

AMCHAM AND USAID LAUNCH PRIVATE SECTOR LED IN -DEPTH STUDY OF GLOBAL TRADESHIFTS



(L-R): Prabhash Subasinghe, Chairman, Export Development Board; Presantha Jayamaha, President, The AmCham Sri Lanka; Reed Aeschliman, Mission Director for USAID Sri Lanka and Maldives; Shirendra Lawrence, Secretary of AmCham Sri Lanka; and Stewart Pierce-Gardner, Trade & Logistics Expert, Deloitte LLC.

AmCham Sri Lanka launched the first and second phase of its project titled 'TRADESHIFTS: Opportunities for Sri Lanka from Global Supply Chains Shifts.' TRADESHIFTS is an initiative of AmCham Sri Lanka in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) focused on identifying and attracting increased export revenues to Sri Lanka, by capturing a portion of the large supply chain shifts taking place across Asia. As the first phase of this project, a detailed study was conducted by USAID's Partnership for Accelerating Results in Trade, National Expenditure and Revenue (PARTNER) activity, to understand the current and future shifts in supply chain strategies across the short and medium-term, identify the drivers of such shifts, and highlight the opportunities for Sri Lanka. The TRADESHIFTS project authored by Deloitte LLC, was launched online to a selected group of GoSL representatives, representatives of local industry and business Chambers/Associations, and top leadership of Sri Lanka's blue-chip organizations in the selected sectors. During phase II of the project, 40 captains of industry representing the industry bodies of the 18 industries identified as high-potential beneficiaries for trade shifts by the phase I study and report authored by Deloitte LLC, participated in a series of sectoral discussions and study sessions. Presantha Jayamaha, President of AmCham Sri Lanka, stated that the opportunity for Sri Lanka from the current shifts in the global supply chain were tremendous with countries like India, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and Indonesia already benefiting from this change. He noted that recognizing this opportunity for Sri Lanka, AmCham Sri Lanka collaborated with USAID to create and implement this three-phased

project. He stated that the estimated trade volume that may be shifted over the next four to five years was over 100 billion US dollars, and emphasized that, "This opportunity for Sri Lanka is real; and available. None of this is possible by any of us doing it alone. This is an opportunity for the private sector, the various chambers, industry groups and the Government of Sri Lanka to achieve the outcome of attracting this trade to Sri Lanka." Reed Aeschliman, Mission Director for USAID Sri Lanka and Maldives, noted that this is a timely initiative given the changes that are happening in global supply chains. He stated that companies are looking to geographically diversify their supply chains to lessen market-risks, and in a competitive investment landscape, Sri Lanka may benefit from trade shifts by pursuing the most promising opportunities. The Keynote Address was delivered by Prabhash Subasinghe, Chairman of Export Development Board. Prabhash Subasinghe agreeing with Reed Aeschliman noted that this was indeed a timely and 'game-changing initiative for Sri Lanka', and that the Export Development Board was pleased to see a private sector led event studying the potential on trade-shifts and how Sri Lanka as a country can capitalize on this. He noted that the EDB as the lead Government agency responsible for exports, values this strategy, and believes it is a timely activity given its interest to diversify the Sri Lankan export basket along with bringing further investment to Sri Lanka. As the highlights of the session, the study and report prepared by USAID PARTNER as the project's first phase was presented by Stewart Pierce-Gardner, Trade & Logistics Expert, Deloitte Consulting who authored the report titled "GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGIES: CURRENT TRENDS & FUTURE SHIFTS." The report and presentation provided an informed view on the likely future shifts in supply chain strategies across the short and medium-term, and identified the drivers of such shifts, highlighting implications for a country like Sri Lanka. Shirendra Lawrence, Secretary of AmCham Sri Lanka reiterated that the key objective of this initiative is to provide a realistic and a practical international business-oriented perspective. He concluded stating that, "We look forward to the commitment of the Government to engage with AMCHAM to seriously take on-board the suggestions and recommendations of this project; and also work collaboratively with the private sector in securing this massive trade opportunity. The opportunity to make a better place, and a better life for our children, and their children to come!"