



## **EXPORTERS' ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA**

Minutes for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka held on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 3.00 p.m. as a Virtual Meeting connected through Microsoft Teams.

Present : Mr. Chrisso de Mel / Chairman  
Mr. M H Talal Shums / 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman  
Mr. Lakshan Algama Perera / 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman

### **Member Companies/ Associations**

Past Chairman  
Past Chairman  
Nidro Supply (Pvt) / Past Chairperson  
Tea Tang (Pvt) Ltd/ Past Chairman  
Ceylon Biscuits Ltd  
Hayleys PLC  
  
Hatton National Bank  
  
Haycarb PLC  
Lion Brewery PLC  
Link Natural Products (Pvt) Ltd  
Meezan & Company (PVT)Ltd  
Rainco (Pvt) Ltd  
The Spices & Allied Products, Producers' & Traders' Association  
Sri Lanka Fruits & Vegetable Producers, Processors & Exporters' Association  
Sri Lanka Association of Manufacturers & Exporters of Rubber Products  
Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters Association  
Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation  
Sri Lanka Association of Software and Services Companies (SLASSCOM)  
  
Sri Lanka Gem and Jewellery Association  
Seafood Exporters Association  
Sri Lanka Diamond Manufacturers' Association  
The Swadeshi Industrial Works PLC  
Tea Exporters Association  
Trelleborg Lanka (Pvt) Ltd

### **Represented by**

Mr. Fazal Mushin  
Mr. A. S. M. Muzzammil  
Mrs. Dawn Austin  
Mr. Rohan P Daluwatte  
Mr. Priyantha Bandara  
Mr. Nalaka Ratnayake  
Mr. Neil Fernando  
Ms. Rozanne De Almeida  
Mr. Randeve Mahaarachchi  
Mr. Rajitha Kariyawasam  
Mr. Ranil Goonetilleke  
Mr. Chanaka Gunathilake  
Mr. S. Abdul Cader  
Mr. Ahmed Aroos  
Mr. Vernon Abeyratne  
  
Mr. S Gnanaskandan  
  
Mr. Justin Senevirathne  
Mr. Ravi Dadlani  
Mr. Yohan Lawrence  
Mr. Mohan Silva  
Mr. Channa Manoharan  
Mr. Ashique Ali  
Mr. Chaminda de Silva  
Mr. Ajward Deen  
Mr. Sampath Padmawansa  
Mr. Sanjay Baid  
Mr. Nihal Dassanayake  
Mr. Deivoo Deivanayagam  
Mr. Rusiri Wijeyaratne

## **1. MINUTES**

Minutes of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting held on July 29, 2019 at the Auditorium (Ground Floor), The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce were confirmed, proposed by Mr. Vernon Abeyratne and seconded by Mr. Justin Senevirathne.

## **2. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 were adopted, proposed by Mr. Channa Manoharan and seconded by Mr. Lakshan Algama.

## **3. ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN**

Chairman delivered his address at the post business session of the AGM taken place soon after the Annual General Meeting.

## **4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF OFFICE BEARERS AND THE MANAGING COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 2020/2021**

Secretariat announced that at the first meeting of the Managing Committee for 2020/2021, the following were elected as office Bearers for the year 2020/2021.

Chairman	- Mr. Chrisso de Mel
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman	- Mr. M H Talal Shums
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman	- Mr. Ranil Goonetilleke

## **MEMBERS ELECTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP**

The following members were elected to serve on the committee for 2020/2021.

1. Ceylon Biscuits Ltd
2. Hayleys PLC
3. Lion Brewery (Ceylon PLC)
4. Meezan & Company (Pvt) Ltd
5. Nidro Supply (Pvt) Ltd
6. Shums & Company (Pvt) Ltd
7. Saboor Chatoor (Pvt) Ltd
8. Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation
9. Tea Tang (Pvt) Ltd

## **REPRESENTATIVES NOMINATED FROM PRODUCT ASSOCIATIONS**

In addition, the following representatives from the product associations were also nominated to serve on the Committee.

### **Represented by**

1. Lanka Fruit & Vegetable Producers' Processors and Exporters Association  
- Mr. Zuraish Hashim
2. Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters' Association – Mr. Yohan Lawrence / Mr. Athula  
Jayasundara
3. Sri Lanka Gem & Jewellery Association – Mr. Ajward Deen/Mr. Rizwan Nayeem
4. Spices & Allied Products Producers Association – Mr. Vernon Abeyratne/  
Mr. Rumesh Jayasuriya
5. Sri Lanka Diamond Manufactures Association – Mr. Sanjay Baid
6. Seafood Exporters' Association – Mr. Channa Weeratunga/ Mr. Dilan Fernando
7. Sri Lanka Manufacturers & Exporters of Rubber Products – Mr. Justin Senaviratne
8. Sri Lanka Association of Software Services Companies – Mr. Channa Manoharan/  
Mr. Ashique Ali
9. Tea Exporters Association - Mr. Deivoo Deivanayagam/  
Mr. Ranjith Abeykoon
10. The Colombo Tea Traders Association – Mr. H D Hemaratne
11. The Colombo Rubber Traders Association –Mr. Harin de Silva

The following past chairpersons were also nominated to serve on the Managing Committee

1. Mr. Harin de Silva (Immediate Past Chairman)
2. Mr. Fazal Mushin
3. Mrs. Nirmali Samarathunga
4. Mr. A.S.M Muzzamil

This comprises the Managing Committee for the year 2020/2021

### **5. ELECTION OF AUDITORS**

Chairman proposed from the Chair that Baker Tilly Edirisinghe & Co. to be appointed as Auditors for the year 2020/2021.

### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF WHICH DUE NOTICE SHALL HAVE BEEN GIVEN**

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

**Post Business Session of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting  
of Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka**

**30<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 at 3.00 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting connected through Microsoft Teams.**

Committee members, past Chairmen, fellow members and distinguished invitees were welcomed to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka.

**1. ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR. CHRISO DE MEL**

Quote

“Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen”.

Past Chairmen, And the Vice Chairman 1 and 2., committee members and members.

It is my privilege to address you all, at this 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Exporters Association of Sri Lanka.

First and foremost, I want to thank the committee for the confidence placed in me and entrusting me to take the leadership of this prestige Association for a second term.

Needless to say, that the past year has been an unprecedented time and a very unique experience for all of us. It is very unusual to have a term in office where Work from Home became the norm and one-fourth of the time business was conducted in a state of lockdown. 2019 commenced with the business struggling to get back to normal after the set back the country experience as a result of the easter Sunday attack. Thereafter the hype running up to the presidential elections put the country in limbo with no proper economic development or plan. The change of government with the change in the political leadership slowed down the countries possible growth potential. Obviously, time was clicking without much choice to have the possibility to call for a general election in order to establish a stable government where the parliament was finally dissolved making way for a general election.

Then came the biggest challenge our world has seen during our life time; this pandemic which we are still struggling to overcome. It is in this backdrop that we, Sri Lankan exporters are going to face a general election in a weeks' time, in the hope of establishing a stable government.

The world is going through a recession, and Sri Lanka is not going to be an exception. Therefore, it is time to repair this broken system without wasting time and the opportunities that are at our disposal.

On a positive note, Sri Lanka still has the advantage and the possibility to control and overcome this pandemic with the great work that has been carried out so far, we cannot afford to be complacent or irresponsible as a nation or as a community by being negligent or irresponsible and short sighted. There are severe challenges to businesses especially with costs escalating with new safety measures. I'm sure we can all agree that we got to be safe rather than sorry and the sooner we manage this pandemic the faster we will be able to see economic development and growth.

We are in the process of finalizing yet another strategic paper following the two detailed documents which were prepared and presented to the previous government. This document is a very short summary which includes some of the things that we propose to implement in the near future and this will be finalized within the next few days. We hope to present it to HE the president and the New Prime minister soon after the elections. During the past year we have continuously lobbied with the government on matters relating to the needs of our members. We have had a close corporation with the Export development board, the Bord of Investment, the Ministry of Finance, the Sri Lanka customs, the ministry of Ports and Shipping, the Sri Lanka port authority including all three terminals, and The Airport and aviation services including The Sri Lankan Airlines.

We have continuously engaged and highlighted the importance of Trade facilitation and ease of doing business. I am also nominated by the secretary to the treasury to sit at a committee on an advisory capacity to modernize the Sri Lanka Customs.

During The last few months, I have been engaged in several webinars arranged by Associations of the Ceylon chamber of commerce, The National Chamber of Commerce and the EDB as a resource person. These events have been extremely useful to the trade, especially to gain better understanding and to update themselves with the rapid changes that took place with the new normal since the lockdown. Furthermore, some of the exporters were able to resolve certain issues instantly by directly interacting with the authorities.

Some of our export companies managed to operate continuously, even during the lockdown period. Of course, it was challenging but I must give credit to The Sri Lanka Customs, the BOI and The Colombo Port and Airport who improvised and stepped up in order to give exporters the opportunity to ship their cargo in difficult circumstances. I had several calls from some of our members, whom I was able to assist in clearing their raw material imports and exports of finished goods.

The current restrictions on imports has impacted most of the exporters either directly or indirectly. I sincerely hope that these restrictions will be removed soon.

The high light of the previous year was the recent meeting arranged by the Export Development board with His excellency the President, for which I was also invited. The Top management of several of our members were present to clearly articulate very important matters that need to be addressed and resolved immediately. In my opinion it was well received, H.E spent nearly two and a half hours with the exporters noting down all the concerns. I believe this is the first time in a long time that such a forum was arranged and I wish to congratulate The Chairman of the EDB for having arranged this vital meeting.

According to the EDB, we see a decrease in the exports in the month of June compared to the previous month and most of the sectors whether its apparel and textiles or earnings from tea, other commodities such as categories of coconut-based products including coconut oil, coco peat and activated carbon and also the rubber and rubber finished products as well as spices and essential oils. all these shipments, businesses including sea food and food and beverages have of course increased. But I think as an industry I must say that the most important thing at this juncture is that we as an association being strong to present one voice and to continuously lobby on crucial matters.

This is why I see a need for better involvement, greater engagement from our membership, so that as we take matters to the government, we are well represented with all our product associations and individual companies contributing vital feedback. Whatever is to be discusses, it needs to be coming in from all sectors.

We need to look at everything positively and the greatest thing we have is a better record out there when compared to some other countries. We have indeed managed this pandemic well.

But now I think we need to use our capabilities to be on full throttle to take maximum use of opportunities to forge ahead with greater success and growth. That being said, I'm committed with my two vice chairmen and the committee to lead this association to greater heights and I sincerely believe that when the going gets tough we need to get going. On that note, I want to thank you once again for connecting to this meeting and as I mentioned earlier, I sincerely hope that you will not only be engaged with us during the Annual General Meeting but continuously be connected to us so that we can hear your voice, we can find out your requirements for which we can bring the best solutions as and when its required. I assure you that we will do the best we could. Thank you once again.

So now I ask my first vice chairman, Talal Shums to give the vote of thanks.

Unquote

## **2. VOTE OF THANKS BY 1<sup>st</sup> VICE CHAIRMAN, MR. M H TALAL SHUMS**

Quote

“Good afternoon past chairpersons, fellow members and ladies and gentleman.

It is my privilege that I have been asked to propose the vote of thanks of the occasion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka. On behalf of our EASL, I would like to thank the members of the EASL for extending their support and cooperation at all times during the past year.

On behalf of the association I also thank the chamber of commerce for providing the secretarial work and for the numerous services rendered to us during the past year.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Mr. Manjula de Silva, CEO of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, and Mrs. Alikie Perera, Deputy Secretary General and Financial Controller of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Manori Dissanayake and Ms. Ushani Dassanayake for the excellent services provided to the Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka.

I would like to end this session by thanking all our members for joining us for our first virtual annual general meeting.”

Unquote

The Chairman declared the annual general meeting closed.

Ushani Dassanayake  
For Secretary