Commission building complex.
- High Commission facilitated the initial work relating to appointment of new Honorary Consuls of Sri Lanka in the Republic of Madagascar and the Republic of Comoros to further enhance bilateral relations with those countries.
- High Commission carried out follow up activities for the finalization of MoU between Ministry of Agricultural Research & Development & The Island Development Company Ltd in order to further consolidate development of cooperation in the agricultural sector.
- Negotiations are under way on theproposed amendments to the MoU of Visa Waiver between of Sri Lanka and Seychelles.

i. Multilateral Relations:

- Facilitation for the establishment of the Secretariat of the Contact Group on the Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) in Colombo, in accordance with the proposal by Sri Lanka
- The High Commissioner participated at the Plenary Sessions of the CGPCS and IOC thus bringing Sri Lanka closer to the African nations located in the Western Indian Ocean and ensuring their support in international fora including the United Nations Organization.
- Facilitation of the consultations in relation to joining with the Indian Ocean Commission as an Observer Member
- Represented Sri Lanka at the Conference of Blue Ocean Economy held in Seychelles.

ii. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- As a part of Independence Day celebrations, High Commission organizeda Sri Lankan food festival at the Coral Stand Hotel on 05th February, 2019
- High Commission provided assistance to open a branch of the Hemas Hospitals Limited in Victoria in June 2019 to promote medical tourism.
- High Commission facilitated visits by Asiri Group of Hospitals to Seychelles with a view to offer healthcare services and facilities.
- In light of the cessation of the services by Air Seychelles to Madagascar, High Commission explored the possibility of extending the services of Sri Lankan airlines from Seychelles to Madagascar.
- High Commission facilitated the "automated greenhouse" was established in Seychelles by the Agricultural experts from Sri Lanka, and also a visit by a group of Seychellois farmers to Sri Lanka on an educational tour. Also, coordinated the process of installation of cool rooms and provision of eco-friendly garbage bags by Sri Lankan entrepreneurs
- Plans are underway to open an "Ayurvedic Panchakarma Hospital" in Victoria, Mahe, and expected to be operational by 2020.
- Facilitation is given for establishment of a multi-country money exchange involving Sri Lanka, India, Seychelles, Madagascar and Mauritius
- Initial actions was taken to establish Sri Lanka – Seychelles Joint Commission with the view to enhance economic cooperation between two countries.
- An application for business venture by Future Holdings Limited is now in the stage of business registration.
- Individual Business agreements signed by businessmen from Sri Lanka and Seychelles on the following:
    - Recruitment of manpower from Sri Lanka
    - Import, sale & hiring of agricultural, construction machinery/ equipment in Seychelles
    - Import and Wholesale distribution of Consumable and Household Products in Seychelles

iii. Cultural Relations

- The High Commission provided assistance for the programs initiated by the Sri Lankans Association in Seychelles, the Buddhists Association, the Lak Star sports Club As a part of the independence

day celebrations, High Commission facilitated in organizing a Sri Lankan traditional dancing and music festival on 04th February 2019.

- Organization of a commemoration Program by the High Commission in memory of the victims of Easter Attack.
- With the participation of Buddhist Monks from Sri Lanka and jointly with the Seychelles. Buddhist Association, religious activities and meditation programmes were conducted during Vesak, Poson and Esala Poya Days.
- Performed a pirith chanting activity at the Sri Lanka High Commission in collaboration with the Sri Lankan Buddhist Association.
- High Commission organized religious activities at the Official Residence to celebrate Christmas
- Actions have been taken to finalize the establishment of a Buddhist temple in Seychelles in consultation with the Vice President of Seychelles

iv. **Labour Welfare**

- High Commission worked in close cooperation with the Ministry of Employment to ensure the welfare of Sri Lankan labour force in Seychelles.
- High Commission facilitated an Agreement signed with a leading man power recruitment company to recruit Sri Lankan labour Force to Seychelles.
- High Commission attended number of labour disputes involving Sri Lankan employees in Seychelles to obtain redress or concessions.

Middle East Division

Middle East Division

Activities of the Division

1. Manage overall foreign policy and relations of the respective region
2. Co-ordination of bilateral visits of H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister, Hon. Foreign Minister and other Cabinet Ministers, MPs and Senior Officials
3. Preparation of Speaking Notes and Country briefs for those high-level visits, credential ceremonies, and all other meetings
4. Holding Bilateral Political Consultations, Political Dialogues, and Joint Commissions, etc.
5. Early conclusion of pending MoUs/Agreements
6. Preparation of Cabinet papers and obtaining Cabinet approval for MoUs/Agreements.
7. Preparation of Condolence Messages, National Day Messages, Toasts and Felicitation Messages etc. by H.E. the President, Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Foreign Minister
8. Facilitation of internal meetings and courtesy calls by Ambassadors/High Commissioners based in Colombo from the Middle East region
9. Preparation of answers to parliamentary questions, responding to Right to Information queries, Preparation of Action Plan, performance and budget reports etc. for Middle East region.
10. Coordination with Sri Lanka Missions abroad, Overseas Missions in Colombo from the Middle East region and line Ministries/Departments and other agencies on day to day activities.
11. Consular matters, legal proceedings and other matters relevant to the nationals from Middle Eastern Region who leave/ visit Sri Lanka
12. Follow-up on the decisions taken during State Visits, Political Consultations, Joint Commissions and other visits to the Middle East Regions

Territorial Coverage

a. There are seventeen (17) countries (as per-world population review and Wikipedia) for the Middle East region, which include Egypt, Libya (Africa Division) Turkey (West Division).With 13 countries where Sri Lanka enjoys formal DPL relations, other than with the State of Palestine.

b. Sri Lanka enjoys formal diplomatic relations with the following 14 Middle Eastern countries;

1. Kingdom of Bahrain	2. The Islamic Republic of Iran
3. Republic of Iraq	4. State of Israel
5. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	6. State of Kuwait
7. Lebanese Republic	8. Sultanate of Oman
9. State of Palestine	10. State of Qatar
11. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	12. Syrian Arab Republic
13. United Arab Emirates	14. Republic of Yemen

c. Out of above 14 countries, Sri Lanka has established 12 resident Missions, namely;

- **Embassies in:**

1. Bahrain (Manama)
2. Iran (Tehran)
3. Iraq (Bagdad)
4. Israel (Tel Aviv)
5. Jordan (Amman)
6. Kuwait (Kuwait City)
7. Lebanon (Beirut)
8. Oman (Muscat)
9. Qatar (Doha)
10. Saudi Arabia (Riyadh)
11. United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi)
12. Representative Office in Ramallah City (Palestine)

- Two Consulates Generals in

13. UAE (Dubai) and
14. Saudi Arabia (Jeddah)

d. Therefore, only for two (02) counties namely Yemen and Syria, we don't have resident Missions and they are concurrently accredited to our Embassy of Oman (Yemen) and Embassy of Lebanon (Syria).

- Our mission in Iran is concurrently accredited to Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan.
- There are Four (04) Sri Lankan Honorary Consul Representations in the Middle East as follows:
  1. State of Israel (Jerusalem)
  2. State of Palestine (Bethlehem)
  3. Republic of Iraq (Kurdistan)
  4. Syrian Arab Republic (Damascus)

Coordination with representations/ Embassies/ Honorary Consuls from the Middle Eastern countries in Colombo

a. There are eight (08) Middle Eastern Embassies based in Colombo.

1. Iran
2. Iraq
3. Kuwait
4. Oman
5. Palestine
6. Qatar
7. Saudi Arabia
8. United Arab Emirates

b. There are six (06) Middle Eastern Embassies based in New Delhi.

1. Lebanon
2. Jordan
3. Israel
4. Syria
5. Yemen
6. Bahrain

c. There are three (03) Honorary Consul Representations from the Middle Eastern countries in Colombo.

1. Israel
2. Jordan
3. Yemen

Multilateral Engagements in the Middle East Region

Lebanon - United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

1. Kingdom of Bahrain

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Ambassador met with and called on His Majesty the King, Prime Minister, Crown Prince, Speaker and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Labour & Social Development of Bahrain, on several occasions primarily focus on promotion of political, trade & tourism relations as well as creation of employment for Sri Lankans. Further discussions were carried on signing/ renewing bilateral agreements/ MoUs/treaties between Sri Lanka and Bahrain.
- Hon. Nalin Bandara, Deputy Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade of Sri Lanka paid an official visit to Bahrain from 14th to 16th April 2019 to participate at the Startup Nations Ministerial: Global Entrepreneurship Conference which was held in Manama.The Hon. Minister had constructive bilateral meetings with Hon. Matrika Prasad Yadav, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Supplies of Nepal, Hon. Zunaid Ahmed Palak, Minister of State for Information and Communication Technology Division of Bangladesh, Hon. Soomilduth Bholah, Minister of Business, Enterprise, and Cooperatives of Mauritius and H.E. (Ms.) Pattrawan Vechasart, Ambassador for SMEs in the Office of the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the Hon. Minister the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- Agreement on Exemption of Visas for the Diplomatic, Service and Official Passport holders between Sri Lanka and Bahrain has been finalized by the both parties and currently awaiting for the signature.

b. Multilateral Relations

- Bahrain has sought the support of the GoSL for their candidature for the 'Membership of the Human Rights Committee (CCPR)" for the period of 2021-2024. The elections will be held in June/ July 2020 in New York and the GoSL has not yet confirmed its position.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) of Ministry of Tourism, in close coordination with the Embassy of Sri Lanka in the Kingdom of Bahrain, conducted a Tourism Promotional Road-Show on 9th April 2019 in

order to attract tourists and visitors from Bahrain to Sri Lanka. This Promotional event consisted of Business to Business (B2B) sessions, presentations and workshops between Sri Lanka and Bahrain based tour/travel agents. Nearly 20 travel agents/ tour operators and hoteliers from Sri Lanka travelled to Bahrain to participate at this Promotional event along with the officials of Sri Lanka Tourism. Well over 120 travel agents, tour operators and companies from Bahrain attended the event and interacted with the Sri Lankan travel and hospitality industry personnel.

- Ambassador met a number of Chairmen/CEOs of leading business houses and entities in Bahrain to secure employment for Sri Lankans and to promote economic activity, among others.
- J Lanka International Company in Sri Lanka, a premier solar and renewable energy technology solutions provider expanded their services to the Kingdom of Bahrain through an investment of USD 10 million. The Embassy provided the necessary assistance to the company in negotiation with the respective Bahrain authorities.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Mission facilitated, attended and extended its fullest cooperation on Cultural activities, which were conducted by the Sri Lanka Club and number of Sri Lankan Associations in Bahrain such as New Year Festivals, Vesak, Poson, Deepawali, Thai Pongal, Christmas and Iftar.
- The Embassy organized "*Tripitakabhivandana Week*" to mark the declaration of the Theravada Tripitaka as a World Heritage in order to list the Tripitaka with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Memory of the World Register. The Embassy coordinated with Barbar Temple in Bahrain to have the religious observances by Most Venerable Sammana Nayaka Ven. Dehiwala Chandavisuddhi Thero, in order to commemorate the "*Tripitaka Week*" from 16th to 23rd March 2019 and to invoke blessings for recognition of Tripitaka by UNESCO under the Memory of World Index.

e. Labour Welfare

- With the coordination of Sri Lankan Associations in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Embassy organized a free Medical Clinic for Sri Lankans who are residing in Bahrain on 01.03.2019 at the Al-Hilal Hospital in Adliya, Bahrain. More than 400 people participated at the Medical Clinic and they were provided free medical tests, medical check-ups and specialized consultations on Free of Charge basis.
- Labour section of the Mission conducted several workshops at the selected Sri Lankan Associations in Bahrain to aware Sri Lankan expatriates on the welfare benefits which entitled by the migrant workers

from the registration at SLBFE and disseminated a brochure prepared by the Mission including the information of the welfare benefits by SLBFE.

- Labour section has conducted 08 job promotional activities to promote Sri Lankan manpower in Semi-skilled and skilled Sectors.

2. Republic of Iran

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Mission facilitated the visit of Hon. Sujeewa Senasinghe, Minister of Science, Technology and Research in Sri Lanka to participate at the Inauguration of Asia - Pacific Forum in 2019 hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the meeting, Minister met the responsible dignitaries of Iranian National Innovation Council in Iran on 10th June 2019 and discussed the possibility of Nano Technology development in Sri Lanka. Further, they discussed the possibility of holding the First Joint Committee Meeting on 19th July 2019. The Sri Lankan side postponed the proposed meeting due to unavoidable circumstances.
- The Mission discussed the possibility of obtaining a training for the Police and Customs officers in Sri Lanka under the MoU on Cooperation in Combating Illicit trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and precursors. As a result, Iranian side agreed to provide the training on 01st October 2019. The Sri Lankan side postponed the proposed training due to unavoidable circumstances.
- The Mission held a discussion on 06th August 2019 with the Ministry of Health in Iran to implement the MoU for Joint Cooperation in the Field of Health, Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment. As per the meeting held in the Ministry of Health in Iran, the Mission forwarded the proposals discussed at the meeting to the Sri Lanka side. These proposals include setting up the food testing laboratory, forming working group for implementation of MoU and promotion of scholarships for Masters and PhD programmes for Sri Lankan medical students. The Mission is awaiting response from the Sri Lanka side.
- The Mission also facilitated exchanging list of prisoners of both sides under the MoU on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons between Sri Lanka and Iran.
- The Mission held a discussion with the Faculty of World Studies in Tehran University to make academic collaboration between the selected universities in Sri Lanka.

b. Multilateral Relations

- Sri Lanka supported the Iranian candidature, Dr. Janet Elezabeth Blake for membership of the Committee for Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on 21st June 2019

c. Economic Relations and foreign investments

- The Mission visited the Yazd Province on 15th February 2019 on the invitation of the Governor of Yazd Province in Iran. The main objective of the visit was to promote trade, education, investment and tourism relations.
- As a result of the Yazd visit, the Mission was able to facilitate Pooyan Parsis Company for importing coconut powder from Sri Lanka to Iran.
- The Mission facilitated Iranian companies such as Pasargad Mall and Business Center, Mehragan Lanka Pvt Ltd. and Doctor Business Lanka Pvt Ltd. However, registration of these companies have become difficult as there is no proper banking system and money transaction system between Iran and Sri Lanka due to US sanctions on Iran.
    - The Mission also held a meeting with the Managing Director of the Iran Tractor Manufacturing Cooperation (ITMCO) in Iran to establish a tractor assembly company in Sri Lanka. The Mission has requested the Ministry to find out a local business partner in Sri Lanka. The response is awaiting from the Sri Lanka side.
    - The Mission held the "*Must Visit Sri Lanka*" tourism promotion programme on 28th October 2019 with the participation of travel agents in Tehran.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Mission held the Independence Day celebration on 04th February 2019 with the participation of Sri Lanka community in Iran.
- The Mission held the "Vesak Day" celebration on 19th May 2020 with the participation of Sri Lankan community in Iran.
- Further, the Mission has participated at Independence Day functions and cultural programmes organized by the resident Missions

e. Labour Welfare

- The Mission assisted matters of the Sri Lankan employees for their consular matters by issuing NMRP and facilitating repatriation case by case.

f. Republic of Azerbaijan (Accredited to the Sri Lanka Embassy/Tehran)

- The Mission disseminated information on export products sent by the Export Development Board in Sri Lanka to the Azerbaijan side and exchanged information to organize an online promotional seminar which organized by the Export Development Board in Sri Lanka with the business counterparts in Azerbaijan.

- The Mission also discussed the possibility of exporting tea, coconut and the garments from Sri Lanka with the Azerbaijan Embassy in Tehran.
- The Mission discussed with the Azerbaijan Embassy in Tehran about the importance of establishing a Sri Lanka Honorary Consul in Azerbaijan as there are education and business opportunities in Azerbaijan.
- The Mission also disseminated information on employment opportunities available in Azerbaijan for the Sri Lanka side.

g. Republic of Turkmenistan (Accredited to the Sri Lanka Embassy/Tehran)

- The Mission held a discussion with the Turkmenistan Embassy in Tehran to promote tourism between the two countries.
- The Mission also discussed the possibility of importing cotton from Turkmenistan as Turkmenistan is famous for cotton industry.
- The Mission also suggested the Turkmenistan side to sign a Cultural, Heritage, Protection and Promotion MoU.

3. Republic of Iraq

a. Bilateral Relations:

- Two (02) Agreements/MoU to be signed and ratified in Colombo at the 9th Iraq Sri Lanka Joint Committee for Economic and Technical Cooperation (9th ISLJCETC) in 1st or 2nd Quarter 2020.
    - Final draft of the MoU on Political Consultations between Sri Lanka and Iraq to be signed and ratified.
    - Conclusion of the Agreement on Mutual Visa Exception for holders of Diplomatic, Special, Service and Official Passports.
- Initiatives to conclude Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons; Agreement on Extradition; Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. - MoFR Colombo initiates to draft the Agreement.
- Holding 09th Iraq Sri Lanka Joint Committee for Economic and Technical Cooperation (9th ISLJCETC) Meeting, Colombo. Awaiting for fixed dates from MoFR / MoT&I of SL in the 1st or 2nd Quarter in Colombo.
- Visit Delegation of the Ministry of Trade in Iraq to Sri Lanka to attend the 9th ISLJCETC meeting in Colombo.
- General Ahmed Saleem Bahjat Utbee, Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Ground Forces attended Colombo Defence Seminar in August 2019, at Colombo.
- The Ambassador has been invited as a special Guest to attend the Iraqi Defence Exhibition– IDEX, Baghdad.

b. Multilateral Relations :

- The Mission maintains close cordial relations with all Diplomatic Missions and the UN agencies, located both in Baghdad and Erbil. The Ambassador meets his counterparts on a regular basis.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments:

- Early finalization of pending Agreement on Investment Promotion and Protection (IPPA): Initiatives to conclude the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation. Meeting of Iraq & Sri Lanka,both parties at the 9th ISLJCETC Meeting, Colombo.
- Arrangements for Iraqi Kurdistan trade & investment, delegation visit Sri Lanka 27-30 Jan 2020.
- Initiatives to MoU to be signed between the Iraq Kurdistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in 2020 in Colombo.
- Initiatives to establish Business Council with Iraq at the next 9th ISLJCETC meeting 2020 in Colombo.
- Sri Lanka Tea Board & 05 Sri Lankan Tea Exporters successfully participated 'Iraq Agro food – Baghdad 2019, Trade Exhibition 15th – 17th April 2019 at the Baghdad International Fair Grounds.
- Sri Lanka Tea Board & 07 Sri Lankan Tea Exporters successfully participated 'Erbil Agro food –2019, Trade Exhibition from September – 3rd October 2019 in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq.
- Iraq is the 2nd largest Sri Lanka Tea Importer Worldwide, Imported Ceylon Tea MT 38,408 Kgs in 2019.
- The Mission conducts regular meetings with the Iraqi Chambers of Commerce & Industry.
- The Mission conducts regular meetings with the Iraq Tourism and Travel Agencies and provided materials to Sri Lanka at their Exhibitions.

d. Cultural Relations:

- The Ambassador travelled to Najaf and Karbala and met with high dignitaries involved inpromotion of culture and religion, at the 2 Holiest Shrines of the Shiite Muslim religion.

e. Labour Welfare :

- The Ambassador has inspected accommodation provided to Sri Lankan migrant workers living in Erbil, Iraq. He got one Agency to completely change accommodation that was provided in 40-foot containers and built a proper and safe building for close to 200 Migrant Workers at the Erbil International Airport.

4. State of Israel

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Ambassador had a meeting with His Worship Meir Itzchak Ha'levi, the Mayor of Eilat on 03rd January 2019 to explore the possibilities of increasing tourism promotional activities with the newly established International Airport in Eilat, Israel.
- The Ambassador met with the officials of Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) on 07th June 2019 on the request of the Sri Lanka Air force.
- The Embassy coordinated the visit to Israel by a 14 member delegation of Tri-Forces of Sri Lanka led by Lt. Col. B.N.S.B. Rangama of Sri Lanka Army from 01st to 14th September, 2019

b. Multilateral Relations

- CDA a.i. participated at the 19th World Summit of Counter Terrorism from 09th – 12th September 2019 in Herzliya conducted by the Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) of Israel.
- Israel requested Sri Lanka's support for Israel's candidature for the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) at UN, for the term 2021 – 2024 and Sri Lanka has confirmed the support for Israeli candidature on reciprocal basis to obtain Israeli support for Sri Lanka's candidature to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), for the term 2025-2027.

c. Economic Relations & Foreign Investments, Tourism Promotion

- The Embassy organized the Sri Lanka Tourism Road Show which was held on 10th February 2019 at Sheraton Hotel Tel Aviv with the assistance of Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) to coincide with the 25th International Mediterranean Tourism Market (IMTM) 2019, the largest annual International tourism exhibition in Israel which was held from 12th – 13th February 2019 at the Tel Aviv Convention Center. More than 80 representatives of Israeli tour operators, travel agencies, media personnel and 08 Sri Lankan leading tour companies participated at the Sri Lanka Tourism Road Show. The objectives of the above events were to promote Sri Lanka as a tourist destination and to offer a platform to exchange ideas, explore business prospects and networking.

Trade Promotion

- The Ambassador met with 8 representatives of leading Israeli companies i.e. M/s Rozdor Trading Co. Inc., M/s ODIS, M/s Scandinavian Marine, M/s Even products, M/s SCR Dairy, M/s A. Azriel Consulting Ltd, M/s TAL Aviation and M/s Supercom on 07th January 2019 to expand their business

activities with Sri Lanka through Federation of Israel Chamber of Commerce (FICC).

- The Embassy organized the participation of two Sri Lankan Companies namely M/s Ran Ruwan Co. (Pvt.) Ltd. and M/s Blue Star at the 44th International Arts and Crafts Festival held in Jerusalem from 12th to 24th August, 2019.
- The new Ambassador discussed with Ms. Anat Bernstein-Reich, Chairperson, Sri Lanka Israel Chamber of Commerce on the possibility of promoting trade between Sri Lanka and Israel on 06th November 2019 and the new Ambassador also had a discussion with Mr. Uriel Lynn, President of Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce (FICC) on possibility of promoting trade and investments through FICC on 29th December 2019.
- The new Ambassador participated at the Festival/Exhibition organized by Israel Precious Stones & Diamonds Exchange Ltd. on 17th December 2019 to explore the possibility of importing Gems/Diamonds from Sri Lanka and made a brief presentation on the Gems and Jewelry sector of Sri Lanka.

Trade Inquiries

The Embassy received a trade inquiry from the Israel Company regarding the supply of Sri Lankan coconut products. Action was taken to assist the respective party through the Coconut Development Board /Sri Lanka Export Development Board.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Embassy organized *'Dharmadeshana'* on 20th March 2019 at the Chancery during the *'Thripitakabhivandana Week'* which was declared by H.E. the President of Sri Lanka from 16th to 23rd March 2019.
- The Vesak was celebrated on 25th May 2019 with the participation of a Sri Lankan Monk, at the Chancery premises.
- The Christmas was celebrated at the Chancery premises on 29th December 2019 with the participation of Sri Lankan Catholic/Christian community.

Education

- The Ambassador had a discussion with Prof. Ranaan Rein, Vice-President, Tel Aviv University on 30th April 2019 to explore the possibility of establishing collaboration with Sri Lankan universities.
- The Ambassador had a discussion with Dr. Joseph Shevel, President of Galilee International Management Institute (GIMI) on 05th May 2019 to explore the possibilities of identifying appropriate universities in Sri Lanka to collaborate with the GIMI.

e. Labour Welfare/Employment

- Assisted 70 Sri Lankan migrant workers to resolve their employment related issues and the Labour Section visited and assisted 03 hospitalized Sri Lankan migrant workers and 03 Sri Lankans who are in Jails and in Detention centers.
- The Labour Section registered 644 Sri Lankan migrant workers under the SLBFE Insurance Scheme.
- The Labour Section assisted 197 Caregivers arrived to Israel through private recruitment agents under the Joint Pilot Programme and 1362 Caregivers arrived through Self-Basis.
- The Mission facilitated in finalizing the draft Agreement on the Temporary Employment of Sri Lankan Workers in the Specific Labour Market Sectors of Israel. The Agreement was scheduled to be signed during the month of February 2020.

f. Other

- A Book of Condolence was opened at the Chancery on 24th & 25th of April 2019 in remembrance and respect of those who lost their lives due to Easter Sunday bomb blast in Sri Lanka on 21st April 2019.
- The Ambassador participated at the memorial services organized by the Sri Lankan Buddhist community and Christian Community in Israel on 26th and 27th April 2019 respectively in memory of the victims of the Easter Sunday bomb blast in Sri Lanka.

5. Kingdom of Jordan

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Ambassador had meetings with the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Labour of Jordan where important initiatives were discussed for the welfare of Sri Lankans in Jordan.
- The Ambassador also had discussions with members of the Royal family, namely HRH Princess Dana Firas, HRH Princess Basma, HRH Prince Mired bin Raad and HRH Prince Hasan in January and February respectively.
- The Ambassador met with the Chief of Protocol and Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in October to present the letter of Credence and to discuss regarding the Jordan - Sri Lanka bilateral ties. The Ambassador suggested that Political Consultations between the two Foreign Ministries should be initiated and a draft MoU was handed over by the Sri Lanka side to the Jordanian Foreign Ministry. Further meetings were held with the Director General/ Asia desk to discuss pending draft Agreements on the following:
    - Draft Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced persons
    - Draft Agreement on Defence Cooperation

- The Ambassador had an audience with His Majesty King Abdullah, Monarch of Jordan after the presentation of credentials on 2nd December where bilateral ties between the two countries and the way forward for enhancement of ties were discussed at length.
- The Ambassador met with the Head of the International Organization for Migrants (IOM) to discuss possible joint collaboration with the IOM to assist the Sri Lankan migrant workers in Jordan.
- A meeting with the Mayor of Amman Dr. Yusef Shawarbeh to discuss establishment of potential Sister City ties between Amman and a suitable city in Sri Lanka to intensify cultural and economic ties between the two countries was held.
- In order to enhance and forge closer student and academic exchanges between Sri Lanka and Jordan, the Ambassador met with the President of Jordan University in order to discuss the proposed MoU between the University of Jordan and the University of Peradeniya on academic cooperation.

b. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Extensive discussions were held with Mr. Fareedon Hartoqa, Acting Chairperson of the Jordan Investment Authority to facilitate a Jordanian delegation of investors to visit Sri Lanka.
- The Mission organized a Sri Lankan Tourism Road Show on 3rd April 2019 at the Rotana Hotel with the facilitation of the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau on 03rd April 2019 to promote and elevate the visibility of Sri Lanka in Jordan as a unique tourism destination in South Asia. The Road Show garnered substantial interest among the Jordanian public.
- The Ambassador had meetings with the Chairpersons of the Amman Chamber of Commerce and Jordan Chamber of Commerce to discuss the promotion of Sri Lankan exports into Jordan.
- At the meeting with the Secretary General of Agriculture of Jordan in December, the Ambassador informed the urgency of having the suspension lifted on the export of Bananas and Mangoes into Jordan from Sri Lanka in order to increase Sri Lanka's export into Jordan.
- The Ambassador met with the Chairman of the Jordan Chamber of Commerce which is the largest Chamber in Jordan, to discuss the Sri Lanka: Single Country Exhibition and B to B meetings to be held in 2020 by the Embassy. (This was held on 26th February 2020).
- The Ambassador met with the Deputy General Manager of IPCO to discuss Sri Lankan's participation at the Jordanian Food International Exhibition scheduled for June 2020 which would be a first time participation for Sri Lanka.
- In order to increase bilateral trade between the two countries with special emphasis on Ceylon tea, the Head of Palestine Trading company (largest importer of Ceylon tea to Jordan) had extensive discussions with the

Ambassador to discuss the further increase of market share for Ceylon tea in Jordan.

- The Ambassador had a meeting with the Chairman of the Jordan Tourism Board Dr. Arabiyat to discuss outbound tourism from Jordan to Sri Lanka and to discuss a familiarization programme for Jordanian journalists in Sri Lanka.

a. Cultural Relations

- The Mission organized a Sri Lankan cultural show at Al Hussein Cultural Center on 06th February 2019 with a performance by the Chandana Wickramasinghe Dance Troupe and also organized a cultural show at Grand Hyatt Hotel to showcase Sri Lankan culture and Cuisine.
- The Mission held a Dharma Sermon programme which, for the Sri Lankan community, conducted by Ven. Pussellayaye Chandima Thero for the Bak Full Moon Poya Day in April 2019.
- The Mission actively participated at the Annual Diplomatic Bazar which organized by the Foundation of Princess Basma Bint Talal for the charity of Mabarrat Um Al Hussein in October. This is the most important Diplomatic Bazaar held under the patronage of the Royal Family. The Embassy displayed food items, Ceylon Tea, handicrafts, Ayurvedic Products and Sri Lankan cosmetics to showcase the upmarket and versatile brands in Sri Lanka.
- The Ambassador met with two Roya TV Journalists to discuss showcasing Sri Lanka on Roya TV's programme on "Focus on countries" for 2020.
- A Sri Lankan Tourism Promotion Workshop on Wellness Tourism was held on 09th December 2019 at the Embassy premises for leading Jordanian Travel Industry Representatives and Managers of leading Airlines covering Sri Lanka. During the Workshop, an overview of the diversity of Sri Lanka's tourist attractions were enumerated on and Jordanians were encouraged to visit Sri Lanka and experience the wellness tourism facilities in Sri Lanka.
- The Embassy celebrated International Migrants Day on 12th December 2019 at the Colombia Global Center in Amman with the International Organization for Migrants in order to honour the Sri Lankan migrant workforce. The Sri Lankan migrant workforce is currently the third largest migrant work force in Jordan. A presentation on Sri Lanka in Arabic language was carried out to the audience at the venue.
- The Embassy organized the annual Christmas Celebrations at the Embassy premises for the Sri Lankan community in December with the participation of Rev. Father Peter Upali who gave a Christmas sermon.

b. Labour Welfare

- The Ambassador and staff have regularly visited detention centers in Juweideh, Nadara (East and West Amman) and Suwaqa to look into the welfare of the Sri Lankan detainees.
- Visits were made to the Apparel Factories where Sri Lankans work to enquire into their welfare and living conditions.
- The Embassy took the initiative of donating complete sets of winter clothing to all Sri Lankan detainees in the detention centres/Jails which were donated by EAM Maliban Textiles Factory.
- A Mobile Consular Service was held in the City of Irbid at the Classic Fashion Apparel factory premises for approx. 1500 Sri Lankans. This was done to deliver the consular services to distant locales where migrant Sri Lankan workers work and reside.
- The Staff of the Embassy attended all the court cases of Sri Lankans appearing in the court on various charges. The court cases were held in Amman and Irbid.
- The Ambassador and Staff met with the lawyers who very often appears for Sri Lankans in the court to discuss the welfare and wellbeing of the Sri Lankans who are charged in court.
- The Embassy was able to successfully obtain compensation of SLRs 5.6 million on 28th November for a Sri Lankan housemaid who had not been paid for 20 years and to obtain US dollars 20,000 for another domestic aide worker on 7th May.
- The Labour section of the Embassy was successful in increasing the number of employment opportunities for Sri Lankans during 2019 which was an increase of 11% over 2018.
- The Embassy maintains a Safe house for runaway Sri Lankan migrant workers to ensure their safety until their repatriation.
- The Embassy conducted a workshop on 31st December to create awareness among Jordanian Employment Agencies concerning Regulations for recruitment of Sri Lankans into Jordan.

6. State of Kuwait

a. Bilateral Relations

- Bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and Kuwait continued to grow during 2019 and the importance of further strengthening the relations was highlighted by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, during the meetings with the Head of Mission, following the presentation of credentials.
- The Embassy took necessary action towards achieving this objective in many ways, including following up on the decisions arrived at the meetings held, during the visit of the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Asian Affairs to Sri Lanka in 2018 and the 2nd Sri Lanka-Kuwait Joint

Committee on Trade and Technical Cooperation meeting held in October 2018.

- As per the provisions of the Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons and the Agreement on Extradition, the Embassy took action to commence the transfer process of Sri Lankan prisoners in Kuwait. The Head of Mission had meetings with relevant officials and obtained details of cases, list of prisoners, committed offences and their medical conditions, which were shared with the ministries and line agencies in Sri Lanka. Meetings were also held with the Legal Advisor regarding the intelligence sharing and also on the possibility of entering into a memorandum of understanding on this subject.
- The Mission coordinated the construction of a rehabilitation centre at the Jaffna Teaching hospital as a gift from the Red Crescent Society of Kuwait.
- Meetings were held with the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Consular Affairs to discuss various issues of migrant workers and many matters relating to welfare as well as payment of compensations.

b. Multilateral relations

- This Mission participated at all the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) periodic meetings held in Kuwait and followed up with the Ministry and other line agencies on events held in third countries. The Mission coordinated and ensured Sri Lanka's participation at the ACD High-level Working Group Meeting on the Organizational Structure of the ACD Secretariat, held in Bangkok in July.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The Head of Mission met with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Moratuwa and the Director General of External Resources in Colombo to discuss regarding the loan facility from the Kuwait Fund for Development and Cooperation and the establishment of the medical faculty for the University of Moratuwa.
- The Embassy facilitated the visit of the Regional Manager of the Kuwait Fund for Development and Cooperation and the delegation to Sri Lanka, which had meetings in Colombo regarding the establishment of the medical faculty for the University of Moratuwa and on additional loan facility for the Third Phase of the Kaluganga Project.
- With regard to finalizing the proposed agreement between the Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka, a meeting was held in December with the KCCI officials, and it was agreed to sign the agreement since the text was acceptable by both parties.
- The Embassy had meetings with businessmen, including the CEO of the NBTC Group of companies with regard to investment in the hospitality

sector, import of fruit and vegetables from Sri Lanka for the group's supermarket and also on recruitment of skilled Sri Lankans to their construction projects.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Mission used the Independence Day celebrations to show case Sri Lanka's culture at the flag hoisting ceremony as well as at the reception. A cultural troupe was flown from Colombo for this purpose and two events were arranged for the diplomatic community, Kuwait Government officials, business community and the Sri Lankan community, including expatriates and migrant workers.
- Thai Pongal and Sinhala Hindu New year were celebrated with safe house inmates at the Embassy premises. The Embassy, in association with the Sri Lankan Funeral Fund in Kuwait, organized a New Year festival which was graced by thousands of Sri Lankan migrant workers. A special Dhamma Sermon by Ven. Olaganwatte Chandasiri thero was organized in December 2019.
- The Embassy, in association with the Sri Lankan Funeral Fund in Kuwait, organized a three day religious programme, with the participation of 06 Buddhist monks who flew to Kuwait from Sri Lanka in December 2019. The programme included Pirith chanting, observation of sil and alms giving.
- Christmas celebrations took place at the Embassy premises on 23.12.2019, with the supportof the Salvation Army. Christmas carols were sung and special gift packs were presented to Safe House inmates, followed by refreshments to all the participants.

e. Labour Welfare

- The Mission liaised with the Public Authority for Manpower of Kuwait regarding the formation of the Joint Working Group, as per the provisions of the MoU on Labour, Recruitment and Manpower Development which was signed in 2012.
- With the aim of resolving issues concerning trafficking in persons, this Mission made representations to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Public Authority for Manpower, the Department of Domestic Labour, IOM office in Kuwait and several Embassies based in Kuwait.
- The Mission provided assistance to large number of migrant workers to overcome different challenges encountered by them, mediating between employees, employers/sponsors and agencies, in resolving those issues. During the period of 01 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, the total number of reported complaints related to domestic workers–in- service and non-domestic workers – in- service, is 2357.

i. Intervention to obtain due salaries of workers

The Mission intervened to recover salary dues of several migrant workers through negotiations with relevant parties and by referring to competent authorities, such as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Domestic Worker Department, and the CID. As a result, this Mission was able to recover sum of KD 8061/- equivalent to SLRs.4.7 million, as salary dues of 48 migrant workers during 2019.

ii. Hospital visits

The Mission undertook many visits to hospitals to assist Sri Lankan patients. Out of which 10 patients were repatriated having waived off hospital charges amounting to KD 27,950/- equivalent to SLRs. 16.5 million, due to the intervention of this Mission.

iii. Embassy Safe House

The Mission maintains a shelter for female domestic workers who flee from their place of employment due to various difficulties and maintains a reception desk that functions 24/7. 1080 runaway female migrant workers reported to the safe house in 2019. On an average 150 female workers were maintained at the safe house by the Mission.

iv. Repatriation

The Mission mediated the repatriation of 1073 Sri Lankans in 2019. Out of 1073 workers, 687 female workers who were reported to the safe house and the rest were out of status migrant workers, living outside.

v. Job Order Approvals

The Mission paid many visits to Foreign Employment Agencies and reputed business entities in Kuwait in order to secure new employment opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled Sri Lankans and secured 503 job orders from reputed companies and agencies.

vi. Jail visits

The Mission visited the Central Jail 07 occasions during this period. Also visited the deportation camp and the Government shelter to extend consular assistance for inmates and expediting repatriation operations. There are 200 Sri Lankans, 160 males and 40 females, detained in Jails in Kuwait.

7. Republic of Lebanon

a. Bilateral Relations

- Draft Agreements approved by the Lebanese Council of Ministers:
    - Agreement on the waiver of the visa for the holders of Diplomatic, Special, Official and Service passports.
    - MoU on political consultation

- Seven draft agreements and Memorandum of Understanding are being processed.
- Ambassador met President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Minister of Labour, Minister of Justice; Minister of Public Health, Minister of Defence, Minister of Economy and Trade and Minister of Interior.
- Newly appointed Ambassador presented the Letters of Credence to the HE General Michel Aoun, President of the Republic of Lebanon on 11th September 2019. She visited the Parliament of the Republic of Lebanon and met the Minister of Justice, Minister of Labour, Minister of Defence.
- The copies of Letters of Credence addressed to the President of the Syrian Arab Republic was forwarded to Syrian authorities to receive the concurrence for presenting credentials.

b. Multilateral Relations

- Ambassador attended diplomatic briefing on the operations of UNIFIL held at UNIFIL House on 22nd January 2019, 18th July 2019, and 12th November 2019.
- The Mission participated in the Global Programme on Migration and Development (GPMD) on 20th February 2019 which was organised by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) jointly with the Embassy of Switzerland in Lebanon; attended the regional conference on 'The impact of Political, Economic and Social changes to the reality of Arab Women that was organized by the Lebanese Council of Women in partnership with the committee of the United Nations Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Arab Women Organization on 21st February 2019; attended the global awareness campaign for the good treatment of girls, boys, and adolescents with disabilities launched in the Arab region on 07th March 2019 at UNESCWA, Head-quarters that was organised by the UNICEF, the Embassy of Chile in Lebanon, and OHCHR; attended the regional dialogue on counter trafficking response in humanitarian settings across the Levant region on 18th July 2019 which was organised by IOM, regional office in Beirut.
- Ambassador had discussions with the Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Stefano Del Col of the UNIFIL on 15th November 2019.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Exports from Sri Lanka to Lebanon marked as USD 23.91 Million in the year 2019 whereas Syria had imported USD 55.38 Million of exports from Sri Lanka.

- Under the Economic Diplomacy Programme, the Embassy organized a Trade Bazaar from 05th to 08th February 2019 to commemorate 71st Independence Day of Sri Lanka.
- The Embassy, in collaboration with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau organised a Travel Trade Roadshow on 05th April 2019 to promote Sri Lanka as a tourist destination at Radisson Blu Martinez Hotel, Beirut with more than seventy representatives of Lebanese tour operators, travel agencies, Airlines and media personnel, and more than twenty representatives of travel agencies, destination management companies from Sri Lanka.
- Three-member Agriculture experts from Agriculture Research Institute of Lebanon had a five- day field visit from 20th August 2019 with the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Economic Affairs, Irrigation and Fisheries and Resources Development of Sri Lanka.
- Under the collaborative efforts of the Embassy, three member delegation from the Bank of Ceylon, Sri Lanka arrived in Beirut on 16th September 2019 for a four-day visit at the aim of background referring to appoint a Permanent Bank Representative to Lebanon.
- Facilitated Sri Lankan and Lebanese Traders - HORECA Trade Exhibition held during 2nd - 5th April 2019 at Seaside Arena and it was participated by the Akbar Brothers (Pvt) Ltd. and Lebanese National, Zeinab Hazmie from Radar Group which was linked to Sri Lankan authorities regarding importing tea from Sri Lanka.
- Events to promote trade - Abey heritage festival, DSAL International Charity and the International Bazaar organized by the Diplomatic Club in Syria.
- Under Economic Diplomacy initiatives of the Economic Affairs Division of the Ministry, the Mission established a cabinet to display Sri Lankan products at the Chancery premises.
- The Embassy facilitated the presence of Representatives from Commercial Bank and Bank of Ceylon to facilitate channeling of remittances of Sri Lankan expatriates in Lebanon.
- The Mission initiated an agreement between Sri Lanka and Lebanon in the field of tourism.
- The tourists originated from Lebanon marked 4304, being the second in the rank of arrivals from the Middle-east.

d. Cultural Relations

- A Diplomatic reception was hosted to commemorate the 71st anniversary of the Independence Day of Sri Lanka at the Official residence on 04th February 2019. A function also held at the Embassy premises on 04th February 2019 together with Sri Lankan community including Sri Lankan Army contingent at UNIFIL, Naquora.
- In collaboration with the Sri Lankan Tamil Community in Lebanon, the Embassy celebrated Hindu harvest festival, Thai Pongal on 20th January

2019 at the Embassy premises and with the Sri Lanka Women Association in Lebanon, the Mission celebratedthe International Women's Day at the Embassy premises on 24th March 2019.

- The Embassy took part in the premier Asian Gourmet Festival organised by the diplomatic Missions of Asian countries based in Beirut in collaboration with the Lebanese University at the Lebanese University premises in Hadath, Beirut on 04th April 2019.
- The Embassy in partnership with the IOM in Beirut conducted a medical camp for migrant workers at the Embassy premises on 14th July 2019.
- The Embassy participated in the Abey Heritage Festival held during 03rd - 04th August 2019.
- The Deepawali celebration organised by the Embassy was held at the Embassy premises in the presence of Sri Lankan and Indian nationals gathering on 27th October 2019.
- The Embassy participated in the International Charity Bazaar-2019 held at Phoenicia Hotel in Beirut on 01st December 2019 which was organized by the DSAL.
- The Embassy celebrated the International Migrants' Day with the Sri Lankan Migrant Community on 22nd December 2019 and Christmas on 29th December 2019.

e. Labour Welfare

- Promotion of employment opportunities
  - A meeting was held with recruitment agencies at the Embassy premises to increasethe employability of Sri Lankan workforce in Lebanon.
  - Field visits to six agencies to discuss issues related to the recruitment process, facilities provided to employed workers, payments of workers' salaries etc.
  - Registered a new recruitment agency, "Perfect Clean"
  - Visited six agencies in Tripoli in the Northern governorate and six agencies in Zahle.
- Workshops and conferences
  - The Mission sent two officers to participate for a two-days workshop in Sri Lanka which was organised by SLBFE.
  - Ambassador Karunaratne and Counsellor (E & W) participated at a conference on revising the operational manual for labour sections of Sri Lankan diplomatic Missions that was held in Malaysia. The symposium was organised by ILO, SLBFE and MFR.
- Performance data of Labour section
  - Labour section approved 437 Employment contracts and 17 job orders.
  - The SLBFE registered 526 migrant workers.

- 56 out of 62 received complaints through the Complaint Management System were settled.
- Safe house inmates (Currently in the safe house 02)- Total Arrival -19, Repatriated -10, Reported to Sponsor 02, Returned to Agencies 03

- Death cases - 16 deaths were reported and12 human remains were dispatched to Sri Lanka whilst 04 human remains were buried in Lebanon.
- Compensation for deceased workers - A sum of USD 23,700/- had been collected as death compensation in respect of 04 cases.
- Repatriations
  - During the year, 98 Sri Lankans were repatriated to Sri Lanka through General Security.
  - Repatriation without penalty payments- out of 98, 20 Sri Lankan migrants have sought the assistance from the Embassy. 24 of arrested Sri Lankans were repatriated to Sri Lanka.
  - Special cases - a victim of human traffickers in Syria was sent back to Sri Lanka via Rafic Hariri International Airport, Beirut. The Embassy assisted 10 migrant workers.
- Court cases – five court cases are being attended.

Jail inmates - Four Sri Lankan female prisoners in Verdun and Tripoli prisons for capital punishments.

8. Sultanate of Oman

a. Bilateral Relations:

The following bilateral visits were undertaken during the period under evaluation;

- The visit of Rishad Bathiudeen, then Minister of Industry and Commerce, Resettlement of Protracted Displaced Persons and Co-operative Development to Oman from 24th to 26th February 2019, for discussion with the Omani Minister of Oil and Gas on the proposed refinery project in Hambantota.
- The visit of H.E Dr Mohammed Hamad Al Rumhy, Minister of Oil and Gas of the Sultanate of Oman from 23rd to 25th March 2019 on the invitation of Hon. then Minister of Industry and Commerce, has attended as the Guest of Honour at the foundation stone –laying ceremony of the Green Field Oil Refinery at the Mirijjawila Export Zone in Hambantota.
- The official visit of a Ministerial delegation led by Hon. Kabir Hashim, then Minister of Highways, Road Development and Petroleum Resources Development comprising of Hon. Malik Samarawickrama, then Minister of Development Strategies and International Trade and Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen, then Minister of Industry and Commerce, Resettlement of Protracted Displaced Persons and Co – operative Development from 4th to 6th May 2019 as a follow up to the meeting of H.E Dr. Mohammed Hamad Al Rumhy, Minister of Oil and Gas of the Sultanate of Oman.
- The visit of Mrs. W.P Sandanayake, then Secretary, State Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to take part for the 19th Conference of the North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission in Muscat on 25th March 2019.

- Dr. Salem Riza Muhammed Rizvi of Sultan Qaboos University, Oman attended the International Network of Quality Assurance Authorities in Higher Education Biennial Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 25th to 28th March 2019.
- The visit of the Royal Yacht Zeinat Al Bahar to Sri Lanka from 22nd to 25th April 2019.
- Ambassador held series of meetings with the relevant officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman from August to December 2019 to follow up on the matters discussed/ agreed upon at the 2nd Political Consultations meeting between the two Foreign Ministries held on 15th August 2018 in Sri Lanka, The 3rd Political Consultation scheduled to be held in Muscat.
- The Mission followed up on the finalization of signing the agreements/ MoUs/ Proposals related to bilateral cooperation with Omani side.
- Diplomatic Reception was held to mark the 71st Anniversary of the Independence.

b. Multilateral Relations

- Sri Lanka was represented at the National Vision Conference Oman - 2040 held from 27th to 28th January 2019 in Oman
- Sri Lankan was represented at the International Conference on Ocean Economy and Future Technology, organized by the Research Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman on 11th February 2019.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

i. Trade

Facilitated a visit of Sri Lankan trade delegation followed by Market Familiarization programme from 4th to 6th February 2019 under the Economic Diplomacy Programme of the Ministry,in coordination with Export Development Board of Sri Lanka and Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

- The Mission organized the Sri Lankan products week "Sri Lankan Delights" in Muscat from 10th to 16th February 2019 in partnership with Lulu Hypermarket, on the occasion of the 71st Anniversary of the Independence of Sri Lanka.
- Visit of Bank of Ceylon delegation to participate in the business promotion meetings in Muscat in June 2019.
- The Mission initiated and organized a visit of eleven Sri Lankan companies representing consumer foods sector including spices, fruits, vegetables, processed foods, tea, coconut kernel products, poultry and other varieties of consumer foods visited to Oman from 1st to 5th October 2019 in collaboration with the Export Development Board.
- The Mission also organized "Sri Lanka Week at Carrefour Oman" – an In – Store Promotional Programme of Sri Lankan food products at Carrefour Hypermarket in Oman, from 2nd to 5th October 2019.

ii. Investment

- The Mission organized meeting with the State General Reserve Fund on 25th February 2019 for the delegation accompanied by Hon. then Minister Rishad Bathiudeen, to brief on the available investment opportunities in Sri Lanka of hospitality, real state and logistics sector.
- Official visit of the ministerial delegation to discuss with the Ministry of oil and Gas and the Oman Oil Company on the proposed partnership between Oman Oil Company and Silver Park International, a Singapore based company for setting up of an oil refinery in Hambantota Special Economic Zone.
- The Mission arranged a meeting with the State General Reserve Fund on 5th May 2019 for ministerial delegation to brief and encourage to invest in Sri Lanka and expressed the investment opportunities in Hilton and Grand Hyatt hotels in Colombo.
- Meeting with Dr. P Mohammed Ali, founder of MFAR a multi – Sectorial conglomerate with extensive expertise in construction, real estate, hospitality and manufacturing solutions, to persuade him to engage in constructing the resort in Sri Lanka, the company purchased a 25 acre land in Kuchchaveli, Trincomalee for construction of a hotel.

iii.Tourism

- The Sri Lankan Tourism Road show was organized in Muscat with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion bureau on 31st May 2019.
- Engaged in social media campaigns of "Sri Lanka is safe to Travel" on the official Twitter and Facebook accounts of the Mission following the Easter Sunday Attack to encourage tourists to visit Sri Lanka.
- Facilitated the launch of first direct flight of Salam Air from Muscat to Colombo on 25th November 2019. Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Oman was invited as the guest of honour in the inaugural flight and a delegation consists of journalists representing different media organizations in Oman joined for a media firm tour in Sri Lanka.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Government of Oman has offered scholarship to the Sri Lankan students for the academic year 2019/20 under the Omani Programme for Scientific and Cultural Cooperation upon the request of the Mission.
- Flag Hoisting ceremony held on the occasion of the 71st Independence Day of Sri Lanka on 4th February 2019 and a newspaper supplement was published to mark the occasion.
- Facilitated the "*Ridma Tharanga*" Musical Show on 7th February 2019.
- Facilitated the Thai Pongal Day on 8th February 2019 at tulip Inn hotel, Muscat by the Sri Lankan Community Social Club.
- Facilitated the Sri Lankan Community Social Club Sports festival from 22nd and 23rd February 2019.

- Facilitated the Vesak Festival at Sri Sambudhattwa Jayanthi Viharaya located at the Embassy premises from 17th to 25th May 2019.
- Visit of Sri Lankan artists Bhathiya and Santhush and the team for musical entertainment programme organized by Sri Lankan Community Social Club and the Sri Lankan School Muscat (SLSM) to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of SLSM on 15th March 2019.
- Facilitated several blood donation campaigns during the year.
- The Mission facilitated the Sri Lankan community in Oman to participate at the Annual Cancer Walkathon – 2019, organized by Oman Cancer Association on 29 October 2019.
- The Mission facilitated the Sri Lanka Junior Hockey Team to participate at the Men's Junior AHF Cup 2019 tournament in Muscat from 5th to 14th December 2019.

e. Labor Welfare

- Organized an employment promotion discussion with the Oman Fisheries Company, SAOG in Ruwi on 20th May 2019.
- Launched a 'Hotline Service' with toll free and Whatsapp/Imo numbers on 1st August 2019 to reach out to Sri Lankan migrant workers in Oman to ensure better services for them.
- Ambassador participated at a Symposium on the updating of the operational manual for labour sections of Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Employment and Skills Development of Sri Lanka in collaboration with International Labour organization in Kuala Lumpur from 18th to 20th September 2019.
- Opening a new safe house facility to accommodate female migrant domestic workers who seek refuge in the Embassy in November 2019 in order to provide them with good living conditions as well as better services until their disputes are resolved and repatriated.
- The Mission obtained permission on 21st October 2019 from the Government of Oman to implement the issuance of a "No Objection Certificate" as a pre requisite for recruiting Sri Lankan domestic workers to Oman, a long awaited mechanism in order to curb human smuggling of Sri Lankan migrant workers.
- The Mission facilitated to find solutions for a large number of labour related issues of documented/ undocumented migrant workers. The Mission also facilitated to sign 5588 nos. employment contracts during the year 2019.

9. State of Qatar

Bilateral Relations

- A Parliamentary delegation headed by Hon. Karu Jayasooriya, Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka visited Doha to attend 140th Inter Parliamentary Union Assembly Meeting on 06th – 12th April 2019.
    - Hon. Speaker and the delegation met with H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al – Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the side-lines of the meeting on 06th April 2019. During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to further strengthen and enhance the existing bilateral relations between two countries. Hon. Speaker briefed the Foreign Minister on the potentiality of investment in the Colombo Port City.
    - Hon. Speaker further inquired with regard to the possibility of importing Qatari fertilizer products directly from Qatar which Sri Lanka is presently importing from other countries.
    - Hon. Speaker and the delegation visited the Stafford Sri Lankan School, Doha (SSLSD) and met the staff and students.
    - Hon. Speaker and the delegation met with Sri Lankan Community Leaders living in Qatar on 08th April 2019.
- Hon. Pelisge Harrison, Minister of Agriculture, Rural Economic Affairs, Livestock Development, Irrigation and Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development visited Qatar from 20th – 22nd April 2019.

Hon. Minister visited the Qatar Fertilizer Company.

- Hon. Tilak Marapana, Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Qatar on 30th April to 2nd May 2019 to attend the 16th Ministerial Meeting of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) held on 01st May 2019.
- The Ministerial Meeting was preceded by the meeting of the Senior Officials and followed by the ACD Business Forum.
- Sri Lanka welcomed the initiative of Qatar to establish the ACD Business Forum which would have way for the respective Business communities to introduce and forge mutually beneficial, advantageous partnerships. The Sri Lanka Export Development Board led the Sri Lankan delegation to the ACD Business Forum.
- Officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassy of Sri Lanka in Doha, the EDB and representatives of the private sector were associated in the meeting.
- Hon. Minister met with Turkey Foreign Minister and conveyed condolences for the two Turkey nationals died in the Easter Day terror attack in Sri Lanka. Turkey Foreign Minister thanked taking prompt action by the Government of Sri Lanka for dispatching the remains to Turkey.
- Both Ministers discussed with regard to the importation of power generators from Turkey to Sri Lanka.
- Hon. Minister met with Iran Foreign Minister and discussed to find ways for the payment of outstanding due of oil purchased by Sri Lanka. They further

discussed with regard to the oil embargo on Iran by USA and the possibility of importing oil from Iran.

- During his stay, Hon. Minister met with Sri Lankan Community Leaders living in Qatar on 02nd May 2019.

a. Multilateral Relations

- Following officials of the Qatar Armed Forces participated in Colombo Defence Seminar – 2019 held on 29th – 30th August 2019.
  - Brigadier General (Dr/Air) Rashid Hamad Al Noimi – Acting Commander, Center for Strategic Studies
  - Brigadier General/Abdullha Mohamed Al Dowsari – Commander of the Intelligence and Security Unit
- H.E. Yousef bin Mohammed Al Othman Fakhro, Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs of Qatar presented the Award of Excellence to the Sri Lankan Community for their outstanding services and positive roll to the progress of the State of Qatar.
- The award was received by the Counsellor (E & W) of the Mission at the International Workers Day Celebration held at Sheraton Grand Doha on 01st May 2019.

b. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The Mission participated at the Hospitality Qatar 2019 – The Global Hospitality and HORECA show of Qatar held at Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre from 12th – 14th November 2019.
  - Sri Lanka pavilion showcased Sri Lanka tourism's new identity "So Full of Wonders Sri Lanka" along with the visuals which illustrated the rich heritage, beautiful landscapes, pristine beaches and wild life of Sri Lanka.
  - Large number of travellers and travel operators visited the Sri Lankan Embassy stall.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Mission organized the Annual Thai Pongal Celebration with the Tamil Society in Qatar on 25th January 2019 at the Embassy Premises.
- The Mission organized the Independence Commemoration Day Ceremony on 4th February 2019 at the Embassy Premises.
- The Mission organized a Cultural Programme to celebrate the Vesak from 15th – 18th May 2019 at the Embassy Premises. Rev. Digana Sugathavansa Thero was invited to conduct religious and cultural events.
- Mr. Lakshuman Khanai, Charge d' Affaires *a.i.* of Embassy of Nepal participated at the celebration on 18th May 2019 on the invitation of the Charge d' Affaires *a.i.* of this Mission.

- The Mission organized the Annual Ifthar Celebration with the Sri Lankan Community and the Embassy Officials on 27th May 2019 at the Official Residence of H.E. the Ambassador.
- The Mission organized a Cultural Programme to celebrate the Poson from 15th – 16th June 2019 at the Embassy Premises. Rev. Moragahawawe Siri sugatha Thero was invited to conduct religious and cultural events.
- The Mission organized the Annual Christmas Celebration with the Sri Lankan Catholic Community and the Embassy officials on 20th December 2019 at the Embassy Premises.

b. Labour Welfare

- Visited and Distributed cloths, portable radios and shawing machines among the Sri Lankan inmates of the prison.
- Handed over books to the Library of the prison.
- Conducted awareness programme about Drugs and Other Rules and Regulation of the Qatar for the Sri Lankan inmates of the prison.
- Conducted 3 mobile awareness programmes about drugs, labour and other rules and regulation of the Qatar for the Sri Lankan Community
- Visited jail and deportation camps to discuss their issues monthly.
- Appeared before the court accompanied with the Sri Lankan Employees or on behalf of the Sri Lankan Employees.
- Visited 320 accommodations sites to inspect the livability conditions
- Translated the various documents to the Arabic Language of the Sri Lankan Employees.
- Appear before the Labour Department to settle the 326 issues of the Sri Lankan employees.
- Visited hospitals and coordinated with medical officers regarding the Sri Lankan Patients.
- Visited police stations to complaint and to settle the problems of Sri Lankan Employees.
- Maintenance of Safe House.
- Mission has given foods, medicine, accommodation facilities for 203 Sri Lankans Female Employees and repatriated them back to Sri Lanka.
- Visited Gulf Warehousing Company (GWC) with H.E. the Ambassador for job promotion.
- Visited Plaza Hollandi with H.E. the Ambassador for job promotion.

10. (1) Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – Riyadh

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Embassy arranged visits and held discussions with following high level authorities of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia both at political and official level with a view to enhancing bilateral relations between the two countries:

Bilateral visits:

- Dr. Abdullah ibn Mohammed ibn Ibrahim al-Sheikh, President of the Shura Council of KSA and a delegation of members of the Shura Council

Bilateral meetings:

- Prince Sultan Bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Chairman of the Saudi Space Commission and the Secretary-General of the Supreme Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA)
- Hon. Dr. Hamad bin Mohammed Al Sheikh, Minister of Education and Higher Education
- Prince Saud bin Nayef Al Saud, Governor of the Eastern Province
- Dr. Abdullah Abu Thinain, Vice Minister of Labour Affairs
- Hon. Azam Abdul Kareem Al Gain, Deputy Minister of Protocol Affairs of MoFA, KSA
- Dr. Khalid bin Muhammad Al-Sheibani, Director General of the MoFA (Eastern Province)
- Mr. Sulaiman Abdulrahman Al Gwaiz, Governor of the General Organization for Social Insurance (GOSI)
- Dr. Bandar bin Mohamed Al Eiban, President of Saudi Human Rights Commission held fruitful discussion about the safeguarding human rights of Sri Lankan migrant workers particularly domestic workers in the Kingdom.
- Mr. Waleed Al Suwaidan, President of Welfare Association of Saudi Families Abroad, KSA
- Eng. Ahmed Al Yamani CEO of the TAKAMOL which is handling the Saudi Domestic Workers recruitment process through Musaned online system in order discuss ways and means to improve system in Sri Lanka
- Ambassador participated at the Global Aviation Summit organized by the General Authority for Civil Aviation and Saudi Labour Forum organized by the IOM.

b. Multilateral Relations

Saudi Arabia hosts several multilateral organizations. The Embassy met the following officials to strengthen multilateral relations between Sri Lankan and these organizations:

- H.E. Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed Al- Othaimeen, Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah and the senior officers of the OIC. Mr. Sulaiman bin Saleh Al Dakheel, Director General of the Executive Board of the Gulf Health Council (GHC).

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- A delegation of six members headed by Dr. R.H.S. Samarathunga, Secretary, Ministry of Finance visited Riyadh to hold discussions with the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD).
- Held discussions with the President and CEO of Saudi Aramco, Mr Amin H.Nasser on issues related to Petroleum investment in Sri Lanka.
- A team of experts from the Gulf Cooperation Council Standardization Organization (GSO) visited Sri Lanka in November 2019 for an awareness programme.
- Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in collaborating with the Embassy of Sri Lanka organized International Food and Beverage Exhibition named as Saudi Foodex in November 2019.
- The Embassy joined hands with the 'LuLu' Hypermarket chain to organize *'Sri Lankan food week'* in 30 stores.
- The Embassy coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at the 'Riyadh Travel Fair'.
- Arranged meetings on commercial policy matters with Mr. Saleh S. AlSolami, Secretary General of Saudi Export Development Authority (SEDA), Dr. Saud A. Almashari, Secretary General of the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CSCCI) and Prof. Hisham Saad Aljadhey, President of Saudi Food and Drugs Authority (SFDA) , Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Received 05 complaints on commercial matters and they were settled successfully, one of the key issues was the ban of shrimp products from Sri Lanka.

d. Cultural Relations

- Embassy offers the only 'cultural space' for the Sri Lankan expats who belong to Buddhist, Christian and Hindu faiths.
- Embassy organized three main Buddhist religious activities, two Christian religious activities, three Hindu religious activities. Moreover, it also supported to organize two Islam religious activities.
- Embassy also supported in organizing a 'Sinhala & Hindu' Avurdu festival.
- Embassy also facilitated weekly Hindu poojai, monthly Buddhist programmes and monthly Dhahampasal programmes (Buddhist & Catholic) by providing the resources of the cultural hall of the Embassy.

e. Labour Welfare

- A Saudi delegation led by Ambassador Mohammed Al Shammary, Director General Citizenship Affairs visited Sri Lanka to discuss regarding the labour related affairs.
- A delegation led by Hon. M.A.D.H.H. Appuhamy (MP), Monitoring MP of the Ministry of Telecommunication, Foreign Employment and Sports made a three day official visit to Riyadh.

- The Labour section of the Embassy conducted 12 mobile services to assist Sri Lankan migrant workers in the Eastern Province. During the said period the Embassy received 452 nos. of complaints from the male workers and 278 cases were settled. 228 nos. of filed visits were carried out (Police, Labour Department, and Prison Deportation Camp, Hospital, Companies / Work Sites and Labour Courts act.). 118 nos. of complaints were received from female workers and 77 cases were settled. 430 visits were carried out for the wellbeing of women workers to woman welfare/social care centers, courts, police station & hospitals. Mission maintains average of 22 inmates' at safe house at a given period of time. A total of 223 FDWs sheltered at safe house in 2019.
- 80 nos. death cases were reported for the year 2019. 26 were buried and 54 were dispatched to Sri Lanka with the assistance of the Embassy.
- 33 compensation cases were completed in 2019. Embassy was able to assist Sri Lankan workers to receive LKR 326 million as salary dues, end of service, compensation and blood money in 2019.
- Embassy also looked into 128 cases of Prison inmates during said time period. Embassy continues to attend 18 long term critical cases. The Embassy successfully arbitrated on two cases and was able to change the severe penalties already being served.

10 (2) Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – Jeddah (Consul General Office)

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Consulate General is working closely with the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs regional office in Jeddah for the Western Region and the regional offices of the line agencies such as Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Labour.The Consulate General had periodical meetings with these Ministries to discuss about the bilaterally important issues and issues pertaining to the welfare of the Sri Lankan migrant workers.
- Consulate General celebrated 71st Independence Day (2019) of Sri Lanka in Jeddah with the participation of high-level Saudi dignitaries, businessmen and well-wishers.
- Being the Sri Lanka's representative to the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah Affairs which is headquatered in Jeddha, the Consulate General coordinated the Sri Lankan Hajj and Umrah pilgrimage with the Department of Muslim Affairs in Sri Lanka. During the Hajj pilgrimage of 2019, the Consulate General entered into a MoU with the Consumer Mobile – Strategies & Investment Co. in order to provide 4000 SIM cards Free of Charge to enable Sri Lankan Hajj pilgrims.
- The Consulate General facilitated the visits of Hon. M.H.A. Haleem, Minister of Posts. Postal Services and Muslim Religious Affairs headed Hajj delegation accompanied with Mr. M.R.M. Malik, Director, Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs, Dr. Ziyad

Mohamed Thaha, Chairman, Hajj Committee of Sri Lanka, Mr. M.H.M.Fahim, Private Secretary to the Hon. Minister and Mr. Arfaz Nuwaiz, Representative of Sri Lankan Air Lines during 13th January 2019 – 20th of January 2019.

- The Consulate General also facilitated for 3500 Sri Lankan Hajj pilgrims during their pilgrimage to Makkah.

b. Multilateral Relations

- The Consulate General and the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Riyadh made representation to the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) which is headquartered in Jeddah. One of the key meetings was with Dr. Yousef Al-Othaimeen, Secretary General of the OIC, concerning OIC reaction to April 21,2019 terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- Though the Economic agenda is mainly handled by the Embassy of Sri Lankan in Riyadh, the Consulate General has made a supportive role in strengthening economic relations by facilitating Sri Lanka's participation at the 'Foodex 2019' exhibition in Jeddah and coordination several trade inquiries with the potential buyers. Moreover, the Consulate also coordinated in processing some of the trade complaints and disputes with the Saudi Chambers of Commerce in Jeddah.

d. Relations with other organizations

- The Consulate General also coordinated with Muslim World League (MWL), one of the prominent Islamic Charity Organizations, for the visit of the Secretary-General Dr. Mohammed bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa to Sri Lanka. During this visit the MWL pledged $5 million to support the families of victims of terrorist acts.

e. Relations with Community organizations

- The Consulate General also works with the professional Sri Lankan organizations, such as the society of Sri Lankan quantity surveyors and society of Sri Lankan accounting professionals, and various toast-masters clubs.
- The Consulate General is the Patron of the Sri Lanka International School in Jeddah. During the said time, Consulate General coordinated with the Ministry of Education and local authorities on administrative needs of the School. It also supported the curricular and extra-curricular activities of the school with the board of Directors and other Sri Lankans.

- The Consulate General also having a close relationship with the students in the Madina Islamic University and the King Khalid University in Abha. These Sri Lankan student circles are representing Sri Lanka at their university functions and the Consulate General is providing them with necessary support.

Multilateral Relations; Covered and reported by SLEMB/Riyadh

Economic Relations and Foreign Investments; Covered and reported by SLEMB/Riyadh

f. Cultural Relations

- Events were held in view of the Essala Poya Day on 19.07.2019 including Pirith Pinkama, Perehera, Bodhi pooja and bakthi gee prasangaya followed by a dansal for nearly 800 Sri Lankans gathered.
- Deepavali was celebrated on 25.10.2019 with Hindu Relegious activities, cultural events, Musical show, while serving Hindu traditional food for nearly 700-750 gathered.
- Consulate in coordination with the Department of Muslim Cultural and Religious Affairs of Sri Lanka extended its support at various levels and ranges to handle 4000 Sri Lankan Hajj pilgrims. The objectives of the operation have been accomplished with the support of all the staff of consulate headed by Consul General.
- Sri Lankan Consulate General facilitated for the participation of Sri Lankan Tea Board in the 'Foodex 2019', an international Trade exhibition dedicated to the food and drink industry, held from 11th-14th November 2019 in Jeddah.

g. Labour Welfare

- Jeddah Mission has conducted 01 mobile service to assist Sri Lankan migrant workers living in Abha Region. The Mission has received 278 nos. of complaints. However, 247 nos. of complaints have been settled which consist of 67 nos. of Exit and 180 nos. of other settlements. Therefore 31 nos. of complaints (pending) need to be settled.

Male:

Jeddah Mission has received 259 nos. of complaints from male workers and out of this, 90% of complaints have been settled. Further 277 nos. of repatriations were conducted (Consulate 67 + Sumaishi Deportation Camp 196 + 14 SLBFE) Made 64 nos. of visits to deportation camps # 13 visits to hospital # 39 visits to police stations # 86 visits to companies # handled 77 labour court cases.

Female:

Jeddah Mission has received 19 nos. of complaints from female workers and out of this, 84% of complaints have been resolved. Further 145 nos. of repatriations were conducted (SLBFE Complaint Management System 29 + Sumaishi Deportation Camp 103 + 13 direct repatriations) Made 19 visits to women welfare/ social care center # 13 visits to hospital # 16 visits to police stations # attended 20 labour cases at court. Mission maintains average of 03 inmates at safe house. 40 nos. of FDWs sheltered at safe house. 39 nos. of death cases (as at 31.12.2019) were reported and out of these, 25 buried in the kingdom and 14 dispatched to Sri Lanka.

11. (1) United Arab Emirates– Abu Dhabi

a. Bilateral Relations

- The Embassy carried out the negotiations with UAE authorities on the deportation of Makandura Madush and in this regard the Embassy facilitated the visit of Hon. Tilak Marapana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and special envoy of H.E the President to UAE from 2-4 April 2020. Minister had discussions with H. E Dr. Anwar Gargash, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, UAE. Further, the Embassy facilitated the visit of Interpol Delegation from Sri Lanka to UAE for the deportation of Makandura Madush.
- The Embassy facilitated and participated in the bilateral discussions held on 22 July 2019 to amend the Extradition Treaty signed between the two countries in 2014. Delegation from Sri Lanka consisting Additional Solicitor General, AG's Department, Legal Advisor, Ministry of Defence, Dy. Legal Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated at the negotiations. As agreed at the negotiations, Sri Lanka forwarded the proposed text to amend the Article 5 (i) of the Treaty to UAE side.
- The Embassy facilitated the official visit of Mr. Ravinatha Aryasinha, Secretary/Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka to UAE from 4-8 November 2020. During the visit Secretary held discussions with His Highness Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance, H. E Dr. Anwar Gargash, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and H.E Khaled Abu Alhool, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UAE. Sri Lanka pledged the support to the UAE candidature to the Executive Board of UNESCO for the term 2019-2023.
- The Embassy held discussions with the Emirates Diplomatic Academy, UAE to commence Training and Exchange programmes for diplomats. As a result, Emirates Diplomatic Academy invited Sri Lanka to participate at the Diplomatic Leadership in the 21st Century Seminar which is scheduled to be held in mid 2020.
- The Embassy held discussions with the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) to sign an MOU between ECSSR and

LKIISS. The draft MoU to be sent from the Ministry to ECSSR for consideration.

- Since Sri Lanka and UAE celebrated 40 years of Diplomatic Relations in 2019, the Embassy in collaboration with the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, UAE initiated publication of a commemorative souvenir to mark 40 years of Diplomatic Relations between two countries.
- The Embassy Facilitated the Study Tour of Senior Military Officials from Defence Service Command and Staff College of Sri Lanka to UAE from 2 to 13 September 2019

b. Multilateral Relations

- The Embassy facilitated and participated at the following international conferences in 2019;
- 9th Session of the Assembly of International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) from 11 - 13 January 2019 and its Council Meetings in April and October 2019.
- The Embassy facilitated Sri Lanka Navy to participate at the International Defence Exhibition and Conference (IDEX) 2019 held from 17 to 21 February 2019. The Sayurala Naval Ship participated at the conference.
- Delegation headed by Hon. Ajith Mannapperuma, Minister of Mahaweli Development and Environment participated at the UN Secretary General's Climate Action Summit from 30 June – 02 July 2019.
- Delegation headed by Secretary Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ravinatha Aryasinhe participated at the 19th Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers Meeting in Abu Dhabi on 7 November 2019.
- The 18th Session of the General Conference of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) from 3 to 7 November 2019.
- Delegation headed by Commissioner and the Director General of the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC) and the focal point for UNODC in Sri Lanka participated at the 8th State Party Conference on UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) from 13 to 20 December 2019.

c. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

- The Embassy facilitated Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) to participate at the Taste of Abu Dhabi tourism promotion event from 7-9 November 2019 to promote Sri Lankan cusine in UAE.
- Set up a showcase/cabinet to exhibit Sri Lankan products at the Embassy premises. Ceylon Tea, Hand crafts etc.
- Set up TV Screen at the public area of the Embassy to promote Tourism, Tea, Exports and investments among foreign visitors
- Translation of "So Sri Lanka" Tourism Promotion Brochure into Arabic Language.

d. Cultural Relations

- The Embassy organized the following cultural programmes in collaboration with the Sri Lankan community in Abu Dhabi;
- Blood Donation Campaign and a Medical Clinic on 01st February 2019 to mark 71st Independence Day of Sri Lanka.
- Monthly Poya Day programmes, Friday Dhamma School, Iftar Programme, Deepavali and Christmas celebrations.
- A multi religious observance was conducted at the Embassy on 26 April 2019 in memory of Sri Lankans and foreign nationals who lost their lives at the Easter Sunday attack.
- All-night Pirith Chanting Ceremony held at the Embassy on 31 December 2019. Ten Most Venerable Buddhist Theros participated at the Pirith chanting.

e. Consular and Labour Welfare

- The officials of the Embassy and Consulate General had discussions with senior officials of the National Qualifications Authority (NQA) of UAE in December 2019 and discussed the matters pertaining to worker's skill harmonization between Sri Lanka and UAE.
- Consular and Labour mobile Services were conducted in Al Ain and the same was expanded to Ras-Al-Khaimah area.
- Monthly medical camps and counselling sessions were conducted by the Mission at the Embassy premises in association with Ahalia Medical Group and Sri Lankan medical doctors.
- The Embassy accommodated female domestic workers who escaped from their sponsors and recruitment agents at the Safe House of the Mission. Breakdown is as follows;
- No of domestic workers reached the Mission - 49
  - repatriated to Sri Lanka - 33
  - handed over to SLCG/Dubai - 05
  - handed over to Agency - 01
  - handed over to Police - 03
  - handed over to Sponsor - 01
  - Cases Carried Forward to next year - 06
- Mission assisted 34 illegal/over stayed workers to be repatriated to Sri Lanka along with one patient Ms. S.I Siththy Suwara (N6177270) who underwent intense treatments in Abu Dhabi for severe Cardiac issue since 02.03.2019 to 01.12.2019.
- Complaints made to the Mission by the migrant workers were entertained through the TAWFUQ centers introduced by the Human

Resource and Emiratization. 74 complaints of this nature were entertained by the Mission.

- The Mission carried out regular labour services for migrant workers such as court visits/representations, jail visits, compensations, repatriation of human remains, issuance of out passes, deposits to "Amanath" account, and other Consumable materials provided by their NOKKs.

11 (2) United Arab Emirates – Dubai (Consulate General office)

a. Bilateral Relations

This is under the purview of SLEMB/ Abu Dhabi.

b. Multilateral Relations

This is under the purview of SLEMB/ Abu Dhabi.

c. Economic Relations & Foreign Investments

- The Consulate General office coordinated participation of Six (06) leading companies in the wellness tourism sectors from Sri Lanka at Arab Health 2019 which was held in Dubai, UAE from 28th to 31st January 2019 at Dubai World Trade Centre under Sri Lanka's country pavilion, promoting Sri Lanka as an emerging wellness tourism destination. This was the first time that Sri Lanka participated in this annual event, which is the largest health and wellness exhibition in the Middle East and North Africa region. Utilizing the main source of funds allocated under the Economic Diplomacy programme initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the support of Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau and the Export Development Board. Sri Lanka's participation at Arab Health 2019 played a vital role in promoting Sri Lanka's specific brand of wellness tourism in a forum that attracted a plethora of worldwide brand leaders engaged in healthcare promotion.
- The world's largest food and beverage annual exhibition was held from 17-21 February 2019 at World Trade Centre, Dubai and more than 60 Sri Lankan export companies participated at the event, promoting Ceylon Tea and other food related exports to the Gulf region and other global markets securing several million US dollars worth of direct orders whilst also establishing and consolidating a large number of business contacts. The SLCG/ coordinated and facilitated Sri Lanka's participation at the Gulf Food 2019 in association with Sri Lanka Export Development Board and Sri Lanka Tea Board.
- Four pages special newspaper supplements were published in the 'Khaleej Times' and 'Gulf News' which are the leading English news papers in UAE, on 4th February 2019 to mark 71st Independence of Sri Lanka. Wider publicity on Sri Lanka's exports, tourism prospects, Sri Lankan airline etc. was given on this occasion promoting country's image in UAE.
- The Consulate General in association with SLTPB, facilitated Sri Lanka's participation at The Arabian Travel Market (ATM), which is the leading travel and tourism exhibition in Middle Eastern and Pan Arab Regions held during

28th April to 01st May 2019. Over 65 SL companies in the travel and Tourism industry have successfully participated promoting Sri Lanka as a key tourist destination.

- Required assistance was extended to SLEDB in association with EXPO secretariat in Dubai with regard to Sri Lanka's participation at the EXPO 2020 including the signing of the participation contract on 08th July 2020.

d. Cultural Relations

Organized National Day celebration for the Sri Lankan expatriates in Dubai on 04.02.2019

- Monthly Buddhist religious observances at the newly established Lankaramaya-temple in Dubai.
- Holding "Dhamma School" (Dahampasala) on every Friday at the premises of the Consulate General with the participation of over 600 students (children of Buddhist expatriate Sri Lankans living in Dubai & Northern Emirates). At the school, children are being taught the subjects of Sri Lankan culture, Sinhala language and Buddhism.
- Signifying the importance of keeping the harmony and goodwill among different religious groups, the Consulate General of Sri Lanka hosted an Iftar function in Association with the Sri Lankan Muslim Community in Dubai on Thursday 16th May 2019. Over 200 Sri Lankans representing all faiths participated for the above programme. This is the third consecutive time that an event of such nature has been organized by the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Dubai.
- Hosted "Sri Lanka Cultural and Tourism Promotion Night 2019" in celebrating the 40 years of the establishment of the Diplomatic Relations between Sri Lanka and the UAE at the Armani Hotel, Burj Khalifa which is the most prominent five star hotel in Dubai with the main objective of promoting Sri Lanka as a renowned destination for both tourism and investment with the participation of over 300 guests.

e. Labour Welfare

- 152 new Job orders were granted during the period under review.
- Legal assistance was provided to 273 Sri Lankans which includes attending to the needs of Sri Lankans in the jail and to Immigration, Courts & Police based in Dubai & Northern Emirates in extending required assistance for needy Sri Lankans.
- 20 visits were undertaken to Hospitals in Dubai & Northern Emirates in taking care of the well-being of affected Sri Lankans.
- Visited 152 labour camps to attend Sri Lankans' requests.
- Attending on priority basis for the claims of compensation and End of Service Benefits by the Sri Lankans.
- Prompt action in repatriation/ burial of human remains as requested by the NOKs & reporting to Consular Division of the Ministry of Foreign Relations. 22 Human remains were repatriated to Sri Lanka and 06

human remains were buried in Dubai and Northern Emirates during the period under review.

- 376 employees including Safe House Inmates were repatriated after the Immigration Clearance.
- Safe House facilities have been provided to 389 Sri Lankans.
- Counselling and conciliation services have been provided respectively for 389 and 215 Sri Lankans.
- 94 Sri Lankans have been supported with Medical assistance where 20 have been assisted for hospitalization.
- Transport facilities have been provided on various matters for 420 Sri Lankans.
- 150 Sri Lankans have been assisted with provision of food and 218 with provision of necessary information.
- 286 Numbers of complaints have been settled.

Economic Affairs Division

Economic Affairs Division

The Economic Affairs Division is entrusted with activities relating to economic diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation and technical cooperation. Accordingly, the Division functions as the focal point within the Ministry that coordinates with relevant government agencies responsible for promoting trade, investment, tourism and other economic activities abroad, and Sri Lanka's missions overseas on matters relating to trade and commerce, investment, technical cooperation, tourism and tea promotion, assisting in promoting foreign employment, matters related to development assistance and assisting and coordinating trade dispute settlements. Additionally, the Division also coordinates Sri Lanka's representation in multilateral organizations and forums dealing with economic issues.
Specific tasks in this effort include exploring, along with Sri Lanka missions and the relevant government agencies, new markets for Sri Lankan goods and services, expanding existing markets, and undertaking and organizing events, meetings and business activities aimed at attracting FDI.
During the year 2019, the Ministry continued to play its role as a facilitator to support the engines of economic growth and economic revival in Sri Lanka through strengthening economic relations with other countries with a special focus on revival of tourism industry aftermath of Ester Sunday attacks.

1. Economic Relations and Foreign Investments

1.1. Economic Diplomacy Programme (EDP)

In order to effectively implement the Economic Diplomacy initiative of the Government, the division introduced a programmes planning over a period of three years in 2018 that comprises three components: (i) Setting Economic Indicators and Performance Targets for Sri Lanka Missions overseas (EIPTM); (ii) Economic promotion of Sri Lanka in selected markets; and (iii) the Overseas Sri Lanka as Development Partners Programme. Each of these sub-programmes contributes to strengthening Sri Lanka's relations with other nations through economic diplomacy initiative.

i. Economic targets for Missions

The Economic Affairs Division envisaged to recognize and enhance engagement with established and stronger markets, while allocating more resources to emerging or potential markets by setting Performance Targets for Missions abroad. Strategic resource allocation would enable Sri Lanka to maximize total engagement with various markets in a more cohesive manner. Export and Foreign Employment targets were setto each Mission in year 2019 following a comprehensive study and also after consultation with relevant line agencies.

ii. Promotion Activities in Selected Markets

'Economic Promotion of Sri Lanka,' a sub-programme, the second component of the EDP was introduces aiming to identify suitable approaches that Sri Lanka could further engage with other nations. As each market has a different set of strengths,

this sub-programme is designed to identify the key markets and propose suitable promotional strategies catered to those strengths. Through this programme, the Ministry has taken the initiative to engage directly, finance and organize Economic Diplomacy programmes in 2018 and in 2019 to be organized in 2020 in collaboration with the relevant line Ministries and the private sector.

26 Sri Lanka Missions overseas in emerging markets were supported in carrying out 39 targeted campaigns to enhance Sri Lanka's global footprint and bring tangible economic benefits to the country and disbursed SLRS 50,000,000 of additional funding under EDP for trade promotion activities during the year. These promotional events ranged in line with the main focus sectors of the National Export Strategy (NES) launched by the Export Development Board. Following the conclusion of promotional events, the Division called for progress reports from each Missions. The reports received indicated that the targeted promotional events had produced excessively encouraging outcome by ensuring and enhancing direct linkages between Sri Lankan exporters and importers in the intended countries. Several direct export orders had materialized through these specific events.

iii. Overseas Sri Lankans as Development Partners

The Economic Affairs Division developed a concept paper on engaging Overseas Sri Lankans as Development Partners under four categories; 1. Economic 2. Political 3. Public and Cultural Diplomacy 4. People to People Contact. The following activities were carried out under this sub-programme:

i. Investment and Trade Round Table Meeting for the British Sri Lankan Diaspora, 2 September 2019, London, United Kingdome.
ii. Sri Lanka Festival – 2019, 9 November 2019, Canberra, Australia.
iii. Introduction Programme of One Village One Products and 2,000 Exporters Development Programme of the Export Development Board (EDB) to Sri Lankan community through Sri Lanka Consulate in Melbourne with a view to generate interest, and identify investors, 13 October 2019.

2. Bilateral Relations

i. The Division facilitated
   a) 03 high level incoming visits from Qatar, Japan, Seychelles
   b) 10 high level outgoing visits to Singapore, China, Japan, Cambodia, UAE, Oman, Kenya, India, Maldives and UK.
ii. The Economic Affairs Division coordinated 03 inward business visits from Lebanon, the Philippines, Poland and 31 outward business visits to Israel, Iran, South Africa, Malaysia,Indonesia, Belgium, Poland, UK, Russia, Turkey, Germany, Switzerland, Luxemburg and Sweden.
iii. Facilitated the visit of the delegation of Technical Cooperation Council of the Philippines from 2nd to 6th December 2019.
iv. The DG/EA (Bilateral) and Assistant Legal Advisor of the Ministry participated at the FTA and the ETCA negotiations on the services, economic and technology cooperation and investment chapter.

The Division has been working closely with international economic organizations, particularly on matters concerning treaties of commerce and advancement of free trade.

2.1. Details of Joint Economic Commissions held in 2018 and progress and future meetings

i. Sri Lanka and Australia Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA)

Sri Lanka – Australia Joint Commission has established under the Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement with the perspective of enhancing and facilitating bilateral trade and investment. Accordingly, the second session of the Joint commission was held in Sri Lanka on 17th September 2019. The several areas including facilitate Government to Government Cooperation, Development partnership, Market access and Commercial Interest were discussed during the meeting.

ii. EU- Sri Lanka Working Group on Trade and Economic Relations Cooperation

The EU- Sri Lanka Working Group on Trade and Economic Relations Cooperation held its annual meeting on 24 October 2019 in Brussels. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. A.L.M. Saleem, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade of Sri Lanka and Mr. Peter Berz, Acting Director, DG Trade, European Commission.

Both sides agreed to have continued cooperation on outstanding trade-related issues and concerns on a regular basis, in particular under the EU- Sri Lanka Working Group on Trade and Economic Relations Cooperation and the EU-Sri Lanka Investor Dialogue.

iii. The First Session of the Sri Lanka – Hungarian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation

The first session of the Sri Lanka – Hungarian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation was held from April 23-24, 2019 in Budapest. During the session it was discussed to deepen the cooperation in the areas of Trade and Economic Cooperation, Tide Aid Credit Cooperation, Agriculture and Food Economy, Water Management, Education, Science and Technology Cooperation and Disaster Management.

Hungary offered emergency aid worth 9 million Hungarian Forints to Sri Lanka in order to help the victims of Easter Sunday attack, and also Hungarian Government offered USD 25,000 in 2017 for the flood affected people in Sri Lanka. Double Taxation Agreement between the two countries is under negotiation. Further, agreed to seek the possibilities in cooperation in the areas of renewable energy, wellness tourism, and infrastructure development.

iv. **Bilateral Political Consultations between Sri Lanka and Egypt in Cairo.** (12 December 2019)

Tourism was identified as a potential growth area, while modalities to ensure sustainable investment flows were discussed during the consultations.

3. Multilateral Relations

3.1 United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

The Economic Affairs Division is the Focal Point for United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) at the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

Sri Lanka is represented at five (05) ESCAP Governing Councils of the Regional Institute: Statistical Institution for Asia and Pacific (SIAP), Centre for Sustainable Agriculture Mechanization (CSAM), Centre for Alleviation for Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CASPA), Asia and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) and the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM).

The Division was instrumental in facilitating and formulation of national policies, and participation of delegations to meetings, conferences, workshops and promoting the candidature to the Governing Council for the 75th Session.

3.2 Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

Sri Lanka is the Chair of BIMSTEC from 2008-2020. The Economic Affairs Division as the Focal Point has coordinated the participation of the following meetings.

i. First Meeting of the Permanent Working Committee (BPWC), 17-18 January, 2019, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Relations, in Colombo, Sri Lanka
ii. 19th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Rules of Origin, 21-22 January 2019, New Delhi, India.
iii. Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Task Force on Traditional Medicine (BTFTM), 24 -25 January 2019, Nay Pyi Taw, Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
iv. Third Meeting of the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs, 21 March 2019 Bangkok, Thailand
v. Seventh Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Agricultural Cooperation, 24-25 April 2019, Bangladesh.
vi. Fourth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Network of National Centres on Coordination in Traditional Medicine, 16-17 June 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
First Expert Group Meeting on Energy, 28-29 March 2019, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
vii. First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, 12 July 2019, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

viii. Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Track 1.5 Security Dialogue Forum, 30-31 July 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
ix. Workshop for Practitioner Level on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism, 13-15 August 2019, Bangkok, Thailand.
x. Eleventh Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism, 03-04 September 2019, Bangkok, Thailand.
xi. Seminar on Tourism Connectivity in BIMSTEC Region, 28 September 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
xii. Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Working Group on Trade Facilitation, 29-30 September 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
xiii. Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee, 10-11 October 2019, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
xiv. BIMSTEC Ports Conclave, 07-08 Nov 2019, Visakhapatnam, India.
xv. Preparatory Meeting for Second BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise, 14-15 November 2019, Puri, Odisha.
xvi. Coastal Security Workshop for BIMSTEC, 20-22 November 2019, Gurugram, India.
xvii. Second BIMSTEC Think Tanks Dialogue on Regional Security, 27-28 November 2019, New Delhi.
xviii. Workshop on "Experience in Countering Terrorism and Terrorist Financing through Case Studies", 27-29 November 2019, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
xix. Workshop of Experts on BIMSTEC Himalayan Science Council, 05-06 December 2019, Goa, India.
xx. International Seminar on Climate Smart Farming System, 11-13 December 2019, New Delhi, India.
xxi. Training Workshop on Risk Informed Urban Planning, 17-20 December 2019, Gujarat, India.

3.3 Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

The Economic Affairs Division coordinated with line Ministries on Sri Lanka's participation in the following Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) meetings.

i. 16th Ministerial Meeting of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, Senior Officials Meeting and Business Forum, 30 April - 2 May 2019, Doha, Qatar.
ii. High Level Working Group (HLWG) on the Organizational Structure of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue Secretariat, 18-19 July 2019, Bangkok, Thailand.
iii. ACD Foreign Minister's Meeting on the sideline of the 74th UNGA, 27 September 2019, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

3.4 Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

As the Focal Point for IORA, the Economic Affairs Division coordinated the following meetings with line Ministries on Sri Lanka participation.

i. Indian Ocean Rim Association, Webinar on Women's Economic Empowerment in the Blue Economy, 24 January 2019, arranged by South Africa.

ii. Meeting of IORA Cluster Group on Disaster Risk Management, 05-06 February 2019, New Delhi, India.
iii. Singapore Cooperation Programme on Tourism Management and Destination Marketing for IORA Member Countries, 04-08 March 2019, Singapore.
iv. A Familiarization Visit for Journalists and Media Practitioners from IORA Member States, 08 - 12 April 2019, South Africa.
v. 2nd Workshop on the Institutional Strengthening of the IORA Secretariat, 09-11 April 2019, Mauritius.
vi. Modernizing Trade in the Indian Ocean Rim Conference, Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI), Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE), and Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF), 17-18 June 2019, South Africa.
vii. 9th Biennial meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials Meeting (CSO), 19-20 June 2019, Durban, South Africa.
viii. Fourth Joint Annual Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise (HADR), 02-04 August 2019, Chennai, India.
ix. IORA Workshop on Tsunami Early Warning Systems – Lessons-learnt from the 2018 Tsunami in Indonesia, 26-28 September 2019, Jakarta, Indonesia.
x. 3rd IORA Blue Economy Ministerial Conference on Promoting Sustainable Blue Economy, 04-05 September 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh
xi. Webinar on Women's Economic Empowerment, 22 October and 26 November 2019.
xii. Workshop on Biennial Review of IORA Fisheries and Aquaculture Sectors entitled "Harmonization of Fisheries and Aquaculture Information System in the FSU Countries, 29-30 October 2019, Muscat, Oman.
xiii. 19th Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers' Meeting and 21st Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), 05-07 November 2019, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.
xiv. Workshop on Biomedical Engineering and other Innovative Technologies with relevance for Post Disaster Situations, 18-21 November 2019, Germany.

3.5 G77, UNCTAD AND WTO

The Division also coordinates and facilitates G77, UNCTAD and WTO issues with line Ministries.

3.5.1 G77

The 43rd Annual Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the G-77, 27th September 2019, on the sidelines of the 74th UNGA.

3.6 World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

The Economic Affairs Division coordinates with the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation and National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) on substantive matters of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The Economic Affairs Division coordinated Sri Lanka's participation at the following WIPO meetings in 2019:

i. 41st Session of the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs & Geographical Indications (SCT), 8 - 11 April 2019, Geneva.
ii. 14th Session of the Advisory Committee on Enforcement (ACE), 2 - 4 September 2019, Geneva.
iii. Fifty-Ninth Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of the WIPO and Session of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Union Assembly, 30 September - 09 October 2019, Geneva.
iv. WIPO Intellectual Property Judges Forum, 13 - 15 November 2019, Geneva.

3.7 Colombo Plan

Sri Lanka was appointed as a member of the Colombo Plan Standing Committee for FY 2019/2020. The Economic Affairs Division representing the Ministry of Foreign Relations participated in the following meetings of the Colombo Plan:

i. Standing Committee Meeting of the Colombo Plan, 1 March 2019, Colombo Plan Secretariat, Sri Lanka.
ii. 297th Session of the Colombo Plan Council, 7 March 2019, Colombo Plan Secretariat, Sri Lanka.
iii. 298th Session of the Colombo Plan Council, 23 July 2019, Colombo Plan Secretariat, Sri Lanka.
iv. Standing Committee Meeting of the Colombo Plan, 18 October 2019, Colombo Plan Secretariat, Sri Lanka.
v. 299th Session of the Colombo Plan Council, 27 November 2019, Colombo Plan Secretariat, Sri Lanka.

3.8 Colombo Process (CP), Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) and Global Forum on Migration (GFMD).

- Economic Affairs along with the Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations (the Focal point for Migration related works) coordinated activities of the Colombo Process (CP), Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) and Global Forum on Migration (GFMD).

3.8.1 Colombo Process

- Discussion on the engagement of the Global Framework on Migration, 22nd - 23rd May 2019, Bangkok, Thailand.

3.8.2 Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD)

Sri Lanka handed over the Chair of ADD to UAE at the 5th ADD Ministerial Consultation in October 2019.

i. Special Meeting of ADD Ministers' 9 - 14 February 2019, Dubai, UAE.

ii. High - Level Symposium on the Future Work, 29 April 2019, Dubai, UAE.
iii. Senior Officials Meeting, 30 April 2019, Dubai, UAE.
iv. 5th ADD Ministerial Consultations, 16 - 17 October 2019, Dubai, UAE

3.8.3 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)

i. Second Government - Led Roundtable (RT) Team Consultation, 28 May 2019, Geneva.
ii. GFMD Thematic Workshop, 2 - 07 July 2019, Morocco.

3.9 EXPO 2020

Sri Lanka signed the Official Participation Contract of EXPO 2020 Dubai on 8 July 2019, with a view to attract 1% of 15 Million visitors to EXPO 2020 Dubai to Sri Lanka over a period of 5 years.

The following meetings were attended by Ministry officials:

i. International Participants Technical Meeting, 12 - 15 September 2019, Dubai, UAE.
ii. 4th International Participants Meeting, 29 – 30 November 2019, Dubai, UAE.

Ministry officials are represented at the following committees:

i. Co-chair of Planning Committee.
ii. Co-Chair of Public Relations and Sponsorship Sub Committee.
iii. Chairperson of the Technical Evaluation Committee to obtain the services of an Event Management Company for Expo Dubai 2020.
iv. Chairman of Cabinet Appointed Procurement Committee to obtain services of an Event Management Company.

4. Statistics of Issuance of Visa (From January 2019 to December 2019)

The Economic Affairs Division coordinated the issuance of visa for short term visits of officials of the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Japan International Cooperation Agency etc. and also facilitated visas for participants at workshops and seminars organized by the various Government agencies.

Visa category			
Short term Gratis Visa		**Residence/ Entry visa recommendation**	
To whom	**No. of Visas**	**To Whom**	**No. of Visas**
World Bank	66	World Bank	12
JICA	57	JICA	42
Others	118	Colombo Plan	07
AIIB	01	IFC	02

Several short and long term scholarships were facilitated for Sri Lankan students, Professionals and Government officials through the Colombo Plan, Singapore Technical Cooperation Programme, Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, UNESCAP, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Indian Government.

5. Technical Cooperation

i. Facilitated to Sri Lanka Foundation (SLF) to conduct a Technical Cooperation Programme in Sri Lanka for Technical/Production staff of Cuban Institute of Radio & Television from 3rd- 6th June 2019 in Colombo at the cost of SLRs. 598,800.00.

ii. Arranged and actively participated for the 'V2025 Enterprise Sri Lanka' Exhibition organized by Ministry of Finance from 23rd to 27th July 2019 in Anuradhapura and 2nd event in Jaffna from 7-10 September 2019 under National Development Programme of the Government.

iii. Guest Lecture Series was organized by the Development Economics (AECC 42013) Class of 2020 of the Department of Economics at the University of Jaffna lined-up at the Department of Economics of the University of Jaffna. Mr. P M Amza, Additional Secretary, Economic Affairs and Admin participated as a guest lecturer and delivered two lectures in English and Tamil medium on 9th and 10th September 2019 on Economic Diplomacy Programme at the Guest Lecture Series organized by the Development Economics (AECC 42013) Class of 2020 of the Department of Economics of the University of Jaffna.

Human Resources and Missions Management Division

Human Resources and Missions Management Division

The Human Resources and Missions Management Division facilitates the smooth functioning of all Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad by providing required resources including, establishment of Missions/Posts, human resources, provision of entitlements/requirements of officers posted abroad, financial allocations, redressing of grievances and guidance with regard to the functioning of the Missions and matters related to Sri Lanka Foreign Service from recruitment to retirement.

Sri Lanka at present maintains following diplomatic Missions and Posts abroad.

Embassies / High Commissions	-	50
Permanent Missions to the United Nations	-	02
Deputy High Commission	-	01
Representative Office	-	01
Consulate General Offices	-	13
Total		67
		==

Following are the highlights of some of the activities during the period.

1. **Staffing - Overseas Sri Lanka Missions/Posts**

i. Appointments of New Heads of Mission :
Processing of twenty seven (27) Heads of Missionand Heads of Posts appointments and facilitation related to their appointments. In this regard, conclusions of tenures of predecessors were also facilitated.

ii. Transfers of SLFS and appointment of other staff grade Non SLFS officers :
Processing of (36) transfers of SLFS officers and thirty three (33) appointments of other staff grade officers and facilitation related to their appointments. In this regard, transfers of their predecessors at the end of their tenures were also implemented/facilitated.

iii. Appointments ofHome based officers as technical and administrative staff of Missions/Posts abroad:
Processing of appointments of Six (06) Management Service Officers as PMAs, five (05) Management Service Officers as Personal Assistants (PA),four (04) Protocol Assistants and nine (9) Consular Assistants and facilitation related to their appointments. In this regard, transfers of their predecessors at the end of their tenures were also implemented/facilitated.

iv. Appointments of Home recruited (HRC) supportive staffs
Processing of 37 HRC supportive staffs appointments and facilitation related to their appointments.

v. Creation of posts
Processing of creation of seven (07) cadre positions in consultation with Department of Management Services and initiation to create five (05) more cadre positions.

vi. Conducting of competitive examinations
Conducted limited competitive examinations for filling vacancies in the Public Management Assistants Service Cadre (PMA) and Personal Assistants (PA) in Sri Lanka Missions Abroad in collaboration with the Department of Examinations.

vii. Transfer Boards
Following transfer boards were appointed during the year.
- Transfer board to select protocol officers for the SL Missions abroad
- Transfer board to select Personal Assistants for the SL Missions abrod
- Transfer board to select Consular Assistants for the SL Missions abroad

viii. Facilitation of retirement from the Public Service and enlistment to retirement pensions scheme.

2. Maintaining of personal files of SLFS officers and home based staff members of Missions/Posts

- Processing of Annual salary increments of SLFS officers and other Staff officers from Public Service serving in Missions/Posts.
- Processing of salary conversions of home based staff of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts
- Processing of promotions of SLFS officers. Facilitation of PSPF requests and end of service benefits.

3. Facilitating visits/consular mobile services of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts

- Facilitation of 169 visits by Heads of Mission.
- Facilitation of 41 Official visits of officers of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts.
- Facilitation of 38 Consular mobile services of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts.

4. Providing entitlements

- Processing of Medical claims of Home based staff of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts and their eligible family members.
- Processing of Education claims of children of home based staff of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts.
- Processing of Education passage, Emergency passage and home leave passage as per prevailing regulations.
- Processing of Overseas/medical and duty leave of all home based officers of Missions/Posts.

- Processing of all requests in respect leave of SLFS officers as per Chapter Xii of Establishment Code.
- Processing of Leave of spouses accompanying home based staff.
- Processing of Leave of school going children of home based officers.
- Processing of Education claims of all SLFS officers in the Ministry.

5. Responding to queries

Responding audit queries, parliamentary questions and queries under Rights to Information Act.

6. Redress of grievances

Addressing/redressing /responding grievances of SLFS officers and all home based, home recruited and local staff of Missions/Posts abroad.

7. Handling of complaints/allegations

Responding to complaints/allegations directed towards SLFS officers, Missions/Posts and staff members of the Missions/Posts.

Overseas Assets Management
&
Development Division

Overseas Assets Management & Development Division

The primary function of the Overseas Assets Management & Development Division (OAM & D) is to facilitate the smooth functioning of all Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad by providing required material resources, managing movable and immovable assets and supervising the day to day communication between the Ministry and its network of Missions. In addition, matters pertaining to the Travel Section, Security Mail Division and IT (Cypher) Division also fall under the purview of Overseas Assets Management & Development Division

At present, the GoSL maintains the following Diplomatic Missions and Posts abroad:

Embassies/High Commissions	-	50
Permanent Missions to the United Nations	-	02
Deputy High Commission	-	01
Representative Office	-	01
onsulate General Offices	-	13
Total		67

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1. Acquisition and Maintenance of Foreign Assets

Immovable properties :

The OAM & D, in consultation with Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad, has a policy initiative to purchase at least two new properties for the use of our Missions abroad every year. This year, the focus was to renovate/construct properties which are dilapidated. In this regard, action has been taken to renovate 23 properties.

Details of construction, renovation and refurbishment carried out in the GoSL owned properties during the year 2019

S/No	Name of the Mission	Description
1	SLHC/Canberra	Repair/Maintenance of the Chancery
2	SLCG/Sydney	Repair/Maintenance of the Consulate/Official Residence
3	SLEMB/Brussels	Repair/Maintenance of the Chancery and the Official Residence
4	SLEMB/Brasilia	Repairs/Renovation of the Chancery building
5	SLHC/Ottawa	Phase II of the renovation of the Official Residence
6	SLEMB/Beijing	Repair of the Green House of the Embassy Garden
		Repair of the main hot water pipe line of the Embassy building
7	SLEMB/Cairo	Painting of the external facades of the Embassy
8	SLEMB/Berlin	Maintenance of the Parapet Wall of the Chancery
9	SLHC/New Delhi	Renovation/Refurbishment of Chancery, Official Residence and Official Quarters -Testing of Electrical Transformers and Distribution Panels with a view to repairing/replacing them based on the requirement - Renovation work and colour washing - Requirement of 07 units of Voltas to make Split Air Conditioners - Repair/Renovation work and colour washing - Renovation/ Repairs of the transformer room, garden benches, electrical poles etc. - Rectification of damages to the power supply cable from main electrical distribution panel to the four-storied building (Home Based Staff Apartments) of the High Commission
10	SLDHC/Chennai	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Chancery - Painting works of exterior walls of the Chancery - Flooring with marble and granite and polishing by machine with wax or powder
11	SLCG/Mumbai	Repair work at the Chancery premises
12	SLEMB/Jakarta	Repair works at the Chancery Premices and the Official Residence

13	SLEMB/Tokyo	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Chancery - Repair of the two toilets on the 4th floor of the Chancery Building. - Installation of a heating and cooling system for the Public Relations Officer's room - Replacement of the outer door of the Accounts Officer's room - Construction of 02 pipe lines from the 2nd floor corridors of the Chancery Building
14	SLCG/Kuala Lumpur	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Official Residence - Extension of the perimeter wall of the Official Residence - Refurbishment the drainage system - Construction of the perimeter wall at the Official Residence - Urgent requisite on leveling up the drainage and adjusting the water flow of the Official Residence of the High Commissioner
15	SLEMB/Yangon	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Chancery and the Official Residence - Renovation of the floor area around the BO Tree - Construction of a Steel Roof for the Buddha Statue
16	SLEMB/Muscat	Installation of a glass door at the entrance to the 1st floor of the Chancery Building
17	SLEMB/Riyadh	Repair and maintenance of the Chancery Building
18	SLHC/Pretoria	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Chancery, Official Residence and official Quarters - Installation of new carpets in a bed room at the Official Residence of H.E. the High Commissioner - Roof repair at 172, Balmoral Avenue, Lisdogen - Painting of all interior & exterior wall surfaces, ceilings, windows, doors and frames, boundary walls and gates
20	SLEMB/Stockholm	Renovation of the Chancery & Official Residence
21	SLEMB/Bangkok	Renovation of the Official Residence - Minor repairs including painting of some parts at the Official Residence - Renovation of the kitchen area of the Official Residence

		- Restructuring/Partitioning of the Consulate area - Fixing a set of aluminum sliding windows to the small balcony / open verandah of the second floor of the Official Residence
22	SLHC/London	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Chancery, andOfficial Residence - Renovation Repair work to the heating system of the official residence - Repair work in the rooftop of the Official Residence - Visual Recognition System & Stand-Alone Access Controls to the Main Entrance of the High Commission - Urgent lift repair work at the Official residence of H.E. the High Commissioner - Construction of a new Gents toilet on the Ground floor of the Chancery - Supply and Installation of a new sink unit at the Official Residence of the High Commissioner - Repair of walls of the Chancery - Re-organizing work at the pantry area of the High Commissioner's Office - Repair work at the Official Residence of H.E. the High Commissioner - Purchase and installation of Horizontal Skylight shading at the Official Residence
23	PRUN/New York	Installation of Window Shades for the Official Residence
24	SLEMB/Washington	Renovation/Refurbishment of the Chancery, and Official Residence - Heating/Cooling repairs at the Official Residence - Purchase of a new Gas Stove & Exhauster - Repair and remodification of the existing bathroom at the Master Bedroom of the Official Residence - Renovation of the bathroom at the master bedroom of the Official Residence - Replacing inner entry door (glass) of the front entrance and a set of French doors open to the sunroom in the interior of the Official Residence.

Movable Properties :

a. Vehicles

The OAM & D in consultation with the Treasury facilitates the purchase of vehicles for Missions/ Posts abroad as and when replacements of new vehicles are required.

Approvals were granted to purchase 6 vehicles during the said period for the use of Missions abroad at a total cost of USD 268,536/ (SLRs 49,710,144/-).

The Ministry has advised above 6 Missions to dispose of the old vehicles in accordance with the Public Finance Circular No 02/2015 in order to minimize the cost of maintenance.

Requests for purchasing new vehicles for Sri Lankan Missions in New Delhi, Tel Aviv, Geneva, Moscow, Jeddah, Riyadh, Singapore, and Paris have to be submitted to the Treasury. However, according to the National Budget Circular No. 05/2019, the General Treasury has temporarily suspended purchasing of new vehicles until further notice.

b. Other Capital Assets :

On the requests made by several overseas Missions abroad, the Ministry has granted approval to purchase office equipment and furniture, acquisition of plant, machinery and equipment at a cost of Rs. 91.1 Mn from January to December 2019.

c. Insurance of movable & immovable Assets

In order to secure assets of the GoSL, this division has taken action to obtain new insurance/renew insurance on time as appropriate.

2. Issuance of Passports

Recommendation letters for the Issuance/Renewals/Extension of the Diplomatic/Official Passports for Officials (Home Based staff) appointed to Sri Lankan Missions Abroad.

3. Packing, Transport and Insurance of Heavy Baggage

Implementation of the MIS circular No. 215 dated 17.07.2018 in order to minimize the expenditure incurred for the transportation of heavy baggage of Non-Diplomatic HB officers.

4. Departure/Arrivals Arrangements for Home Based Staff

The Division facilitated logistical arrangements for 185 officers including their family members for their departure and 115 officers including their family members for their arrivals after completion of tour of duties.

5. Board of Survey of Sri Lanka Missions Abroad

Board of Survey Reports 2018 of all Sri Lankan Missions/ Posts were obtained and submitted to the Auditor General's Department for necessary clearance. Necessary instructions were conveyed regarding the disposal of unusable items.

6. Audit Inspections

Regular audit inspections at Missions /Posts abroad, in consultation with the Internal Audit Division, are facilitated by this Division.

7. Preparing the Progress Report and Annual Performance Report

The OAD coordinated with Overseas Missions and respective divisions in the Ministry and prepared a Progress Report, Annual Action Plan and Annual Performance Report to submit to the Parliament

8. Maintenance of the Website

In line with economic/public diplomacy programs, the SL Missions were requested to focus on maintenance of websites on a regular basis to provide the most updated information to relevant parties abroad. It was further requested to establish new websites for the Missions which do not have websites at the moment.

9. Leasing/Renting Chanceries and Official Residences

The Division was also dedicated to provide temporary/permanent accommodation for Officials assigned to the SL missions abroad with a minimum financial burden on the GoSL.

10. Allocation of Staff Quarters

This Division also coordinated the allocation of official quarters among SLFS on a first come first serve basis.

11. Issuance of circulars

This Division issued the circular no 303 dated 11.11.2019 requesting all Diplomatic Missions to comply with tax/vat claims and report the earnings of the same to this Ministry on quarterly basis.

Facilitation of Official Travel

The Travel Unit which falls under the purview of the OAM & D has facilitated obtaining visas and ticketing arrangements for 154 official visits from January to December 2019 and has also arranged the payments of necessary travel allowances and other entitlements for 308 officers during the period. Third-Party Notes (TPN) have also been issued to facilitate obtaining visas for Government Officials from various Ministries, Departments and Semi-Governmental authorities.

Security Mail Division

The Security Mail Division deals with the dispatch of Diplomatic Bags to Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad, collecting Diplomatic Bags sent by Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad and delivering items of the collected Diplomatic Bags to the relevant Divisions of the Ministry. The Ministry also initiated assistance with the Courier Company to undertake dispatch of Diplomatic Bags from selected Missions in order to cut down the cost and ensure speedy delivery of mail bags.

In order to minimize the loss of DPL Bags while dispatching, a new set of DPL Bags were printed with the name of the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

IT Division

The IT Division handles between 600 – 700 faxes and emails on a daily basis from Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad and from other organizations and entities in Sri Lanka and abroad. The IT Division works around the clock, seven days of the week and the staff are deployed on a roster basis.
Arrangements were made to increase the storage facility of the IT Division in order to secure the documents of the CYPHER.

Protocol Division

Protocol Division

1. The work of the Protocol Division can be categorized into the following main areas:

a. Coordinating ceremonial functions;
b. Facilitating and monitoring diplomatic immunities and privileges extended to foreign Diplomatic Representations, the UN and its specialized agencies, and International Organizations accredited to Sri Lanka;
c. Facilitating arrangements for Heads of Missions accredited to Sri Lanka (Based in Colombo and concurrent accreditations from other missions); and
d. Facilitating logistical and protocol arrangements for international conferences held in Sri Lanka

2. Ceremonial Functions:

Ceremonial functions coordinated by the Division during the corresponding period.

2.1 VVIP/VIP visits to Sri Lanka

2.1.1 Heads of States/Prime Ministers
2.1.2 Foreign Ministers and Deputy Foreign Ministers
2.1.3 Dignitaries from the UN and other International Organizations
(See Annexure I/I, I/II, I/III)
2.1.4 Transit Visits
2.1.5 Other Foreign Dignitaries
2.1.6 Delegations for Meetings/Conferences

2.2 Visits by Sri Lankan VVIP/VIPs

2.2.1 Visits by H.E. the President (Annexure II)
2.2.2 Visits by Hon. Prime Minister (Annexure III)
2.2.3 Visits by Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs (Annexure IV)
2.2.4 Visits by Hon. Deputy/State Minister of Foreign Affairs (Annexure V)

3. Immunities and Privileges

The functions performed under Privileges and Immunities by the Protocol Division during the corresponding period are as follows:

3.1 Issuance of clearance certificates

3.1.1 For Foreign Missions (17 Books containing 50 certificates) **850**
3.1.2 For International Organizations (2 Books containing 50 certificates) **100**

3.2 Customs facilities – Imports

3.2.1 For Foreign Missions **1120**
3.2.2 For International Organizations **513**

3.3 Customs facilities – Exports

3.3.1 For Foreign Missions **130**

3.3.2 For International Organizations **11**

3.4 Vehicles (DPL/UN and other Organizations)

3.4.1 Sale of vehicles **194**

3.4.2 Registration of vehicles **102**

3.4.3 Issuance of revenue licenses **602**

3.4.4 Issuance of driving licenses **192**

3.4.5 Issuance of petrol coupon books **466**

3.5 Visas

3.5.1 Visa for Foreign Missions – Entry visa (Annexure VI) **565**

3.5.2 Visa for Foreign Missions – Residence visa (Annexure VII) **1062**

3.5.3 Visa for International Organizations – Entry visa (Annexure VIII) **204**

3.5.4 Visa for International Organizations – Residence visa (Annexure IX) **411**

3.6 Airport passes

3.6.1 Permanent – New Issuance **77**

3.6.2 Temporary (for 6 months) – New Issuance **36**

3.6.3 Permanent – Renewal **127**

3.6.4 Temporary (for 6 months) – Renewal **217**

3.7 VIP lounge permits

3.7.1 Foreign Passengers **5810**

3.7.2 Local Passengers **4152**

3.8 Diplomatic Clearances (Annexure X)

3.8.1 Approval for Foreign Aircrafts
(Military Aircrafts/State Owned) **184**

3.8.2 Approval for Foreign Ships
(Military Ships/State Owned) **37**

3.9 Identity cards (DPL/ the UN and other Organizations) **788**

4. Appointments of Heads of Mission/Honorary Consuls

The Protocol Division is responsible for arranging ceremonies for the presentation of credentials for foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners accredited to Sri Lanka and seeking agreement for Sri Lankan Ambassadors/High Commissioners appointed to countries where Sri Lanka has established resident Missions. The Protocol Division is also responsible for appointments of Honorary Consuls of Sri Lanka and appointments of Honorary Consuls of other countries in Sri Lanka. Functions performed by this section during the period are as follows:

4.1. Appointments of Foreign Heads of Mission to Sri Lanka (Annexure XI) **39**

Appointments of Sri Lankan Heads of Mission abroad **31**

4.2 Appointments of Honorary consuls of Sri Lanka Abroad (Annexure XII)

4.2.1 Appointments **09**

	4.2.2 Extensions	**23**
4.3	Appointments of Honorary Consuls in Sri Lanka	**04**

5. International Conferences coordinated by the Division

The Protocol Division plays a key role in promoting Sri Lanka as an attractive venue for holding international conferences. In this context, the Protocol Division closely coordinated with relevant line Ministries/Departments in facilitating trade events organized by line Ministries.

The Protocol Division also provides necessary assistance and guidance to the staff members of relevant line Ministries/Agencies to perform protocol and logistical functions related to such International Conferences.

Annexure I / I

Heads of States/PMs

01	Private Visit of His Majesty King Lestie iii, Head of State of the Kingdom of Lesotho and Her Majesty Queen Masenate Mahato Seeiso from 02nd – 08th January 2019
02	Private Visit of H.E. Ibrahim Mohomed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives 3rd-6th January 2019
03	State Visit of H.E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives to Sri Lanka 03rd -06th February 2019
04	State Visit of Hon. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India 09th June 2019
05	Transit Visit of H.E. M.C. Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, 27th –29th June 2019
06	Transit Visit of H.E. Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco, President of the Republic of Angola
07	Visit of H.E. Foure Essozimha Gnassingbe, President of the Togolese, 13th- 18th Sep. 2019
08	Transit Visit of H.E. Felix Antoine Tshisekedi - Rep of Congo 31st Aug. 2019
09	Transit Visit of H.E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives 21st Sep. 2019
10	Transit Visit of H.E. M.C. Ramaphosa President of the Republic of the South Africa
11	Private visit of H.E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of Maldives 2ndand 3rd December

Annexure I / II

Foreign Ministers & Deputy Foreign Ministers

01	Working Visit of Ruban Dario Molina, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela (24th-28th August 2019)
02	Hon. Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, India
03	Visit of MFA of Pakistan from 1-2 December 2019
04	Visit of Mr. Motegi Toshimitso, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan From 12th-14th December 2019
05	Visit of Hon. Abdullah Shahid, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maldives 4th to 7th Decembe
06	Visit of Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore from 19th-21st December 2019

Other Ministers' Visits to Sri Lanka

01	Hon. K. Shanmugam, Minister for Home Affairs and Law 18th-23rd May 2019
02	Hon. Ms. Toshiki ABE, State Minister For Foreign Affairs of Japan

Annexure I / III

Dignitaries from the UN & other International Organizations & other Dignitaries

01	Visit of Friends of Sri Lanka Group in the European Parliament
02	Ms. Samantha Power, the 28th US Ambassador to the United Nations during the period 2013-2017, and Member of the Cabinet of President Barack Obama (27th Feb. 2nd March 2019)
03	Visit by Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya, 8th March 2019
04	Visit of the United Nations Office on Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) 27th-31st May 2019
05	Special Adviser of Prime Minister of Japan on 20th-21st June 2019
06	Visit by Dr. SeyedRasolMonsori, DG/West/Asia Department of the M/FA of Iran and Adviser to Hon. M/FA of Iran
07	Visit by H.E. Amjad Hussain B. Sial, SAARC Secretary General to Sri Lanka 4th-8th July 2019
08	Visit of the EU Counter Terrorism Coordinator From 2nd July to 16th July 2019
09	IWA WDCE 2019 meeting 1st to 4th December 2019
10	Visit of Dr. Syedna Mufaddal 28th Aug – 12th Sep 2019 (Bohra Community)
11	H.E. Chen Minister (Member of the political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC)) Central Committee, 17th-19th September 2019
12	Visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury 29th-21st Aug. 2019
13	Visit of Lord Naseby to Sri Lanka 16th-20th September 2019
14	Launch of the United Nations Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management on 23rd-24th October 2019
15	Visit of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, H.E. David Hale, US State Department.
16	Visit of Ms. Lei Chumeiu Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Fujian Provincial People's Congress

Annexure II

Overseas Visits by H. E. the President

No.	Country	Duration	Purpose
1	**The Philippines**	15-19 January, 2019	State Visit
2	**Singapore**	23-25 January, 2019	Conference on the 3rd Forum of Ministers & Environment Authorities of the Asia Pacific
3	**Kenya**	13-17 March, 2019	Official visit
4	**China**	13-16 May, 2019	Conference on Asian Civilization Dialogue

5	**India**	30-31 May,2019	Swearing in Ceremony of the Hon. Prime Minister of India
6	**Tajikistan**	13-16 June,2019	Official Visit
7	**Cambodia**	07-10 August, 2019	State Visit
8	**Japan**	21-23 October, 2019	Ceremonies of Enthronement of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Japan

Annexure III

Foreign Visits by the Hon. Prime Minister

No	Country	Duration	Purpose
1	**Singapore**	23-25 April 2019	Official
2	**Singapore**	12-14 June 2019	Official
3	**Maldives**	2-4 September 2019	Official

Foreign Visits by Hon. State Minister

No	Country	Duration	Purpose
1	**Cuba & Panama**	24 June -05 July 2019	Official
2	**Cambodia**	07-11 August	Official
3	**Venezuela**	02-08 October	Official

Annexure IV

Foreign Visits by Hon. Foreign Minister

No	Country	Duration	Purpose
1	The Philippine	15-19 January 2019	H. E the President's State visit to the Philippine
2	Cyprus	25-29 February 2019	Official
3	Geneva	18-24 March 2019	Human Rights Council Session
4	Myanmar	10-15 April 2019	Sri Lanka Myanmar Joint Commission
5	Qatar	30 April – 2 May 2019	ACD Foreign Ministers Meeting
6	New York	18-10 May 2019	Official
7	Mexico	11-15 May 2019	Official
8	Norway	22-26 May 2019	International Conference
9	Hungary & Poland	12-18 June 2019	Official
10	Thailand	02-04 August 2019	26th ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting
11	Bangladesh	04-07 September 2019	Official
12	Romania	08-12 September 2019	Official
13	Rome, Italy	08-11 October 2019	Official

Annexure V

Visa for Foreign Missions – Residence Visa – 2019

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	OCT	Nov	DEC.	TOTAL
Afghanistan							3						3
Australia	4	5		1		2	1			3	1	4	21
Bangladesh	4		1		3		10						18
British Council			3	2			1	9	9	13	4		41
Brazil	1	1		4				2					8
Canada	2						3		4				9
China		3	4	6	6		1		6	1	1		28
Cuba										3			3
Egypt			1		1	1							3
EU	1	3	2				4	1	6		4	1	22
France	5	1	2	5	3	3	3		12	10	3		47
Germany	2		1	2	4		5	6	1	1	2	1	25
Holy Sea													0
India	6	17	21	15	10	5	15	16	58	5	6		174
Indonesia						2	1	3		4			10
Iran							2				1		3
Iraq							2			1			3
Italy	4				3		1	2	2	2			14
Japan	3		1	12	2	1	4		1	1	1		26
Korea	2	2	5		3	1	8	7			2		30
Kuwait	1						1	5		1			8
Libya			17	2		5	5	4	1	7	2	1	44
Malaysia													0
Maldives	11	5	5	9	7		6	7	7	1	6	1	65
Myanmar			6										6
Nepal								8	3				11
Netherland	2		2					8	1			5	18
New Zealand								1					1
Romania										1			1
Norway	1					2					1		4
Oman								1					1
Pakistan	5	9	3	7	4	1	9	10	1	6	1		56
Palestine		7						4	1				12
Qatar		1	1	3			1						6
Russia	7		4		3		5	7	8		1		35
Saudi	10	3	1			5	7	6	13	7	2		54
Seychelles					1				5				6
South Africa									1		2		3
Switzerland	1	3			1	4	1	1		1	2		14
Thailand										4			4
Turkey								1				4	5
UAE	5			5			1	1		1	7		20
USA	7	3	17	11	5	3	17	35	24	14	13	8	157
UK	26	1		1	1	1	6	7					43
Vietnam													0
Total	**110**	**64**	**97**	**85**	**57**	**36**	**123**	**152**	**164**	**87**	**62**	**25**	1062

Entry Visa for International Organizations - 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2019

	ADB	AMNESTY	COLOMBO PLAN	FAO	ICRC	IFRC	ILO	IOM	IWMI	JICA	SACEP	UNDP	UNFPA	UNHCR	UNDP	UNFPA	UNOPS	UNICEF	UNHCR	UNHABITAT	WFP	WHO	WOLD BANK	TOTAL
Jan			4		2				5															11
Feb	1																							1
Mar					2				5	3		1												11
Apr		2	1							4		1									1			9
May							1	1	4	4					1						2			13
Jun			2	1	2			2	19	4	1				7			7	4					49
Jul				1	2				10	1							6	4	1		4			29
Aug			1		1				18	7		1												28
Sep					3				7		1	2									2		5	20
Oct			2					1	4	9									1		1	1		19
Nov					1	1			4						1						2			9
Dec									2	2	1				1						1			7
TOTAL	1		10	2	13	1	1	4	78	34	3	5	0	0	10	0	6	11	6	0	13	1	5	204

Consular Affairs Division

Consular Affairs Division

A. Introduction

1. The Consular Affairs Division is the portal through which the Ministry of Foreign Relations extends assistance to Sri Lankans and Sri Lankan origin foreign passport holders, in accordance with the Consular Functions Act No.04 of 1981 and the subsequent amendment of Act No.18 of 2006, through its main office, regional offices, Sri Lanka's Embassies, High Commissions, Consulates General and Honorary Consulates abroad as well as Foreign Missions and Posts accredited to Sri Lanka and other local institutions/authorities.
2. The Consular Division located at the Ceylinco House, Colombo 01 comprises Document Authentication Section, Repatriation Section, Compensation Section, Death Section, and the Miscellaneous Section.
3. As per the government policy, Consular Affairs Division strives to take delivery of services to people in need both in Sri Lanka as well as abroad, in an efficient and effective manner, through digitalization of services and establishments of regional consular offices in Jaffna and Matara. The second regional consular office declared open on 15th February 2019 by Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance.

B. Key Developments in 2019

4. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the e-DAS system on 6 February 2017 and linked it with all Sri Lanka Missions abroad with effect from 01 January 2019. This system provides for online appointments and accepts payments through credit and debit cards, in addition to cash payments for document authentication.
5. The Ministry conducted and performed an Integrated Consular Mobile Services [ICMS] with the assistance of relevant District Secretariats in Trincomalee, Kandy, Kurunegala, Dambulla, Anuradhapura, Puttalam, Mannar, and Nuwara Eliya. The Ministry of Foreign Employment, the Department of Immigration & Emigration, the Department of the Registrar General and the Foreign Employment Office of Sri Lanka, together with representatives from the Ministry's Consular Affairs Division, participated in the ICMS.
6. The Ministry also participated mobile facilities in Ampara, Batticaloa, Mullaitivu, Monaragala, Divulapitiya and Jaffna under the domestic program' Rata Wenuwen Ekata Sitimu.' Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ravinatha Aryasinha attended the mobile service held in Divulapitiya under this programme, visited the ministry's stall and attended the President's Progress Review Meeting.
7. The Ministry also carried out mobile services under the domestic program' Rajya Sewaya Gamata Gena Yana Janatha Sewaya' in Matale and the program ' Enterprise Sri Lanka' in Anuradhapura and Jaffna.

8. Services given to the individuals of these districts and neighboring regions include certification of foreign employment and education papers, assistance to families of Sri Lankans stranded abroad, registration of births, weddings, deaths in the overseas territories, aid in compensation-related matters and assist in obtaining police clearance certificates.
9. The Division facilitated for symposium on 'Updating the Operational Manual for Labour Sections of Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions' held from 18 to 20 September 2019 in Malaysia.

C. Document Authentication Section

10. The Document Authentication Section provides attestation of documents through Electronic Documents Attestation System (e-DAS), using the innovative digital technology.
11. The Authentication Section has received approximate total revenue of Rs.237,706,000.00 for the period from 1st January to 31st December 2019 and the approximate number of documents were authenticated during the period is about 312,563.
12. The total revenue of the Jaffna Regional Consular office was approximately Rs.14,345,000.00 for the period from 1st January to 31st December 2019 and approximate 17,419 documents were attested during the above period.
13. The Matara Regional Consular office has received approximate total revenue of Rs. 1,091,000.00 for the period from 15th February to 31st December 2019 and approximate 1,345. Documents were authenticated during that period.

D. Repatriation Section

14. The Repatriation Section is mandated to handle complaints related to stranded and destitute Sri Lankans overseas, owing to multitude of reasons.
15. The Section facilitates repatriation of Sri Lankans who left Sri Lanka for the purpose of employment, without registration at the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE). In 2019, there were 706 complaints, lodged by the Next of Kin (NoKK) with this Division directly, seeking assistance for repatriation, in addition to complaints directly received by Missions/Posts abroad and other authorities.
16. The Division also facilitates repatriation of Sri Lankans who are in prisons in foreign countries, following appeals from their NoKK or Missions/Posts concerned. In 2019, out of 184 cases of imprisoned Sri Lankans, 47 Sri Lankans were repatriated.
17. The Division in coordination with the relevant Sri Lanka Missions abroad assisted safe return of 290 victims of human smuggling.
18. The Division, acting as the focal point under the Readmission Case Management System (RCMS) to upload and process special Readmission Applications, and assisted for a training workshop on the new e-Readmission Case Management System(e-RCMS) in Brussels for EU countries from 16 – 17 October 2019.

E. Compensation Section

19. This Section handles cases and issues related to compensations, insurances, end service/retirement benefits of Sri Lankans who pass away abroad and those who return back to the country without receiving their legal entitlements, due to various reasons.
20. Approximately SLR 394 Million has been recovered by settling the cases of nearly 162 families /victims as compensation/blood money and other dues during 2019.
21. NoKK of the deceased and others who submit applications for compensation are provided required consular assistance and advised with regard to submission of required documentations, including translations etc in the required format.
22. In cases of murder or accident related deaths of Sri Lankans abroad, action is taken to ensure that their entitlements are secured for the NoKK.
23. All complaints received from migrant workers regarding non-payment of salaries/other dues abroad are facilitated through the respective Sri Lanka Missions.

F. Death Section

24. The Division is responsible for identifying the rightful NOK in case of a death abroad and to facilitate with the repatriation, burial or the cremation of the human remains at the earliest in coordination with Missions abroad and the parties concerned.
25. The Division advises the Missions to repatriate, bury or cremate the human remains after careful consideration in deciding the rightful party, especially when several parties claim for human remains.
26. The Ministry publishes newspaper advertisements requesting assistance from the public to trace NOKK of Sri Lankan nationals who pass away abroad.
27. During the period under review a total 480 deaths were reported to Ministry, requesting consular assistance while 77 deaths reported to Sri Lankan Missions abroad, without requesting assistance.
28. The Death section also facilitates obtaining death certificates and assists insurance payment from the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment in cases of death.
29. In cases of deaths of Sri Lankans in foreign countries, who are not registered with the SLBFE or who are not in a position to bear the cost to repatriate, bury and cremate, the Division assists them. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has incurred a sum of approximately SLRS.388, 853/= in this regard for 2 Sri Lankans nationals in Lebanon and Dubai.
30. A sum of SLRS 145,293/= was spent to publish newspaper advertisements to trace NOKK of 6 Sri Lankan nationals who passed away in Dubai and Greece in 2019.

Annex I - Government Expenditure

Annex II - Number of reported death cases in 2019

G. Miscellaneous Section

31. This section primarily attends to requests for consular assistance of Sri Lankans residing overseas which do not directly come under purview of other sections of the Division.
32. During the period under revive a total of 107 cases of Sri Lankan fishermen and fishing vessels apprehended abroad or outside Sri Lanka's territorial waters had been attended and assisted for the release of fishermen and vessels.
33. The section processes the monthly progress report on the human rights of unregistered migrant workers obtained from Missions for the Sectoral Committee on the Implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRA).
34. The section facilitates obtaining Police Clearance Certificates, issued by foreign countries where Sri Lankan nationals lived and employed. The total number of such Police Clearance Certificates handed over to the applicants was 308.
35. The section had received 25 complaints through the "Tell to President" grievances management programme and the grievances were processed.
36. Furthermore, 209 requests for consular assistance to Sri Lankan migrant workers, students, professionals overseas which did not come under the purview of other sections of Division had been attended by this Section.
37. The section facilitates issuance of birth certificates for children born overseas and had attended 80 complaints in this regard. A total of 904 birth certificates of children born to Sri Lankan citizens overseas had been distributed.
38. The section processed 18 complaints with regard to whereabouts of missing relatives abroad.
39. 08 citizenship certificates received from Missions abroad were distributed to the applications while 18 complaints were attended.
40. The request for information regarding biological/natural parents of those who had been adopted overseas and other similar requests have also been attended to as and when the section receives from Sri Lanka Missions abroad. (two cases)

Details of Consular Assistance provided for the period from 1st January to 31st December 2019

Number of documents (Total)	331,327
Total Cash Collection (Verification) (Rs.)	253,1421,000
Reported Deaths	480
Complaints requesting support for repatriate to Sri Lanka (Normal cases)	522
Repatriated Normal cases	208
Number of police clearance certificated issued	246
Number of Educational Certificates received from Sri Lankan Missions abroad for onward transmission	10
Matters related to passport	25
Complaints for Registration of Births	80
Benefited Families (Number) (Compensation)	162
Verifying Foreign University degrees	240
Total paid Compensation (Rs.)	394,546,513.56
Miscellaneous inquires (written)	230
Number of Sri Lankan fishermen repatriated	102
Details of overseas police clearance applications processed	308
Death Sentences cases repatriated of 21	02
Details of birth Registration abroad	904

Annex 1

Payment made by the Ministry for the burial or cremetion of Human Remains 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2019								
No	**Name of deceased**	**PPT No**	**Cause of Death**	**Date of Death**	**Mission**	**Cost**		**Status**
						SLRS	**US$**	
1	Mrs.Y.R.Seelawathi	N3979238	Illness	22.01.2019	Lebanon	143,000	800.00	Buried
2	Mrs.Linda Fernando	N4589257	Illness	10.05.2019	Dubai	245,853	1,389.00	Buried
	Total					**388,853**	**2,189.00**	

Annex II

Number of Reported death from 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2019

Number	Mission	Number of Death
1	Abu Dhabi	12
2	Australia	8
3	Bahrain	2
4	Brazil	2
5	Belgium	1
6	Cambodia	1
7	China	5
8	Cyprus	1
9	Canada	2
10	Cuba	1
11	Dubai	31
12	France	8
13	Gambia	1
14	Germany	6
15	Greece	1
16	India	12
17	Indonesia	2
18	Iraq	1
19	Israel	2
20	Italy	24
21	Japan	13
22	Jordan	10
23	Saudi Arabia	111
24	Kenya	1
25	South Korea	10
26	Kuwait	76
27	Lebanon	17
28	Malaysia	19
29	Maldives	7
30	Madagascar	1
31	Mauritius	1
32	Myanmar	1
33	Oman	14
34	Qatar	49
35	Rumania	1
36	Russia	3
37	Singapore	1
38	Timor	1
39	Turkey	1
40	Thailand	4
41	Vietnam	1
43	Sweden	1
44	United Kingdom	8
45	United States	5
46	New Zealand	1
TOTAL		480

Legal Division

Legal Division

A General description of the core areas of the functions of the Legal Division

The Legal Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established in 1967. The function of the Legal Division is to furnish legal advice on matters of International Law to the Minister through the Ministry's Secretary, to the other Divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the Sri Lankan Missions abroad, to the Foreign Missions in Sri Lanka as well as to other Ministries. The Legal Division is also the Treaty depository of the Government of Sri Lanka.

Principal areas in which advice is given by the Division

The Legal Division provides advice on legal aspects of all policy decisions and particularly international issues arising from time to time, such as territorial claims and boundaries, recognition of treaty relations, diplomatic immunities and privileges etc.

The Legal Division also advises on matters of International Law to all other Ministries and Government Departments involved in foreign transactions covering a wide range of subjects such as Shipping, Civil Aviation, International Trade, Investment, Terrorism and Migration. Further, the Legal Division is also involved in convening, holding negotiations and finalizing treaties on Judicial Cooperation such as Extradition, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal, Civil and Commercial matters, Avoidance of Double Taxation, Investment Protection and Promotion, Transfer of Prisoners, Readmission, Migration, Labour and Manpower and Law of the Sea.

Interpretation of Ministry Instruction Series relating to Sri Lanka Overseas Service, contracts and agreements entered into by Sri Lanka's Mission abroad, local recruitment of labour by our Missions, issues relating to Diplomatic and Consular Privileges and Immunities of Sri Lanka's Missions abroad as well as Foreign Missions in Sri Lanka are few of the areas in which the Division is consulted.

Legal Division acts as a focal point with regard to the Right to Information matters in the Ministry of Foreign Relations and handles applications received under the Right to Information Act no 12 of 2016.

Law of the Sea/Continental Shelf Submission of Sri Lanka

The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) appointed a sub-committee to consider Sri Lanka's submission on the continental shelf presented by 8th May 2009. The defending process of the submission has commenced and 9 rounds of discussions with the Sub Commission and Sri Lanka delegations have taken place. The National Ocean Affairs Committee (NOAC) that comes under the purview

of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to work with the relevant stake holders as well as with the Legal Division to finalize pending issues.
The Legal Division represented Government of Sri Lanka at the 2nd and 3rd Intergovernmental Conferences (IGC) held to negotiate a Convention on Marine Bio-diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)and asserted SL position.

United Nations Convention on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)
UNCITRAL working Group III on Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) was attended and Sri Lanka position was asserted relating reform options of arbitration mechanism during the 37th Session.

Agreement on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments

IPPA with Turkey – Held discussions on the initialed text with the stakeholders and decided to review the text upon developing the model Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, prior to signature.

IPPA with Belarus - Held discussions on the partially negotiated text with the stakeholders and decided to review the text upon developing the model Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, prior to having next round of discussions with Belarus.

IPPA with UAE- Held discussions on the partially negotiated text with the stakeholders and decided to review the text upon developing the model Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, prior to discussions with UAE.

Inter-Ministerial Committee- A committee comprising representatives from the AG's Department, BOI, Ministry of Industrial Export and Investment Promotion and the Legal and Economic Affairs Divisions of the MFR formed to develop a new Bilateral Investment Treaty and commenced work.

Free Trade Agreement (FTA) discussion

The Legal Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is involved in the negotiation of Investment Chapters with India (ETCA), Thailand and China which are pending finalizations.

Sri Lanka/Singapore Free Trade Agreement (SLSFTA) –Text was reviewed by a Standing Committee appointed by the Cabinet based on recommendations made by the Committee appointed by the former President. Legal Division was actively involved in the review process.
Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA)- Legal Division Chaired the 5th Meeting of the Working Group on Investment and discussed the review and implementation of the Framework Agreement on Investment.

Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement with India(ETCA)- Pursuant to the 11th Round of Discussions, Legal Division provided inputs to the National Trade Committee (NTC) Meetings to finalize SL position on outstanding issues.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Limited privileges and immunities for IAEA was negotiated.

Status Agreements with UN Specialized Agencies and other International Organizations

Green Climate- Several stakeholder meetings were conducted to agree on SL position and the text was finalized except two articles.

International Center for Research in Agroforest (ICRAF) –Text finalized in consultation with the Ministry of Environment and Mahaweli Development

Agence Francaise Development (AFC)

Legal Division has cleared the agreement between Sri Lanka and France on the establishment of Agence Francaise Development (AFC) Sri Lanka.

Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) and the promulgation of UNSCRS on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) and on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)

The Legal Division contributed and got engaged at many forums with national and international experts on the promulgation procedures to be adopted by Sri Lanka on FTFs and CVE, and assistance was pledged by many International Organizations and Countries including Australia and the UK. Also contributed in the listing of terrorists and terrorist organizations under Regulations framed to implement UNSCR 1373 and the related UNSCRs.

International Terrorism

The First Meeting of the Hi-level interagency Coordinating Committee on targeted financial sanctions was set up and chaired by the former Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and the term of reference of the committee was adopted.

Legal Division organized across regional workshop on preventing violent extremism through rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremists, strengthen partnerships with civil society organizations and local community in collaboration with the UNODC and the government of Japan in 2019.

National Committee for the implementation of Strategic Trade Control System

Legal Division contributes as a member of the National Committee for the implementation of Strategic Trade Control System in Sri Lanka pursuant to UNSCR 1540. Legal Division contributed to the APG plenary held in Canberra in October 2019.

Migration

The Legal division participated and contributed at the Sixth Joint Working Group (JWG) on People Smuggling and other Transnational Organized Crime held in Canberra on 11th October 2019.

First Experts Meeting under the MoU on Migration Partnership between Sri Lanka and Switzerland was organized in September 2019. The Meeting addressed a large number of issues including labour, vocational training, regional consultation process and peace building and reconciliation process.

Readmission

Negotiations on a draft Readmission Agreement with Georgia was concluded and was finalized for signature through diplomatic channels. Negotiations to finalize Protocols to the EU/SL Readmission Agreement with Netherlands on behalf of the Benelux countries, France and Italy were concluded to be signed subject to agreement on an appropriate clause relating to "Readmission in error".
Fifth Joint Readmission Committee Meeting was coordinated and held in Colombo in March 2019 under the EU/Sri Lanka readmission Agreement.

Prisoner Transfer Agreements

First round of expert negotiations on the Treaty between Czech Republic and Sri Lanka on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons was held in May 2019.

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

Legal Division got involved by providing observations at the Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee that was held from 10-11 October 2019 in Colombo to hold discussions on finalization of the BIMSTEC Charter, MOU between the BIMSTEC Secretariat and the Asian Development Bank and the review and rationalization of sectors and sub-sectors of BIMSTEC.

International Humanitarian Law Matters

Expert Exchange Meeting for the National IHL Committee of Asia was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 15 December 2019. The Legal Division has participated at the above Meeting.

9th South Asia Regional Conference on IHL held from 11th to 13 November 2019 in Sri Lanka was organized by the Legal Division with International Committee for Red Cross (ICRC) in Sri Lanka.

Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)

Fifty-Eighth Annual Session of AALCO was held from 21-25 October 2019 in Tanzania. The Legal Division has participated at the above session with Hon. Attorney Generals Department and highlighted the SL laws pertaining to matters discussed there.

Right to Information issues

Provided information relating to 58 RTI applications received under the RTI Act requesting various information from January to December 2019.

Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (DTA)

Sri Lanka and Maldives

First round of Negotiations on the Agreement on DTA between Sri Lanka and Maldives was held in Colombo from 15-19 July 2019 and the Legal Division played a vital role at negotiations.

Sri Lanka and Hungary

Negotiations for the Agreement on DTA between Sri Lanka and Hungary were held in Colombo in May 2019 played a vital role at negotiations.

General Administration Division

General Administration Division

Introduction

The General Administration Division (GAD) is responsible for all matters related to Personnel Administration the Ministry, other than officers of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) and mission cadre. The GAD conducts various Human Resource Development programs throughout the year.

Apart from the above, it undertakes matters related to the maintenance of office premises and official quarters; procurement of goods and services required to the Ministry and Sri Lankan Missions abroad; Maintenance of Stores and assets inventory control; logistics and vehicle fleet management; and provision of utility services.

The GAD also handles the correspondence with other public institutions, including the Parliamentary and Cabinet affairs. The sections coming under GAD are HR, Procurement, Maintenance, Transport, Dispatch, Translations, Library, Record Room and the Stores.

B. Human Resources Management

In respect to Human Resources Management (HRM), the GAD facilitated to enhance the optimum utility of the limited human resources of the Ministry to meet the organizational objectives. The organizational restructuring program initiated by the GAD, in collaboration with Policy Planning, Research and HR Division and in consultation with all other divisions, has brought up the need of revitalizing the organizational structure, cadres of each strata in the hierarchy as well as the necessity of re-introducing of certain institutional positions to meet Ministerial specificities. It is noteworthy that a considerable pressure on catering to dynamics in international affairs has emerged owing to the institutional human resource limitations, in absence of comprehensive HR reforms since 2012. The proposals are being negotiated with the National Salaries and Cadre Commission and the Department of Management Services, with the vision of operationalizing within the course of year 2020.

The GAD continued its pioneer role in devising procedures and guidance in relation to the establishment matters, in accordance with the policies of the Government and regulations imposed by the Presidential Secretariat, Cabinet of Ministers, Public Service Commission, Ministry of Public Administrations and other appropriate authorities.

The GAD also pursued its functional scope of administering all staff categories (other than the SLFS officers and Mission cadre), by way of recruitment to vacant positions, training and development, internal transfers, disciplinary control and dismissal (including retirement and transfers out of the Ministry).

In respect of training and development, in the year 2019, the GAD prioritized the needs of enhancing the English language proficiency, improving competencies in office procedures and developing ICT skills of relevant staff categories. Accordingly, the GAD conducted an English Language Proficiency Course in collaboration with Bandaranaike Institute of Diplomatic Training for 66 officers, Basic and Advance

Computer Literacy training for 75 Officers, Capacity building programs in the areas of Finance, Procurement and Establishment affairs for 76 officers and facilitated a workshop on Human Resource Development for the officers of the Consular Affairs Division. In addition, the GAD facilitated 26 drivers and Office Employed Service personnel who had been selected to serve in Sri Lankan missions overseas, with a tailor-made training opportunity at the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, to improve their awareness on conditions of foreign employment and to build them with multi-faceted competencies to work in teams at Missions.

As in the past years, the Ministry experienced considerable limitations in sourcing competent human resources owing to the requirement of obtaining the majority of staff categories through transfers within Combined services that are implemented by the Ministry of Public Administration. Alternatively, the GAD continued to source essential services such as Translators on contract basis and also mitigated the HR dearth by awarding internships for university undergraduates and industrial training for vocational Diploma holders.

C. Maintenance Work

Ministry of Foreign Affairs is located in the Republic Building established during the British period which has more than 100 years of history and therefore, it needs proper and regular maintenance to keep the building in good condition. In year 2019, GAD has taken actions to repair and renovate some Divisions and common areas of the Ministry housed in the Republic Building spending 4.6 Mn. As a special task in year 2019, the Economic Affairs Division was re-established within a new suitable official environment for enabling to streamline its' functions with interacting high-level stakeholders and develop international relationships in trade and other economic fields based on the concept of 'Economic Diplomacy'. The total cost for completion of this whole task is approximately 20 Mn.

GAD has given the attention to develop infrastructure facilities of the Ministry not only by construction and renovations but also by addressing the space management, record keeping and protection of documentaries. In the view of that, 3.1 Mn has been spent for fabricating and fixing Aluminum cupboards in the Divisions to store important documents and files which are regularly maintained. GAD has taken steps to develop Archives and Information Unit which stored old records, documents and files, and the materialistic and labour cost for the purpose was amounting Rs. 1.8 Mn.

While recognizing the importance of continuous maintenance of 20 nos. of official quarters owned by the Ministry, GAD has engaged in repairing and renovation works for 15 nos. of quarters and total expenses borne by the Ministry to fulfil the activity is 8.25 Mn.

For smooth functioning and to provide uninterrupted services by all Divisions of the Ministry, it is vital to maintain the condition of machineries and equipment used by the staff up to standard level. Within this purpose, annual service and maintenance agreements were enforced covering all technical equipment and machines amounting Rs. 2.25 Mn. In addition, Maintenance Unit has facilitated to recover the faults of machines and equipment bearing the total repairing cost at Rs. 3.1 Mn in year 2019.

D. Procurement and Inventory Control

At the beginning of the year Procurement plan was developed forecasting all procurement needs of the Ministry and approximately 250 procurement activities were implemented to supply capital and recurrent items to the Ministry over the year. It was calculated that 27 Mn and more than 28 Mn were spent for procurement activities on capital and recurrent expenditures respectively. In year 2019, GAD has facilitated to implement 50 nos of procurements to supply capital assets for SL missions abroad amounting 9 Mn.
Stores Unit functioning under GAD maintained the stock of capital and recurrent assets including receiving and issuing of assets to fulfill the requirement of the Ministry.

E. Parliamentary and Cabinet Affairs

The GAD also functions as the focal point in coordinating with Cabinet of Ministers and in handling parliamentary affairs. In this regard, GAD has submitted 44 Cabinet Memoranda and answers for 08 Parliamentary questions referred to this Ministry.

F. Logistics and Other

The GAD has continuously taken all possible measures to facilitate the smooth functioning of the Ministry through maintaining the vehicle fleet efficiently. All matters related to acquisition, maintenance and disposal of the vehicles as well as management of Drivers are handled by this Division. Apart from the same, sourcing suitable transport and other related logistics facilities for Credential ceremonies of Foreign Ambassadors, High Commissioners, state visits and visits by VVIP and other foreign delegations are coordinated by the GAD. During the year of 2019, numerous Credential Ceremonies, VIP visits and International Conferences held in Colombo have been facilitated. Having disposed 06 overly-used vehicles in 2018 and another 10 in 2019, the GAD is now in the process of negotiating with the Ministry of Finance to refresh the vehicle fleet with new vehicles.

G. Information and Communication Technology

Ministry IT systems has evolved over the time and currently majority of the IT infrastructure has reached to its matured level and delivering optimum support service to the Ministry internal Operations as well as the General Public.
One of the main components of the IT infrastructure is the Ministry website. To strengthening the security of the website, based on the recommendations of SLCERT, IT division has implemented a Web Application Firewall (WAF) to prevent potential cyber-attacks received through general internet. In year 2019, the daily average number of bad web requests blocked through the WAF is 38.
The ministry consists of 5 firewalls to protect the end user, system data and the information namely in Republic Building, Ceylinco Building and Regional Consular

Offices in Jaffna and Matara. To ensure that the Ministry networks are protected, continuous improvement of the rule base and the internet policies are being done.
In view of digitizing the Inventory Records, an Online Inventory Management System was developed and currently migrating data to the system.
One of the main requirements the Ministry had is a full coverage of the Wi-Fi facility in the Republic Building. Considering the building architecture and the thick walls the Wi-Fi connections were not strengthen for the Ministry operations. Considering the above, implementation of fully coverage Wi-Fi solution was operationalized in year 2019.

H. The Library

With the view of upgrading the Ministerial library facility, the GAD, in consultation with PPR & HRD Division, has taken measures to introduce the standards devised by the National Library and Documentation Service Board (NLDSB) and also to facilitated the Ministry's Librarian to enhance her capacity through attending periodic training and awareness programs conducted by the NLDSB. The GAD has periodically recruited trainees to the Library as to provide them with practical skills, whilst meeting the institutional need of competent youth to develop the Record Management System in the Library.

Finance Division

Finance Division

Head : 112
Ministry of Foreign Relations

The Finance Division is entrusted with the responsibilities of providing auxiliary services for the management and financial planning of activities of the Ministry. The division also maintains two sets of Accounts related to financial transactions of the Ministry and 67 Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad, which are reported to the General Treasury on a monthly and annual basis.

Key Functions carried out in 2019:

- Assisting the Secretary/Foreign Relations, the Chief Accounting Officer to fulfil the Financial Obligation of the Ministry and other institutions coming under the purview of the Ministry.
- Preparation of annual budgetary estimates, participation in the budget discussions and getting them approved from the General Treasury.
- Disbursement of budgetary allocations to 68 spending units and progress being monitored accordingly.
- Overseeing the entire Financial Reporting functions of the Ministry and Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad to ensure all the payments and its reporting are carried out in accordance with the Financial Regulations and other statutory requirements.
- Imprest being disbursed to Ministry activities and to Sri Lanka Missions/ Posts abroad on a regular basis in order to meet the expenses utilizing budgetary allocations granted.
- Guidelines being issued to Sri Lanka Missions/Posts through Ministry Circulars with a view to streamlining the Finance and Accounting functions.
- Consolidation of monthly and annual Accounts of 68 spending units and preparation of annual Financial Statements for the financial year 2019.
- Facilitated a number of other Ministries and Departments to remit allocations to Sri Lanka Missions/Posts to conduct their events.
- Facilitated a number of semi-government organisations (Ex. SLTPB, SL Tea Board etc.) to remit their funds to Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad to conduct various events through the General Deposit Account (GDA) and inbound fund remittance being carried out through the GDA.
- Liaising with the Auditor General's Department with regard to the Audit Queries, Audit Reports and COPA meetings.

ACA -F

Statement of Financial Performance
for the period ended 31st December 2019

(Rs.)

Budget 2019		Note	Actual 2019	Actual 2018	
	Revenue Receipts				
-	Income Tax	1		-	ACA-1
-	Taxes on Domestic Goods & Services	2		-	
-	Taxes on International Trade	3		-	
-	Non Tax Revenue & Others	4		-	
-	**Total Revenue Receipts (A)**		-	-	
-	**Non Revenue Receipts**				
	Treasury Imprests		10,606,109,415	10,433,901,869	ACA-3
	Deposits		2,332,843,654	1,897,581,581	ACA-4
26,000,000	Advance Accounts		46,734,753	45,851,607	ACA-5
	Other Receipts		2,731,432,749	3,741,111,453	
26,000,000	**Total Non Revenue Receipts (B)**		15,717,120,571	16,118,446,510	
26,000,000	**Total Revenue Receipts & Non Revenue Receipts C = (A)+(B)**		15,717,120,571	16,118,446,510	
	Less: Expenditure				
	Recurrent Expenditure				
12,130,766,400	Wages, Salaries & Other Employment Benefits		7,240,445,122	6,452,857,210	ACA-
4,213,235,000	Other Goods & Services		4,171,621,625	4,240,955,878	
622,326,200	Subsidies, Grants and Transfers		617,125,066	387,167,357	
-	Interest Payments			-	
45,655,700	Other Recurrent Expenditure		33,722,420	59,675,280	
17,011,983,300	**Total Recurrent Expenditure (D)**		12,062,914,233	11,140,655,725	
	Capital Expenditure				
612,801,100	Rehabilitation & Improvement of Capital Assets		180,814,314	269,625,726	ACA-
173,984,900	Acquisition of Capital Assets		169,843,624	968,426,096	
8,777,400	Capital Transfers		6,800,000	9,485,909	
-	Acquisition of Financial Assets			-	
3,796,000	Capacity Building		3,795,641	5,678,290	
54,713,200	Other Capital Expenditure		54,523,350	41,736,519	
854,072,600	**Total Capital Expenditure (E)**		415,776,929	1,294,952,540	
40,000,000	**Main Ledger Expenditure (F)**		2,276,757,380	2,055,305,066	
	Deposit Payments		2,226,489,422	2,002,780,984	ACA-4
40,000,000	**Advance Payments**		50,267,957	52,524,081	ACA-5
17,906,055,900	**Total Expenditure G = (D+E+F)**		14,755,448,542	14,490,913,331	
(17,880,055,900)	**Imprest Balance as at 31st December...2019.. H = (C-G)**		961,672,030	1,627,533,179	

Statement of Financial Position
As at 31st December- 2019

	Note	Actual 2019 Rs	2018 Rs
Non Financial Assets			
Property, Plant & Equipment	ACA-6	12,644,103,122	6,387,030,315
Financial Assets			
Advance Accounts	ACA-5/5(a)	120,308,680	116,775,476
Cash & Cash Equivalents	ACA-3	640,722,603	900,564,516
Total Assets		**13,405,134,405**	**7,404,370,307**
Net Assets / Equity			
Net Worth to Treasury		(377,607,411)	(274,786,384)
Property, Plant & Equipment Reserve		12,644,103,122	6,387,030,315
Rent and Work Advance Reserve	ACA-5(b)		-
Current Liabilities			
Deposits Accounts	ACA-4	497,916,091	391,561,859
Imprest Balance	ACA-3	640,722,603	900,564,516
Total Liabilities		**13,405,134,405**	**7,404,370,307**

Detail Accounting Statements in ACA format Nos. 1 to 6 presented in pages from ...04.... to...78... and Notes to accounts presented in pages from ...79.... to ...123.. form and integral parts of these Financial Statements. The Financial Statements have been prepared in complying with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles whereas most appropriate Accounting Policies are used as disclosed in the Notes to the Financial Statements and hereby certify that figures in these Finacial Statements, Notes to accounts and other relevant accounts were reconciled with the Treasury Books of Accounts and found to in agreement.

.....
Chief Accounting Officer
Name :
Designation :
Date : 15.05.2020

Ravinatha Aryasinha
Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Relations
Colombo 01.

.....
Accounting Officer
Name :
Designation :
Date : 15.05.2020

Ravinatha Aryasinha
Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Relations
Colombo 01.

.....
Chief Financial Officer/ Chief Accountant/ Director (Finance)/ Commissioner (Finance)
Name : U. G. C. Abeyrathna
Date : 15.05.2020

Chief Accountant
Foreign Ministry
Colombo 01

Statement of Cash Flows
for the Period ended 31st December-...2019..

	Actual 2019 Rs.	2018 Rs.
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Total Tax Receipts	-	-
Fees, Fines, Penalties and Licenses	-	-
Profit	-	-
Non Revenue Receipts		16,113,371,074
Revenue Collected for the Other Heads	2,691,133,111	-
Imprest Received	9,750,096,951	-
Total Cash generated from Operations (a)	**12,441,230,062**	**16,113,371,074**
Less - Cash disbursed for:		
Personal Emoluments & Operating Payments	11,445,789,167	13,681,153,796
Subsidies & Transfer Payments	617,125,066	387,167,357
Expenditure on Other Heads	334,110,538	-
Imprest Settlement to Treasury	-	14,122
Total Cash disbursed for Operations (b)	**12,397,024,771**	**14,068,335,275**
NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES(C)=(a)-(b)	**44,205,291**	**2,045,035,799**
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Interest	-	-
Dividends	-	-
Divestiture Proceeds & Sale of Physical Assets	16,525,426	5,089,558
Recoveries from On Lending	-	-
Recoveries from Advance		-
Total Cash generated from Investing Activities (d)	**16,525,426**	**5,089,558**
Less - Cash disbursed for:		
Purchase or Construction of Physical Assets & Acquisition of Other Investment	406,229,520	1,294,952,540
Advance Payments		
Total Cash disbursed for Investing Activities (e)	**406,229,520**	**1,294,952,540**
NET CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES (F)=(d)-(e)	**(389,704,094)**	**(1,289,862,982)**
NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING & INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES (g)=(c) + (f)	**(345,498,803)**	**755,172,817**
Cash Flows from Fianacing Activities		
Local Borrowings	-	-
Foreign Borrowings	-	-
Grants Received	-	-
Deposit Received	2,332,843,654	-
Total Cash generated from Financing Activities (h)	**2,332,843,654**	**-**
Less - Cash disbursed for:		
Repayment of Local Borrowings	-	-
Repayment of Foreign Borrowings	-	-
Deposit Payments	2,226,489,422	-
Total Cash disbursed for Financing Activities (i)	**2,226,489,422**	**-**
NET CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES (J)=(h)-(i)	**106,354,231**	**-**
Net Movement in Cash (k) = (g) - (j)	**(239,144,572)**	**755,172,817**
Opening Cash Balance as at 01st January 2019	**484,881,544**	**145,391,699**
Closing Cash Balance as at 31st December 2019	**245,736,972**	**900,564,516**

Internal Audit and Investigation Division

Internal Audit and Investigation Division

Objective

Monitor and evaluate the Internal Control Mechanism of the Ministry, Sri Lanka Missions/ Posts abroad and other institutions coming under the purview of the Ministry and provide the strategic apex with the guidance on overall performance and compliance.

Key Functions

1. Conducting Internal Audits in all kinds of divisions, institutions under the Ministry of Foreign Relationsand Internal Audit inspections of Sri Lanka Missions/Posts abroad.
2. Coordinating the compilation of replies to the queries issued by National Audit Office.
3. Coordinating of COPA issues and taking follow up corrective actions.
4. Audit and Management Committee Meetings being convened (chaired by Secretary / Foreign relations).
5. Conducting special investigations according to the guidance of Secretary /Foreign Relations.

Work done during the year 2019

1. Raised 37 audit queries for Ministry and Missions/ Posts abroad
2. Special Investigation being conducted
3. Sri Lanka Buddhist Pilgrims Rest belonging to Sri Lanka High Commission in New Delhi.
4. System based audit

   Internal Audit and Investigation Division provides a systematic and disciplined audit approach in order to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of internal control and corporate governance.

   Bank reconciliation statements for all Missions/ Posts. (106 bank accounts)

   Proposals being furnished on acquisition of properties for SL Missions/Posts abroad based on the evaluation of cost and benefits.

   Obtaining sound system equipment on rent basis.

   Settlement of monthly communication bills of Ministry.

1. **COPA matters**

Coordinating the compilation of replies to the eleven matters raised in the COPA held on 06.03.2019.

2. **Audit and Management Committee Meeting – 2019**

Three audit and management committee meetings were conducted during the year and follow up actions were taken for Audit and Management Committee Meetings' decisions.

3. Coordination for compilation of replies to the General Audit Queries (29) replied – 29.

Sri Lanka Diplomatic Missions / Posts Aboard



Revenue Collected by Each Missions/Posts for the Year 2019

M/ No	Mission	Rent on Govt.Build 2002-01-01	Other Interest 2002-02-99	Passport & Visa 2003-02-07	Exams & Other 2003-02-13	Dept.of Motor Trafic 2003-02-14	Consular Fees 2003-02-99	Other Receipts 2003-99-00	W &OP Central 2004-01-00	W & OP Provin 2004-02-00	Sale of Cap.Assets 2006-02-01 (Vehicle)	Sale of Cap.Assets 2006-02-02 (Other)	Total
01A	Canberra		23,400	22,499,022		92,350	8,472,792	3,187,727	291,992	24,657			34,591,940
02A	Sydney		28,714	30,907,319		479,828	12,268,705	1,719,846	220,810				45,625,223
03A	Cairo		17,575	2,828,181	611		1,141,937	716,157	135,893				4,840,354
04A	Paris		39,662	181,403,038			23,190,270	5,755,000	427,161	33,425	299,824		211,148,380
05A	The Hague		215,690	10,332,553			2,598,181	1,231,056	217,112				14,594,591
06A	Tokyo		16,583	30,757,898		1,382,417	17,722,622	2,818,126	236,014	17,829			52,951,489
07A	Amman		21,334	16,888,635			741,160	968,319	154,262				18,773,710
08A	Kathmadu			4,507,590	1,819		345,573	14,005,440	133,980				18,994,401
09A	Berlin		8,500	34,642,953			3,127,520	3,792,227	165,435	68,011			41,804,646
10A	Vienna		29,835	3,506,542		21,944	1,082,037	2,524,601	161,553				7,326,512
11A	Beijing		47,017	20,788,474			7,209,768	3,404,841	408,494	25,428	200,336		32,084,358
12A	Havana		5,010	88,693			229,067	710,226	100,065				1,133,062
13A	Kualalumpur		14,530	22,866,903			4,302,252	1,009,829	183,324				28,376,839
14A	Singapore		24,965	8,973,410			5,572,127	1,966,606	355,030				16,892,138
15A	New York		23,032	14,718,847			3,052,681	3,075,981	382,286				21,252,828
16A	Washington		49,220	24,876,309			6,855,283	3,823,099	652,468	21,468			36,277,847
17A	Los Angeles		8,548	14,465,037			1,446,008	1,285,341	113,232				17,318,166
18A	Dhaka		22,402	5,216,559	1,834		1,601,760	763,332	119,889				7,725,776
19A	Mumbai		17,016	1,308,404			1,530,041	813,817	138,726				3,808,004
20A	Nairobi	452	45,223	1,087,887			449,199	699,976	107,566				2,389,852
21A	Yangon	43,248	5,023	2,572,326			99,427	699,352	95,208	23,972			3,495,308
22A	Stockholm		14,297	10,788,825			2,491,764	2,031,822	235,956				15,562,664
23A	Bangkok		28,259	4,051,862			2,050,851	7,113,182	236,269	46,375			13,526,798
24A	Brusseles		24,734	4,607,369	698		1,092,143	4,585,477	306,967				10,617,388
25A	Chennai		41,635	10,140,155			31,829,587	3,286,846	591,651				45,889,874
26A	Jakarta		19,673	1,315,398	16,952		534,699	1,075,691	228,541				3,190,953
27A	Male		28,335	5,401,290	1,240		3,162,888	782,935	111,958	31,698			9,520,344

Revenue Collected by Each Missions/Posts for the Year 2019

M/ No	Mission	Rent on Govt.Build 2002-01-01	Other Interest 2002-02-99	Passport & Visa 2003-02-07	Exams & Other 2003-02-13	Dept.of Motor Trafic 2003-02-14	Consular Fees 2003-02-99	Other Receipts 2003-99-00	W &OP Central 2004-01-00	W & OP Provin 2004-02-00	Sale of Cap.Assets 2006-02-01 (Vehicle)	Sale of Cap.Assets 2006-02-02 (Other)	Total
28A	Geneva		21,858	66,387,232			16,768,799	3,867,060	589,523	16,774	10,489,216		98,140,462
29A	Abu Dhabi		24,573	31,008,453			4,020,410	3,584,715	293,488				38,931,639
30A	Dubai		28,135	103,791,192	636		17,047,096	1,644,086	217,692	22,613	849,599		123,601,048
31A	London		49,714	68,789,367			93,876,573	3,584,744	634,767	36,611			166,971,776
32A	New Delhi	37,430	39,837	3,417,911			6,806,288	5,874,270	446,926	28,823			16,614,055
33A	Seoul		32,395	20,042,067	1,800		10,981,326	1,719,926	459,150		296,800	493	33,533,957
34A	Kuwait		33,321	176,844,220			30,742,174	1,707,925	729,124				210,056,765
35A	Riyadh		19,416	77,207,164			2,874,898	2,241,193	410,785				82,753,456
36A	Moscow		33,835	1,174,188	1,949		1,640,955	9,553,547	253,764				12,658,238
37A	Ottawa		38,139	19,833,754			3,276,826	11,653,194	177,938				34,979,850
38A	Baghdad		544	573,666			314,042	668,402	29,701				1,586,355
39A	Rome	465,566	54,006	114,109,927	2,222		34,973,146	2,357,121	294,170				151,790,591
40A	Oman		20,455	20,075,011			5,700,092	1,150,923	329,091	25,408			27,300,980
41A	Islamabad		9,944	1,412,701			1,058,287	1,196,203	231,797	24,874			3,933,806
42A	Karachi		12,005	1,355,189			600,270	543,808	113,984	23,262			2,648,519
43A	Jeddah		13,047	29,207,387			3,180,055	895,905	157,514		532,646		33,986,554
44A	Qatar		13,451	115,775,160	1,463		16,756,143	1,639,469	196,849				134,382,536
45A	Pretoria		34,315	3,415,010			264,126	1,795,900	176,952		1,242,865		6,929,167
46A	Beirut	2,313	29,656	16,115,672			949,631	1,562,299	241,505	28,069			18,926,831
47A	Tehran		21,846	1,176,939			114,297	856,086	100,018			4,248	2,273,433
48A	Manila		30,032	2,639,659			644,663	1,009,939	132,044				4,456,337
49A	Warsaw		748,267	1,196,922			550,015	912,177	85,774	22,608			3,515,763
50A	Oslo		11,464	7,666,415			809,440	1,957,868	115,313				10,560,500
51A	Frankfurt		10,670	48,535,310			1,375,692	1,424,562	229,395				51,575,629
52A	Tel Aviv	8,008	9,305	10,123,976			3,508,973	1,159,541	140,803				14,942,598
53A	Toronto		51,229	80,117,837			9,347,957	5,796,611	264,400				95,578,035
54A	Brazilia		22,769	156,324			290,394	1,334,042	383,272				2,186,802
55A	Hanoi		5,680	3,040,448			1,328,529	1,677,816	171,577		218,400		6,442,450
56A	Ramallah			54,105			17,975	537,037	19,452				628,568
57A	Shanghai		10,868	4,077,877			2,407,163	2,840,796	84,417				9,421,122

Revenue Collected by Each Missions/Posts for the Year 2019

M/ No	Mission	Rent on Govt.Build 2002-01-01	Other Interest 2002-02-99	Passport & Visa 2003-02-07	Exams & Other 2003-02-13	Dept.of Motor Trafic 2003-02-14	Consular Fees 2003-02-99	Other Receipts 2003-99-00	W &OP Central 2004-01-00	W & OP Provin 2004-02-00	Sale of Cap.Assets 2006-02-01 (Vehicle)	Sale of Cap.Assets 2006-02-02 (Other)	Total
60A	Ankara		10,304	829,319			780,413	1,174,207	238,218				3,032,461
61A	Guangzhou		19	5,495,223			522,493	852,559	145,902				7,016,195
62A	Melborne		361,302	53,331,921		1,931,759	19,671,179	1,475,840	147,226				76,919,227
63A	Manama		15,196	19,009,884			3,862,138	885,137	127,472	57,039			23,956,867
65A	Abuja		495	345,143			916	640,389	126,614	24,850			1,138,408
66A	Victoria		2,617,378	1,076,882			288,910	630,112	22,054				4,635,336
67A	Kabul			1,093,797				611,710	22,782				1,728,289
68A	Milan		15,117	84,368,519		21,121	46,968,350	1,527,047	97,410				132,997,564
69A	Addis Ababa		5,131	252,745			296,346	1,717,851	141,370				2,413,442
70A	Cyprus		621,935	5,865,106			12,682,020	660,459	79,418				19,908,938
Grand Total		**557,018**	**5,897,864**	**1,692,531,100**	**31,224**	**3,929,419**	**501,499,339**	**160,769,327**	**15,371,496**	**603,797**	**14,129,685**	**4,741**	**2,395,325,010**

CONSULAR ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY SRI LANKA MISSIONS ABROAD
FROM 01ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2019

Country	Mission	Employment contracts	Visas issued	Passports issued	Non Machine Readable Passports	Identity Certificates issued	Endorsements made in Passports	Passport Renewals	Repatriations	Registration of Births	Registration of Marriages	Registration of Deaths	Attestation of Documents	Police Clearance Certificates	Other
Afghanistan	Kabul	0	254	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Australia	Canberra	0	56	799	11	70	6	0	70	186	0	10	198	63	5
Australia	Melbourne	0	975	1667	108	25	51	0	5	459	0	5	599	162	1154
Australia	Sydney	0	603	744	48	112	17	0	0	210	0	8	1471	83	0
Austria	Vienna	0	319	59	4	0	3	0	4	15	2	0	162	5	0
Bahrain	Manama	751	273	594	66	0	70	0	18	72	2	3	727	15	265
Bangladesh	Dhaka	0	990	32	12	0	15	0	0	10	0	3	288	0	15
Belgium	Brussels	0	371	42	9	15	0	0	0	8	1	0	133	0	3
Brazil	Brasilia	0	11	2	0	0	3	2	0	6	0	2	42	1	1
Canada	Toronto	0	1801	1140	76	0	38	0	51	114	1	4	1794	42	0
Canada	Ottawa	0	419	338	32	5	3	0	0	77	0	1	167	2	0
China	Beijing	0	3380	49	3	0	5	2	0	26	1	4	1629	0	15
China	Guangzhou	0	821	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	127	0	0
China	Shanghai	0	591	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	337	0	0
Cuba	Havana	0	3	2	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	63	0	0
Cyprus	Nicosia	1261	12	213	33	6	3	0	23	20	0	1	2958	1	0

CONSULAR ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY SRI LANKA MISSIONS ABROAD
FROM 01ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2019

Country	Mission	Employment contracts	Visas issued	Passports issued	Non Machine Readable Passports	Identity Certificates issued	Endorsements made in Passports	Passport Renewals	Repatriations	Registration of Births	Registration of Marriages	Registration of Deaths	Attestation of Documents	Police Clearance Certificates	Other
Egypt	Cairo	0	211	46	5	0	1	0	6	8	0	0	107	0	72
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	0	20	0	4	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	34	0	0
France	Paris	0	978	4372	148	0	424		190	1144	0	33	864	19	2317
Germany	Berlin	0	1760	416	4	0	6	0	0	26	1	0	309	4	0
Germany	Frankfurt	0	818	1340	20	0	41	0	3	124	1	2	82	3	0
India	New Delhi	0	2715	16	15	0	0	0	0	6		14	1063	0	0
India	Chennai	0	3726	1645	118	0	4	591	963	3166	12	21	4118	0	0
India	Mumbai	0	783	18	2	0	1	0	2	2	0	1	271	1	0
Indonesia	Jakarta	0	162	6	28	0	0	0	28	3	0	0	40	0	19
Iran	Tehran	0	215	1	17	0	0	2	25	1	0	0	8	0	0
Iraq	Bagdad	0	61	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	35	0	0
Israel	Tel Aviv	240	17	333	62	0	3	0	2	17	2	1	592	3	0
Italy	Rome	0	82	3270	868	0	223	0	27	924	31	30	1938	63	3007
Italy	Milan	0	7	2783	735	0	298	0	0	823	36	18	1817	132	3604
Japan	Tokyo	0	694	828	187	25	21	0	12	289	55	11	1629	2	148
Jordan	Amman	217	54	476	251	0	15	3	16	9	2	0	64	0	0
Kenya	Nairobi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Korea	Seoul	90	217	552	77	0	3	4	0	45	5	10	1671	18	0
Kuwait	Kuwait	29993	752	5356	2838	0	392	212	742	342	3	70	5353	3	769
Lebanon	Beirut	437	16	525	82	0	17	0	122	33	0	9	130	10	0
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	0	115	440	691	0	13	0	113	60	21	23	411	0	0
Maldives	Male	7729	266	101	67	0	1	0	0	11	0	0	493	0	0
Myanmar	Yangon	0	382	6	6	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	13	0	0
Nepal	Kathmandu	0	1064	5	16	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	55
The Netherlands	The Hague	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nigeria	Abuja	0	26	5	3	0	0	0	3	2	0	2	3	0	0

CONSULAR ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY SRI LANKA MISSIONS ABROAD
FROM 01ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2019

Country	Mission	Employment contracts	Visas issued	Passports issued	Non Machine Readable Passports	Identity Certificates issued	Endorsements made in Passports	Passport Renewals	Repatriations	Registration of Births	Registration of Marriages	Registration of Deaths	Attestation of Documents	Police Clearance Certificates	Other
Norway	Oslo	0	331	133	8	0	9	0	6	44	0	0	103	0	0
Oman	Muscat	5588	52	630	121	0	44	0	159	61	0	4	986	2	0
Pakistan	Islamabad	0	456	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	152	0	76
Pakistan	Karachchi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Philippines	Manila	0	286	24	3	0	2	0	0	8	1	0	105	2	42
Poland	Warsaw	26	59	22	4	0	4	0	1	4	0	1	82	0	0
State of Palestine	Ramallah City	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Qatar	Doha	0	122	3467	1089	0	308	0	0	348	12	45	2606	2	577
Russian Federation	Moscow	1	248	6	14	16	0	0	1	9	0	1	629	3	6
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	344	239	2333	1400	0	82	0	176	131	0	78	506	57	0
Saudi Arabia	Jeddah	4	178	202	486	0	38	932	422	68	2	12	288	0	154
Seychelles	Victoria	11	7	35	51	0	0	35	75	10	0	2	54	1	0
Singapore	Singapore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Africa	Pretoria	0	106	16	7	0	9	74	0	18	0	2	32	14	0
Sweden	Stockholm	0	683	204	13	0	3	5	0	32	0	1	122	4	0
Thailand	Bangkok	0	513	44	24	0	2	0	13	18	13	2	274	1	28
Turkey	Ankara	1	98	1	5	108	0	0	6	4	0	1	115	0	0
United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi	0	200	118	24	78	89	862	0	145	32	12	380	5	12
United Arab Emirates	Dubai	0	646	3450	506	0	464	3298	376	405	0	30	563	47	362
United Kingdom	London	0	2105	2806	389	0	241	703	47	738	0	5	1840	56	2285
United Nations	Geneva	0	221	1731	130	0	57	0	266	366	0	5	1064	1	0
United Nations	New York	0	206	377	40	0	3	0	0	64	0	4	134	1	0
United States of America	Washington	0	887	575	51	26	26	0	25	165	0	9	583	3	335
United States of America	Los Angeles	0	214	278	46	0	0	0	3	59	0	4	35	0	0
Viet Nam	Ha noi	0	340	15	1	0	6	0	0	3	0	1	217	4	0

Auditor General's Summary Report

(English translation of the Sinhala text furnished by the National Audit Office)

English translation of the Sinhala text furnished by the National Audit Office

National Audit Office
My No. EHA/A/MFA/01/FS/2019/01 Date: 17th June, 2020

Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Relations

Auditor General's Summary Report on the Financial Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Relations for the the year ending 31 December, 2019 as per Clause 11(1) of National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018

1. Financial Statement

1.1. Qualified Opinion

The Financial Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Relations for the year ending 31 December 2019 consisting of the Financial Status Report as at 31 December 2019, Financial Performance Report for the year ending at that date and Cash Flow Statement were audited under my direction in accordance with the provisions setout in Article 154(1) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to be read along with the provisions laid down in the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018. My comments and observations with regard to the Financial Statement being submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Relations as per Clause 11(1) of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 are contained in this report. The Annual Detailed Management Audit Report to the Accounting Officer as per Clause 11(2) of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 will be issued in due course. The Auditor General's Report in accordance with the Clause 10 of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 to be read along with Article 154(6) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka will be presented to the Parliament in due course.

It is my opinion that a true and fair position of the financial status as at 31 December 2019, Financial Performance for the year ending at that date and Cash Flow of the Ministry of Foreign Relations is reflected in the Financial Statement, other than the impact caused by the facts stipulated in para. 1.6 of this Report.

1.2. Basis of the Qualified Opinion

Audit was conducted by me in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standard (SLAuS). My responsibility with regard to the financial statements are further described under the Cause titled Responsibility of the Auditor. It is my belief that audit evidences obtained by me to compile a basis for my opinion are adequate and appropriate for the purpose.

1.3. Responsibility of the Chief Accounting Officer with regard to the Financial Statements

It is the responsibility of the Chief Accounting Officer to compile Financial Statements reflecting the true and fair position in accordance with the generally accepted Accounting principles and provisions set out in the Clause 38 of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 and to decide upon the internal administration process enabling

the compilation of Financial Statements sans quantitatively erroneous due to frauds and faults.
The Ministry should duly maintain books and reports with regard to its Revenue, Expenditure, Assets and Liabilities enabling compilation of annual and current Financial Statements in line with Clause 16(1) of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018.
The Chief Accounting Officer should ensure that an effective internal administration network, as per Sub Clause 38(1)(c) of the National Audit Act, is being maintained in the Ministry which should be reviewed from tome to time to ensure its effectiveness and should make amendments necessary for streamlining.

1.4. Responsibility of the Auditor with regard to Auditing of the Financial Statements

My objective is to make available a fair confirmation to the effect that the Financial Statements as a whole are devoid of quantitatively erroneous statements which may cause due to frauds and faults and to issue the Auditor General's Report containing my opinion. Although a reasonable assurance is a high level certification, it will not be a confirmation that it is devoid of quantitative misrepresentations, in the process of auditing as per Sri Lanka Auditing Standards. Quantitative misrepresentations may arise due to individual or collective impact of frauds and faults and due vigilance should be exercised by those who make economic conclusions on the basis of these financial statements.
The auditing was carried out with professional judgement and professional dubiety as per Sri Lanka Auditing Standards. Thus:

Basis of my opinion was the collection of quantitative and appropriate Audit evidence in order to avoid risks which may arise due to frauds and faults, through planning of savoir-faire audit procedures in the instances of identifying and assessing the risks of quantitatively erroneous declarations in Financial Statements due to frauds and faults. The impact caused by a fraud may be more intensive than an impact caused by quantitatively erroneous statements and a fraud may be caused through collusion, forgery, willful evasion or evasion of internal administrative network.
It is not intended to make an opinion with regard to the effectiveness of the internal administration network in the Ministry in order to compile savoir-faire auditing systems.
Evaluation of appropriate and reasonable inclusion of transactions and events which provided the basis for structure and contents of the financial statements containing revelations.
Transactions and events which provided the basis for the structure and contents of the financial statements have been appositely and reasonably included when submitting Financial Statements as a whole.

The Chief Accounting Officer and the Accounting Officer were made aware of the important audit findings, main internal administration deficiencies and others identified during my auditing.

1.5. Report on other legal requirements

My declaration as per Clause 6(d) of National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018.

a) The Financial Statements corresponds to the previous year.
b) The following recommendations I had made regarding financial statements for the previous year had not been implemented.

Para. Ref. Audit Observation Recommendation

1.6.3 (b) During the year under review, the selling price of 03 Nos. vehicles disposed by 03 Missions with a purchase value (cost) of Rs. 13,875,228 was indicated as Rs. 2,156,731 and the purchase value of another 02 vehicles amounting to Rs. 7,648,500 was not included in the disposal value indicated in the Non-Financial Asset Statement The value of Rs. 19,366,997 should also be identified as the disposal value for the 05 disposed vehicles.

Comments on Financial Statements

Financial Performance Statement

1.6.1.1. Non-Revenue Receipts

Although the other receipts included in the Financial Performance Statement for the year under review were Rs. 2,731,432,749, the other receipts indicated in the Trial Balance was Rs. 2,667,447,127. However, even after the adjustment of Rs. 20,217,163 entered to the Balance by the final journal entries by the Treasury and the adjustment of Rs. 43,730,296 entered to the Imprest account 35-18 by journal entries, the other receipts indicated in the Financial Performance Statement were Rs. 238,163 higher.

Cash Flow Statement

1.6.2.1. Cash Flow generated by Investment Activities

The following observations were made:

a) The reception and payment of advances for the Government Officers were not indicated in the Net Cash Flow generated by the investment activities.
b) Although the amounts of Cash Deposits received and the Cash Deposits paid in sequence were Rs. 2,184,233,119 and Rs. 2,107,779,187 according to the Monthly Accounts Summary Reports of the Ministry during the year under review, the reception and payment of deposits were indicated in sequence as Rs. 2,332,843,654 and 2,226,498,422 in the Cash Flow Statement for the year ending on 31 December 2019.

1.6.3. Non-maintenance of Documentation and Books

A Register of Losses in respect of Missions abroad had not been maintained as per FR 110.

Financial Review

2.1. Expenditure Management

In spite of preparing complete and accurate estimates as far as possible being the responsibility of the Accounting Officer as per FR 50 (II), total provisions allocated for 13 Vote Heads amounting to Rs. 441,019,627 had been under utilized within a range from 51 percent to 100 percent, due to non abiding by this. Similarly, Rs. 344,510,000 of provisions had been obtained through Supplementary Estimates for 06 Vote Heads in addition to the estimated provisions.

2.2. Liabilities and Commitments

Liabilities amounting to Rs. 89,551,688 had been created with an amount of Rs. 81,835,422 over and above the total Balance Provision of Rs. 7,716,246 after utilizing the Net Provisions allocated or 30 Vote Heads.

2.3. Issuance and Settlement of Advances

The following observations were made:

a) It has been observed that the unsettled Advance Balance of the Missions abroad was Rs. 365,063,523 including the Balance amount of Rs. 301,986,504 for a period ranging from 02 years to 28 years.
b) As per the Government Officers Advance 'B' Account, the total arrears Loan Balances of the officers who were deceased, suspended, terminated and vacated service by 31 December 2019 was Rs. 2,036,618 while the total balances of Loan Arrears for over 05 years was observed as Rs. 1,167,642.
c) No action has been taken to recover the the total balance loan arrears remaining over 05 years of Rs. 1,515,668 indicated in the Government Officers Advance 'B' Account from the relevant officers in the year under review.

2.4. Deposits

Following observations are made:

a) As per the Deposit Statement in the Financial Statements up to 31 December 2019, there has been a difference of Rs. 4,521,095 under each Deposit Account Number between the balances in the Books of the Treasury and the the balances in the Books of the Ministry.
b) FR 565 (5) directs that a Monthly Deposit Summary Report prepared in respect of each month should be submitted to the Auditor General before the end of the next month, which has not been done.
c) There were deposits of Rs. 8,851,391 which exceeded 02 years in the General Deposit Accounts of the Ministry and Temporary Retentions for Statutory payments of Rs. 28,498,689 which exceeded 02 years at the Missions abroad by the last day of the year under review.

2.5 Bank Account Operations

No action has been taken as per FR 396(d) regarding 06 Nos. Cheques to the value of Rs. 55,385 which exceeded 06 months by 31 December 2019.

3. Operations Review

The Audit Observations related to the Operations Review, Sustainable Development, Good Governance and Human Resource Development regarding the Revenue, Expenditure, Assets and Liabilities indicated in the Financial Statements submitted will be included in the Report submitted as per the Clause 10 of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 mentioned in para. 1.1 above.

W.G.N. Menike
Deputy Auditor General
For Auditor General

Copy: Director General, Department of Public Accounts