



A
Legacy
of Excellence

THE STORY OF THE COLOMBO PLAN

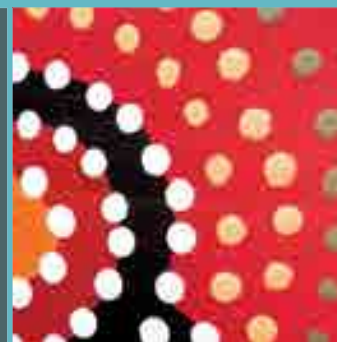
A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

THE STORY OF THE COLOMBO PLAN

1. CANADA One of the seven founder members in 1950. Contributed significantly as a donor until it withdrew from the organisation in November 1991.

2. UNITED STATES Joined the Colombo Plan in 1951 and remains a major donor.

3. UNITED KINGDOM One of the seven founder members in 1950. Contributed significantly as a donor until it withdrew from the organisation in November 1991.



4. SAUDI ARABIA Joined the Colombo Plan in 2012.

5. AFGHANISTAN Joined the Colombo Plan in 1963. The country was never colonised.



6. IRAN Joined the Colombo Plan in 1967. The country was never colonised.

7. PAKISTAN One of the seven founder members in 1950. Gained independence from the British on August 15, 1947.

8. INDIA One of the seven founder members in 1950. Gained independence from the British on August 15, 1947.



9. SRI LANKA One of the seven founder members in 1950. Gained independence from the British in 1948.

10. MALDIVES Joined the Colombo Plan in 1963. Gained independence from the British on July 26, 1965.

11. NEPAL Joined the Colombo Plan in 1952.



12. BHUTAN Joined the Colombo Plan in 1962. Was never colonised.

13. BANGLADESH Joined the Colombo Plan in 1972, after separating from Pakistan in 1971.



14. MYANMAR Joined the Colombo Plan in 1952, after gaining independence from the British in 1948.

15. CAMBODIA Joined the Colombo Plan in 1951, while under French rule. Gained independence in 1953. Withdrew from the organisation in 2004.

16. THAILAND Joined the Colombo Plan in 1954. Was never colonised.

17. LAO PDR Joined the Colombo Plan in 1951, while still under the French protectorate. Gained full independence in 1954.

18. VIETNAM Joined the Colombo Plan in 1951, after gaining independence from the French on September 2, 1945. Following reunification of the country in 1975, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam rejoined the Colombo Plan in 2004.

19. THE PHILIPPINES Gained independence from the United States on July 4, 1946. Joined the Colombo Plan in 1954.

20. MALAYSIA Gained independence from the British on August 31, 1957, and became a Colombo Plan member two months later, in October 1957.

21. SINGAPORE Gained independence from the British in 1963, when it became part of Malaysia. On August 9, 1965, Singapore formed an independent republic. Became a Colombo Plan member as a sovereign nation in 1966.



22. BRUNEI Joined the Colombo Plan in 2008. Gained full independence from the British in 1984.

23. INDONESIA Joined the Colombo Plan in 1953. Gained independence from the Dutch in 1949.

24. PAPUA NEW GUINEA Joined the Colombo Plan in 1973. Gained independence from Australia in 1975.

25. FIJI Joined the Colombo Plan in 1972. Gained independence from the British in 1970.



The Colombo Plan: A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK



27. NEW ZEALAND
One of the seven founder members in 1950. Became a donor country from the beginning.



29. REPUBLIC OF KOREA
Joined the Colombo Plan in 1962. Gained independence from Japan in 1945.

26. AUSTRALIA One of the seven founder members in 1950. Became a donor country from the beginning.



28. MONGOLIA Joined the Colombo Plan in 2004. Gained independence from China in 1921.



30. JAPAN The Colombo Plan provided Japan with its first ODA window when it joined the organisation on October 6, 1954. It has continued to be a significant contributor.





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PHOTO OF SRI LANKAN TEXTILE BY CHEN HUEN PHUET

| Foreword |

THE COLOMBO CONNECTION

Designing Pathways to Prosperity



I am pleased to pen a few words in this book commemorating the success of the Colombo Plan. It is a great honour to have played host nation to the idea of the Colombo Plan when it was aired in 1950, and then to have housed its Bureau, and later the Secretariat, from 1951.

The Colombo Plan was born in a world ravaged by the Second World War. Yet, the founding fathers carved a design which slowly led to regional prosperity. They erased all colonial notions to establish for the first time in history a multinational aid programme that placed donor and recipient nations side by side, as partners in the ensuing saga of development.

Sri Lanka was home to the Colombo Plan Secretariat for six decades. We have seen the launch of projects and programmes that have changed the socio-economic destinies of countries within the Asia-Pacific region.

In Sri Lanka, the Colombo Plan was responsible for a number of major infrastructure projects, such as the Colombo International Airport, Colombo Port, Kelaniya Bridge, the Gal Oya project, Laxapana Hydro Scheme, Colombo Thermal Power Plant and Victoria and Randenigala reservoirs to name a few, while contributing to develop our human capital.

I commend its current emphasis on service to the education sector especially the most lasting aspect of long-term scholarships for postgraduate studies as well as its dedication to assist member states to develop capacities in key areas of public administration, private sector development and combating the menace of drugs.

With the defeat of terrorism, new opportunities are opened up in Sri Lanka for nation building with the cooperation of the member states of the Colombo Plan.

I hope the member states will continue to assist governments in establishing equality, justice and prosperity for all and wish that many more pages of this book will be written in years to come adding to its already rich history.

H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa
President of Sri Lanka



| Message |

TIES THAT BIND

Partnering for Progress



I am honoured and privileged to serve as the 6th Secretary General of the Colombo Plan Secretariat. I have accepted this job with much humility and deep gratitude to all those who have supported and bestowed their confidence in me.

The Colombo Plan has a track record of being one of the oldest inter-governmental organisations instituted in 1951 by the far-sighted Commonwealth leaders. This renowned international office has been administered and nurtured by a series of well-known professionals who served as Secretaries General. They were the best people from the Member States. Therefore, living up to the expectations of this position will not be easy.

However, as the first Bhutanese to head this multilateral organisation I am prepared to do my best. I am committed to work hard with full dedication. At the same time I intend to pursue matters with open-mindedness and with due respect to all the Member States.

My foremost vision for the Colombo Plan is for it to become a vibrant international organisation and my mission for this premier organisation is to vigorously enhance the networking and collaboration among all Member States by consciously promoting dialogue and discussion. The Colombo Plan Secretariat should strengthen contact with all national focal points to effectively reach out to the Member States.

Efforts will be made to share human and technical resources and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills to promote all programmes at national, regional and international levels. The Colombo Plan Secretariat is prepared to serve as an inter-governmental forum for decision making through consensus building for enhanced peace, harmony and friendship among all Member States. In this way we can work towards a common goal to reach the unreachable.

In the next four years I am confident that the Colombo Plan will become a viable multilateral organisation with increased number of member states committed to living in a global community for a more harmonious life.

Kinley Dorji
Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan



PHOTO OF FIJIAN SCHOOL GIRL BY RAPHAEL BICK

An aerial photograph of the ancient city of Bagan in Myanmar, showing numerous golden stupas and pagodas rising from a dense forest. The scene is captured during the golden hour, with warm sunlight illuminating the structures. The text 'Interlacing' is prominently displayed in a large, white, serif font across the center of the image. Below it, the subtitle 'Development for Peace, Harmony and Mutual Help' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Interlacing

Development for Peace, Harmony
and Mutual Help



FOUNDING FATHERS...

This picture of (from left) Lester Pearson, Sir Percy Spender, Ghulam Mohamed, Jawaharlal Nehru, D.S. Senanayake, Ernest Bevin, J.R. Jayewardene (second row) and Frederick Doidge has become synonymous with the Colombo Plan. It represents the conviviality and cohesiveness that were to distinguish the organisation.





“The Senate Building on 9 January, 1950, was shimmering white in the heat of a tropical morning when the Foreign Ministers’ Conference opened. The people of Ceylon were, however, completely unaware (as indeed were the delegates themselves) that from this conference would emerge the beginning of something which was to have an important impact on their lives.” SIR PERCY SPENDER

1950 Five years after the end of World War II, in which 60 million lives were claimed, cities destroyed and people ravaged. The world, in the words of Australian Minister for External Affairs, Sir Percy Spender, “was guardedly enjoying the uneasy peace... when the Foreign Ministers of the British Commonwealth met at Colombo” to discuss international affairs. It was the first time that these heads of state, representing Australia, Canada, Ceylon, India, New Zealand, Pakistan and the United Kingdom, were meeting in an Asian country. It was also the first time that a ‘plan’ that would significantly change the course of development of the South was mooted.

This was the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia. It was, strictly speaking, not a plan. There was no single, integrated plan for the entire region, nor was there a master plan to which individual national plans contributed or were expected to conform. Instead, the Colombo Plan, as it is commonly abbreviated, was, and continues to be, an aggregate of bilateral arrangements involving foreign aid and technical assistance for the development of Asia and the Pacific.

There were two main authors to the Colombo Plan. J.R. Jayewardene, then Finance Minister of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), proposed that joint financial assistance be provided to the region. Sir Percy Spender, meanwhile, suggested that the developed Commonwealth countries provide technical assistance to the region's developing nations. Their proposals were combined and, as in all future decisions taken by the Colombo Plan, there was unanimous agreement on both financial and technical aid from the more developed to the lesser developed countries. The Colombo Plan consisted of two main initiatives: the Capital Development Programme, which funded projects in agriculture, power, infrastructure and communication; and the Technical Cooperation Scheme, providing equipment, supply of technical experts, scholarships to students for academic studies and technical training for government staff.

The concept of foreign aid to assist in the development of newly independent countries was by no means new. It had already been successfully implemented by the Marshall Plan, which ran for four years from 1948, under which the United States contributed some US\$13 billion to the recovery of Western Europe. What was new in the Colombo Plan was the spirit in which it was formed, and which continues today – a spirit that recognises the equality of all peoples and the right of all nations to move together along the march of development.

Although Asia did not suffer the same level of casualty as did Europe during the war, most Asian countries were by any standard under-developed. Further, many had for years been governed by colonial rulers, which compounded the various setbacks experienced during World War II. For these nations, new-found independence was both a cause of celebration and concern.

Having been ruled for so long, how was a country to rebuild, or indeed build from scratch, its own political, economic, judicial, educational and health systems?

The Colombo Plan helped immensely. Not by imposing the will of the developed countries, but instead by hearing from the Asian nations what their needs were, and then working towards providing solutions. As former Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, said at the launch of the 40th Consultative Committee Meeting of the Colombo Plan in November 2006, the word ‘altruism’ best describes the spirit of the Colombo Plan. “It continues to touch and improve the lives of millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region.”



FIRST SPEECH...
D.S. Senanayake (standing), then President of Sri Lanka, presiding over the deliberations in the Senate Building, Colombo, 1950.



LONDON MEETING...

At the Second Consultative Committee Meeting in London, in September 1950, a draft constitution for a Council of Technical Cooperation was studied and recommended to member governments for adoption.

MIDDLE

Robert Wade, Head of the Eastern Political Division of the New Zealand Department of External Affairs, who very cleverly gave the Colombo Plan its name.

RIGHT

Hugh Gaitskell, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer of Britain, was struck by the mixed lineage of the Colombo Plan, having roots as it does in Colombo, Sydney and London.



From a group of seven Commonwealth nations – Australia, Canada, Ceylon, India, New Zealand, Pakistan and the United Kingdom – the Colombo Plan very quickly expanded. At the first meeting of the Consultative Committee, in Sydney, May 1950, the Colombo Plan agreed that it should not confine itself to Commonwealth countries, but rather should address the development issues and challenges faced by all countries in South and Southeast Asia. It also considered the possibility of cooperating with non-Commonwealth countries and agencies as donors.

Thus, invitations were extended to Burma (now Myanmar), Indonesia, the Associated States of Indo-China (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam) and Thailand, all of which were in need of assistance. These countries, along with the initial members, were asked to submit plans for six-year development programmes. The Committee, meanwhile, agreed to provide financial assistance of up to £8 million over three years beginning July 1, 1950. This helped put in place an initial framework from which the Colombo Plan would eventually expand.

At the Second Consultative Committee Meeting held in London in September 1950, the Committee took matters ahead with great speed. The proposed six-year development plans submitted by developing

countries were closely examined and a report on the objectives, plans and aims of the group was drafted. A draft constitution for a Council of Technical Cooperation was studied and recommended to governments for adoption.

It was also at this meeting that the 'plan' officially got its name. Until then, there was debate as to whether it should be known as the Spender Plan or the Jayewardene Plan. In Australia, it was already being referred to as the Spender Plan by government agencies and the media. The New Zealand representative to the London meeting, Robert Hunter Wade, diplomatically resolved the issue. He suggested 'The Colombo Plan', since the idea was conceived in Colombo, Ceylon. It was a brilliant suggestion, and endorsed by all.

The inter-continental nature of the Colombo Plan's origins led Hugh Gaitskell, who was then Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, to note: "The Colombo Plan was conceived in Colombo, nurtured in Australia and born in London."

The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Development in South and Southeast Asia began operations on July 1, 1951. The United States joined the grouping as its

first non-Commonwealth donor member in 1951, and continues to be one of the most active donor countries. Of the two other subsequent principal donors, Japan was invited to join the Colombo Plan in 1954, and the Republic of Korea in 1962. In December 1977, a new Constitution was adopted, and the official name of the initiative was changed to 'The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific'. This was to reflect the expanded geographical composition of its enhanced membership and the scope of its activities. By this time, there were 24 members. Today, the Colombo Plan is an international organisation encompassing 26 countries.

Perhaps nowhere else in history can we find a better example of the resolve of young nations for self-help and the spirit of unparalleled generosity which motivated the developed countries to extend that hand of help. As Sir Percy Spender noted more than 20 years after the Colombo Plan was established: "From relatively small beginnings, the (Colombo) Plan has become one of history's finest programmes in international cooperation."

Certainly, a new pattern for development had been crafted, which would continue to influence North-South and South-South relationships for decades to come.

The Colombo Plan Monument

The Colombo Plan Monument was erected in 1952 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in conjunction with the Colombo Plan Exhibition that year, which was attended by all 16 member countries: Australia, Canada, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaya, the Maldives, North Borneo, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sarawak, Singapore, the United Kingdom, the United States and Vietnam. Reflecting the diversity of the Colombo Plan's membership, the two messages on the Monument are written in seven languages: Tamil, Pali, Hindi, Vietnamese, Bahasa Indonesia, English and Sinhala. Behind the Monument is Colombo's Town Hall.

Chronology of Events

January 1950

Colombo, Ceylon

Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers meet to discuss foreign affairs policy. J. R. Jayewardene proposes that financial aid be provided to the region. The Australian delegation, led by Sir Percy Spender, presents a memorandum titled *Economic Policy in South and South-East Asia*. These proposals are combined into one resolution called The Colombo Plan, and a Consultative Committee is established to consider the resolution.

May 1950

Sydney, Australia

At the First Consultative Committee Meeting, Asian countries are asked to prepare six-year development programmes; and the Committee agrees to provide up to £8 million over three years beginning July 1, 1950. Burma, Indonesia, Indo-China and Thailand are also invited to submit their six-year development programmes.

September 1950

London, Britain

The Second Consultative Committee Meeting is held and the six-year programmes of member countries reviewed. A draft constitution for a Council of Technical Cooperation is recommended to governments for adoption.

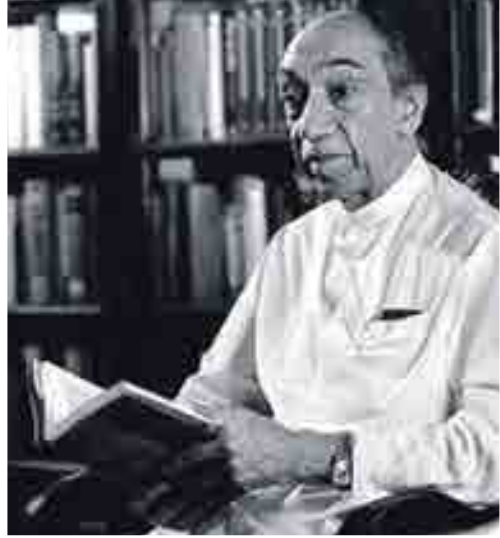
July 1, 1951

Colombo, Ceylon

The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Development in South and Southeast Asia is established, and is called the Colombo Plan for short.



Junius Richard Jayewardene, better known as J.R. in Sri Lanka, played a part in founding the United National Party in 1946. He was elected Finance Minister in the country's first post-independence Cabinet in 1947. In 1950, along with Sir Percy Spender, he mooted the idea of the Colombo Plan. A man noted for his intelligence, Jayewardene recognised the potential of tourism to earn foreign exchange and create mass employment, leading him to promote tourism as Minister of State in the 1960s. In 1977, Jayewardene won a sweeping electoral victory to become Prime Minister, upon which he opened up the Sri Lankan economy. He also created the post of Executive President, which he occupied from 1978 till 1989.



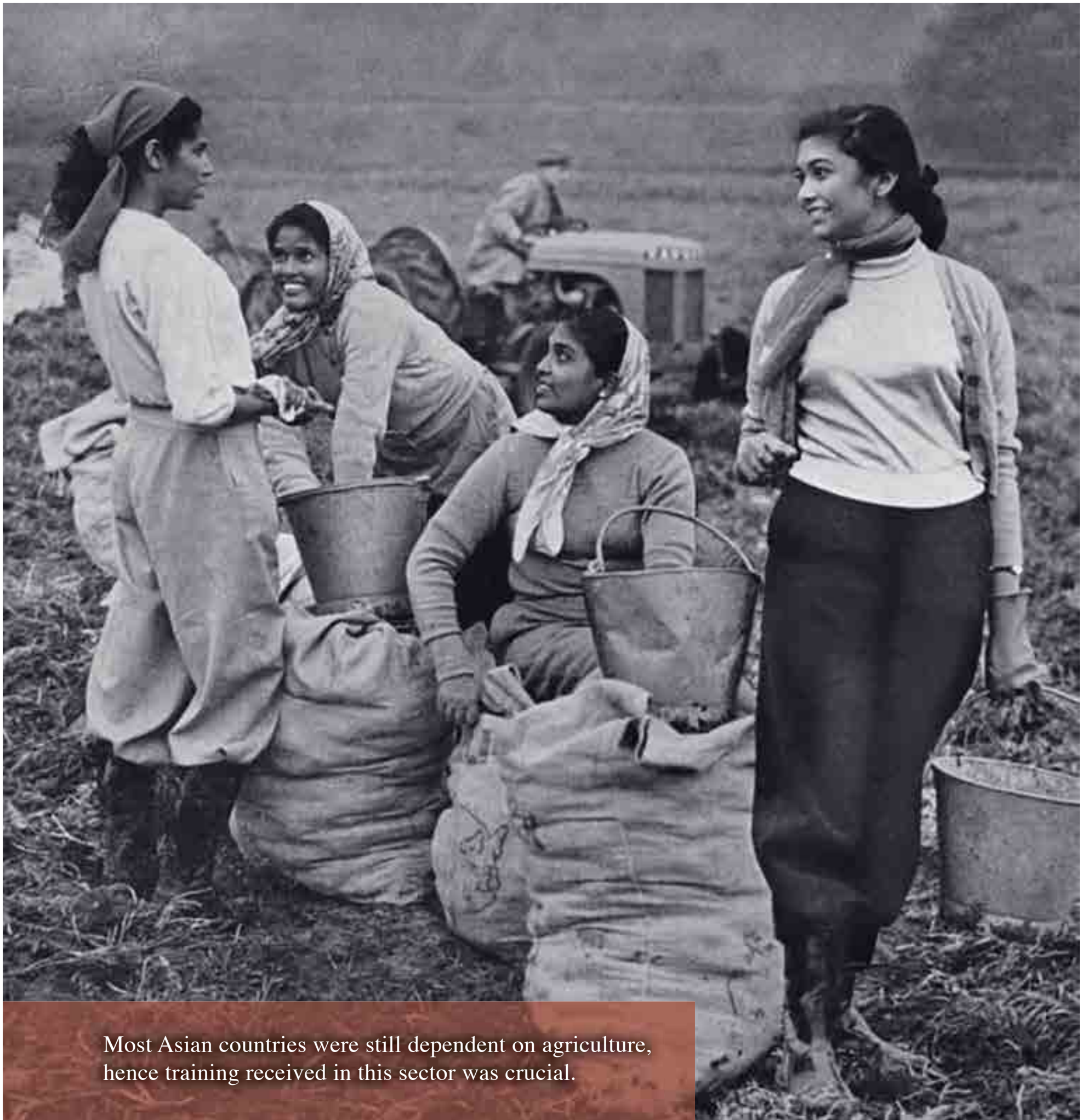
Other than the Colombo Plan, among his greatest legacies was supporting Japan's cause in reentering the international community at the San Francisco Conference in 1951. In welcoming Jayewardene and his wife to the White House on June 18, 1984, President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, recalled the memorable occasion, saying: "As the representative of Sri Lanka, you spoke out for the principle of freedom for all people, including the Japanese. You quoted Buddha, the great teacher, and said that 'hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love'."

Moulding the World According to Our Hearts' Desire

At the Second Consultative Committee Meeting, held in London in September 1950, **J. R. Jayewardene** clarified his vision for The Colombo Plan, as follows:

"This conference takes us a step beyond the progress we made at Colombo. We made it clear there, that the basis of aid was to be mutual, that it would be cooperative and not competitive, and that it would be given only when asked for and not forced upon any unwilling party. While stressing these principles once again, I wish to add that there is no question whatsoever of interference with the independence and the internal affairs of those who seek and obtain aid.

The conception that we in the Commonwealth have today with the accession of India, Pakistan and Ceylon to it, is a world of diverse nationalities each developing its own individuality and while preserving its freedom, contributing its quota of culture to make a composite and harmonious federation of mankind. Let us therefore, representatives of free and democratic peoples, devote our energies to the welfare of humanity that needs our aid, with ill-will towards none, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but marching straight on to mould the world according to our hearts' desire."



Most Asian countries were still dependent on agriculture, hence training received in this sector was crucial.





Sir Percy Spender worked tirelessly to pave the way towards improving international relations, fuelled by an unshakeable belief “in a world where men may dwell in peace, in a world where compassion and understanding take the place of hatred, rancour and hostility”. His greatest influence on Australian politics occurred while he was Minister for External Affairs and Minister for External Territories from 1949-1951. During this period, he led the Australian delegation to the Commonwealth Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, where he was instrumental in the development of the Colombo Plan, which for a while was known in Australia as the Spender Plan. He also led Australia to the Fifth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, of which he was the Vice-President. Among his other notable achievements were the roles he played in the signing of the ANZUS Pact and the Japanese Peace Treaty in 1951. He was the first Australian appointed to the International Court of Justice in the Hague (1958-1964) and was the Court’s President from 1964 to 1967. Spender was internationally well respected, and received many awards, including the Grande Ufficiale Order of Merit by the Republic of Italy in 1976.

A Plan for Asians, by Asians

In his memoir, *Exercises in Diplomacy*, **Sir Percy Spender**, former Minister for External Affairs, Australia, and a co-founder of the Colombo Plan writes:

“The world was guardedly enjoying the uneasy peace that followed World War II when the Foreign Ministers of the British Commonwealth met at Colombo.

The war, with its aftermath, had left some sorry bequests to humanity, fortunately accompanied by tremendous technological achievements that had enriched and promised still further to enrich the world. In vast areas, however, human beings still bent their shoulders to the primitive plough and the river and barge backbreaking physical toil, as in countless thousands they still do. Diseases of many kinds and in many forms had been conquered by the scientists, yet some raged unchecked where poverty or ignorance stood in the path of

progress. New methods and discoveries had opened the way to great production advances in agriculture and manufacture, yet many millions could earn barely sufficient to keep life in their bodies.

It was in this atmosphere of inviting vision and frustrating fact that the representatives of the United Kingdom, Ceylon, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Australia – the Asian countries sitting with the members of the old Commonwealth on a basis of complete equality – met to discuss their mutual problems and those besetting the world. It was a memorable occasion.

Never before had any city in Asia been host to a Commonwealth meeting on foreign affairs. Colombo was the first. Its selection and the predominantly Asian tone of the subjects which came under discussion were a tacit recognition of a shift, which, though evident then, in later years became increasingly pronounced, of the centre of gravity of international matters towards the Middle East and Asia.

When the Commonwealth Prime Ministers met in London in October 1948, it was contemplated that, apart from the meetings of the Prime Ministers, other Commonwealth meetings should be held at ministerial level as occasion required, on such subjects as foreign policy and economic affairs. There had been the Canberra meeting of 1947 on Japanese peace treaty terms and another, of its Finance Ministers in London in

in the form of a concise working paper of a scheme to seek to resolve this problem, the planning of means to put it quickly into effect, and this was critical to obtaining acceptance of it. This was not, as I found, an altogether easy task.

My departmental officers and I used the long hours of our flight from Australia (for these were the days before jet travel precipitated persons from one continent to another) on the first draft of a memorandum which subsequently, in its final form, was presented by me to the Conference and ultimately won its support.

The proposals which this draft put forward were by no means the product of hurried thinking. Asia and its problems were not unknown to me. Long before the war had ended, I had been deeply concerned with

“Long before the war had ended, I had been deeply concerned with the inevitable post-war problems that would beset this vast area with its ever-increasing population pressures and disturbed by the failure and reluctance on the part of more fortunate nations to assist in resolving these problems in a manner which held out any real hope for people whose lives had encouraged them to entertain little expectation of betterment of their lot.”

1949. The Conference at Colombo, the third of such meetings, was however, the first of the meetings which dealt with problems of foreign affairs in general. As the initial paragraph of the final communiqué of this Conference stated, it proved especially appropriate that a meeting at this time for the discussion of foreign affairs should be held in Colombo; for although world problems are indivisible, Asia is at the moment the main focus of interest and the area of special urgency.

There was, perhaps, nothing singularly new about the ideas inherent in the Colombo Plan. There had been a number of people in the United Nations, in Europe, the USA, Asia and elsewhere who had talked of the need for economic aid to South and Southeast Asia, but little had been done. What certainly was new was an examination of the problem presented by this need, the presentation

the inevitable post-war problems that would beset this vast area with its ever-increasing population pressures and disturbed by the failure and reluctance on the part of more fortunate nations to assist in resolving these problems in a manner which held out any real hope for people whose lives had encouraged them to entertain little expectation of betterment of their lot.”

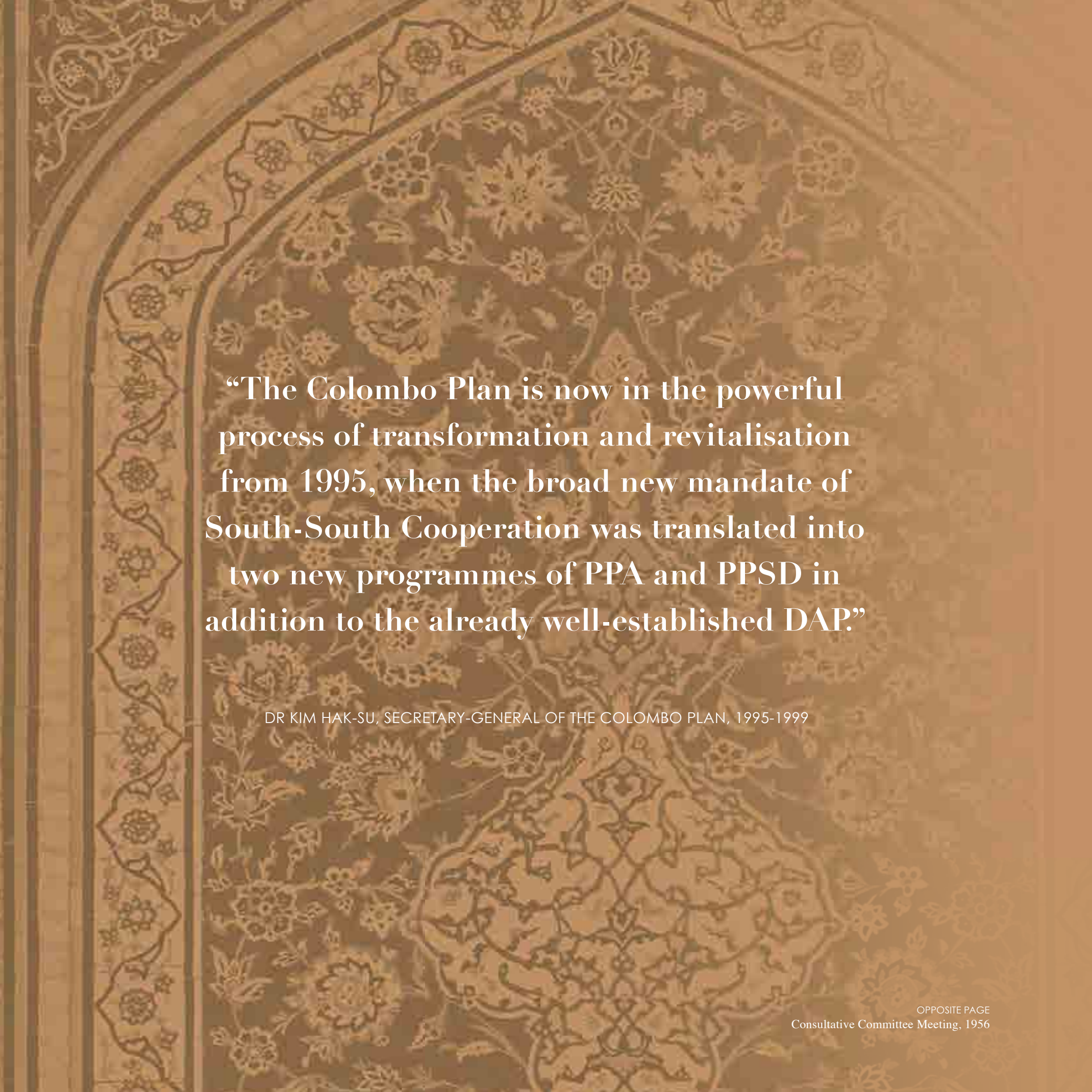






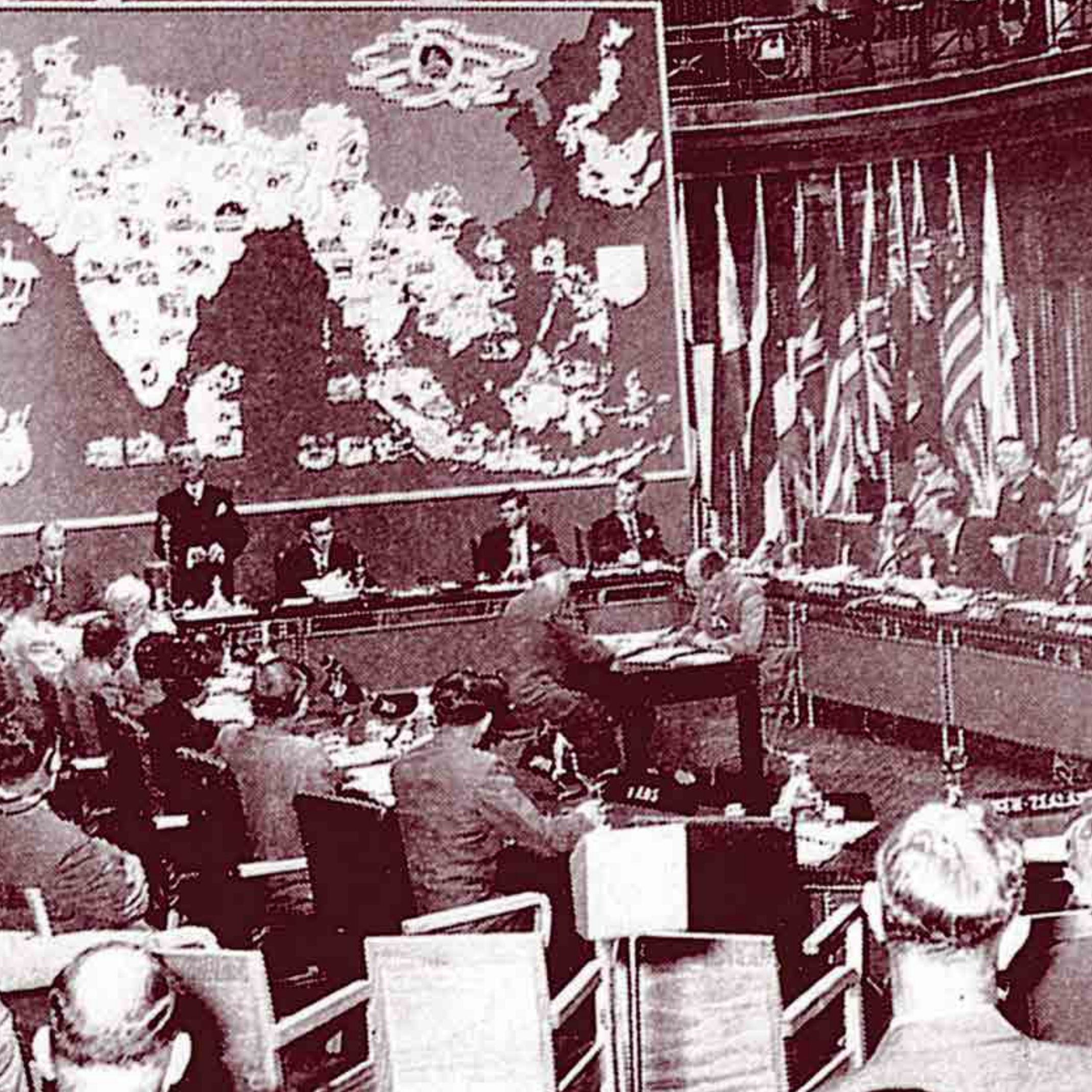
Fashioning

a Framework for Meaningful Collaboration



“The Colombo Plan is now in the powerful process of transformation and revitalisation from 1995, when the broad new mandate of South-South Cooperation was translated into two new programmes of PPA and PPSD in addition to the already well-established DAP.”

DR KIM HAK-SU, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE COLOMBO PLAN, 1995-1999





ABOVE
Colombo Plan Directors J.K. Thompson, from the United Kingdom (July 1959 – December 1961); R.H. Wade, from New Zealand (August 1957 – July 1959); and Sir Geoffrey Wilson from the United Kingdom (August 1951 – September 1953) with Tilak E. Gooneratne from Sri Lanka, who was President of the Colombo Plan Council from February 1964 – May 1965.



RIGHT
I. Katagami and M. Ohto representing Japan at the first meeting of officials attending the 16th meeting of the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee in London, 1964.

Most initiatives are swayed by a single overpowering vision, but the Colombo Plan is unique. It was stitched together by a group of people working in harmonious collaboration based on a shared motto of 'Planning Prosperity Together'. Even today, building relationships remains fundamental to the success of these collaborations. The structure of the Colombo Plan, as an organisation, makes it a special entity, mirroring closely the spirit of the United Nations, a lean bureaucracy and flat organisational structure.

Effective collaborations within the Colombo Plan network are characterised by building and sustaining 'win-win-win' relationships between donors, recipients and stakeholders – the kind of relationships where expectations are made clear through a series of formal and informal dialogue sessions. Former Secretary-General Dato' Patricia Chia saw her role as setting clear parameters for debate and discussion and ensuring all member countries understood the idea of working for mutual benefit and the common good. To observe the proceedings of the Colombo Plan Council, which meets every quarter, is to understand the process of joint decision-making that leads to mutually beneficial outcomes.

Many of the decisions of the Colombo Plan are made by the Council, which comprises resident heads of mission of member countries in Colombo and representatives of other member countries. Long-term strategies, meanwhile, are conceived and developed at the Consultative Committee Meetings held biennially. "No resolutions are voted upon; decisions are arrived at by consensus among member countries," says Chia, who was Colombo Plan's first female Asian Secretary-General.

"Pragmatically speaking, issues often get clouded and the threads that hold relationships become stretched. But, for me, these are the defining moments in the relationship among member countries. It helps the Colombo Plan move forward in identifying tasks, roles, responsibilities and work plans and, ultimately, reaching the desired outcomes for all," she says.



LEFT
Arthur Bottomley, Britain's Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, receiving Ministers and other representatives of the Colombo Plan member governments participating at the 16th Consultative Committee Meeting at a reception in their honour in St James' Palace, London, 1964.

ABOVE
Ministers from the Colombo Plan member countries meeting at the Consultative Committee Meeting in Pakistan, 1966.

The history of the Colombo Plan has not always been like running stitches; it has had its fair share of cross stitches, knots and broken threads. The same questions of priorities keep cropping up when national aspirations and goals seem to be in conflict with what some regard as the more esoteric goals of the Colombo Plan. "In their pressing need for economic growth and social development, member countries are often caught in the collaborate-or-compete debate," explains Chia. There is no doubt that this struggle is likely to continue until countries within the Colombo Plan caucus feel that equity and justice have been achieved by all. This, then, is the moral basis for fashioning a framework for the Colombo Plan.

Vice-President of the Colombo Plan International Society (CPIS) and Colombo Plan scholar, D.S.D.R Senanayake, President's Counsel, was a young idealist when the Colombo Plan was born. The idea of mutual help is best described by the way the first meeting in Colombo in January 1950 panned out. Senanayake, a former judge, recalls: "We were all at the Senate Building to try and catch a glimpse of the great political and social luminaries gathered together in Colombo as they gave life to an inspired idea no less spectacular than the great Marshall Plan." He reminisces that he stood in awe as he watched these events unfold. After all, the Colombo Plan was a grand design to mend economies in the Asia-Pacific tattered and torn by World War II.

Senanayake recounts the appearance of the 'weighty' Anuerin (Nye) Bevan, Minister of Health in British Prime Minister Clement Attlee's Government (1945-51), arguably Labour Party's most successful government. Bevan was credited with helping Attlee decisively shape post-war Britain, establishing policies for full employment and the welfare state. He played a big part in the United Kingdom's morphing from the British Empire to a Commonwealth.





“He had poor lungs, no doubt from working in the coal mines from the age of 14, and eventually died of cancer in 1960,” says Senanayake. “He was a big man and was carried in a chair up the four flights of stairs of the Senate Building every day so he could be involved in every session of that first Commonwealth meeting held in an Asian venue.” Bevan brought to the Colombo Plan the idea of a world committed to the welfare of all. This spirit of every voice counting has helped shape the organisation ever since.

“It is the Colombo Plan way to be inclusive. It is the Colombo Plan way to care. It is the Colombo Plan way for each member country to remain first among equals,” adds Chia. These are the very same values she gained as a Fulbright scholar in the American University, Washington D.C.

Several enabling mechanisms have been developed to help strengthen this framework of collaboration. These are delivered on the back of strong values based on good governance, mutual respect, shared knowledge, shared technology and a shared vision.

Member countries contribute equally towards the administrative costs of running the Colombo Plan Secretariat. Programme activities are funded by voluntary contributions from developed member and non-member countries. Contributions are also received from international and regional organisations as well as donor agencies that see in the Colombo Plan a chance to deliver equity and social welfare. Developing member countries and their public and private sector institutions which participate in programme activities are encouraged to meet local costs when training programmes are held in their countries.

Human resources training and development, institution building, infrastructure development, rural electrification and clean water supply were broad areas for cooperation and self-help. These different programmes are scrutinised on an on-going basis at Council and Consultative Committee levels.

At the 23rd Consultative Committee Meeting in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1973, the Colombo Plan took an important and strategic step towards making



LEFT
British Columbia's Premier W. A. C. Bennett posing with Colombo Plan Secretary-General J. G. Hadwen and delegates after opening the Officials' Week of the Colombo Plan Conference held in Victoria, Canada, 1969.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Vice-President of the Colombo Plan International Society, D.S.D.R. Senanayake, President's Counsel, was an impressionable youth when the heads of Commonwealth – whom he describes as 'great political and social luminaries' – gathered at the Senate Building in Colombo to discuss the future of the region.

itself even more relevant. In response to the increasing problem of drug abuse, a comprehensive programme that addressed this menace was established: The Drug Advisory Programme (DAP). The obvious need for this programme to be strengthened was recognised at the 36th Consultative Committee Meeting in Colombo in 1996.

1973 was also the year in which the Colombo Plan Staff College for Technical Education (CPSC) was established in Singapore. It had a clear mandate to address the quality and standards of technical education by focusing on 'training of trainers' type programmes for teachers, educators and facilitators. The CPSC provides the setting for the sharing of success stories which offers opportunities for new educational models to be developed. Since February 1987, the CPSC has been hosted by the Government of the Philippines in Manila.

The 1980s and 1990s was a period of disenchantment among some and a time of rationalisation for other members within the economic and social caucus. "Member countries began to review their role and function within the Colombo Plan, with a view of assessing their efficacy," says Chia.

It was also a time when Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) were making a huge impact on the way the world conducted its business. Suddenly, there were opportunities for individual countries to leapfrog years of under-development. New groupings emerged, such as the Asian Tigers and the Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs), which strove to become economic equals to the most affluent in the world. Basic communication tools such as mobile phones empowered the underprivileged and marginalised. The knowledge and networking capabilities of interactive and convergent technologies such as the Internet presented further opportunities for economic growth and social development by increasing access to education and health services and enhancing the decision-making powers of the poor the world over.

Chia believes the ICTs help redress the 'have and have not' equation. Within the ICT scenario, it is possible to see how competition plus collaboration equals innovation. However, the question is how competition and collaboration led to innovative solutions for the Colombo Plan Bureau in 1994.





TOP LEFT

A new Colombo Plan flag was unfurled by New Zealand Prime Minister Sir Keith Holyoake in Parliament Buildings, Wellington, to mark the 20th anniversary of the Colombo Plan, in 1971.

TOP RIGHT

It was at the CCM in Wellington in 1973 that member countries agreed to setting up the Drug Advisory Programme. At the time, M. P. Chapman, Deputy Director of the External Aid Division of New Zealand (extreme left), was Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee.

ABOVE

Regional and global organisations are invited to sit in as observers at the Consultative Committee Meetings. This contingent of observers was present at the 21st CCM held in Manila, the Philippines, in 1971.

Chia answers this prickly question by referring to past developments within the Colombo Plan. "Financial assistance received by the Colombo Plan decreased dramatically in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Countries increasingly shifted towards engagement in bilateral relationships. Donors and beneficiaries felt more in control in mutually exclusive relationships," she explains. "Specialised global aid agencies that came into existence also undermined the flow of funding to the Colombo Plan."

This decrease in funding necessitated much soul searching. While a few member countries began to believe the Colombo Plan had served its purpose, others started strategising to come up with tacit solutions. A fresh strategy was clearly outlined in 1994 by the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) appointed by the Colombo Plan to act as its think tank. It recommended that the Colombo Plan focus on a few permanent and regular training programmes on subjects of "foremost and common relevance" while retaining the emphasis for collaboration. It was articulated during these sessions of the EPG that developing countries should focus on

project-based training that could address social and economic challenges within member countries through South-South cooperation.

These recommendations were accepted by the Consultative Committee Meeting in Seoul that same year. Out of the Seoul CCM came a clear structural change within the Colombo Plan that was demarcated along four thematic focus areas: Public Administration, Private Sector Development, South-South Technical Cooperation and the Drug Advisory Programme. The Colombo Plan Bureau was restructured to reflect this new energised mission and, thus, became the Colombo Plan Secretariat. Its first Secretary-General was dispatched from Seoul, Dr Kim Hak-Su, who brought with him a pledge from Korea of US\$500,000 for the Colombo Plan.

In keeping up with the times, the Colombo Plan Secretariat became fully ICT-enabled in 2006. Again, the Government of Korea played a leading role, this time by offering a generous grant through the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to upgrade the Secretariat's IT system. At the same time, the Colombo Plan Secretariat began to place greater emphasis on the inculcation of IT knowledge through its training programmes.

In the last six decades, countries of the Asia-Pacific have astounded the world with extraordinary growth rates. Although still considerably poorer, the energy and pace at which some of these economies have transformed from agrarian societies into industrial powerhouses have been unprecedented.



LEFT
Opening of the 24th Colombo Plan Ministerial Conference at the Shangri-la Hotel by the then Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, 1974.

MIDDLE
Bill Hayden, then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, officially opening the 31st Consultative Committee Meeting in Sydney in 1986.

RIGHT
Dr Kim Hak-Su, the first Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan Secretariat, was instrumental in its revitalisation.

Their growth rates began to outstrip those of many advanced nations, and their ability to be completely at ease with the new and emerging technologies called for a reassessment of a global balance of power. Within the Colombo Plan, it was recognised that new relationships were emerging among member countries. The basis for cooperation and collaboration was also changing. Some beneficiaries of the Colombo Plan assistance became net donors. They were among developing economies being described as NICs and recognised for their contributions to the global economy. Among this group of high performers were India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand. In the spirit of South-South cooperation, these countries were offering to share technical and financial resources with other members of the Colombo Plan family.

The framework of collaboration today extends beyond aid, assistance and technical cooperation. Relationships among Colombo Plan members have been threaded much more closely together through trade and business partnerships as well.

But what will the Colombo Plan fabric look like in the future? Will the collaborative effort be radically altered? Part of the answer lies in looking at some interesting developments in recent years. According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers 2008 report, *The World in 2050: Beyond BRICs*, the E7 emerging economies or the BRIC economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China, plus those of Mexico and Indonesia appear likely to unseat the position of the G7. It is forecasted that, by 2050, the E7 emerging economies will be around 50 per cent larger than the current G7 (the United States, Japan, Germany,

UK, France, Italy and Canada). China is expected to overtake the United States as the largest economy around 2025. India has the potential to nearly catch up with the United States by 2050. The projected list of fastest growing economies by 2050 is led by Vietnam, and others in the top 10 include Nigeria, the Philippines, Egypt and Bangladesh.

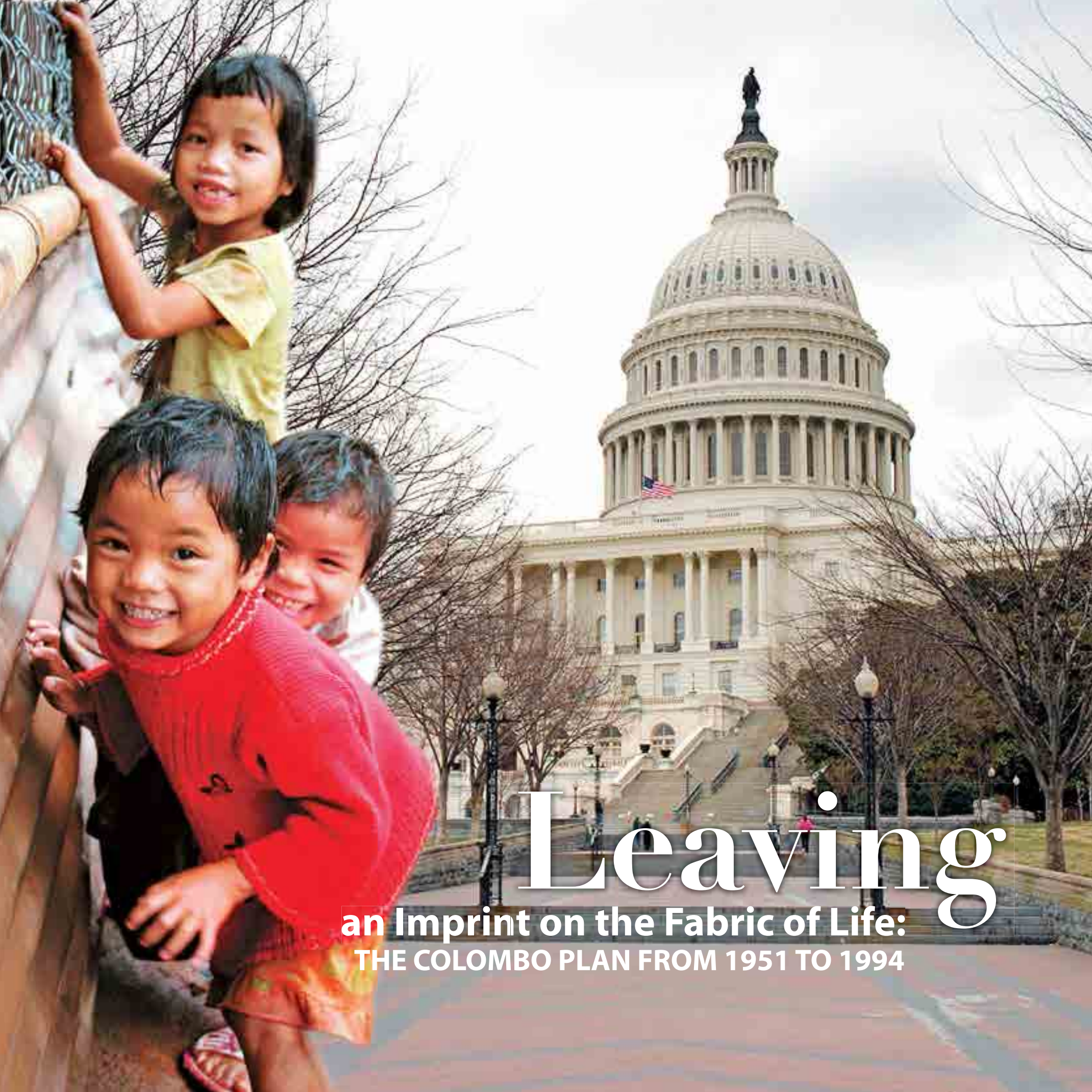
It is, therefore, likely there will be new entrants into the Colombo Plan close-knit community. The entry of Brunei Darussalam in 2008 demonstrates that the world is beginning to understand that community counts; that there are more than financial rewards in becoming a member of an organisation like the Colombo Plan. It is indeed possible to plan prosperity together in a close-knit community in the Asia-Pacific, mirroring the original spirit of the Colombo Plan. For, after all:

“All mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated... As therefore the bell that rings to a sermon, calls not upon the preacher only, but upon the congregation to come: so this bell calls us all: but how much more me, who am brought so near the door by this sickness... No man is an island, entire of itself... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

– John Donne (1572-1631)

in *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, Meditation XVII*





Leaving

an Imprint on the Fabric of Life:

THE COLOMBO PLAN FROM 1951 TO 1994



Asian students in Australia enjoyed many informal gatherings with their new-found friends.



Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson opening club rooms for Colombo Plan scholars.

From its inception, the Colombo Plan has mobilised resources from developed member countries and channelled these towards those countries that require aid. The term generally used for the recipient nations is 'developing', but perhaps this is euphemistic, at least in the beginning. Most Asian countries in the 1950s were not in a position to develop, as they faced widespread poverty.

As diverse as this region was geographically, historically and culturally, the countries were united by low standards of living, poor nutrition, large populations and high death rates. Making up a quarter of the world's population, they occupied only a sixteenth of its land mass. They lacked education, health and public services, telecommunications and even the most basic infrastructure. Any exports enjoyed were produce from the land, which were subject to the vagaries of rainfall, pest control and global market prices. Many of these countries were still dependent on mules, bullock-carts and human labour for transport. In land-locked Nepal, vehicles brought in from abroad were carried on human back.

Within this stark environment, the Colombo Plan in the early years focused on helping South and Southeast Asian nations build themselves. It laid the foundations for education and healthcare systems, improved agricultural methods, developed the physical infrastructure needed for transport and communication and, eventually, led these countries to industrialise. Most of the countries were economic backwaters. Some, like Bhutan, had never before been part of a global forum. Participation at the Colombo Plan meetings, thus, became great learning opportunities.

Much of the aid came in the form of technical assistance. Experts were dispatched to introduce knowledge and skills to improve irrigation and crop diversification. Tools and equipment were donated. The developed Colombo Plan countries also offered thousands of scholarships for smart young minds from the under-developed and developing countries. These played a huge role in nurturing the human resources and capabilities of the recipient nations. But much more than that, the scholarships created lasting bonds between peoples from different cultures, traditions and socio-

economic backgrounds, engendering in the process feelings of compassion and understanding that only close human interaction could possibly bring about.

While it is easy to assume that the recipient countries were the major beneficiaries of these scholarships, the fact is the advantages were two-way. As Peter Varghese, the Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia from 2000 to 2002, once said: "After the Colombo Plan, many Australians were never the same. For Australians, getting to know people from Asia was a profound and far-reaching step and it changed the lives of many average Australians. In policy terms, perhaps its greatest contribution was in helping to change attitudes within Australia to questions of race and region."

Japan, too, enjoyed its fair share of relationship-building as a result of the scholarships. A large number of Sri Lankans went to the Land of the Rising Sun to further their studies or to deepen their professional skills. World-renowned surgeon Dr P.R. Anthonis, who passed away just before this publication went to print, remembered very clearly the brilliance of Japanese surgeons under whom he studied during his one-year Colombo Plan scholarship in 1964, saying: "They were among the best in the world." More than just appreciate the calibre of medical experts in Japan, Dr Anthonis later founded the Sri Lankan chapter of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and also the Sasakawa Memorial-Sri Lanka-Japan Cultural Centre, both of which continue to strengthen ties between the two countries.

Another Sri Lankan scholar, the artist H.A. Karunaratne, displays a Zen-like attitude towards art, life and the universe... perhaps as a result of his three-year scholarship to the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music from 1959 to 1961. The Japanese, whom he describes as being "very refined", have rewarded their protégé with exhibitions (including a solo in Shinjuku in 1989) and a special Bunka Award, in collaboration with Sri Lanka's 50th anniversary of independence in 1998. Karunaratne maintains an even stronger and more meaningful link with Japan through his spouse, Kazuko.

Indonesian graduates in Australia for a seminar in librarianship in 1952.





Taking An Artistic Leap of Faith

"To be simple is great, but to be great is not simple," declares renowned Sri Lankan artist and Colombo Plan scholar H.A. Karunaratne. He credits J.D.A Perera, David Paynter and Stanley Abeyasinghe for his early education. But it was his Colombo Plan scholarship to Japan (1959-1961) that provided him 'the wings' with which he soared to artistic freedom.

He has spent the last half century defying definition. He refuses to be put into an artistic silo; he refuses to be predictable and refuses for his work to be set into any particular genre. His works are an outpouring of the artistic heart. "There is no 'must' in art," he explains. A typical interface with the artist goes something like this:

- QUESTION What does this represent?
ANSWER Anything you like.
- QUESTION Is this a metallic Buddha?
ANSWER If you like.
- QUESTION Is this a tree? Is it a planet? Is it the meaning of life?
ANSWER It is all of those. Today it can mean one thing and tomorrow another. That is art. It speaks to you differently at different times of your life. It communicates to different people differently.
- QUESTION And what if you don't see anything, but dots, squiggles and holes burnt into canvas?
ANSWER That is ok.

All is well. No tension exists between Karunaratne's art and the rest of the world. His creative outpourings disarm you with its "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". However, his best works lie almost forgotten in a shallow recess in his lounge.

We are given a rare preview of the more than 50 stacked-up masterpieces that span 40 years of creative genius. Karunaratne's art challenges the senses. One is reminded of the phrase "None so blind as they who will not see". His abstract images do not detract from the quiet acceptance of the way things are. Karunaratne's art is implicitly Buddhist. They compel you to see not with your eyes, but with your heart. His artistic journey is described as climbing a high mountain with every rock carrying an imprint of a personal revelation.



In the beginning, an artist seeks to imitate nature in its external manifestations. "So, you draw a tree, draw some flowers, and even that is not enough, so you add birds," he says. This seems to suggest that realism clutters our ability to explore the inner recesses of our hearts and, indeed, our souls. Mild and self-effacing, Karunaratne then demands that we do not copy, but seek to become introspective. His works urge you to dig deep within yourself and to understand what in nature triggers self-enlightenment.

"We gradually simplify. We go deep into the core of our being, transforming nature into ideas, concepts and feelings. That is the abstract," he clarifies. "Not mere outward appearance. Outward appearance depends on the inner structure. You need to connect with your inner structure to shape outward structure."

"That is nature and there is the teacher," he says, echoing the Romantic poets Wordsworth ("let nature be your teacher") and Keats, who in the *Ode to the Grecian Urn*, concludes: "Beauty is truth and truth beauty. That's all ye know and all ye need to know."

Karunaratne has committed himself to a lifelong search for truth. Nature and the world around him forces him to come to this truth. "It's not easy to come to the truth. Sometimes, the time must be right... time to find the truth."

The Colombo Plan scholarship and, later, a Fulbright Award have helped Karunaratne to make that artistic leap of faith.



Karunaratne defies convention and definition by producing works of art that are fluid in their meaning.



COUNTRIES THAT GAVE OF THEIR RESOURCES

Upon the launch of discussions on the Colombo Plan in 1950, four countries came forward as principal donors: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. By the time the Colombo Plan actually began its programme of aid in 1951, the United States had joined their fold.

In the first two decades of the Colombo Plan, 90 per cent of Australia's bilateral aid was directed to member countries. Up to June 1970, Australia's expenditure in South and Southeast Asia had exceeded A\$300 million. This was in addition to the tens of thousands of full scholarships offered to Asian students.

Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, meanwhile noted on the Colombo Plan's 20th anniversary that "more than a billion dollars have so far been made available to realise the full human potential of Asia". New Zealand was more cash-strapped than the other donor countries, hence concentrated its efforts mainly on technical assistance – in the construction of dams, and improving dairy and agricultural methods,

for example – as well as in welcoming Asian scholars into its universities. It did also contribute to some large projects, most notable of which was the All-India Medical Research Institute (AIMRI) in Delhi.

The United Kingdom's total contribution to the Colombo Plan countries up to 1969 amounted to US\$1.77 billion, while the United States was by far the biggest donor, channelling no less than US\$25.1 billion in bilateral loans, grants and technical assistance within the same timeframe. It continues to be the largest contributor to the Colombo Plan, today playing a key role in the organisation's Drug Advisory Programme.

On October 6, 1954, Japan was accepted as another contributing member, an occasion that is celebrated by the nation as International Cooperation Day. The Colombo Plan was Japan's first Official Development Assistance (ODA) window, and continues to provide opportunities for foreign aid programmes. In 1995, Japan supported a restructuring of the Colombo Plan by contributing towards the establishment of its Programme for Public Administration (PPA) and by seconding three JICA officers to the Secretariat in Colombo as Directors of PPA until April 2004.

LEFT
The Colombo Plan scholarships opened a whole new world to the recipients, like these Asian students arriving in Bolton, UK.

RIGHT
The Australian Snowy Mountains Authority Survey Team under the Colombo Plan doing geological investigations and drilling at the Pa Mang Dam site, straddling PDR Lao and Thailand.



Dr Anthonis kept his logbook, detailing the surgeries performed on a daily basis, as well as letters from patients, such as the one below from R.L. Spittle, himself a renowned surgeon, and one of Dr Anthonis' early mentors.

The Most Senior Colombo Plan Scholar

In his 61 years of practice as a surgeon, Dr Polwattearachchige Romiel Anthonis operated on no less than 100,000 patients. The list of those who went under his healing knife reads like the Who's Who in Sri Lanka's recent history, including prime ministers, ambassadors, judges, ministers and pop celebrities. So well-known and revered were Dr Anthonis' surgical skills, he was the first to be awarded Sri Lanka's most prestigious honour, the Deshmanya.

Among all these accolades is one that may not shine as gloriously, yet is significant in its own way. Dr Anthonis was a Colombo Plan (CP) scholar; and was in fact the oldest recipient of the CP scholarship alive until he passed away on December 17, 2009.

Although Dr Anthonis was already an established surgeon by the time he went to Japan under the CP scholarship in 1964, the one year he spent with medical luminaries such as Professor Komei Nakayama, Prof Massaru Kuru, Prof Uchiyama Kagoshima and Prof Ineguchi Kyushu was to improve his masterly skills even further, especially in the areas of pancreatic and gastric surgeries. Prof Nakayama, in particular, according to Dr Anthonis, was one of the greatest surgeons of the time.

"I specifically chose to go to Japan, and not to any other country because I'd heard so much about Prof Nakayama," he said in an interview in early 2009. "I'd been to Japan in my personal capacity in 1961 and worked with Prof Nakayama at Chiba University for two months. But the Colombo Plan gave me the opportunity to work some more with him, and with other Japanese surgeons."

Japan joined the Colombo Plan in 1954. This was, in fact, a milestone in the nation's efforts to re-establish good relations with the international community post-World War II. Since then, Japan has made extraordinary contributions, both in terms of technical skills and expertise, as well as financial aid, to developing countries – in Asia and the rest of the world.

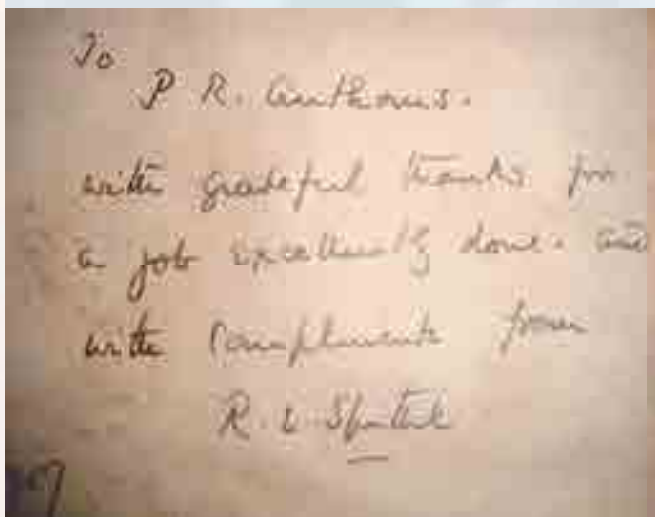
To Dr Anthonis, Japan was a marvel because of its medical achievements. It was in Japan that the first breast cancer operation was conducted without pain, using a herbal decoction, in 1804. The day this operation was performed continues to be celebrated as a national holiday, and Dr Anthonis happened to be in Japan on CP scholarship on its 160th anniversary. He remembers the occasion vividly. "The Japanese Government telephoned me to go to Wakayama University for the celebration. They wanted me to represent Asia. They had invited a German doctor to represent Europe and an American doctor to represent the United States. The German professor gave me a book about this remarkable surgery. I felt this was an important piece of documentation for Japan, and returned it to their government in 2008," he said.

For his contribution to the furtherance of friendly relations between Japan and Sri Lanka, he was awarded the Sacred Treasure of Japan in 1981.

Professionally, Dr Anthonis trained about 1,000 Sri Lankan surgeons, and was so well-respected among the medical fraternity worldwide, he was invited to share his expertise at congresses in Sydney, Tokyo and Mexico. He was also flown to Athens to demonstrate a surgery to cure gastric ulcers, which involved cutting a nerve.

Tom Duthie, an American visiting Sri Lanka for work had to have an operation to remove five feet of gut. Dr Anthonis performed the surgery. Upon Duthie's return to the United States, he said in a newsletter: "In retrospect, I'm glad that the necessity for this work occurred in Sri Lanka rather than the United States. How could I have fared better?"

In another case, Dr Anthonis received high praise by a top Israeli surgeon. This time, it was a Sri Lankan



newspaper editor whose leg he had operated on. Completely cured, the editor later developed complications requiring further surgery, while he was in Israel on holiday. The leading surgeon at Hadassah Medical Institute whom he consulted looked at the editor's leg and said: "You should not be having this leg. Only a brilliant piece of surgery has saved it. Who performed this surgical miracle?" Upon hearing Dr Anthonis' name, he replied: "I'm not surprised. It would've taken a man of Dr Anthonis' skill to save that leg. We've heard of him over here too."

What is particularly wonderful is the fact Dr Anthonis came from a very humble background. He was born on January 21, 1911, in the Colombo suburb of Bambalapitiya, the second of 16 children to a carpenter – who earned 50 cents a day – and his wife. "My mother was a great lady. She never saw a doctor. She delivered all her babies, five girls and 11 boys, at home; and breastfed them all. She lived till she was 84," he said with great pride.

Of his father, Dr Anthonis observed: "Although he was just a carpenter, his work was excellent. I must've inherited his hands. I have operated on the greatest people in this country, but my father is one of the greatest men I know. He never told a lie and never changed his values."

Dr Anthonis inherited more than his father's skillful hands. He also inherited a noblesse demonstrated by his passion for serving humanity – at times performing seven operations without break – and not even charging those who could not afford his services.

A couple of years before his last interview, he was called to be witness in the extradition of a monk. By this time, the nonagenarian had begun to have problems walking, and wrote to the judge to explain his predicament. "The judge sent me a letter and said, Dr Anthonis, you operated on me when I was 12, and you still haven't charged me. I wrote back and said I'm still living!" he said with a laugh.

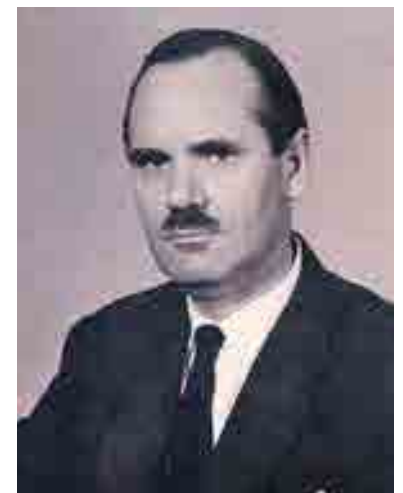
Dr Anthonis inspired in everyone a renewed faith in humanity – in the spirit of caring that is needed to ensure wellness of all peoples in all nations. In many ways, it is this very spirit of generosity that led to the birth of the Colombo Plan and has marked its many success stories.

Without doubt, all the donor countries played a crucial role in the Colombo Plan, allocating vast sums of money, manpower and equipment for the development of the more disadvantaged member countries. In addition, until the restructuring of the Colombo Plan in 1995, Directors of the Bureau were seconded from the donor countries (afterwards, the Secretaries-General were elected from any member country, donor or recipient).

If not for these donors, the Colombo Plan would not have achieved the successes it did, prompting J.K. Thompson, Director from 1959-1961, to say: "Plans go awry; but this one had shown a remarkable consistency and degree of achievement. Facts and figures were published; more difficult to get across was the spirit that had been engendered. Nobody feared it; nobody doubted its sincerity; everybody had the sense that it belonged to them. A few questioned its effectiveness, but only because they thought the tremendous need of the area should have been matched by even vaster sums of money. Some thought, quite wrongly in my view, that nothing could be effective with so little central machinery."

BELOW
J. K. Thompson, the sixth Director of the Colombo Plan Bureau, from August 1959 to December 1961.

BOTTOM
Prince Philip having a word with the 2,000th Colombo Plan scholar to the United Kingdom.





Spreading Education and Empowerment

Sri Lanka in the 1970s was a socialist state in which foreign trade, foreign exchange and foreign travel were severely restricted. Within this scenario, it was nothing short of a miracle to further one's education abroad. The Colombo Plan provided just such a miracle. It was the only source of scholarships to foreign universities, other than the Fulbright. Among the recipients of the Colombo Plan scholarship was Sirimevan S. Colombage, a young economist with great aspirations.

Colombage had already obtained a Bachelors in Economics, Money & Banking with First Class Honours from the University of Ceylon, in 1969. Full of ideas, and ideals, he was keen to contribute towards the country's economic development. In the early 1960s, Prime Minister of newly independent Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, had said: "I wish one day for Singapore to become like Sri Lanka." But by the early 1970s the country had regressed and, when Sri Lankan Prime Minister J. R. Jayewardene visited Singapore towards the end of that decade, he repeated Lee's statement... only with the two countries in reverse.

As fortune would have it, in 1973, Colombage won a Colombo Plan scholarship to pursue a Masters in Income Distribution at the University of Manchester, the United Kingdom. Upon obtaining his Masters in 1975, he was offered a place to do a PhD at Sussex University, but the Sri Lankan Government had a rule of sending out as many students as possible for overseas studies, therefore was not willing to sponsor his PhD immediately. Colombage, thus, had to wait almost 10 years before he got to return to the University of Manchester to do his PhD on *The Role of Exchange Rate Policies in the Balance of Payments Adjustment Process in a Small Developing Economy: A Case Study of Sri Lanka*.

In the interim, he joined the Central Bank in its Economic Research and Statistics Departments. "When Jayewardene came into power in 1977, he made some radical changes. He encouraged privatisation, liberalised the financial markets, opened up trade, allowed foreign banks to come in..." says Professor Colombage. It was

during this exciting time that he was able to apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in his Masters.

"We were expected to prepare policy papers. My training had direct relevance to policy making. At the same time, I had the privilege to teach at various local universities."

The results of Jayewardene's liberalisation were very positive, until 1982 when political instability resulting from the Tamil-Sinhalese ethnic conflict took root. "There were riots. The economy took a dive. Even now, it is still suffering," says Prof Colombage.

Today, a Chair Professor of Social Studies at The Open University of Sri Lanka, one of 18 universities in the country, he continues to be involved in various programmes to spur economic growth, focusing on those regions that have a lot of catching up to do with Colombo. One area that interests him is the use of new technologies in transactions and savings, such as e-banking.

He is also interested in improving on microfinance facilities offered to rural poor. At present, he says, there are weaknesses in the microfinance structure, mainly because of a stubborn affinity for family traditions such as making bread and hoppers (a Sri Lankan staple). "If a woman's father or mother does a particular business, she will follow in the same business. But revenue from these traditional businesses is very low, partly due to economies of scale," he explains. "One way to overcome this is to pool resources of a village, for example have a factory instead of individual producing units for, say hoppers, in homes."

The Open University itself has plans to extend its training programmes to the grassroots level. Today, in addition to the main campus in Colombo, the University has four regional centres and 20 smaller study centres, and about 30 per cent of its 3,000 students are from outside Colombo. "But we want to increase this figure," says Prof Colombage.

In the process, the University will be doing a huge service to the millions of Sri Lankans for whom tertiary education means an opportunity for a better life.

THE FOURTH DECADE (1980s)

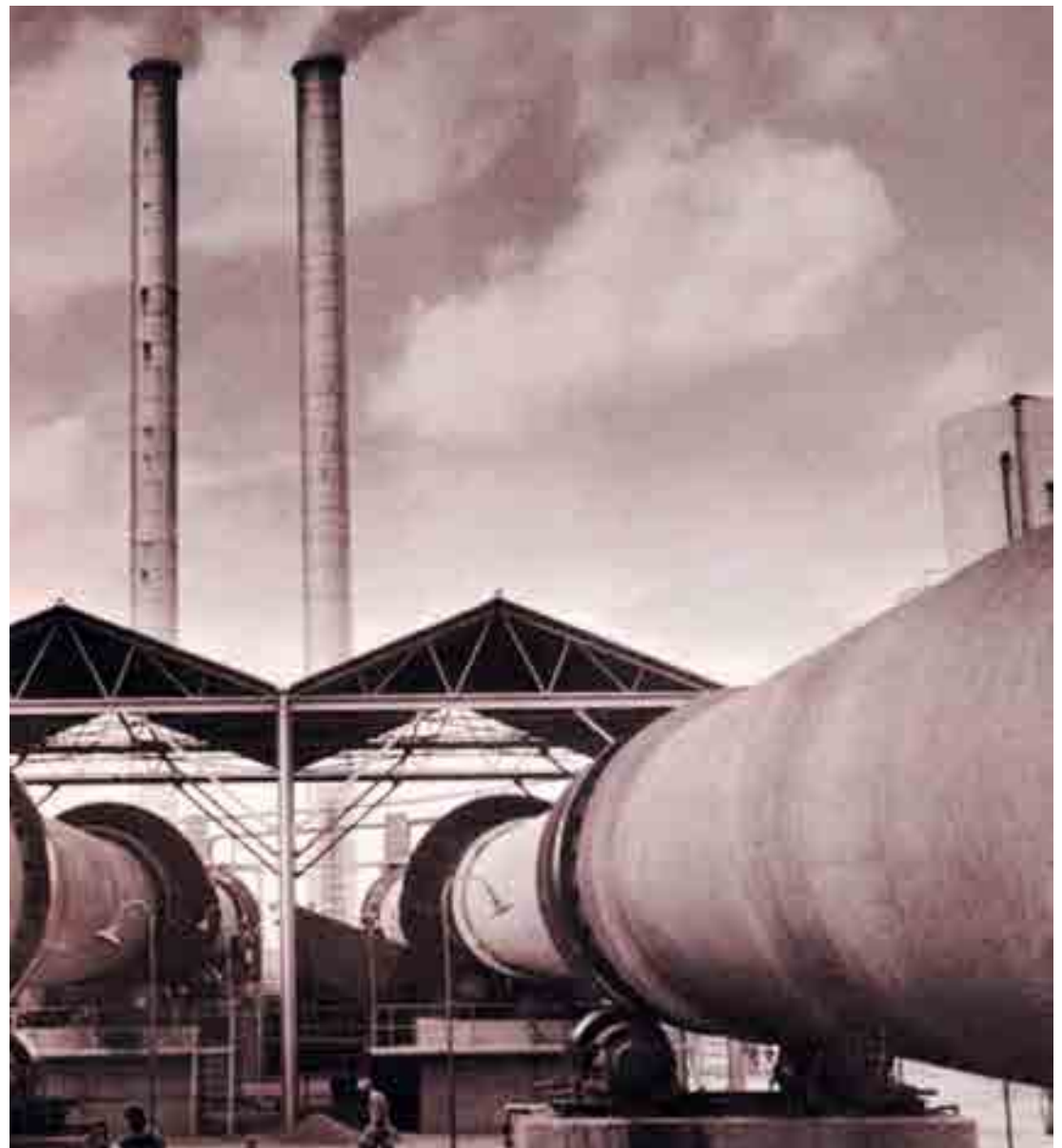
By the 1980s, a good number of the South and Southeast Asian member countries had progressed to such an extent that they now truly deserved the description 'developing'. By this time, also, the global international cooperation system had matured. The United Nations had established more multilateral organisations; and the Colombo Plan member countries were beginning to place greater emphasis on their own bilateral cooperation programmes. The Colombo Plan's relevance as a multilateral aid agency was thus challenged. Reflecting the changing times, by 1989, the scholarship programme came to a slow and grinding end. Donor countries felt, perhaps justifiably, that recipient countries no longer needed such intense and committed aid.

To adjust to the changing world order, the Colombo Plan Director, John Ryan, in 1994 appointed an Eminent Persons Group to review the organisation and suggest how it could be revived. The Group was made up of six leading minds from the region, all highly experienced in development issues: Deshamanya W.M. Tilakaratna, from Sri Lanka; Hyo Seung Ahn, from Korea; Morihisa Aoki, from Japan; A.V. Ganesan, a UNDP nominee; Datuk Khor Eng Hee, from Malaysia; and M. Siddiqueur Rahman, from Bangladesh. From September 26-30, these luminaries convened at the Colombo Plan Secretariat in the capital of Sri Lanka to analyse the activities of other international development organisations; the needs of developing member countries; and prospects of future funding for the Colombo Plan. In their deliberations, they also managed to consult former Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene, the only surviving founding father of the Colombo Plan.

Their verdict? The need to continue with technical training and support, a flagship focus area of the Colombo Plan; the need to encourage greater South-South cooperation; and the need to establish long-term programmes that reflect emerging challenges. Specifically, they noted the need for public administrators to be supportive of the changing economic landscape, and to promote as far as possible local entrepreneurs struggling to cope with open and free markets.

The Eminent Persons Group also recommended that the Colombo Plan Bureau be restructured as the Colombo Plan Secretariat and that the post of Director be replaced by that of a Secretary-General, who could be appointed from any member country, and not just from one of the donor countries. The suggestions of the group were accepted by the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee Meeting in the Republic of Korea in 1994, resulting in a more strategic and streamlined organisation that now focused on a Programme for Public Administration (PPA), Programme for Private Sector Development (PPSD) and, to continue its work on drug supply and demand reduction, maintained its Drug Advisory Programme (DAP).

The Zeal Pak Cement Factory, in Pakistan, was built with aid from New Zealand.





THE COLOMBO PLAN IN ACTION

Broadly speaking, the Colombo Plan can be said to have contributed towards six main areas in the development of recipient countries: human capacity building, healthcare, infrastructure development, agriculture and husbandry, irrigation and hydropower, and industry.

EDUCATING ASIA

At the time the Colombo Plan started disbursing aid, most of the under-developed countries had no proper system of education. Where schools existed, enrolment was low and the drop-out rate, high. Donor countries helped these lesser developed countries to set up schools and then universities, equipping them with books and other curriculum materials, laboratories and furniture, in addition to providing teachers and teacher training. Further training was given in technical areas essential to national development.

ABOVE
Nasheeda M. Ahmad, who was trained in New Zealand under the Colombo Plan, teaching at the Ameeniyya School for girls in Male, the capital of Maldives.

RIGHT
In addition to receiving educational equipment and materials, Burmese (Myanmar) students were sent abroad to acquire relevant skills. This soil chemist is busy at work in Canada. The Colombo Plan also provided aid to build a new campus for the Institute of Economics at Rangoon University.

FAR RIGHT
One of the thousands of Indians who received technical training through the Colombo Plan.



These efforts, combined with the scholarships that saw more than 175,000 bright Asians attending universities and professional institutes in the donor countries, contributed immensely to the emergence of skilled scientists, doctors, engineers, educators and administrators who then took their countries to greater heights. Dr Francis S.P. Ng, a renowned botanist in Malaysia who trained at the University of Tasmania in the early 1960s, has this to say about the impact of the Colombo Plan scholarships on his country: "All through the 1960s, the returning Colombo Plan scholars took over professional positions from departing British officers in the technical departments dealing with public works, agriculture, forestry, utilities and so on. In my opinion, the Colombo Plan kept Malaysia running through the critical post-independence decades of the 1960s and the 1970s."

Up to end of 1989, when the last batch of scholars returned to their home countries, the Colombo Plan had funded more than 465,781 training programmes and scholarships.

Intra-Regional Training

Although most of the training was provided by donor countries, some of the more developed South and Southeast Asian nations also contributed their expertise and know-how, though on a smaller scale. India, the largest and probably the most advanced country within this grouping, shared its technical knowledge with trainees from the rest of the region from the beginning, as did also Ceylon. Eventually, Burma, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand also joined the ranks of trainers, especially in technical areas. Supplementing the efforts of all these countries, the Intra-Regional Training Programme came into operation in 1964, under which the Colombo Plan organised and conducted regional colloquia and national seminars.

By 1989, there had been 2,271 expert exchanges and 33,371 trainee exchanges among the developing member countries.

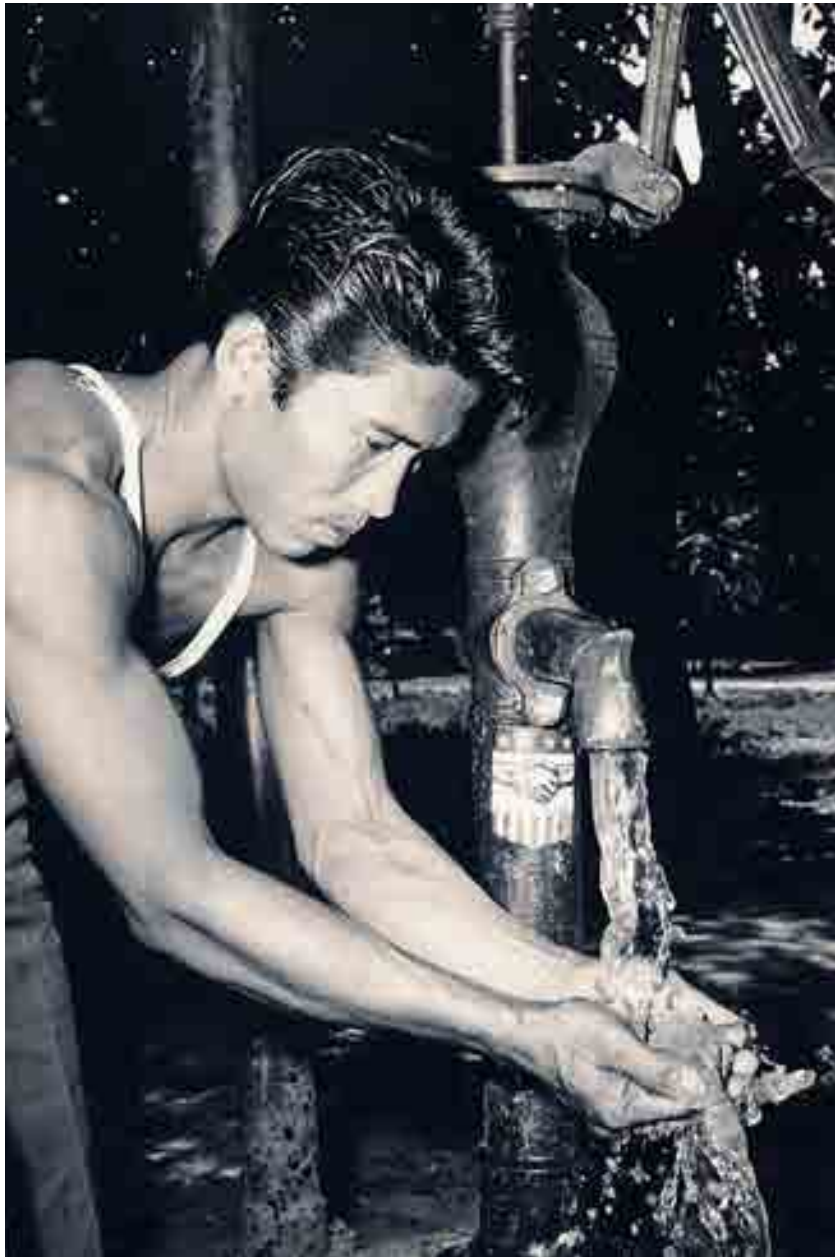
LEFT
Thais learning how to man a telephone exchange in the United States.

RIGHT
An English teacher taking a class of Buddhist monks in a pagoda in Phnom Penh. Cambodia received aid to build more classrooms and schools to cater for children from all over the country.





A number of young women from all over Asia qualified as nurses overseas via the Colombo Plan scholarships. This group of nurses from Sri Lanka was the first batch of scholars to go to New Zealand for training.



BATTLING DEATH AND DISEASE

In the fifties and sixties, health services and facilities in Asia were very basic. Epidemics spread rapidly, taking a heavy toll on vulnerable communities. According to British journalist Martin Adeney, who wrote a book on the Colombo Plan in 1969, "as many as one per cent of the population of Nepal died each year from malaria, the largest single cause of death". The Colombo Plan put in place health awareness programmes and helped strengthen existing health systems by building new clinics and hospitals, and providing the necessary equipment and training. The results were impressive. Within a relatively short period, common diseases were under control, mortality rates had decreased and lifespans increased.

The Governor of Yogyakarta, Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono X, notes that the impact of the Colombo Plan malaria eradication programme in Indonesia, funded by the United States, was so great that the Government and people named a road, several commercial buildings and shops in this province after Colombo.

As part of its public health initiatives, the Colombo Plan also looked into schemes to ensure clean and safe water supply in these countries. Water from traditional wells, streams and rivers was often contaminated, leading to the spread of communicable diseases. All these efforts led to a healthier and, therefore, better quality of life.

LEFT
A villager in the Philippines gets a drink of cool, clean water at one of the several thousand village pumps installed in protected wells on the islands.

BOTTOM LEFT
Microscopes donated by the United States to the faculty of medicine in Saigon (Hanoi) helped tremendously in training future doctors in the country.

BELOW
Nurses from India, Ceylon and Indonesia being trained at an anti-tuberculosis (TB) clinic in Sydney, Australia.



Better Health, Bigger Populations

While better health was, of course, a great step forward for countries of South and Southeast Asia, it also had its 'setbacks'. Most notably, it contributed to a population explosion. When the Colombo Plan started, the region accounted for around 25 per cent of the world's population; by 2008, the figure had increased to 33 per cent. Ceylon, in fact, recorded the highest population growth in the region in 1961, notching an increase of 3.1 per cent. The increase in population rendered national development plans that much less effective, and hindered progress.

Within this scenario, experts appointed by the Colombo Plan crafted population control plans and strategies. They introduced population awareness education into the formal school systems and, through informal educational channels, into development programmes. Mass awareness programmes were launched emphasising the importance of having small families.

Drug Control

An immensely successful health-related initiative implemented by the Colombo Plan was the Drug Advisory Programme (DAP). This was established in 1973, following a proposal by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to tackle the growing drug menace, involving both drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The Colombo Plan readily embraced this suggestion, given that two of the world's three largest sources of drugs are in Asia: the Golden Triangle, covering Myanmar, Thailand and Lao PDR; and the Golden Crescent, covering Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The DAP has grown in strength over the years and, till today, the Colombo Plan continues to play a pivotal role in drug demand and supply reduction. DAP has managed to sensitise member governments to the enormity of the problem, as a result of which national drug focal points have been established, enabling the appropriate policies and legislation to be framed, and strategies formulated on a bilateral or multilateral basis.

A Man of Substance



Atty Pio Abarro (left) received numerous accolades for his unrelenting contributions to the fight against drugs.

Attorney Pio Abarro, the first drug advisor to the Colombo Plan Bureau, will always be remembered for his unstinted and unwavering commitment to the fight against drug abuse. During his 15 years at its helm, the DAP made important strides towards greater cooperation and coordination among governments, law enforcement agencies and NGOs involved in the prevention and control of narcotics in the Asia Pacific.

Atty Pio Abarro worked with member governments to set up specialised agencies in their respective countries to tackle drug problems much more effectively. He also brought law enforcement agencies together through the Meeting of the Heads of Narcotic Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) in an effort to find a more effective way to protect communities from the dangers of drug abuse.

Atty Pio Abarro's tireless efforts to mobilise and support community-based organisations in the region led to

the formation of the International Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO).

His outstanding work in the drug field won him international recognition. In 1979, he was the first and only Asian to be honoured with the prestigious Edward W Browning Achievement Award in New York. In 1986, the Asian Pacific Federation of Therapeutic Communities established the Pio Abarro Award. In 1988, he became President of the International Narcotics Enforcement Officers Association (INEOA) in New York, and was awarded the International Law Enforcement INEOA/ UN Medal. He also received the coveted international award from the World Therapeutic Communities in Cartagena, Colombia, as well as an IFNGO award in Bangkok, Thailand.

Atty Pio Abarro passed away on August 13, 2003, in California.

The DAP has become one of the flagship programmes of the Colombo Plan, and the following chapter highlights the innovative strategies employed which have contributed to its continuing success.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Following World War II, most of the recipient countries of the Colombo Plan were lacking in infrastructure needed for transport and communication, both of which were essential to fast-tracking economic development. Some of the countries had never made much progress in transport, and were still reliant on animals to carry goods and people. Looting during the war wiped out half of their farm-bred 'vehicles'. Where railways existed, the war rendered more than a third of the tracks useless. Road and water transport were also badly affected. Air travel, meanwhile, was in its infancy, if it existed at all. Broadly speaking, the transport system within the region was in dire need of rehabilitation. During the first half of the Colombo Plan, around £200 million was spent to build from scratch or to revive means and modes of transport in member countries.

Roads, railways, airports and seaports were constructed. Nepal, for example, was assisted in the construction of the Tribhuvan, Biratnagar, Bhairahawa, Janakpur and Pokhara Airports. Carriages and locomotives were donated; training centres set up, and trainers provided... paving the way for countries in the Asia-Pacific to accelerate their development.

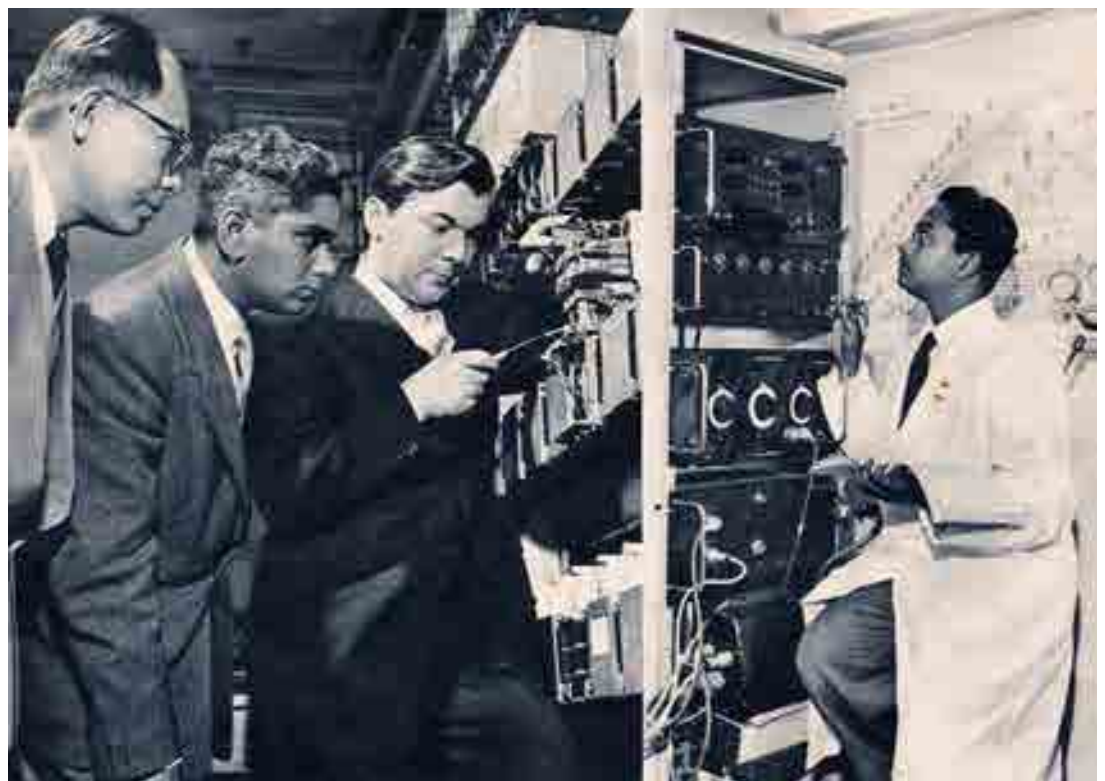
Telecommunications and broadcasting facilities, necessary to maintain links with the outside world, as well as locally, were also either badly damaged or non-existent. As in all areas of funding and support, the recipient countries applied for relevant aid, and the Colombo Plan responded by helping to install trunk telephone lines, equipping telecommunications facilities with modern tools, providing broadcasting equipment, and setting up satellite stations. Donor members also established local training centres which churned out numerous graduates who went on to contribute towards the development of their countries.



TOP
All foreign visitors to Sri Lanka land at the Bandaranaike International Airport in Katunayake, 30 km north of Colombo, which was converted from a Royal Air Force base into a commercial airport with initial funds from Canada, under the Colombo Plan.



MIDDLE
A very competent and confident Singaporean manning an air base, having been trained in Australia.



BOTTOM
A telecommunications student from Malaya and a nuclear physicist from Pakistan undergoing training.



LEFT
Students from India, Ceylon, Pakistan, Thailand and Malaya undergoing training in agriculture in Australia.

BOTTOM LEFT
Pakistani students picked up modern agricultural techniques in Japan, while the East Pakistan Agricultural Development Corporation received a fleet of mobile cinemas and the country's seed potato project was supported.

BOTTOM RIGHT
Nepalese students receiving agriculture-related training in New Zealand.



WORKING THE LAND MORE EFFICIENTLY

Agriculture played a predominant role in the economies of the Colombo Plan recipient countries. As rice is a staple in the diet of most of the region, a large proportion of arable land was allocated for paddy cultivation. In general, however, individual plots of agricultural land were small and production rates low due to traditional farming methods. Even the more advanced countries such as India often experienced famine as a result of crop failure. There was no question about it: the agricultural sector desperately needed to be modernised.

Member countries also required aid to bring their methods and systems in the cultivation of export crops such as rubber, tea, coconut and jute on par with developed world standards. Support provided by the Colombo Plan led to crop diversification and major changes in the agricultural sector. For example, Pakistan and India became large wheat producers and the Rice Research Institute established in Manila introduced several wonder seed varieties, acquiring renown as a centre of innovation.

India's White Revolution

"In the 1950s, the milk supply of Delhi was disorganised and unsatisfactory. Not only the supply was inadequate but also the quality was poor." These were the words used by an early Colombo Plan publication to describe dairy production in India's capital. Responding to these dairy woes, New Zealand invested NZ\$1,632,000 in the Delhi Milk Scheme while also supporting dairy schemes in major cities such as Dhulia, Chennai, Mumbai, Indore, Matigara and Lucknow. New Zealand's total investment in this sector in India exceeded NZ\$4 million. Today, India's milk production exceeds local demand and the surplus is exported. Donor countries of the Colombo Plan also contributed to the development and diversification of the dairy sector in other member countries.



TOP
Filipino and Indonesian students of agriculture in Britain. Indonesia was also supported in establishing its Institute of Agricultural Science in Bogor.

MIDDLE
Acquiring new knowledge and skills to modernise agricultural practices in their own countries.

BOTTOM
Asian students at a fisheries training centre in Japan. Burma, Ceylon, India, Malaysia and the Maldives were recipients of various forms of aid that contributed towards developing their fisheries sector.



The Sharvati hydro-project in Mysore, India, was designed by Indian engineers and built by 50,000 Indian workers. Upon completion, it produced more than a million kilowatts of electricity, making it one of the biggest power projects in South Asia. The United States was a major sponsor of this project, providing \$26.4 million in loans plus food grains for the workers.

SPREAD OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS

Country	No. of Projects	Percentage
Afghanistan	1	1
Burma	3	3
Ceylon (Sri Lanka)	4	5
India	19	22
Indonesia	5	6
Iran	4	5
Khmer Republic	3	3
Republic of Korea	6	7
Lao PDR	3	3
Malaysia	5	6
Nepal	6	7
Pakistan	15	17
Philippines	3	3
Thailand	10	11
Vietnam	1	1
Total	88	100

Source: *Dreams Come True – Dam Construction, a 1971 publication of the Colombo Plan*

PRODUCTION OF ELECTRICAL ENERGY WITHIN THE MEMBER COUNTRIES IN MILLION KILOWATT HOURS

Country	1953	1968/1969	Increase
Afghanistan	16	254	16 Fold
Ceylon (Sri Lanka)	144	612	4
India	8,681	49,476	6
Indonesia	718	1,607	2
Khmer Republic	24.5	125	5
Republic of Korea	736	7,737	11
Lao PDR	1.2	37	31
Malaysia	777	3,169	4
Nepal	6	43	7
Pakistan	411	4,991	12
Philippines	1,111	4,761	4
Singapore	281	1,878	7
Thailand	158	3,246	21
Vietnam	162	1,028	6
Total	83,194	447,876	5

Source: *The Colombo Plan 1951-1971, 20th Anniversary Book*

IRRIGATION & HYDROPOWER

One significant reason for low agricultural yields was lack of proper irrigation. As they were dependent on rain and traditional methods of irrigation for cultivation, the Colombo Plan recipient countries could neither ensure sufficient water supply to existing farms nor expand the acreage of land under cultivation to meet the increasing food needs of their fast-growing populations. Malnutrition, already a problem in some of the poorer countries, would have become pandemic if not for Colombo Plan aid targeted at setting up proper irrigation systems. From 1951 to 1971, 88 irrigation projects were carried out either with full Colombo Plan support or through multilateral organisations with funds provided by the donor countries.

India received the most aid for irrigation efforts. No less than 19 projects were carried out in this highly populated country that has large tracts of arid or semi-arid land. In the desert state of Rajasthan, for example, Canada assisted in an extensive canal project estimated to cost \$261 million which provided irrigation to 3.12 million acres. Meanwhile, the Bhakra dam channelled water to the south-eastern reaches of Punjab, which had been subject to frequent and devastating famines. Today, Punjab is considered the green bowl of the country.

In Pakistan, where 15 irrigation projects were completed, hundreds of thousands of acres of barren land were transformed into fertile pastures. The Warsak dam

– built largely with aid from Canada (and was Canada's biggest Colombo Plan project) – was known locally as a *jehad* (holy war) against poverty. It contributed towards the production of 70,000 tons of cash crops annually, increasing Pakistan's national income by about US\$3.3 million each year.

What is more, a good number of the dams built doubled as hydropower plants, generating electricity. Post-World War II, almost all countries in South and Southeast Asia were dependent either on oil or kerosene lamps for domestic lighting. Only a few townships received electricity from modern power systems. Lack of electricity not only affected the standard of living, it also hampered industrial development and stymied economic growth of these nations. By generating hydro-electricity, the multi-purpose irrigation projects truly empowered the Colombo Plan member nations and their populations.

The week of January 24, 1961, was celebrated in Pakistan as 'power week'. This was when Warsak dam on the western border with Afghanistan started to generate 160,000kW of electric power. Various hydropower projects completed in Pakistan between 1953 and 1969 increased its electricity supply 12 fold, while during the same timeframe power supply in Lao PDR and Thailand increased 31 fold and 21 fold respectively. In these two Indochinese nations, a big contributor towards better irrigation and more power was a massive, multinational undertaking to harness the resources of the Mekong river, the eighth longest in the world. Six dams were built along the Mekong, benefitting the lives of more than 20 million people in Burma, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Irrigation and hydropower projects are necessarily massive in terms of labour and cost, and consumed by far the largest chunk of aid provided by donor countries to the Colombo Plan members.

RIGHT

The Hirakud Dam in the northern state of Orissa, India, irrigates about one million acres of farm land, contributing in no small measure to increased food production for the world's second most populated country.

BOTTOM LEFT

The Gal Oya Hydropower scheme in Sri Lanka, funded by Canada, not only generates electricity, but also irrigates farms in the area.

BOTTOM RIGHT

The Klang Gates Dam in Taman Melawati, a suburb of Kuala Lumpur, is Malaysia's first reservoir. Opened in 1958, the dam is one of the major suppliers of drinking water to residents of the Klang Valley.



Nuclear Energy

In 1970, India was supported by the US to establish its first ever 380 MW Atomic Power Station in Tarapur, which supplies electricity to the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. Later, Canada assisted India to establish two atomic power stations in Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. Subsequently, India established its Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and a thorium and uranium plant to fuel further atomic energy development. India also started producing radio-isotopes used in the medical field, which are exported.



In addition to India, the United State helped the Philippines and Thailand to establish nuclear research centres for peaceful purposes. Canada, meanwhile, supported Pakistan's nuclear efforts, and in particular the establishment of its first nuclear power station in Karachi. It also donated a digital electronic computer to the Atomic Centre in Dhaka. Today, Pakistan has atomic energy centres in Lahore, Dhaka and Tandojam; and boasts the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology in Islamabad.

Other Colombo Plan member countries were supported by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in building up national nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes. Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam received assistance in the form of equipment and experts.

BOTTOM LEFT

The Tarbela Dam in Pakistan, completed in 1974, was designed to store water from the Indus River for irrigation and flood control, and for the generation of hydro-electric power. Because the source of the Indus River is glacial melt water from the Himalayas, the river carries huge amounts of sediment. This means that, over time, the reservoir will fill. It is estimated that the dam will last 85 years, that is up to about year 2060.

BOTTOM RIGHT

While the Colombo Plan did much to increase hydro-generated power in recipient countries, students such as this Indian scientist also studied solar power and other alternative sources of energy.



A REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Industrial development allows for countries to use their human and natural resources in the most efficient and effective manner. However, industrial development is capital intensive and, except for India, recipient countries of the Colombo Plan did not have the means to invest in infrastructure facilities to support industrial growth. The Colombo Plan's contribution in this regard, therefore, is highly noteworthy.

Afghanistan received aid to set up a Bost Oil factory, and to modernise its Baghlan sugar factory. In Burma, a teak saw mill was constructed at Okkyin while in Ceylon an industrial estate was built in Ekala. Bakeries were modernised in India. Aid was provided for lignite, fertilizer and plastic factories in India and an asbestos cement factory in Indonesia. The petrochemical industry in the Republic of Korea was supported. In Malaysia, a timber reconditioning plant was built. Pakistan set up an industrial bank, a Maple-leaf Cement factory, a hardboard plant and two sugar mills. In Nepal, the

Colombo Plan helped to build the Pathan Industrial Estate. A screening and crushing plant for lignite mining was provided to Thailand. Two sugar mills were constructed in Vietnam.

In addition, training centres were established in various member countries and equipment provided for these. Industrial equipment was also donated.

Industrial assistance provided by the Colombo Plan helped a number of member countries to make the all-important transition from being agrarian economies to those in which industry played at least a supporting role. The success stories here are, of course, India, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and Singapore. But even the other countries benefitted from the setting up of basic industries, and to the value-add of existing production lines.

In many ways, the Colombo Plan paved the way towards an Industrial Revolution in the region.

LEFT
A Pakistani postgraduate
in Canada.

RIGHT
Indian steel foundry
workers in Scotland.





All Manner of Surveys

Before grandiose projects can be carried out – and a number of the multi-purpose projects under the Colombo Plan were certainly of an impressive scale – surveys are needed to ascertain their feasibility. Here, too, the donor countries lent their hand, or rather their men and their skills. These weather-beaten surveyors, donning hard hats and solar tops, could be seen dotting both barren and lush landscapes, eyes fixed to binoculars and other instruments, carrying out geological, aerial, resource, land and meteorological surveys. These surveys helped recipient countries to make important development decisions and, through the transfer of technology, increased the technical skills of the local communities.

CATALYST OF DEVELOPMENT

So much changed within the first 44 years of the Colombo Plan. If one were to compare the member countries to blank yarns, the Colombo Plan can be said to have left an indelible imprint on them that would forever change their fabric of life. Some of the countries that had initially been recipients of aid made such progress they were now giving back to the forum. These included six out of the eight countries – Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan (China) and Thailand – that together constituted what the World Bank in 1993 referred to as the East Asia Miracle; countries which astounded the world with startling economic performance in the years from 1965 to 1990.

By the second phase of the Colombo Plan (1995 till present), India, Iran, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Pakistan and Thailand had become donor countries. Having benefitted from the transfer of knowledge, technology and funds that the Colombo Plan offered, they were now sharing their technical and intellectual wealth with fellow Colombo Plan members who had yet to savour the fruits of development. At the same time, other aid agencies were set up, many emulating the principles or ideals of the Colombo Plan.



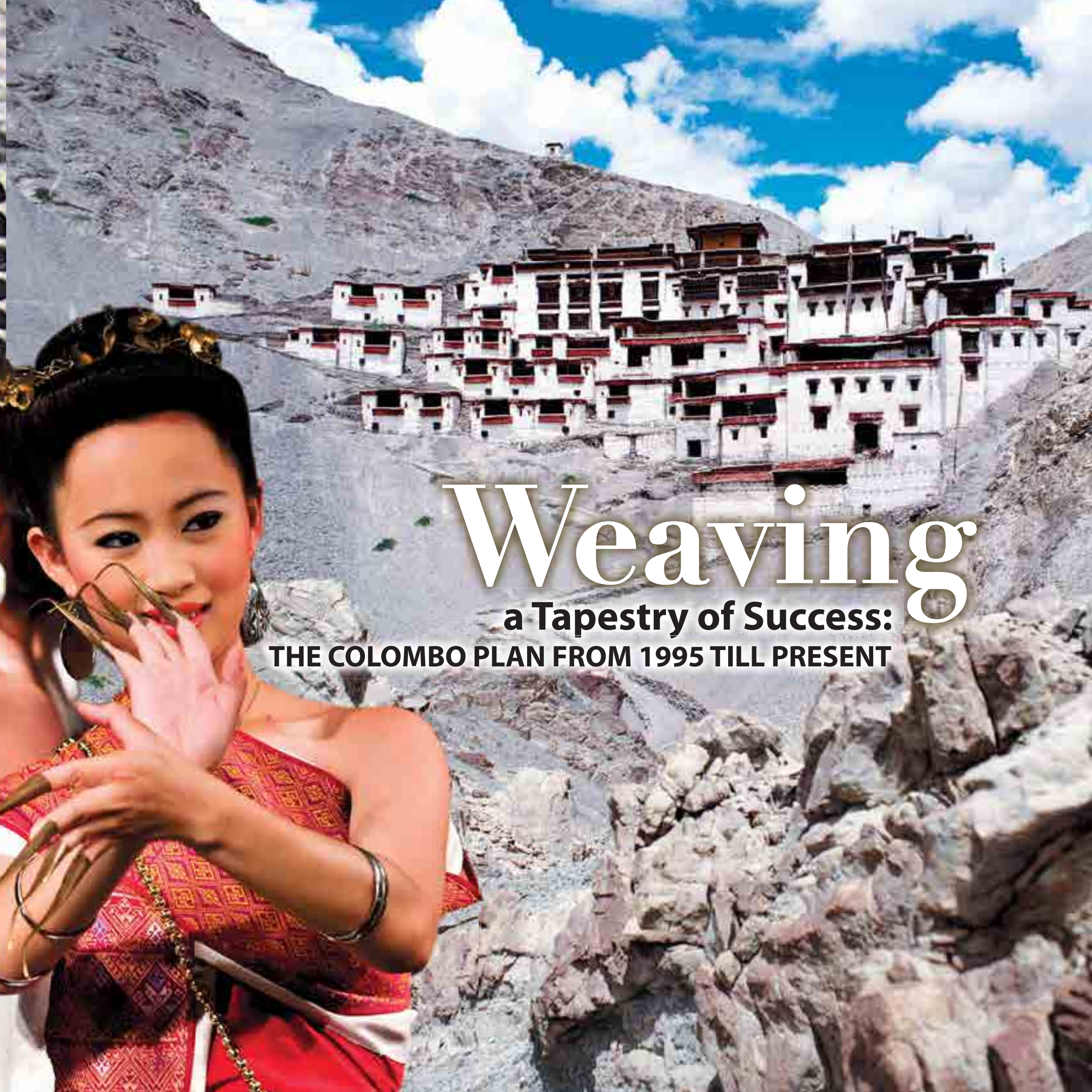
Indonesians on a ship-building tour in Japan.

The global landscape was permanently altered, and the Colombo Plan had been a catalyst in bringing about this change.

As former Governor General of Australia Bill Hayden noted on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Colombo Plan in 1991: "Forty years ago, the Colombo Plan was one of the few forums available for cooperative economic assistance to the region. Today, there are many such bodies, but the experience gained with the Colombo Plan was essential to the success of later developments."



PHOTO OF FILIPINO TEXTILE BY DR. ILLUMINADA F. CASTIGADOR



Weaving

a Tapestry of Success:

THE COLOMBO PLAN FROM 1995 TILL PRESENT

“We have achieved great success with the programmes that we initiated, and these success stories are being shared across the region through the partnerships and networks that we have established.”

TAY BIAN HOW, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE COLOMBO PLAN DRUG ADVISORY PROGRAMME

Following a two-day symposium organised by the Colombo Plan for Mullahs from all over Afghanistan, the National Council of Ulamas announced a *fatwa* against drug cultivation, production and trafficking in 2005.





SALT OF THE EARTH...
**Women such as these play an important role
 in the growing economy of Puttalam.**



About 130 km north of Colombo, along the coast, is a sleepy enclave of fishermen and farmers. This picturesque region is also dotted with salterns – pools of seawater that dry in the blistering heat, leaving mounds of salt. Men and women, tanned from the sun, spend hours collecting the glistening crystals which are then sent to be processed. Puttalam, a relatively undeveloped district of Sri Lanka, supports a population of some 700,000, about a seventh of whom are displaced Muslims from the war-torn north-east. Nafeel Abdul Careem Mohamed, a Divisional Secretary in the Ministry of Public Administration & Home Affairs, concerns himself with the well-being of these people. He's the government officer-in-charge of the district.

“In the beginning, the Government had no choice but to put up the displaced refugees in public buildings like schools. But in 1994, they were shifted to welfare centres. Now, the Government gives them the option of purchasing their own land and provides housing assistance. So, many are living in their own homes,” says this civil servant who is passionate about creating a more egalitarian Sri Lanka, one in which everyone is able to enjoy the same standard of living.

In order to move up the civil service ladder, and to increase the level of responsibility entrusted to him, Nafeel decided to pursue a Master in Public Policy. Fortunately for him, the Colombo Plan had reinstated its long-term scholarships in 2004, and Nafeel was able to enroll in the KDI School of Public Policy & Management, Korea, in January 2008. Although Master students are generally given two years to wrap up their coursework, Nafeel worked late into the nights, and over weekends,



to successfully complete his postgraduate degree within a year. So great was his desire to return to his homeland and put his newly gained knowledge to use.

Like Nafeel, more than 100 other ambitious young Asians have been able to pursue their Master's at established universities in Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand under the revived scholarship programme. In the formative years of the Colombo Plan, these scholarships had provided the opportunity to obtain first degrees to thousands who would otherwise not have been able to train as the kind of professionals their countries so desperately needed. By now, of course, these very same countries have their own universities and other tertiary educational establishments. However, most still lack expertise in certain postgraduate subject areas critical to further development. Once again, the Colombo Plan has stepped in to fill the void.

The Colombo Plan has extended a helping hand to motivated young public administrators keen on acquiring new and relevant skills. These include Deki Wangmo, an Assistant Planning Officer in the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, Bhutan. Deki says: "Youth unemployment is a major issue in Bhutan." The Ministry she works with was set up with the mission of creating gainful employment for all citizens. She herself will be contributing towards the formulation of national policies aimed specifically at job creation.

Among the other recent long-term scholars are Kiran Prasad Acharya, a Senior IT Assistant in Nepal's Ministry of Commerce & Supplies; and Zohreh Bahrehbar, a Senior Expert in the Office of Loans, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, Iran. Kiran pursued a Master of IT in Business

(Financial Services) at the Singapore Management University and hopes to develop the use of IT within the banking sector back in Nepal. Zohreh, meanwhile, did her Master's at the School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia. She acknowledges that, if not for the Colombo Plan scholarship, financial constraints would have hampered her hopes of being "exposed to global developments in theory and practice of public administration". In effect, it would have prevented her from fully contributing to the development of Iran.

The second wave of long-term scholarships falls under the Programme for Public Administration (PPA), one of three focus areas of the Colombo Plan today. Although public administration has always received much attention from the Colombo Plan, training, workshops and seminars in the past were done on a piecemeal basis. It was only following the extensive and in-depth review of the organisation in 1994 by the Eminent Persons Group that the PPA was formalised as one of three long-term, permanent programmes. The other two permanent programmes are the Programme for Private Sector Development (PPSD) and the Drug Advisory Programme (DAP).



OPPOSITE PAGE
Zohreh (second from right), Sri Lankan Salithamby Abdul Rauff (extreme right) and Bhutanese Rattu Tshering Dukpa (extreme left) were the first recipients of the revived long-term scholarships of the Colombo Plan. With them are (from left): Khairul Dzamee Daud, then Director of the PPA; Dr Ismail Baba, Dean of USM; and Patricia Chia, former Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan.

TOP LEFT
Nafeel enjoyed the opportunity of sharing experiences with people from all over the world during his year-long Master's at the KDI School of Public Policy & Management, in the Republic of Korea.

TOP MIDDLE
Kiran (second from left) aimed to become a consultant in the Ministry of Commerce & Supplies upon returning to Nepal from his Master's in Singapore.

TOP RIGHT
Deki (fourth from left) pursued a Master in Public Policy and Management at KDI. She says every day was an exciting adventure, living with so many scholars from various countries, backgrounds, cultures and traditions.

LEFT
Dr U. Sarat Chandran (second from left), Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan from 1999-2003, at the 2001 CCM, when the Colombo Plan celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Molecular Interpreter of Maladies



ABOVE
India shares its biotechnology expertise with other Colombo Plan member countries.



TOP RIGHT
Geethani hopes to introduce a new molecular test for Hepatitis in Sri Lanka.

Geethani Galagoda, a consultant virologist at the Medical Research Institute (MRI) in Sri Lanka, attended a three-week course on Gene-Based Techniques for Research in Biotechnology at the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar, from March 7-28, 2009. Her aim: to be able to introduce molecular testing for Hepatitis B & C in Sri Lanka's public health system. She talks about the relevance of the Colombo Plan course to furthering her ambition:

How useful was this programme in providing you with knowledge/skills to initiate molecular testing for Hepatitis B & C?

Molecular methods are useful in the diagnosis of many viral diseases such as herpes simplex, rotavirus, influenza, polio and encephalitis. We test for most of these viruses at MRI and the knowledge gained will be very useful to implement new tests.

How prevalent is Hepatitis B & C in Sri Lanka? Are these diseases considered major health problems in the country?

Hepatitis B and C are not very prevalent in Sri Lanka, but there are high-risk patients, such as those who have undergone repeated blood transfusions – for haemophilia, congenital spherocytosis – and those who have repeated injections such as kidney transplant patients, those with malignancies, diabetics on insulin and drug addicts who share needles. Both Hepatitis B & C can cause chronic diseases like cirrhosis and hepato-cellular carcinoma, which are difficult to treat.

How would molecular testing contribute to the diagnosis of viral diseases?

Molecular testing enables experts to find out how much of a virus is present in the body. This would be very useful as treatment programmes are very expensive. This method is not available in the public sector in Sri Lanka.

How expensive would it be to do the molecular test?

About Rs. 2,000 (US\$18) per test.



PROGRAMME FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The Colombo Plan had from the beginning been supporting human capacity development through scholarships and training. Most of the recipients of such training served in the public administrations of their countries, some of whom may have been absorbed into the private sector subsequently. Courses, seminars and workshops were held for middle to senior-level government personnel, aimed at elevating their skills in dealing with pressing issues of poverty reduction, economic management, food security and, later, leadership development, strategic management and the management of the environment. From 1995, these training initiatives fell under the purview of the Programme for Public Administration (PPA).

Thousands of civil servants within the Sri Lankan Government machinery benefitted from the Colombo Plan training, many even before the PPA was officially established as one of its permanent programmes.

B.H. Passaperuma, Director-General of the Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development, Sri Lanka, for example, was sent on numerous Colombo Plan professional enhancement programmes, beginning in 1980. The first seminar he attended, when he was a young Assistant Director in the External Resources Department of the Ministry of Finance, was on Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) Loans in Japan. "The programme was to train counterpart officers about the Japanese loan system and procedures. Nineteen

nations attended. We had a wonderful time, and learnt a lot about Japan in the one month we were there," he recalls.

Although Passaperuma's main objective was to unravel the intricacies of Japan's foreign aid system, his sharp antennae picked up much more that was equally important. For example, he quickly came to understand how it is the Japanese are so efficient. And this, too, he shared with his colleagues. "When I returned to my department in Sri Lanka, my superior asked me to present what I had learned. I mentioned two things: one, we must feel part of a team, we must feel like family and work with ethics, commitment and dedication. And, two, we have to be systematic. In everything we do, from our behaviour, our filing systems and documentation to managing diaries, it's important to be systematic."

Perhaps more pertinently for Sri Lanka's development, Passaperuma also learnt the importance of human dynamics, and how best to negotiate to get desired outcomes.

Over the years, the Colombo Plan has established close working relationships with centres of excellence in most member countries – such as the Civil Service College and the International Trade Institute of Singapore; the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization



– Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics (SEAMEO-RECSAM), the National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN) and the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), in Malaysia; Mahidol University, Thailand; and the National Institute of Technology and Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), India. Training is conducted with such centres on a regular basis.

It is a sign of the Colombo Plan's success that most of the training provided now is conducted by countries that previously were recipient nations. At these training sessions, there is a large amount of knowledge sharing, as Sandhya Leelaratne, Sri Lanka's Deputy Director of Education (Science & Mathematics Section), discovered. While attending a four-week *Professional Development Programme for Science and Mathematics Educators* organised by SEAMEO-RECSAM in Penang, Malaysia, she noted that most other countries have an experiential approach to science learning in schools. In Sri Lanka, on the other hand, practical sessions have been neglected because "at the end of the day, the students have to write down their answers, and so teachers concentrate only on theory". Appreciating the pedagogical benefits of teaching students via experiments, Leelaratne is determined to change the Sri Lankan school curriculum to reflect this.

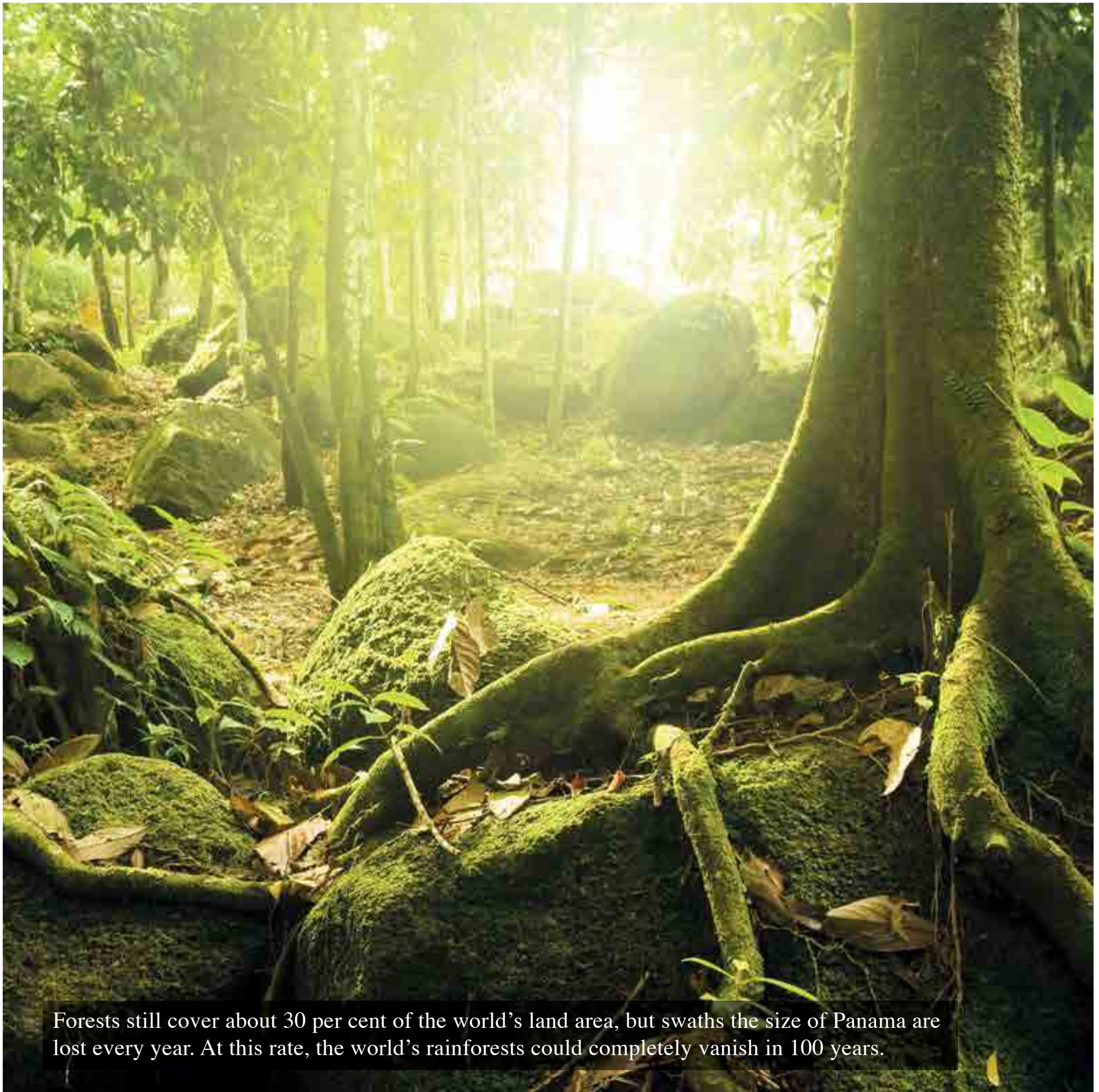
OPPOSITE PAGE
Participants of the Economic Planning and Management Training Programme, held at INTAN, Malaysia in 2008.

TOP LEFT
Passepurama is one of thousands of Sri Lankan civil servants who have benefitted from the Colombo Plan training.

TOP RIGHT
Participants of the 4th collaborative Training course on Empowering Women through Social Economic and Cultural Intervention, Jakarta, Indonesia in 2013.

LEFT
Participants of the 107th Advance Railway Training Course held at the Railway Training College in Lahore, Pakistan in 2009.





Forests still cover about 30 per cent of the world's land area, but swaths the size of Panama are lost every year. At this rate, the world's rainforests could completely vanish in 100 years.



ENVIRONMENT

Progress, unfortunately, does not come without its own challenges. In the early years of the Colombo Plan, better standards of living led to a population explosion. Under-developed countries simply could not sustain large numbers of people on limited resources. This was dealt with via effective population control programmes.

Today, the question of sustainable use of resources has again become pertinent, this time within the context of preserving clean, healthy environments that are able to sustain not only developing countries, but the entire globe, in the long term. Among the more immediate environmental issues facing the region are deforestation and loss of natural habitats, industrial pollution and climate change. Under the stewardship of the third

Secretary-General Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul, the Colombo Plan Secretariat established the Programme on Environment, which deals with just such challenges.

During Kittipan's tenure, the Thai Government, through the Thai International Development Cooperation Agency, pledged a grant of about US\$750,000 for a two-year environment programme from October 2005 till July 2007. The grant covered short and long-term research and training in topical subjects such as wetlands management, industrial ecology and environment, and hazardous waste management.

As part of the PPA, environment management courses continue to be offered by Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand in critical areas like climate change, air and industrial pollution and environmental planning.

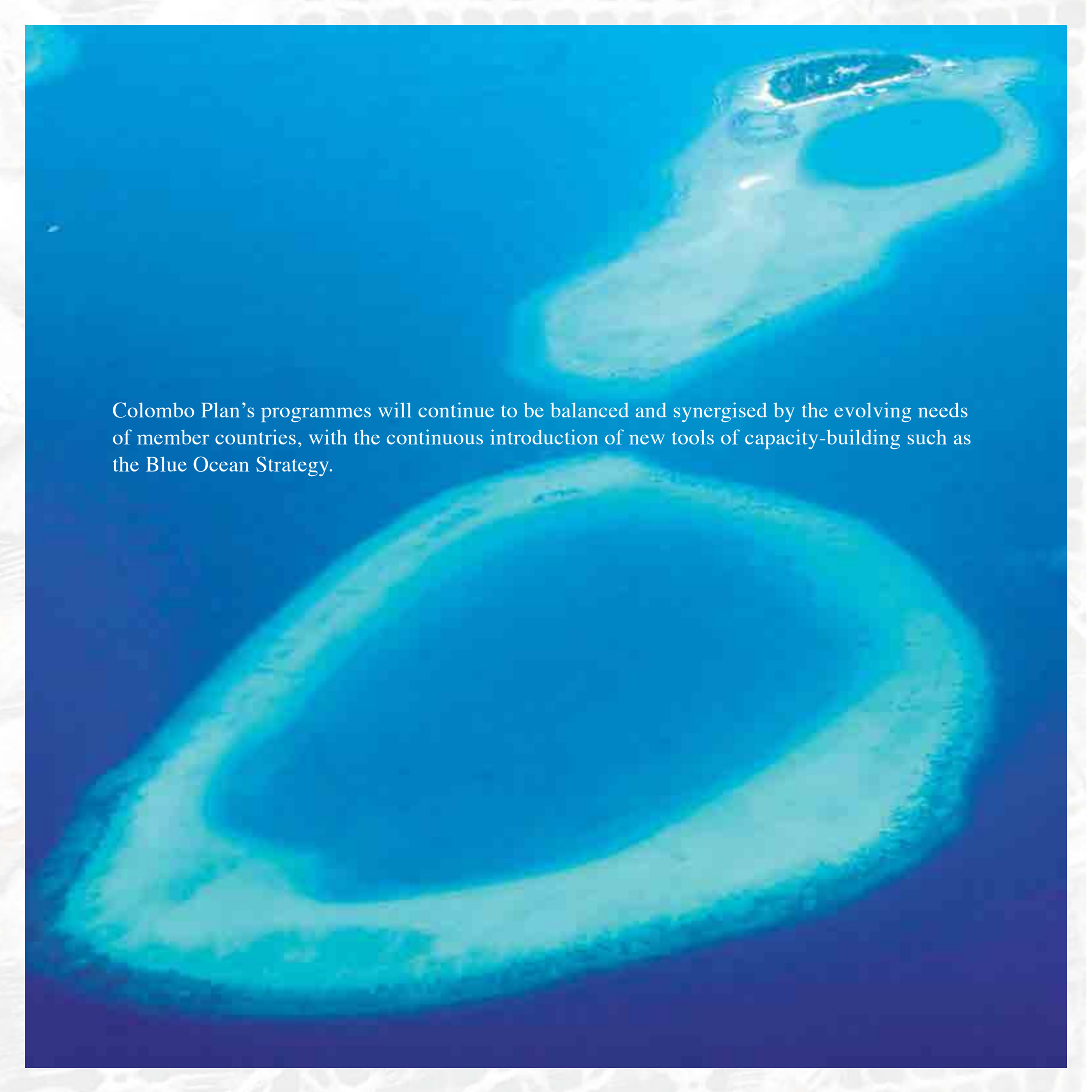
TOP LEFT
The Singapore Environment Institute hosted a Climate Change, Energy and Environment programme in February 2009.

TOP MIDDLE
Mahidol University, Thailand, hosted the Training Course on Industrial Ecology and Environment in July 2009.

TOP RIGHT
Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul was Secretary-General of the Colombo Plan when the Environment Programme took off, with a grant from the Thai Government.

LEFT
Despite their overwhelming value, wetlands represent the most highly threatened ecosystem on the planet.



An aerial photograph of a tropical atoll, showing a large, irregularly shaped lagoon in the foreground and a smaller, more circular lagoon in the background. The land is a mix of green and brown, indicating vegetation and possibly some cleared areas. The water is a deep blue, and the surrounding ocean is a lighter blue. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Colombo Plan's programmes will continue to be balanced and synergised by the evolving needs of member countries, with the continuous introduction of new tools of capacity-building such as the Blue Ocean Strategy.

THE PROGRAMME FOR PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

The ancient city of Colombo offers beautiful vistas of the deep blue Indian Ocean. But the 25 government officers representing ministries of enterprise development, trade, investment or chambers of commerce from 17 countries who gathered in the Sri Lankan capital from July 14-19, 2008, were interested in a vastly different blue ocean – one that was 'created' by two economic gurus, Prof W. Chan Kim and his INSEAD colleague, Prof Renée Mauborgne: the Blue Ocean Strategy.

The Blue Ocean Strategy outlines a plan of action for business entities to exit intensely competitive markets by creating entirely novel niches for themselves. While it is aimed primarily at businesses, the strategy is relevant also to policymakers. It helps them to understand what constitutes the most conducive environment for entrepreneurs to succeed in. Hence, the *Training Course on Entrepreneurship Development Using The Blue Ocean Strategy*. According to Mohd Haniff Hassan, the then Director of the Colombo Plan's Programme for Private Sector Development (PPSD), the course was the first

Blue Ocean Strategy Workshop to be organised for the Colombo Plan members. It was the first PPSD training to be conducted in Sri Lanka; and also the first to be attended by an Afghan participant.

The *Blue Ocean Strategy* course also exemplifies the Colombo Plan's commitment to keeping policymakers and planners up to date with new ideas and perspectives. This was, in fact, one of the objectives of the PPSD when it was established in 1995. "The PPSD came about following the suggestion of the Eminent Persons Group that public administration in developing member countries be in tune with market-oriented economic policies," explains Haniff.

"Courses such as these are useful, as many of the participants are policymakers who can advise on the right policies and means to promote investment in their respective countries. In a world where developing countries are all competing for scarce resources, it is important that we nurture market-relevant skills and a technologically savvy business environment," says Ibrahim Abdullah, the former PPSD Director from Malaysia.



ABOVE
Mohd Haniff Hassan was Director of PPSD from June 2008 – May 2009.

BELOW LEFT
Dr Sarath Amunugama, Minister of Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion of Sri Lanka, lighting an oil lamp at the opening of the *Training Programme on the Blue Ocean Strategy*. Looking on are HE Thinakorn Kanasute, 62nd President of the Colombo Plan Council and Council Member, HE Mahmoud Rahimi Gorji, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

BELOW RIGHT
Ibrahim Abdullah thanking Prof Lakshman Jayathilake for his input.





The scope of PSD is broad – from enhancing the capacity of public sector officials to create enabling environments for the private sector, to training members from the private sector itself. Just as broad are the subject areas dealt with – anything from income generation and poverty reduction to sustainable SMEs, international trade, WTO policies and entrepreneurial development. Every year, the PSD runs 10 to 12 courses, workshops, seminars and conferences, benefitting 1,500 to 2,880 participants from various levels at ministries, government agencies and the private sector.

As with the Programme for Public Administration, PSD activities are carried out in collaboration with centres of excellence in Colombo Plan member countries, such as CMC Limited in Delhi, India; the Malaysia Productivity Council (MPC); the Small and Medium Business Training



The Colombo Plan Advantage

Subashini Abeysinghe, an economist with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC), has participated in two Colombo Plan programmes targeted at building knowledge and skills within the private sector. In March 2003, she attended a seminar in Bangkok aimed at examining *The New Round of Trade Talks: Issues Pertaining to Agriculture and Service*. In May 2004, she participated in a week-long UNESCAP-Colombo Plan-KOICA training programme on *Regional Dialogue on the Role of Regionalism and Multilateralism in Shaping the International Trading System*.

The networking opportunities, exposure to best practices and the ability to amass much knowledge in a short span of time were of immense benefit to her on a personal level and to the business community on a national level. "Local networking is good, but regional networking, better. We can discuss common issues, common problems and common challenges and seek for regional solutions," she says.

Subashini believes an added advantage of the Colombo Plan is its ability to act as a conduit between academia, the corporate sector and the private sector. "We don't get WTO (World Trade Organisation) experts in Sri Lanka who have 10 to 20 years' experience to speak to you with authority. Programmes such as these allow us to acquire some baseline knowledge."

In terms of institutional- as well as capacity-building, Subhashini made a strong case for closer partnering between the CCC and the Colombo Plan. "We can look at the Colombo Plan model for our own capacity-building." Good governance, transparency and de-politicising of regional chambers of commerce would, she feels, lead to better representation for rural businesses.

"My work in the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce has been enhanced significantly through the learning and networking opportunities provided by the Colombo Plan Secretariat," she says, adding that the Colombo Plan helps individuals, organisations and non-government enterprises to meet the demands of a globalised world.

Institute, Korea International Trade Association (KITA) and the Seoul Foundation of Women and Family, in Korea; and the International Trade Institute, Singapore. Experts, academics, entrepreneurs and specialists come together to share their knowledge and experience with participants eager to learn and help their countries bridge the chasm of development.

“Since its inception in 1995, Korea has been a major contributor to the PPSD,” says Ibrahim. A number of training programmes are held in Seoul, in collaboration with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). PPSD also enjoys fruitful relationships with the India Millennium Fund, Asian Productivity Organisation, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Funding of PPSD programmes comes from voluntary contributions and cost-sharing by Colombo Plan member countries, programme-specific donations and international organisations such as the Asian Development Bank, OPEC Fund for International Cooperation and United Nations agencies. Financing of the local costs, meanwhile, is undertaken by host countries.



OPPOSITE PAGE (TOP)
KOICA-Colombo Plan Joint Training Programme on International Trade, WTO and FTA held in November 2007 in Seoul, the Republic of Korea.

LEFT
Dress-up day during the Training Programme on Industrial Development Policy, held in 2008 in Seoul.

ABOVE LEFT
While attending the Training Programme on Systems Development for SMEs, organised by the Malaysia Productivity Council in 2009, the participants visited the country's administrative centre, Putrajaya.

ABOVE RIGHT
Participants of a training programme organised by CMC Limited, New Delhi, India.



ABOVE
Reverend Bodhi is very appreciative of the DAP, saying all his staff at the Mithuru Mithuro Movement have undergone at least one of the training programmes.

BOTTOM LEFT
Atty Pio Abarro (centre) was the first Director of the Drug Advisory Programme.

BOTTOM RIGHT
The 9th AFTC Conference held in Colombo, Sri Lanka 2013.

THE DRUG ADVISORY PROGRAMME

Drug abuse is a major issue affecting countries in the Asia-Pacific, and the problems of addiction cut across age, gender, income and ethnicity. It has led to increased rates of crime and violence, susceptibility to life-threatening diseases, and adverse social behaviour. Youth are particularly susceptible to its devastating effects. Substance abuse interferes with their normal mental and emotional development and robs them of their potential. As a result, everyone suffers: the individuals; their families and friends; and society as a whole.

In 1972, gravely concerned by the growing numbers of youth succumbing to the lure of illicit drugs, the Colombo Plan decided to address the problem through a proactive drug demand reduction programme. The Colombo Plan's Drug Advisory Programme (DAP), funded by 14 member countries with the United States as the major donor, has made treatment and rehabilitation, preventive drug education, training and community action the bedrock of its efforts to combat drug addiction.

One of its earliest initiatives was to convince governments to take concerted action against drug abuse. Each member country was encouraged to set up national drug focal points which could look at effective policies and legislation, and develop strategies on a bilateral or multilateral basis, to reduce drug demand and supply. In all of this, the DAP plays a strong advisory role and keeps a finger firmly on the pulse of the drug scene, so it can help member countries respond quickly and effectively to new problems as they arise.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

A 12-year-old Sri Lankan boy saw prisoners in chains being taken from the courthouse to prison. He wrote to the Prisons Commissioner, asking would it not be better to give the prisoners spiritual healing? The Commissioner replied that it was a very noble idea and suggested the boy complete his A-Levels and then make it his mission to provide prisoners with spiritual healing. The boy did just that, with the help of the Colombo Plan. The Venerable Kuppiyawatte Bodananda Thero (Reverend Bodhi) started the Mithuru Mithuro Movement for recovering addicts, using the therapeutic community approach augmented by spirituality for treatment and rehabilitation. The DAP supported the Movement by training its people, as well as helping in the after care provided and particularly in establishing peer and family support groups.

"The Colombo Plan has provided scholarships and offered many training opportunities under its Drug Advisory Programme. All the staff at our centres have been trained by the Colombo Plan," he says. Reverend Bodhi himself was sent on a Colombo Plan scholarship for a six-month training course in New York. He has also attended several of the DAP training programmes.

"This sharing of knowledge and skills has enabled us to help hundreds of drug addicts," he adds. "The Government has four centres, with a total capacity of 150 clients. In comparison, Mithuru Mithuro Movement has five centres and a total capacity of 500 clients. We have the biggest centre and the highest success rate in the country, with almost 70 per cent being completely cured of their addiction."





The Colombo Plan was the first international organisation to conduct training for addiction professionals and remains the leading organisation in the region to do so. "Our strategy is simple – make a real difference by creating a pool of knowledgeable and skilled resource people to tackle drug abuse prevention and treatment," says Tay Bian How, a former Director of the DAP, from Malaysia. Each year, about 25 short-term training courses are held, attracting 1,000 people from all over the Asia-Pacific region who are equipped with the understanding and ability that will help them deal with the drug problem in their respective countries.

In Afghanistan, for example, the DAP runs basic demand reduction courses aimed at creating a core group of trained Afghans to handle drug prevention, treatment and aftercare. Elsewhere, women are being trained as facilitators and counsellors in drug abuse prevention at a community level. Courses for drug demand reduction have been held in the following member countries: Bhutan, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam. Drug professionals across the region have attended DAP-run Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse courses. Fellowships awarded to officials involved in drug demand reduction efforts have enabled a wider dissemination of regional best practices in drug abuse prevention, treatment and control.

Tay sees life skills training as critical in both drug prevention and treatment. In fact, the introduction of this component is considered a landmark achievement of the DAP. Quoting J. G. Botvin, who developed Life Skills, Tay says the idea is to present drug resistance in the larger context of the social skills that young people need to help them navigate the minefield of adolescence. "I saw how successful it was when I introduced it as part of a preventive drug education programme in Malaysian schools. I felt it would be suitable for teachers as well as students, and participants who came for our drug treatment and rehabilitation courses found it very useful, so we came up with another module – life skills for treatment," he explains. He believes the DAP drug prevention and treatment programmes have improved steadily over the years, becoming more comprehensive in approach and with a much richer content.

In the eighties, the DAP promoted the Therapeutic Community Approach (TC) for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts across Asia. TC is based on the belief that chronic addiction comes with an acquired lifestyle, and recovery requires a holistic approach that challenges ingrained behaviour and teaches healthy alternatives. Addicts are brought together in a supportive community and encouraged to help each other throughout every aspect of their treatment.

At the Mithuru Mithuro Movement, spirituality is an important element in the recovery process.

Spreading Evidence-Based Approaches to Drug Demand Reduction



The United States has adopted a truly international approach toward the drug challenges facing the world. Besides focusing on its own domestic drug problem, the U.S. Department of State, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), actively promotes public and private cooperation in the creation, dissemination, and training of evidence-based best practices for substance abuse treatment and prevention.

Alongside the Colombo Plan, INL is widely recognised as a major player in funding and organising international, regional, and national training programs, attended by leaders and service providers in the anti-drug abuse movement. These activities have gone a long way toward meeting the global drug challenge. In over three decades of demand reduction work, INL has worked in over 70 countries, empowering local authorities, while also acting as a strategic platform for knowledge sharing. INL is a strong proponent of disseminating global best practices, providing countries and treatment providers with the best knowledge available, in a cost-effective and easy to replicate format. This approach has helped the U.S. Government and Colombo Plan member countries to develop policies and programmes to combat international narcotics and crime, but most importantly, to save lives.

INL's senior Demand Reduction expert, Thom Browne, says, "Addiction is a major concern for many countries. In partnership with excellent implementers like the

Colombo Plan, INL aims to effectively address the global drug challenges by exchanging information on successful drug abuse prevention and treatment best practices, pointing out pitfalls to avoid, and highlighting new ideas and emerging problems."

INL is particularly proud of its work tackling new and previously unaddressed challenges in drug treatment and prevention. In the past few years alone, INL has funded the creation and training of a Universal Treatment Curriculum, Universal Prevention Curriculum, development of a treatment curriculum specifically addressing the needs of women, a recovery curriculum, and is currently developing a curriculum to address the new and alarming phenomenon of child addiction.

As an indication of the respect and appreciation for the unparalleled work of Colombo Plan, the organisation currently receives more than \$46 million in funds from INL.

No country in the world is free from the blight of drugs, and addressing the problem requires the full cooperation and political will of all nations. With the continued support of stellar partners like the Colombo Plan, INL and the U.S. Government remain committed to leading efforts to reduce the demand for drugs globally, aiming to help countries create drug-free societies and generations.

TOP LEFT
Thom Browne has been a prime mover in terms of advice and support from the United States to the DAP.

TOP RIGHT
Thom Browne and team.

Since 2000, however, the DAP has been promoting the evidence-based approach in drug treatment and rehabilitation that provides a comprehensive range of services to assist recovering persons and their significant others to maintain sobriety. Apart from drug reduction, the DAP also implements supply reduction activities.

The current DAP Director, Antonius Riva Setiawan from Indonesia says “We have recognised the need to also support Law Enforcement efforts in the fight against drugs and are very appreciative of the support extended by member states who generously offer their expertise and resources to conduct regional training for Narcotic Law Enforcement officers from Asia and the Pacific.”

Courses such as the International Training on Precursor Chemical Control conducted in collaboration with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Thailand, the Regional Training for Drug Law Enforcement Officers conducted in collaboration with the Central Narcotics Bureau, Singapore, and the Regional Training on Forensic Drug Analysis conducted in collaboration with the Narcotics Control Bureau, India are some examples of these initiatives.

BUILDING NETWORKS FOR COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION

Recognising that non-governmental organisations play a crucial role in mobilising communities against the drug problem, the DAP has fostered closer collaboration between NGOs at a national, regional and global level. It spearheaded the setting up of the International Federation of Non-Government Organisations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO), and the South Asian Federation of Non-Government Organisations (SAFNGO). NGO effectiveness has been greatly enhanced as a result of the exchange of information, knowledge, ideas and experiences.

Iflal Abdullah, President of the Sri Lankan Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations Against Drug Abuse (FONGOADA), attributes much of the success of FONGOADA's efforts against drug abuse to the funding and training resources provided by the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme.



“We enjoy close collaboration with the DAP, which has supported many of our activities in terms of funds and resource persons. This includes the 11th International Federation of NGOs Conference in Sri Lanka (in 1989) and the 20th IFNGO Conference in 2003, at which all Colombo Plan countries were represented,” says Iflal. “We do not have much specialised training on drug abuse prevention in the region. The Government of Sri Lanka has started a diploma course in Sinhala. Similar training should also be provided in English, and the Colombo Plan would be the best organisation to do so.”

Iflal himself has attended several DAP courses on drug abuse prevention and drug demand reduction.

“Our challenge is how to connect with young users,” he explains. “Three boys who attended a camp in Kandy disappeared after three days because they felt the other participants were much older and they didn't belong. It helps tremendously to be able to reach out to them. We can't fight this drug problem alone. Collaboration with the DAP has given us access to the experiences of other drug professionals, and strengthened our efforts to deal with this growing threat.”

One of the greatest achievements of the DAP's efforts in the mobilisation of NGOs against drugs is the formation of umbrella NGOs at the national level in member countries, such as PEMADAM, in Malaysia; BASMIDA of Brunei, ANCC of Thailand; BERSAMA of Indonesia; FONGOADA of Sri Lanka; FINGODAP of India; PHILCADSA of the Philippines; MANA from Myanmar; and SANA from Singapore.

It has also helped to create partnerships among governments, non-governmental organisations and international agencies dealing with the drug problem. Regular forums, conferences and meetings implemented by the DAP have strengthened the partnerships and facilitated the sharing of experiences and success stories.



TOP
The Colombo Plan's DAP spearheaded the setting up of the International Federation of Non-Government Organisations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO). Seen in this picture are participants of the 23rd IFNGO Conference in Brunei Darussalam.

ABOVE
Iflal says collaboration with the DAP has given FONGOADA access to the experiences of other drug professionals.



Mithra aims to build a rehabilitation centre on this island, close to Piliyandala.

On a High... Without Drugs

Many believe that drug addicts can never recover. Sri Lankan Mithra Karunanayake will tell you otherwise. He was a drug addict for 14 years. He has been a recovered addict for 13. The Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme played a big role in his recovery.

He remembers the turning point in his life. "This was in 1996. My parents left for the United States and closed the doors on me. I was left on the streets and had nowhere to go," he recalls. During the previous four years, he had tried fighting his drug addiction at Nawa Jeevana (New Life), a Christian rehabilitation centre which used faith-based healing, but relapsed many times. "Now I was desperate. I turned to God and re-discovered my physical and mental strength."

While at Nawa Jeevana, he was introduced to the Colombo Plan and became a trainee. He attended several workshops, life skills training, self-help groups and community programmes of the Colombo Plan including all four Asian Recovery Symposia. "I had good qualifications, but no one would hire me. Then the Colombo Plan started giving me printing jobs," he says.

He managed to get himself a weekly column on social issues in a local newspaper. "I became well-known through this column, and many parents as well as young addicts came to me for help and counselling." In 2001, a young woman brought her younger brother – who had drunk poison – to Nawa Jeevana. Mithra was by then a lecturer at the centre. "I went in to help the family, and ended up getting married into the bargain! My wife ran a small T-shirt business. Together, we built it up. The Colombo Plan is a major client," he says with a smile.

In October 2008, Mithra started the Mithuru Foundation on a farm in Piliyandala, about 16 km south of Colombo. "A Catholic Father gave it to me," he says. Mithra had been working as a counsellor in prisons for 10 years, and was getting regular invitations to talk to inmates of many drug treatment facilities, when he felt the desire to set up his own centre. "Many centres provide treatment but when the inmates come out, they don't know what to do. If they don't have the mental and spiritual strength, they go back to drugs. That's why I wanted to start a training centre for screen printing, sewing, basic computer knowledge, mushroom cultivation and poultry. While they are rehabilitating, they can learn a 'trade,' so that they can start their own business when they come out."

The centre already houses 15 recovering addicts. They get help with their addiction while working on the farm or undergoing vocational training. They stay full-time. "In addition, we provide faith-based healing, prayers, spiritual healing, meditation and physical activities. They catch fish from the river, and there are a few ducks. We plan to start a poultry farm for eggs," Mithra says.

"Meanwhile, my sister in America gave me an island close to Piliyandala. I'm trying to save money to build a centre on the island. At the moment, there's no drinking water, no building, no electricity. I will start with a well and a small hut and build it gradually from there," Mithra asserts.

Since 2008, the Colombo Plan DAP has been organising a biannual meeting of its Focal Points to discuss regional drug issues and the corresponding training needs for anti-narcotics personnel. This also gives DAP the opportunity to update itself on new trends and training initiatives.

MOBILISING COMMUNITIES AGAINST DRUGS

The DAP believes one of the best ways to tackle drug prevention and addiction is to mobilise communities into helping prevent and reduce illicit drug use, especially among young people. "After all, behaviour is the outcome of the influence of multiple levels of our social environment – family, school, peer groups and community. Our challenge is to encourage members of the community to get involved in prevention and treatment efforts," says Tay. "We have achieved great success with the programmes that we initiated, and these success stories are being shared across the region through the partnerships and networks that we have established."

One of the DAP's major achievements has been the involvement of faith-based organisations, in drug demand reduction efforts as well as the recovery process for drug addicts. "We have a diverse religious community across Asia, and while many of these groups are aware of the prevalence of drug abuse problems, they don't know how to help those in need," Tay explains. "We provide them with the knowledge and tools to enable them to deal with drug abuse prevention and aftercare of treated drug dependents in the community."



When the Colombo Plan renewed assistance to Afghanistan in 2003, the DAP started a systematic drug demand reduction programme in the country which is the world's leading producer of opium. Many Afghans had resorted to drugs to find an escape from the apparently unending struggle against war and poverty. Some women had started using drugs to combat their depression after being abandoned by their husbands; some had introduced opium to their children to help them deal with physical and mental pain. Mothers who were carpet weavers fed opium to their infants to keep them asleep so they could work undisturbed. "That was in 2003," Tay recalls.

Along with this came a groundbreaking achievement. The DAP brought 547 Mullahs from 34 different provinces (including the former President of the Mujahideens) together for a two-day symposium. The topics covered were: *Understanding Drug Addiction from the Islamic Perspective; Role of the Mosques in Drug Demand Reduction - An Overview; Role and Functions of Religious Leaders in Primary Prevention; and Role of Religious Leaders in Drug Treatment & Rehabilitation and Aftercare*. As a result, the National Council of Ulama announced a *fatwa* against drug consumption, cultivation, production and trafficking in 2005.



ABOVE
Antonius Riva Setiawan assumed the position of Director of the DAP in September 2011.

TOP LEFT
Regional Training for Drug Law Enforcement Officers in collaboration with the Central Narcotics Bureau, Singapore.

TOP RIGHT
Women counsellors training conducted at PPK Hospital, Chennai, India in 2012.

BELOW
A groundbreaking achievement was bringing together religious leaders from all over Afghanistan to attend the DAP training programme.





Afghan's Anti-Drug Lord

Dr Zafar Khan, a medical practitioner by profession, has been involved in Afghan's fight against drugs since early 2003. Around the same time, the Colombo Plan's involvement in Afghanistan resumed, following a 23-year hiatus caused, first, by the invasion of the USSR and, subsequently, by internal turmoil.

Soon after the Taliban was defeated in 2002, and Afghanistan was able to resume international relations, Dr Zafar was made Head of Drug Demand Reduction in the Counter Narcotics Directorate of the National Security Council in Kabul. When the Colombo Plan extended its Drug Advisory Programme (DAP) to Afghanistan, the newly established Ministry of Counter Narcotics was its focal point, with Dr Zafar as the main contact person.

Part of his functions was to organise training for Afghans involved in the country's concerted efforts to reduce drug demand. "More than 1,000 workers have been trained inside and outside of the country, including staff of government organisations and NGOs involved in drug treatment, drug abuse prevention, religious scholars, even drug supply reduction staff such as police," he says.

Dr Zafar is full of admiration for the work of the DAP, and notes how the scope of DAP's efforts in Afghanistan has gradually increased. "In the first year, we only had training workshops, whereas now we have a whole range of programmes, from capacity building and institution building to drug treatment centres and even media information campaigns," he says.

Just as the DAP has increased its involvement in the country, Dr Zafar's role and responsibilities have similarly risen. In December 2004, he was promoted to Director of Drug Demand Reduction, Ministry of Counter Narcotics. In June 2007, he became Director General of Policy and Coordination within the same ministry. In April

2008, he was appointed as Deputy Minister, Policy and Coordination, Ministry of Counter Narcotics.

Part of his extensive responsibilities is to review and update Counter Narcotics strategies in the country. This he does with input from local as well as international organisations. The problem with the drug menace in Afghanistan is its complexity and the fact that it is embedded within the very social fabric of the nation. While the Government is committed to drastically reducing poppy cultivation in the country – which ranks as the highest in the world – there are powerful forces to contend with.

With the aid of international organisations, however, Dr Zafar remains optimistic of being able to overcome the drug problem. Of the DAP, he says: "The Colombo Plan is well-established in the field of drug control and demand reduction. It has experienced trainers and resource persons... and the ability to build capacity and make institutional changes to make demand reduction programmes sustainable in Afghanistan."

In 2012, the Afghanistan Treatment project was expanded from 26 residential centers to 33 with a total capacity of 870 beds. Out of 33 centers, 23 centers conducted home-based treatment with an annual capacity to cover 3680 clients. The CPDAP has also started 11 OPTCs to fill the increasing gap in treatment facilities. Today, the Afghanistan project has the capacity to treat 8,420 clients annually including residential, home-based and OPTC modalities. Currently Afghanistan's treatment system has undergone a process of maturity over several years and empirical successes have been documented through extensive evaluation. The treatment project is being gradually transitioned to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Government of Afghanistan from 2014." A Vocational Training Project was also started to help recovering addicts attain self-sustainability through a holistic approach to rehabilitation and after care services.

CPDAP has also initiated several prevention initiatives in Afghanistan including integration of Preventive Drug Education into the school curriculum and the training of over 1000 teachers from 21 provinces. To date, PDE has covered over 300,000 students across Afghanistan. The CPDAP also helped the Ministry of Counter Narcotics of Afghanistan to launch a comprehensive public awareness and engagement plan against the illicit cultivation of opium poppy in 34 provinces in Afghanistan. The Mobile Exhibition and Street Theater project is another prevention initiative, using popular art forms like street theater to spread the anti-drug message.

ABOVE

Despite the complexity of the drug problem in Afghanistan, Dr Zafar Khan remains optimistic of being able to overcome it with multi-stakeholder, cross-border support and cooperation.

BELOW

Counter narcotics public information campaign in Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan Stakeholders' Meeting is a forum for the Colombo Plan, Ministry of Counter Narcotics, Ministry of Public Health and NGOs to review and determine ways to improve treatment initiatives in Afghanistan.





The future of these Afghan children hangs on a balance, which the DAP is determined to tip towards the side free of narcotics.

Heralding Hope and Bringing Dignity



The late Naveed Younus
(centre in the above pictures)



What brought a successful Peshawar businessman to a DAP drug treatment and rehabilitation training course? A big heart and a dedication to making a difference in the lives of poverty stricken people, including drug addicts he saw lying unattended in the streets of Karachi, Pakistan. Muhammad Naveed Younus and a group of like-minded friends could not drive by and do nothing. They put their heads together and raised funds to provide food, education and other assistance for widows, destitute children, drug addicts, prisoners and people in drought-hit areas.

They managed to raise US\$6,000 and used this to send the addicts to treatment centres. At the time, there was no free treatment and rehabilitation centre for Pakistan's almost five million drug addicts. With the support and encouragement of the Anti Narcotics Force (ANF), Naveed and his friends set up the New Horizons Care Centre (NHCC) in 2002. It was the first centre to offer its services totally free.

Large numbers of patients at a time are cared for at NHCC facilities, where they receive food, shelter, medicines and treatment. Recovering addicts are monitored, receive vigilant aftercare to prevent a relapse, as well as self-help support, including training to help them run their own small businesses. And all these, free of cost.

Just as a group of businessmen in Peshawar spearheaded the establishment of NHCC, a group of university students in India, initiated the Society for Promotion of Youth Masses (SPYM) to curb the alarming drug culture among youth. The two organisations share the same vision: to cater to marginalised communities that are unable to access treatment facilities and services.

With more than 28 years experience in the Drug De-addiction field, SPYM mainly targets street children. The programme follows a well formulated and easily accessible treatment plan. Picked up from Railway stations, under bridges and slums, the children are provided with free drug treatment services and shelter.

SPYM, which had a humble beginning in university hostel rooms, was initiated by a group of students with the burning desire to bring about a change among their peers. Today, SPYM has grown with a wide network across the country and is providing services to those suffering from drug addiction especially vulnerable children.

Like NHCC, SPYM is among the organisations that received technical support and training from the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme. "The facilities extended to these street children would not have been possible without the active support of Colombo Plan," says Dr. Rajesh Kumar, the Executive Director of SPYM. In 2005, CPDAP with funding support from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), US Department of State had established and supported seven outreach programmes in Afghanistan, Malaysia, Pakistan and the Philippines. In 2012, CPDAP expanded this into the Maldives, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Liberia and Iraq.



ABOVE
ODIC Stakeholder
Meeting in Bangkok
Thailand hosted by ONCB
Thailand

ODIC facilities run by
SPYM in India supported
by Drug Advisory
Programme

Over the years, the DAP's efforts to strengthen and support faith-based prevention and aftercare activities have gained momentum across Afghanistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Several of these faith-based initiatives are co-sponsored by Malaysia and the United States. For religious leaders, it has provided an opportunity to become catalysts of change in drug demand reduction.

The DAP has also developed family support group networks as a mechanism to prevent relapse among recovering addicts and to help them reintegrate into mainstream society.

"Our experience is that the most critical juncture for family and community involvement is at the point when the addict graduates from a treatment centre. Helping him out of his addiction doesn't give him a new life. It merely puts him at the starting point on the path to building a new life," says Tay. "Where is he going to live? How will he get a job? How is he going to face the people in his neighbourhood? If he doesn't find the answers to these questions, he may not be able to stay on the road to recovery."

Aftercare is therefore something that the DAP takes very seriously. In order to make a real difference in the next chapter of an addict's life, it has worked very hard to establish effective family support group networks that can provide recovering addicts and their families with the help and resources they need to help them cope with the many challenges they encounter.



Young people have also been roped into the battle against drugs. The DAP has invested considerable time and resources in education and training to build widespread awareness among youth of the dangers of drugs and develop peer leaders who will spearhead projects and programmes in their own schools and neighbourhoods. Ten sessions of the Asian Youth Congress have been conducted and the first ever Global Forum for Youth Leaders on Drug Use Prevention was conducted in February 2014 in Abu Dhabi to empower young people against drugs. "Looking at the current trend of drug use we see that youth are on the front line, therefore DAP is dedicated to meeting the challenge by focusing more on programmes to help youth cope with pressure and avoid drugs through training, awareness campaigns, publications and promoting healthy lifestyles," says Riva, Director of the DAP.



The Colombo Plan Gender Affairs Programme

The Colombo Plan's Gender Affairs Programme (CPGAP) began in a humble way in 2007 through facilitating transit shelters for women under the drug advisory programme. In the years that followed, there was growing realisation of the need for a more focused effort to deal with the wide-ranging issues faced by women and children.

In 2012, at its 43rd meeting in Manado, Indonesia, the Consultative Committee stressed the importance of establishing a separate programme for women and children under the Colombo Plan. The Colombo Plan Council approved the establishment of the CPGAP at a meeting on 7 May 2014.

The CPGAP will:

- Increase awareness of gender equality, gender development, women's legal rights and gender issues among developing member countries.
- Raise funds for capacity building and direct empowerment programmes for women.
- Conduct research on key gender and child issues.
- Share knowledge and experiences on issues and programmes for women and children among member countries.
- Represent the Colombo Plan in gender and child related international forums and discussions.
- Assist member countries to align gender and child related policies with global standards and practices.

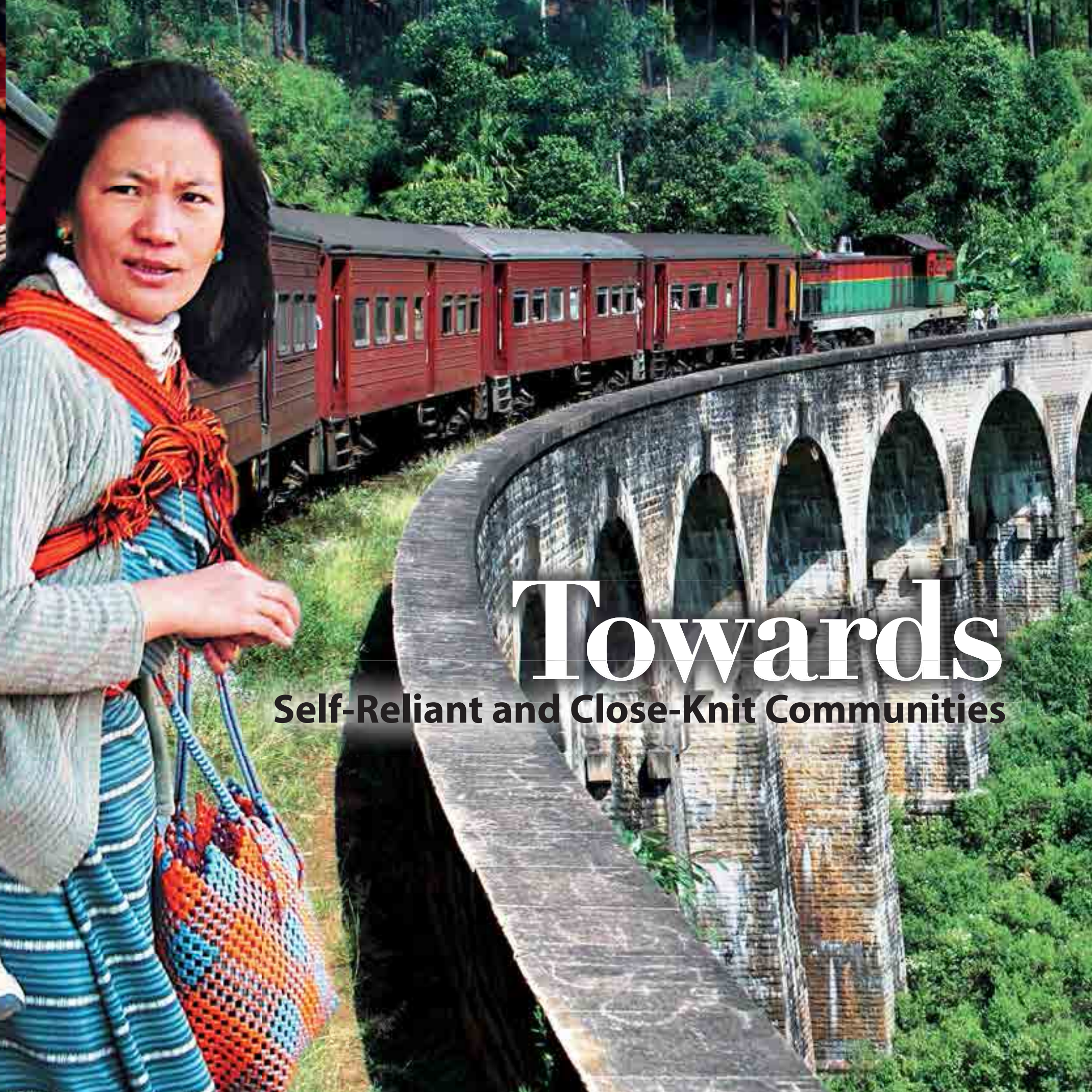


TOP
The 9th Asian Youth Congress – Stay Smart for a Drug-Free Asia, Osaka, Japan, 9-11 July 2012.

ABOVE
The Wadan Treatment Centre is part of a growing network of drug treatment facilities in Afghanistan, which today boasts 26 such centres.



PHOTO OF MONGOLIAN TEXTILE BY MARK HEARD;
PHOTO OF BHUTANESE MOTHER & CHILD BY JUDY KOH



Towards

Self-Reliant and Close-Knit Communities

“My mission is to create unity and harmony by enhancing networking efforts and strengthening Colombo Plan’s presence in all member countries. I believe we can attain peace and stability for a well contented global community by rethinking the idea of development based on the principle of Gross National Happiness (GNH).”

KINLEY DORJI, THE COLOMBO PLAN SECRETARY-GENERAL



Brunei's entry into the Colombo Plan in 2008 is a sure sign that the world still needs an international organisation that operates on the principles of inclusiveness and collaboration.



Kinley Dorji hopes to see much stronger collaboration and sharing of knowledge and experiences for mutual benefit among the Colombo Plan member states.

Coming from a family of nine brothers and sisters and having grown up in a simple Bhutanese village, Kinley Dorji understands implicitly the need for close kinship and a strong community spirit in building peace, harmony and mutual well-being among nations.

His belief in strong families, empowered youth and the universal values of integrity, honesty and unity of purpose, has marked his 33 years of service in the Royal Government of Bhutan. These values underpin his vision of a vibrant, internationally important Colombo Plan. He sees this 63-year-old organisation playing a pivotal role in addressing drug issues, youth unemployment, gender equality and sustainable development.

“Colombo Plan has, over the years, accumulated extensive experience and wisdom, and is ready to make a greater impact as a platform for new ideas, new thinking and effective solutions,” Kinley Dorji says.

“My mission is to create unity and harmony by enhancing networking efforts and strengthening Colombo Plan’s presence in all member countries. I believe we can attain peace and stability for a well contented global

community by rethinking the idea of development based on the principle of Gross National Happiness (GNH),” he adds.

In 1996, he was asked to establish the Youth Guidance and Counseling Section in Bhutan, which later became a full-fledged Department of Youth and Sports under the Ministry of Education, which invested resources towards building strength and resilience among young people. His success put him in the driver’s seat for yet another important organisation, the Bhutan Narcotics Control Agency. He started these organisations single-handedly from scratch, and under his leadership they implemented several critical social development and drug demand reduction initiatives.

“I realised that for these organisations to grow and succeed, we needed to foster strong networking as well as regional and international linkages. I have seen the power of collaboration in creating effective change at grassroots level for community transformation,” Dorji explains.

This will underscore his strategies for effective implementation of Colombo Plan programmes and activities over the next four years. Priority will be given to addressing common issues affecting young people especially in regard to poverty alleviation and drug addiction.

“I am also very passionate about the need for decision-making by consensus and for close consultation among Colombo Plan member states. I would like to see more nations joining the Colombo Plan family and sharing knowledge, skills, expertise, as well as to build capacity in the interests of the common people.”

WEAVING SKILLS, CAPACITY AND KNOWLEDGE

In 2008 and 2009, the Colombo Plan Secretariat focused on the enhancement and expansion of human resources development of member countries. This was done in response to a needs analysis carried out at end 2007. The Secretariat sought to increase the integrity of its efforts by a series of programmes, visits and dialogues that affirmed



ties with member countries through their national focal points. Brunei Darussalam became a provisional member in November 2008, clearly demonstrating that the values of inclusiveness and equal opportunity continue to attract nations committed to global cooperation and prosperity. In the Colombo Plan, all members have equal rights and equal responsibilities, from the membership fees to our expectations of member countries in terms of shared responsibilities.

Every member is acknowledged and honoured, and welcomed to participate in a meaningful way. Indonesia is a case in point. While being a major beneficiary of the Colombo Plan's technical and financial support, it is also becoming more significant as a contributor towards the Colombo Plan programmes. In the true spirit of South-South cooperation, Indonesia is sharing its best practices with other Colombo Plan member countries from 2010.

In 2007-2009, the Colombo Plan responded to the new demands of development by more than doubling the number of programmes run. A total of 64 programmes was implemented in 2008 itself, directly impacting more than 1,500 people from 21 countries. The careful process of participant selection will have a positive multiplier effect within the communities in which they serve and contribute. They will finally knit strong communities and enable the systemic attrition of poverty and under-development.

Every Colombo Plan participant comes to understand the tacit values that bind this august organisation. The Colombo Plan, under its present leadership, continues to have the courage to embrace the special needs of disadvantaged groups, the honesty and integrity to 'walk the talk' and to ensure its projects and programmes contribute towards bridging the development gap.

A fine example of this is an education programme for underprivileged children in Bhutan. Recognising that education is critical for development, the Colombo Plan has since 2006 provided assistance to support the basic education needs of 30 school-going children aged 14 to 17 from large rural families, single parent families and poor farming families from across the mountainous country. This programme is being implemented until 2012, in cooperation with the Youth Development Fund.

A BEAUTIFUL ASIAN TAPESTRY TEARING AT THE SEAMS

Although much progress has been made since the 1950s, there are dangers that threaten to undermine this. A particularly insidious threat is that of drug dependency, which reared its ugly head in the 1970s and is casting a long shadow on developmental efforts. The threat is real. The possibility of it undermining the progress made even more so.

The Colombo Plan's Drug Advisory Programme (DAP) began waging a war against this threat in 1973. With funding from 14 member governments, effective programmes have been designed. The protocols associated with ridding countries of their drug pestilence are two-fold: demand reduction and supply reduction. "There is an urgent need for international cooperation, which is precisely what the Colombo Plan is fostering. US support for the work of the Colombo Plan's DAP recognises this," says Thomas Browne, Deputy Director of the US Department of State Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

A pressing need to benchmark best practices and to standardise the approaches used have resulted in an

Council meetings are held quarterly, attended by resident heads of mission of member countries in Colombo.





The ACCE trainers after taking their NAADAC Level 1 Examination.

innovative certification programme. The DAP established a training arm, the Asian Centre for Certification and Education of Addiction Professionals (ACCE) – now called the International Centre for Certification and Education of Addiction Professionals (ICCE) – on February 16, 2009. This was made possible with funding from the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Department of State, and implemented in collaboration with the National Association for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counsellors (NAADAC), USA, one of the most prestigious certification institutions in the United States. This certification programme is raising the bar for addiction professionals by enhancing their knowledge, skills and competence.

In the coming years, Asia will have a cadre of addiction professionals able to take up the challenge of caring for recovering individuals and families.

“It is important to have trained professionals in this field because the problem of drug addiction, treatment and recovery is complex. It requires real understanding and the application of methods that actually work. A good number of addicts would like to recover, but they need proper support mechanisms to do this,” says Dr Zafar Khan, former Deputy Minister, Policy and Coordination, Ministry of Counter Narcotics in Afghanistan.

A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE

Timely intervention is what the Colombo Plan Secretariat aims to achieve. The Colombo Plan continues to balance the scales of needs and resources. Efforts to step up the intensity and efficacy of programmes have put great pressure on its funds and funding mechanisms. At the same time, for the Secretariat to function optimally in

terms of service delivery, it needs resources to strengthen its own organisational structure and capacity. The need, therefore, for voluntary funding has become critical.

Public administration continues to be at the forefront of development. Its quality and efficiency determine the potential of a country to achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This places the PPA in a very significant position within the Colombo Plan. Its programmes in prioritised areas are designed to increase knowledge, skills and professionalism within the civil service in much needed areas of leadership development, economic management, strategic management, poverty amelioration, food security and environmental issues.

It is expected that the public sector programmes will continue to be balanced and synergised by the Programme for Private Sector Development (PPSD). Through the PPSD, the Colombo Plan enables government agencies, chambers of commerce and quasi-governmental organisations to create good business environments. Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) are particularly targeted, as they play a key role in the economic growth of developing countries.

Training and finance provided to SMEs will drive productive capacity, competitiveness and enable them, in turn, to create jobs to alleviate poverty. Without training and access to funding, SMEs cannot acquire and absorb new technologies, nor can they expand in global markets or even strike up business linkages with larger firms.



In addition to SME development, the Colombo Plan, through its networks and partnerships, will continue to provide programmes and workshops on technology transfer, business management and best practices. It acts as a knowledge repository by calling upon member countries to share resources that deal with productivity, trade and industrialisation, and economic and environmental policies.

“By increasing the capacity of entrepreneurs and civil servants, exposing them to new knowledge and experiential learning, it is hoped the propensity to succeed becomes appreciably higher in the near and medium term,” says Ibrahim bin Abdullah, Director of the PPSD. “To obtain the best outcomes, PPSD collaborates with member governments and their centres of excellence to implement various programmes.”

Besides current partner agencies, PPSD expects to see increasingly more collaboration with the private sector.

TOP
Secretary-General Kinley Dorji

BELOW
An Indonesian delegation’s visit to the Colombo Plan Secretariat in April 2009.



Tay: Building a Cadre of Drug Professionals

As Director of the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (DAP) for nearly six years, Tay Bian How has been the primary force behind several milestone initiatives to reduce drug demand in the Asia-Pacific region. When he joined the DAP in 2000, he brought with him not only an excellent grasp of the drug abuse issues facing Asian nations, but also a mind brimming with innovative ideas on how to tackle this problem.

Very quickly, he ramped up the DAP's drug demand reduction strategies. When he took over as Director, the DAP was running six to nine programmes a year with an annual budget of US\$200,000. This has grown to about US\$12 million, including 10 long-term programmes in Afghanistan and the region.

Tay believes passionately in the need to share information and best practices. "We have a wealth of accumulated knowledge and experience, and this is being used to build the human resource capacity of member governments, non-governmental organisations and faith-based organisations, as well as private sector institutions involved in drug demand reduction," he says.

It was Tay who introduced life skills training, which has proven highly effective in both prevention and treatment programmes. And it was his team that developed a series of training manuals and guidebooks which are being

used by drug abuse professionals across the region. It was Tay, further, who led a small 'army' of treatment specialists to train health related personnel in drug demand reduction activities in Afghanistan.

"I was shocked and deeply touched by the plight of Afghan women and children when the DAP first went into Kabul in 2003," he says. He remembers one house he visited. "It was literally a hole in the ground – three underground rooms, each housing one family, and the smell of opium everywhere," he says.

Access to treatment for women addicts was a real problem as well. Now, there are 26 treatment centres in Afghanistan, six of which are specifically for women, six for children and two for adolescents. Ex-addict and family support groups have been established, while members of faith-based organisations, including mullahs, are being trained to spearhead efforts to reduce the demand for drugs.

One of the DAP's greatest challenges has been the high turnover of drug professionals in the region. "Most countries don't have a scheme to retain drug counselors and there is therefore a constant shortfall," Tay points out. "We are now putting heavy emphasis and considerable resources into professionalising addiction practitioners."

The last five years have seen training and certification programmes become much more structured. "The ICCE works with US experts to write curricula for these programmes. It is now recognised by major international organisations for offering the most advanced evidence-based curricula for prevention and addiction treatment. It is being translated into several languages," Tay says. Numerous training manuals have been developed and textbooks on selected topics are in the pipeline.

"We're also partnering with universities and other institutions to educate and train addiction professionals in the region. The idea is to integrate this subject into the university system. This will ensure the sustainability of efforts to build a strong cadre of top notch drug professionals," Tay says.

Tay addressing participants of the 3rd Asian Recovery Symposium held in Tagaytay, the Philippines, November 2008.





LASTING IMPRINTS

In the last 20 years, the Asia-Pacific region has made a huge imprint in terms of developing centres of educational excellence. The Colombo Plan has looked at its core competencies to move forward its efforts to uplift member nations still being challenged by poverty and inequalities. Colombo Plan's Long-term Scholarship Programme (LTSP), which was its hallmark from its inception until 1989, took on a fresh look and focus in 2005. Suitable candidates from member countries are now privileged to pursue their Masters at leading universities in Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

This programme has far-ranging implications for South-South cooperation and for finding Asian solutions to Asian challenges. It is envisaged that the Colombo Plan will work in consonance with member countries to maintain a balance and clarity in instituting programmes that promote integration of the global economy. Multi-stakeholder dialogues are proving to be the most effective way to develop viable policies and reduce conflict on divisive issues such as trade liberalisation, boundary claims, drug trafficking, resource sharing and the environment.

The Colombo Plan looks to work with all stakeholders, ensuring that effective collaboration happens at all levels – government, business and non-governmental organisations. It believes in listening deeply to all perspectives, and searches for a common ground to prevent conflict while encouraging collaboration. Says former Secretary-General Dato' Patricia Chia, "Poverty alleviation, sustainable development and environmental degradation are huge global concerns. Any project or programme endorsed by the Colombo Plan has to be careful and considered in its approach. Development, which has to be sustainable, socially acceptable, economically viable and environmentally sound, is driven by the human resources of a country. By building capacity in the Colombo Plan member countries, this important catalyst for development can be tapped to its full potential for development. By so doing, I believe Colombo Plan can close the widening gap between rich and poor nations."

The happy Colombo Plan family with Secretary-General Kinley Dorji in May 2014.



G.M. Wilson



Dr P.W.E. Curtin



Dr. N. Keyfitz Canada



R.H. Wade New Zealand



J.K. Thompson



S. Matsui



J.L. Allen



D. Alan Strachan



Brig-Gen A.B. Connelly



I.K. McGregor



L. Storar



Noboru Yabata



Erik Ingevics Australia



Donald R. Toussaint



G.H. Sheinbaum



John Ryan



Dr Kim Hak-Su



Dr U. Sarat Chandran



Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul



Dato' Patricia Yoon-Moi Chia



Adam Maniku



Kinley Dorji

The Colombo Plan Leadership

DIRECTORS OF THE COLOMBO PLAN BUREAU

NO.	NAME	COUNTRY	DURATION SERVED
1.	G.M. Wilson	Britain	Aug 1951 – Sept 1953
2.	Dr P.W.E. Curtin	Australia	Sep 1953 – Feb 1956
3.	Dr. N. Keyfitz	Canada	Apr 1956 – Aug 1957
4.	R.H. Wade	New Zealand	Aug 1957 – Aug 1959
5.	J.K. Thompson	Britain	Aug 1959 – Dec 1961
6.	S. Matsui	Japan	Dec 1961 – Jan 1964
7.	J.L. Allen	Australia	Jan 1964 – Mar 1966
8.	D. Alan Strachan	United States	Mar 1966 – Jun 1969
9.	Brig-Gen A.B. Connelly	Canada	Jun 1969 – Aug 1973
10.	I.K. McGregor	New Zealand	Aug 1973 – Dec 1975
11.	L. Storar	Britain	Jan 1976 – Jan 1979
12.	Noboru Yabata	Japan	Jan 1979 – Jan 1982
13.	Erik Ingevics	Australia	Jan 1982 – Feb 1985
14.	Donald R. Toussaint	United States	Feb 1985 – Jan 1986
15.	G.H. Sheinbaum	United States	July 1986 – July 1991
16.	John Ryan	New Zealand	July 1991 – Dec 1994

SECRETARIES-GENERAL OF THE COLOMBO PLAN SECRETARIAT

NO.	NAME	COUNTRY	DURATION SERVED
17.	Dr Kim Hak-Su	Korea	Jan 1995 – Mar 1999
18.	Dr U. Sarat Chandran	India	Apr 1999 – Jun 2003
19.	Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul	Thailand	Jun 2003 – Aug 2007
20.	Dato' Patricia Yoon-Moi Chia	Malaysia	Aug 2007 – Aug 2011
21.	Adam Maniku	Maldives	Sept 2011 – Nov 2013
22.	Kinley Dorji	Bhutan	May 2014 – present

PRESIDENTS OF THE COLOMBO PLAN COUNCIL

NO.	NAME	COUNTRY	DURATION SERVED
1.	Raju Commaraswamy	Sri Lanka	Dec 1950 – Oct 1953
2.	H.E. Shri C.C. Desai	India	Oct 1953 – Nov 1954
3.	H.E. Haji Abus Sattar Saith	Pakistan	Nov 1954 – Nov 1955
4.	J.D. De Fretes	Indonesia	Nov 1955 – Jan 1957
5.	H.E. U. Ba Lwin	Burma	Jan 1957 – Dec 1957
6.	Raju Commaraswamy	Sri Lanka	Dec 1957 – Jan 1959
7.	H.E. Shri Y.D. Gundevia	India	Jan 1959 – Dec 1959
8.	H.E. Mirza Hamid Hussain	Pakistan	Dec 1959 – Mar 1961
9.	H.E. Asa Bafgih	Indonesia	Mar 1961 – Jan 1962
10.	H.E. Situ Dr Htin Aung	Burma	Jan 1962 – Sep 1962
11.	H.E. Eduardo L. Rosal	Philippines	Sep 1962 – Feb 1964
12.	Tilak E. Gooneratne	Sri Lanka	Feb 1964 – May 1965
13.	H.E. Dr Bhim Sen Sachar	India	May 1965 – Feb 1966
14.	H.E. Enver Murad	Pakistan	Feb 1966 – Mar 1967
15.	H.E. Wunna Kyaw Htin Sao Boonwaat	Burma	Mar 1967 – Nov 1967
16.	H.E. Yusup R. Abubaker	Philippines	Nov 1967 – Jan 1969
17.	H.E. Enche Mohamed Sopiee	Malaysia	Jan 1969 – Jan 1970
18.	H.E. Abdoel Hamid	Indonesia	Jan 1970 – Mar 1971
19.	H.E. Ahmed Hilmy Didi	Maldives	Mar 1971 – Jun 1971
20.	Dr H.A. De S. Gunesequera	Sri Lanka	July 1971 – July 1972
21.	H.E. Shri Y.K. Puri	India	July 1972 – Nov 1972
22.	H.E. M.S. Shaikh	Pakistan	Nov 1972 – Mar 1973
23.	H.E. U Ohn Khin	Burma	Mar 1973 – Apr 1974
24.	H.E. Librado D. Cayco	Philippines	Apr 1974 – May 1975
25.	H.E. Mustapha bin Dato Mahmud	Malaysia	May 1975 – Jun 1976
26.	H.E. Adlinsjah Jenie	Indonesia	Jun 1976 – Jun 1977
27.	H.E. Justice Abdul Hakim	Bangladesh	Jun 1977 – Oct 1977
28.	H.E. Shri Gurbachan Singh	India	Oct 1977 – Feb 1978
29.	Dr. Lal Jayawardena	Sri Lanka	Feb 1978 – Apr 1978
30.	H.E. Adlinsjah Jenie	Indonesia	May 1978 – Apr 1979
31.	H.E. Ms. Ampha BhadranaWik	Thailand	Apr 1979 – Apr 1980
32.	H.E. D. Young Kyo Yoon	Korea	Apr 1980 – Apr 1981
33.	H.E. Thomas Abraham	India	Apr 1981 – Apr 1982
34.	H.E. U Maung Maung Gyi	Burma	Apr 1982 – Apr 1983

NO.	NAME	COUNTRY	DURATION SERVED
35.	H.E. Bahktiar Ali	Pakistan	Apr 1983 – Jun 1984
36.	H.E. Anthony K.S. Yeo	Malaysia	Jun 1984 – Jun 1985
37.	H.E. Suffri Jusuf	Indonesia	Jun 1985 – Jun 1986
38.	H.E. A.S. Noor Mohammad	Bangladesh	Jun 1986 – Jun 1987
39.	H.E. Ahmed Abdullah	Maldives	Jun 1987 – Jun 1988
40.	H.E. Antonio L. Ramirez	Philippines	Jun 1988 – Sep 1988
41.	Ronnie Weerakoon	Sri Lanka	Sep 1988 – Jun 1989
42.	H.E. Shri L.L. Mehrotra	India	Jun 1989 – Jun 1990
43.	H.E. Apinan Pavanarith	Thailand	Jun 1990 – July 1991
44.	H.E. Abdolreza Faraji-Rad	Iran	July 1991 – July 1992
45.	H.E. Hoon Chang	Korea	July 1992 – July 1993
46.	H.E. Kadir Deen	Malaysia	July 1993 – July 1994
47.	H.E. Tariq Altaf	Pakistan	July 1994 – July 1995
48.	H.E. U Soe Myint	Myanmar	July 1995 – July 1996
49.	H.E. Junizar Jacub	Indonesia	July 1996 – July 1997
50.	H.E. Masum Ahmed Chowdhury	Bangladesh	July 1997 – July 1998
51.	H.E. Nilamber Acharya	Nepal	July 1998 – July 1999
52.	H.E. Alireza M. Alamofi	Iran	July 1999 – July 2000
53.	H.E. Mohammad Saleh	Indonesia	July 2000 – July 2001
54.	H.E. Seiichiro Otsuka	Japan	July 2001 – July 2002
55.	H.E. Lee Nam-Soo	Korea	July 2002 – July 2003
56.	H.E. Iskandar Sarudin	Malaysia	July 2003 – July 2004
57.	H.E. Raashida Yoosuf	Maldives	July 2004 – Oct 2004
58.	H.E. Mohamed Asim	Maldives	Dec 2004 – Oct 2005
59.	H.E. Durga Prasad Bhattarai	Nepal	Oct 2005 – Oct 2006
60.	H.E. Shahzad A. Chaudhry	Pakistan	Nov 2006 – Nov 2007
61.	Deshamanya Prof W.D. Lakshman	Sri Lanka	Nov 2007 – Nov 2008
62.	H.E. Thinakorn Kanasuta	Thailand	Nov 2008 – Nov 2009
63.	H.E. Patricia Butenis	USA	Nov 2009 – Nov 2010
64.	H.E. Kathy Klugman	Australia	Nov 2010 – Nov 2011
65.	H.E. Mahbub-Uz-Zaman	Bangladesh	Nov 2011 – Dec 2012
66.	H.E. Ashok K Kantha	India	Dec 2012 – May 2013
67.	H.E. Y.K. Sinha	India	July 2013 – Nov 2013
68.	H.E. Harimawan Suyitno	Indonesia	Nov 2013 – Present

DIRECTORS OF THE DRUG ADVISORY PROGRAMME

NO.	NAME	COUNTRY	DURATION SERVED
1.	Atty Pio A. Abarro	Philippines	Aug 1973 – Apr 1988
2.	Hema Weerasinghe	Sri Lanka	Apr 1988 – Dec 1991
3.	Chung Tsu Tuan	Malaysia	Jun 1992 – May 1996
4.	Rabi Raj Thapa	Nepal	Jun 1996 – Jun 2000
5.	Tay Bian How	Malaysia	Jun 2000 – Jan 2006
6.	Y. Ratnayake	Sri Lanka	July 2006 – Dec 2007
7.	Devendra Dutt	India	Mar 2008 – May 2008
8.	Nguyen Cuu Duc	Vietnam	Jun 2009 – Jun 2011
9.	Antonius Riva Setiawan	Indonesia	Sep 2011 – Present

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6.	Muhamad Ghopran	Malaysia	July 2010 – July 2011



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