

# Annual Activity Booklet

## 2025

365 days.

Advocacy. Access. Engagement.

Over the past year, The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce has worked across policy, trade, and sector engagement to advance private sector interests. Through advocacy, business facilitation, and sustained collaboration, our efforts have delivered tangible outcomes that strengthened business, drove investment, and supported sustainable growth for private sector and economic advancement.



**23**

Submissions



**32124**

Certificates of  
Origin Issued



**22**

Countries

Multiple  
Engagements



**1860**

SMEs  
Supported



**20**

Trade  
Delegations



**63**

Workshops  
Seminars  
Trainings

# Policy Advocacy

## Shaping Policy - Driving Growth

Throughout the year, the Ceylon Chamber played an active role in shaping policy discussions that affect business confidence, competitiveness, and long-term growth. Drawing on the expertise of its membership and committees, the Chamber worked closely with government, regulators, development partners, and international institutions to address structural constraints, improve implementation, and support practical, evidence-based reform. Our advocacy efforts focused on trade facilitation, fiscal and tax policy, investment climate reform, digitalisation, climate and energy policy, and sector-specific priorities raised by members.

### Trade Facilitation, Customs Reform, and Logistics

Trade facilitation remained a core priority, with the Chamber consistently highlighting operational and regulatory bottlenecks affecting exporters and importers. Engagements with Sri Lanka Customs, the Ministry of Finance, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, and international partners focused on export clearance delays, VAT refunds, BOI cargo releases, warehouse operations, and port congestion.



- Quarterly dialogue with Sri Lanka Customs to address export clearance delays, VAT refunds, BOI cargo releases, and administrative inefficiencies
- Engagement with the Sri Lanka Ports Authority on warehouse operations and weekend cargo clearance
- Industry-wide interventions on port congestion, including convening chambers and logistics associations and submitting an immediate action plan to the Ministry of Finance
- Advocacy for modernising the Customs Ordinance and implementing a Trade National Single Window
- Inputs to the Export Development Board ahead of Exporters' Forum discussions, highlighting bottlenecks and actionable solutions
- Consultations with the WTO, World Bank, ADB, and UNCTAD on trade facilitation reforms

# Policy Advocacy

## National Budget and Economic Reform

Budget advocacy remained a key intervention. The Ceylon Chamber presented its priority proposals for the National Budget 2026 directly to the President, emphasising timely implementation, stronger public sector efficiency, and targeted measures to restore investor confidence and support medium-term growth. The inclusion of 18 Chamber proposals in Budget 2026, reflected strong alignment with national reform priorities.

This builds on progress from the previous year, where 17 Chamber proposals were incorporated into the 2025 Budget, with 14 of these proposals showing moderate to significant progress. [Video.](#)  
[Ceylon Chamber Budget Proposals](#)



### Trade Promotion and Facilitation

- Establishment of the **Trade National Single Window**
- Introduction of a New **Tariff Policy**

### Investment Promotion and Facilitation

- Implementation of the PPP Framework
- **Single Window** approval process for large-scale investments
- Reduced investment threshold for enhanced **capital allowances**
- **Residence visa** scheme for foreign investors

### Land Management

- **National Land Use Policy Plan** and central digital land information system
- Improved efficiency in **land release** for investment

### Tourism Sector Development

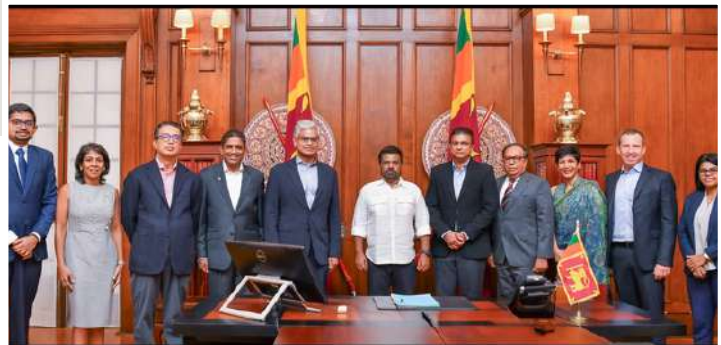
- Integrated **tourism marketing** and destination development
- Restructuring **tourism related government institutions**
- Resumption of **Bandaranaike International Airport** expansion
- **Connectivity projects** linked to tourism
- **Culture, arts, and heritage** promotion

### Public Sector Reforms

- Introduction of the **Public Commercial Business Management Act** to strengthen SOE governance

### Digital Drive

- **National Digital ID** to be issued in 2026
- Integrated government digital platforms through a **national data exchange**
- Issuing of **5G licenses**
- No service fees for **online payments** to government institutions



- Contributions to the National Budget 2026 with 18 proposals adopted across trade, investment, tourism, infrastructure, digital economy, sector enablers, and ease of doing business
- Engagement with IMF missions, World Bank, and other international development agencies, to share private sector perspectives on reform priorities for sustainable growth
- Submission to the Public Sector Reform Committee on reviewing government-owned non-commercial institutions



# Policy Advocacy

## International Trade, Tariffs, and Market Access

Shifting global trade conditions placed renewed focus on protecting Sri Lanka's export competitiveness. The Chamber played a central role in addressing external trade challenges, particularly U.S. tariff measures affecting Sri Lankan exports. As a member of the Presidential Committee on tariffs, the Chamber contributed private sector insights to government engagements with the U.S. Administration.



- Advocacy and submissions addressing US tariffs, non-tariff barriers, and efforts to secure reduced tariff rates for Sri Lankan exports
- Policy note on strengthening trade resilience in response to external tariff changes submitted to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs



## Fiscal Policy, Taxation, and Public Finance

Extensive engagement with the Ministry of Finance, Inland Revenue Department, Sri Lanka Customs and international tax authorities on fiscal and tax policy centred on improving administrative efficiency, and easing exporter cash-flow pressures. Key issues raised included the removal of SVAT, VAT refund delays, tax compliance challenges, and administrative inefficiencies affecting businesses.

- Engagements with the Inland Revenue Department on SVAT removal, withholding tax credits, deferred VAT for exporters, unresolved taxpayer appeals, interest and penalties, and early access for filing income tax returns
- Meeting with an Australian Taxation Office delegation to discuss tax compliance, audit capabilities, risk management, and taxpayer challenges
- Submissions to the Ministry of Finance on strengthening tax administration, modernising revenue collection mechanisms, and improving inter-agency coordination
- Input on Consumer Electricity Tariffs following discussions with the IMF

# Policy Advocacy

## Investment Climate, Public-Private Partnerships and Ease of Doing Business

To enhance Sri Lanka's investment environment, we maintained sustained dialogue with policymakers, investors, and development partners. This included detailed engagement on Public-Private Partnership reforms, review of the draft PPP Bill in collaboration with ADB and the National Agency for Public-Private Partnerships, and submissions aimed at improving transparency, bankability, and project delivery.

Discussions with multinational investors and foreign government representatives reinforced the importance of policy consistency, a transparent national tariff framework, streamlined approvals, and a more effective investment promotion role for the BOI.



- Engagements on PPPs, including draft PPP Bill Review with ADB and the National Agency for PPP, focusing on transparency, bankability and private sector participation
- 'Partnerships for Progress' event in collaboration with the High Commission of India and the Indo-Lanka Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- CEO Roundtable with Indian and Sri Lankan business leaders discussing trade facilitation, regulatory alignment, and cross-border investment
- Discussion with a multi-national company on Sri Lanka's investment landscape, policy consistency, and competitive practices

# Policy Advocacy

## Digital Economy, E-Commerce and Digital Trade

Prioritising reforms needed to modernise Sri Lanka's economy, the Chamber convened multi-stakeholder discussions on cross-border B2C e-commerce, digital payments, and trade digitalisation. Engagements with the President's Adviser on the Digital Economy, ICTA, logistics providers, and digital platforms highlighted regulatory gaps, manual clearance processes, and outdated thresholds limiting sector growth.

Reforms required to expand market access, particularly for SMEs, women entrepreneurs, and digital exporters were also a focal point.



- Multi-stakeholder policy roundtable, leading to a white paper on cross-border B2C e-commerce bottlenecks
- Meetings with the President's Adviser on Digital Economy and ICTA on enablers for digital trade and interational payment platforms
- Consultation with World Bank on digital trade readiness (B-Ready Index)
- Engagements on integrating digital solutions into trade processes and e-commerce faciliation

The Chamber continued to integrate private sector perspectives into Sri Lanka's climate and energy agenda. This included facilitating private sector input into NDC 3.0 consultations, engaging with the Ministry of Environment, FAO, GGGI, and UNDP, and contributing to discussions on climate adaptation, green finance, and Just Energy Transition frameworks. The Energy Committee also led advocacy on proposed amendments to the Electricity Act and consumer electricity tariffs, with feedback received that several recommendations are under consideration.

## Climate Policy, Energy Transition and Sustainability





# A year of action. A year of impact.

## 23 Submissions.

- Recommendations for the National Budget 2026 - 2
- Budget 2025 Tax Proposals and Administrative Recommendations
- Recommendations on the Draft PPP Bill
- Members' Issues for the 25th Exporters' Forum - 2
- Recommendations for the Review of the Economic Transformation Act
- Concerns and Non-Financial Trade Proposals for the EU-SL Working Group for Trade and Economic Cooperation
- Recommendations for the Customs Ordinance Review - 3
- Critical Issues Faced by Exporters in SVAT Returns and VAT Refunds
- Recommendations to Strengthen Tax Administration and Compliance
- Distortionary Impact of Fin-VAT on Holding Companies
- VAT Amendment Bill
- Strengthening the Regulatory and Recovery Framework for the Non-Bank Financial Institutions Sector
- Comments on the Draft Revised Foreign Exchange Regulations on Overseas Investments by Residents and Inward Investments by Non-Residents
- Strengthening Sri Lanka's Trade Resilience in Response to External Tariff Changes
- Strategic Plan for Digitalising the Logistics and Transport Sector
- VAT Compliance and SVAT Transition – Exporter Concerns and Strategic Follow-up Actions
- White Paper on Cross-Border B2C E-Commerce
- Feedback Report on the Consumer Tariff

# Market Access

## Bridging Borders – Expanding Trade

Facilitating access to international markets remained a key priority for the Chamber. The focus was on strengthening trade links, promoting investment, and helping Sri Lankan businesses compete globally. Through Business Councils, high-level delegations, sector-specific forums, and SME initiatives, the Chamber supported practical solutions for export growth, forged partnerships, and provided guidance to companies exploring new markets.

## Bilateral Trade and Investment Promotion

The Chamber's efforts to expand Sri Lanka's international trade and investment reach in 2025 focused on connecting businesses with strategic markets, facilitating sector-specific partnerships, and providing support for SMEs and larger enterprises. Activities ranged from hosting high-level inbound delegations to leading outbound missions, while promoting regulatory readiness, trade facilitation, and market intelligence.

### Inbound Delegations

- Australia
- Bangladesh - 2
- China
- India - 4
- Pakistan
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- Vietnam

### Outbound Delegations

- Cambodia
- Canada
- India
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Maldives - 2

- Agro-processing
- Digital
- FMCG
- Hospitality
- Investment
- IT
- Logistics
- Manufacturing
- Renewable energy
- Trade
- Wellness



## Trade Delegations

- Inbound and outbound trade delegations created platforms for private sector dialogue, investment promotion, and bilateral trade discussions
- Facilitated engagements with ministers, ambassadors, and chamber heads on trade agreements, multi-sector partnerships, and FDI opportunities
- Enabled sector-specific discussions and B2B meetings across multiple industry sectors
- Multi-sector B2B sessions, trade forums, and investment-focused meetings highlighted Sri Lankan expertise in multiple sectors, while promoting Sri Lanka as an attractive destination for FDI
- Engaged in high-level dialogues on market entry, regulatory frameworks, and bilateral trade opportunities, while promoting Sri Lanka's visibility and competitiveness abroad
- Supported SMEs and larger enterprises in identifying export and investment prospects, exploring partnerships, and gaining insights on global trade and funding mechanisms

## SME Support and Market Readiness

- Equipped small and medium enterprises with tools, knowledge, and networks to scale, compete internationally, and access new markets
- Facilitated linkages with buyers, service providers, and international partners to create practical opportunities for market expansion

## Sectoral Engagements

- Organised targeted initiatives across agriculture, energy, manufacturing, services, and technology to promote knowledge exchange, investment, and collaboration.

## Trade Facilitation Initiatives

- Supported smoother international trade and regulatory readiness for businesses, particularly SMEs, to increase competitiveness and efficiency







# Engagement

## Building Partnerships - Driving Opportunity

Throughout the year, we worked to connect Sri Lankan businesses with policymakers, diplomats, and international partners to strengthen trade, investment, and enterprise development. Through delegations, forums, and regional outreach, the Chamber facilitated collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and practical support for businesses, across the country and internationally.

Australia - Canada - China - EU - France - Jordan  
Kazakhstan - Maldives - New Zealand - Poland - Spain  
Vietnam - UAE - United States - Zimbabwe

Badulla - Batticaloa - Colombo - Gampaha - Jaffna - Kandy  
Kegalle - Kurunegala - Monaragala - Nuwara-Eliya  
Ratnapura - Trincomalee - Vavuniya

## Partnerships and Diplomatic Relations

We maintained an active and wide-ranging engagement programme in 2025, bringing together business leaders, policymakers, diplomats, and international partners to strengthen trade, investment, and enterprise development. Through high-level delegations, sectoral consultations, regional dialogues, and capacity-building initiatives, the Chamber facilitated knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and practical support for businesses across Sri Lanka.



# Engagement

- Hosted and engaged with foreign ambassadors and high-level delegations from several countries
- Networking events offering members opportunities to forge connections with diplomats, government officials, and industry personnel
- Met with delegations from international chambers of commerce to discuss opportunities for collaboration
- Series of diplomatic dialogues with commercial counsellors of foreign missions in Sri Lanka, to gain insights into policy and regulatory challenges faced by foreign investors
- Bilateral business councils hosted sector and industry-focused discussions on exports, tourism, investment, and industrial collaboration

## Business Resilience and Preparedness

Supporting businesses in managing risks and preparing for emergencies, the Chamber led programmes on business continuity, disaster preparedness, and early warning systems, providing practical training for SMEs, government agencies, and other stakeholders. These efforts not only strengthened operational resilience but also fostered collaborative networks that ensure long-term sustainability and recovery capacity.



- DEI (Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion) regional dialogues in Gampaha, Badulla, and other districts, engaging SMEs on inclusive practices under the GIZ-supported SCOPE programme



# Engagement

- Multi-district Business Continuity Management (BCM) and Multi-Hazard Mapping trainings, BCM simulation exercises and validation workshops to ensure practical application and readiness
- Conducted Sri Lanka's inaugural DEI Champion Awards under the GIZ SCOPE programme
- FLASH-Early Warning Innovation Challenge to identify tech-driven disaster alert solutions
- Training programmes on cost-saving business practices and resource efficiency for SMEs under GIZ-VTSL
- National-level Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes for SMEs, government agencies, and support institutions, including entrepreneurs with disabilities
- Developed best practices and training manuals for corporates in areas including humanitarian standards, sustainability, and business continuity. Trilingual manuals are available [here](#)

## Sectoral and Thematic Events

Discussions on key business and regulatory trends included sessions on climate finance, cross-border e-commerce, data protection, green finance, vocational education reforms, and trade regulations. By connecting experts, policymakers, and business leaders, the Chamber helped create actionable insights and solutions that advanced competitiveness and growth.



# Engagement

- Launched the Chamber's flagship Outlook 2025 Report
- Climate and sustainability: sessions on climate financing, carbon markets, and assessing climate impacts on insurance and export sectors
- Corporate resilience: workshops on financial fraud prevention, corporate ethics, and strategies to manage geopolitical risks
- Digital and regulatory readiness: discussions on cross-border e-commerce, SME data protection under the new law, and green finance opportunities
- Skills and market alignment: technical and vocational education consultations, greening initiatives, and seminars on trade regulations, foreign exchange, VAT reforms, and the GSP+ scheme

## Post Cyclone Ditwah Relief

With the generous support of our members, the Chamber contributed to national relief efforts following Cyclone Ditwah. As co-chair of the Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership we worked closely with the Disaster Management Centre to coordinate emergency response, helping ensure timely and effective assistance reached affected communities. We are deeply grateful to our members, and a large number of private donors, both individuals and companies, for supporting those in need during this critical time.



- Aitken Spence PLC
- BASF Lanka (Pvt) Ltd.
- CDK Philip Hospital
- Central Finance Company PLC
- Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts
- Devi Trading Company
- Eastern Merchants PLC
- Emar Pharma Pvt. Ltd.
- Finagle Lanka Pvt.Ltd.
- H Connect International Pvt. Ltd.
- Hemas Manufacturing (Pvt) Ltd.
- John Keells-Cinnamon Life
- John Keells Holdings
- John Keells Properties
- Lakdhanavi
- Lanka Shipping
- Oxford College of Business
- Perera & Sons
- Shanthi Textile
- Union Assurance PLC
- Union Bank of Colombo PLC
- Walkers Tours
- Wealthtrust Securities Ltd.



# Flagship Events

## Sri Lanka Economic and Investment Summit 2-3 December

700+ participants - 100+ foreign delegates - 17 countries

40+ Speakers - 650+ B2B Meetings

[Watch the highlights](#)



## National SME Forum





# Flagship Events

## Best Corporate Citizen Sustainability Awards



## 186th Annual General Meeting



## CMA Annual Report Awards Chambers of Commerce Gold



### Other Services

Appointment of Ceylon Chamber  
Surveyors and Assessors

Business Advisory Services

Business Information  
Publications

Certificates of Origin

GS1 Barcodes

Visa Facilitations Services