Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts strengthens Sri Lanka’s bid for the Worldchefs Congress 2030 through strategic partnership with Chef Guild Lanka

L–R: Chef Madhawa Weerabaddhana, Director of culinary skills development of Chef Guild of Lanka; Chef Gerard Mendis, Chairman, Chef Guild of Lanka; Kamal

Munasinghe, Senior Vice President, Colombo Hotels, Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts and General Manager, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka; and Dileep Mudadeniya, Senior Vice President Global Alliances and Partnerships, JKL, and Head of Corporate Affairs JKH.

As part of its continued commitment to positioning Sri Lanka as a leading destination for international conferences and business events, Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts has entered into a strategic partnership with Chef Guild Lanka to jointly pursue the bid to host the Worldchefs Congress 2030 in Sri Lanka.

The partnership was officially announced during the launch of Cinnamon Box Office, a new digital platform by Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts designed to simplify access to world-class entertainment, business events, conferences, and experiences. The announcement reflects Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts' broader vision of creating an integrated ecosystem that supports the growth of Sri Lanka's Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) industry while enhancing the country's competitiveness as a global business events destination.

Over the past several years, Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts has led a series of strategic initiatives to strengthen Sri Lanka's conference bidding capabilities. These include the establishment of the Sri Lanka Conference Ambassador Program (SLCAP), launched in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB) and SriLankan Airlines, to mobilize local experts, industry leaders, and professional associations to attract international conferences to the country. Complemented by strategic partnerships across the public and private sectors, together with the development of dedicated industry platforms such as Cinnamon Box Office, these initiatives continue to build a stronger ecosystem for securing global business events and positioning Sri Lanka as a competitive international conference destination.

The collaboration with Chef Guild Lanka marks another significant milestone in these ongoing efforts. Through the partnership, both organizations will work together to prepare and submit Sri Lanka's bid to host the Worldchefs Congress 2030, one of the world's foremost culinary industry gatherings that brings together thousands of chefs, culinary professionals, educators, hospitality leaders, and food industry partners from across the globe.

Hosting the Congress would further strengthen Sri Lanka's position on the

international MICE calendar while generating significant economic value through delegate arrivals, hotel occupancy, destination exposure, and opportunities for the local hospitality and culinary industries.

Dileep Mudadeniya, Senior Vice President Global Alliances and Partnerships – John Keells Leisure, and Head of Corporate Affairs John Keells Holdings, said: “Positioning Sri Lanka as a preferred destination for international conferences requires long-term investment, meaningful partnerships, and a collaborative ecosystem. Over the years, we have continued to build this foundation through initiatives such as the Sri Lanka Conference Ambassador Program and by working closely with professional associations across diverse industries. Our partnership with Chef Guild Lanka represents another important step in that journey. We are delighted to support Sri Lanka’s bid for the Worldchefs Congress 2030 while continuing to create new opportunities that deliver lasting value to the country’s tourism and business events sectors.”

Kamal Munasinghe, Senior Vice President, Colombo Hotels, Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts, and General Manager, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka, added: “City of Dreams Sri Lanka was envisioned as a destination capable of hosting events of international significance. The launch of Cinnamon Box Office is another investment in creating an integrated events ecosystem in which conferences, exhibitions, entertainment, and cultural experiences are more accessible through a single platform. Announcing this partnership at the launch reflects our commitment to supporting international conferences from the bid stage to delegate experience, further strengthening Sri Lanka’s position as a destination for world-class events.”

Speaking on behalf of Chef Guild Lanka, Chef Gerard Mendis, Chairman, commented: “Hosting the Worldchefs Congress in Sri Lanka would be a landmark achievement for our culinary industry and an opportunity to showcase our country’s exceptional hospitality, culinary heritage, and professional talent to the global community. We are pleased to partner with Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts in pursuing this bid and look forward to working together to present Sri Lanka as a compelling host destination for Worldchefs 2030.”

The proposed bid forms part of Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts’ long-term strategy of working alongside industry associations, government stakeholders, and international partners to attract high-impact global conferences to Sri Lanka. Through continued investment in destination development, industry collaboration, and world-class infrastructure, the organization remains committed to expanding Sri

Lanka’s international conference portfolio and reinforcing its position as one of Asia’s emerging business events destinations.