Sri Lankan Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation presents credentials Saturday, 16 February 2013

The newly appointed Sri Lankan Ambassador to the World Trade Organization (WTO), Mr. Nimal Karunatilake presented his credentials to Director General of the WTO, Mr. Pascal Lamy on 13th February 2013. Having welcomed the new Ambassador, Mr. Lamy provided him with a brief update on the state of play in the Doha Round of Trade Negotiations, which is commonly known as the Doha Development Agenda (DDA), with special emphasis on areas where the WTO Members have been able to achieve considerable progress in consensus building. Mr. Lamy also said that the WTO would be pleased to offer more technical assistance for capacity building in trade-related institutions in Sri Lanka. Following Director General Lamy's observations, Ambassador Karunatilake said that Sri Lanka, being a founder member of both the GATT and the WTO, remained fully committed to the rule-based, multilateral trading system in promoting global trade. " In fact, Sri Lanka was also the first South Asian state to introduce market-friendly economic reforms. The unilateral trade liberalization measures implemented under those reforms as far back as 1970s have made Sri Lanka one of the most business-friendly nations in the region" he added. He also said that Sri Lanka looked forward to an early conclusion of the DDA that would effectively address the interests of all stakeholders, in particular, the specific issues and challenges faced by small and vulnerable economies like Sri Lanka. Stressing Sri Lanka&rsquo:s appreciation of the World Trade Organisations&rsquo:s support, Ambassador Karunatilake conveyed his sincere thanks to Director General Lamy for the valuable cooperation the WTO continues to extend toward trade-related capacity building in Sri Lanka, through various training programs, awareness building seminars and related projects. Ambassador Karunatilake is the sixth Lankan Ambassador to the WTO, whose membership accounts for about 97% of the global trade. He holds a career record of nearly 28 years at the Department of Commerce, Colombo, and his previous overseas assignments include Sri Lanka Missions in Baghdad, Tokyo, Manila, Paris and Washington D. C.

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