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Colombo:

UNICEF rings Market Opening bell to Celebrate 30 years of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)



***From left to Right:** CSE CEO Mr. Rajeeva Bandaranaike, UNICEF Deputy Representative Ms. Emma Brigham, UNICEF Communication Specialist Mr. Jeremy Sprigge, Acting United Nations Resident Coordinator Dr. Razia Pendse, UNICEF Representative Mr. Tim Sutton, UNICEF Child Protection Officer Mr. Mihilar Mohammad, UNICEF Finance Officer Ms. Ruthie Pelpola & UNICEF Health and Nutrition Officer Dr. Dhammica Rowel.*

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) today rang the Opening Bell to commence trading at the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and to mark World Children’s Day.

The UNCRC, known as the international law on childhood, came into existence on 20 November 1989, and has since become the most widely and rapidly ratified human rights treaty in history, signed by 194 countries including Sri Lanka. Further, in September 2019 Sri Lanka became the first country in South Asia to recommit to the UNCRC on behalf of its children.

For thirty years the UNCRC has helped to transform children's lives. In that time, Sri Lanka has achieved a great many milestones for its children, including lifting millions of families from extreme poverty, drastically reducing mortality rates for children under 5 and achieving almost universal primary school attendance for boys and girls. Yet with the drastic changes in childhood witnessed over the past three decades, effort is still required to ensure that every child has the best possible start in life and the ability to reach their full potential.

Today's celebrations follow UNICEF's Ara Wade; A Vote For Children Campaign, which aimed to raise awareness among leaders and the public of the 6 critical issues facing Sri Lanka's 6 million children that require urgent action.

UNICEF was represented by Representative for UNICEF in Sri Lanka Mr. Tim Sutton, Deputy Representative for UNICEF in Sri Lanka Mrs. Emma Brigham and other senior officials from UNICEF. The CSE was represented by CEO Mr. Rajeeva Bandaranaike and the Senior Management of the Exchange. The event was also attended by Acting United Nations Resident Coordinator Dr. Razia Pendse and invitees from the Sri Lankan business community.

CSE CEO Mr. Rajeeva Bandaranaike speaking at the event noted the importance of protecting the future generations of this country and commended the steps taken by UNICEF in voicing out the pressing issues prevalent and hindering the progress of children around the world. He also said that CSE is honoured to partner with UNICEF to mark the 30th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. "Children need support to fully realize their rights and unlock their potential and we thank UNICEF for using the CSE market opening ceremony as a platform to create awareness on how to build a more socially cohesive Sri Lanka for our Children." he added.

Also speaking at the event, **UNICEF Representative Mr. Tim Sutton** said "We are honored to be 'ringing the bell' for children with the Colombo Stock Exchange. Sri Lanka can be proud of its achievements for its children. But as we mark 30 years of the CRC and the positive impact it has had, we must look ahead and commit to urgent, concrete action to address the unmet needs of our children. Together we must end child malnutrition, improve education, end child poverty, ban physical punishment, build social cohesion and fight climate change. This requires political leadership, and the action of all citizens, as we all care about the future of Sri Lanka, which is its 6 million children today and future generations to come."



Mr. Tim Sutton Representative for UNICEF in Sri Lanka

About CSE

The Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) operates the only stock market in Sri Lanka and is responsible for providing a transparent and regulated environment where companies and investors can come together. The CSE is a company that is limited by guarantee established under the Laws of Sri Lanka. The CSE is licensed by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Sri Lanka (SEC) and is a mutual exchange consisting of 15 Members and 14 Trading Members. All Members and Trading Members are licensed by the SEC to operate as Stockbrokers. For more information, please visit: www.cse.lk.

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About UNICEF Sri Lanka

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere. For more information about UNICEF Sri Lanka, visit www.unicef.lk

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