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இலங்கை சனாதிபதி  
President of Sri Lanka

**Commemoration of 33<sup>rd</sup> SAARC Charter Day, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

It is a pleasure for me to convey my warm greetings and best wishes on the occasion of the SAARC Charter Day.


Since the commencement of SAARC in 1985, as a region we have achieved significant progress by promoting peace, freedom, social justice and economic prosperity through fostering mutual understanding, good neighbourly relations and meaningful cooperation among Member States which are bound by ties of history and culture.

Sri Lanka as a founding member of SAARC, has actively engaged with the Organization, since its inception and we are happy to note that our level of engagement with the SAARC processes has increased this year, with many SAARC meetings and events hosted by Sri Lanka, amongst them, a parliamentary conference and two ministerial meetings.

SAARC's strength is in its diversity and harmonious coexistence. Yet it is important to take cognizance of the fact that our achievements over the last three decades within SAARC have been below the region's full potential. In pursuance of our common endeavor, it is important that we strive to push the SAARC process forward, for the people of South Asia to reap the dividends of development.

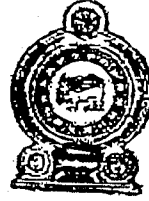
I wish to reassure that Sri Lanka will continue to play a pivotal role in promoting the SAARC agenda towards fulfillment of its objectives.

December 4, 2017

  
Maithripala Sirisena



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இலங்கைச் சனநாயக சோசலிசக் குடியரசு



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இலங்கையின் பிரதம அமைச்சர்  
Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE HON. PRIME MINISTER

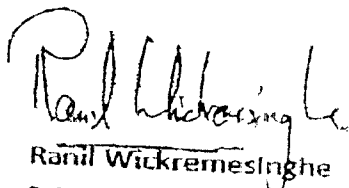
I am delighted to extend my warmest felicitations to the people in South Asia on the occasion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> SAARC Charter Day.

South Asian nations formed SAARC thirty years ago towards creating a greater sense of regional co-operation among the neighbouring nations; today, we have been able to cement strong bonds of friendship and co-operation while creating sustainable bilateral partnerships of mutual benefit.

In view of the goodwill SAARC has generated over the years, the SAARC Charter Day gives us the opportunity to reflect on the achievements, and to recommit ourselves towards consolidating a common vision for us all.

Given that regular assessment of SAARC has encouraged us to ensure that the organization stays focused on results while being people centric, we must be able to take the initiative towards heralding in such change if and when needed.

Sri Lanka would always be committed towards the common values embodied in the SAARC spirit of friendship.

  
Ranil Wickremesinghe  
Prime Minister

29<sup>th</sup> November 2017



තිලක් මාරපන - (පා.ම.) විදේශ කටයුතු අමාත්‍ය  
 திலக் மாரப்பன - (பா.உ.) வெளிநாட்டு அலுவல்கள் அமைச்சர்

**Tilak Marapana - (M.P.) Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Message on the occasion of the commemoration of 33<sup>rd</sup> SAARC Charter Day  
 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

I wish to convey my heartfelt felicitations and best wishes on the occasion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> SAARC Charter Day on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017. SAARC was established over three decades ago in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter to promote the welfare of the people, economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region. It is also an organization which encourages Member States to come together on issues of common concern in a spirit of friendship, trust and understanding.

SAARC is a regional organization, which has matured over time. Sri Lanka, as a founding member, places great importance on the purposes and principles of the SAARC Charter. Sri Lanka hosted a number of SAARC meetings and events this year including the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians and two ministerial meetings, resulting in many important outputs.

While recognizing past achievements of SAARC, more dynamism and commitment is required by all Member States to vigorously move forward. I therefore call upon Member States to pursue a cooperative, action oriented path, leading the Organization towards more robust cooperation which would result in tangible benefits to the people of South Asia.

In pursuance of our common endeavour, I reiterate Sri Lanka's firm support to the work of SAARC, in taking forward the objectives of the Organization in a spirit of collective responsibility.

*Tilak Marapana*

Tilak Marapana, P.C., M.P.  
 Minister of Foreign Affairs

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 විදේශ කටයුතු අමාත්‍යාංශය, පාර්ලිමේන්තුවේ, කොළඹ 1, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව. வெளிநாட்டு அலுவல்கள் அமைச்சு, குடியரசுக் கட்டிடம், கொழும்பு 1, இலங்கை.  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic Building, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka