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President of Sri Lanka

**Message on the Occasion of the Commemoration of 36th SAARC Charter Day,
08th December 2020**

I take this opportunity to extend my warmest greetings and sincere best wishes to the Member States of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), as we celebrate the 36th Anniversary of the founding of the SAARC.

Since its inception in 1985, the SAARC has brought all of us together with a greater sense of affinity and inclusivity in the Subcontinent. Today, as we commemorate the 36th Anniversary, all eight Member States may wish to take pride in the efforts and cooperation in our Association.

I would like to commend the recent efforts of the SAARC to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, including the SAARC Leaders' video conference on 15th March 2020, several other Ministerial Conferences and Senior Officials Meetings by virtual mode and the establishment of the SAARC Covid-19 Emergency Fund, as well as the operationalization of the Covid-19 Emergency Response Grant Proposals of the SAARC Development Fund.

Today, as we celebrate this annual occasion, time is ripe to address a number of common issues to fully realize the founding objectives and goals of the SAARC. On this occasion, Sri Lanka resolves to cooperate with other Members to improve the living standards of the people of South Asia.

I reaffirm on this occasion, the firm commitment of Sri Lanka to the SAARC process and its progress.

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Gotabaya Rajapaksa

08 December 2020



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இலங்கையின் பிரதமர்
Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

Message on the Occasion of the Commemoration of the 36th SAARC Charter Day

On the auspicious occasion of the 36th anniversary of the SAARC Charter Day, I have the great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings and felicitations to all citizens of the SAARC Member States.

Three decades and half ago on this auspicious day, we embarked together on a common journey of regional cooperation with the aim to eradicate poverty and to achieve peace, stability and prosperity in South Asia. During this difficult journey, SAARC has made remarkable progress including the setting up of institutions and mechanisms while developing norms and practices.

SAARC has unexplored potential for transforming the development landscape in the region. In order to achieve this, SAARC has to redouble its efforts in deepening cooperation. The delivery of concrete results through effective implementation of our commitments and decisions remains unfulfilled. We should place utmost commitment to make this regional mechanism dynamic and results-oriented for the benefit of our common progress.

In pursuant to our common endeavor, I reiterate Sri Lanka's full and firm commitment to advance the work of SAARC in taking forward the founding principles of the Organization in a spirit of collective responsibility.

Mahinda Rajapaksa
Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



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தினேஷ் குணவர்த்தன - (பா.உ.) வெளிநாட்டு அமைச்சர்
Dinesh Gunawardena - (M.P.) Foreign Minister

**Message on the Occasion of the Commemoration of 36th SAARC Charter Day,
08th December 2020**

On the happy and auspicious occasion of the 36th anniversary of the SAARC Charter Day, I am delighted to extend my warmest felicitations and sincere good wishes to the Secretary General and his diligent staff at the SAARC Secretariat and the people of South Asia.

Over the past 35 years, the SAARC nations - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - have overcome many challenges and achieved success in terms of bringing about qualitative changes in the lives of the peoples of South Asia. It has become a platform for greater interactions among various stakeholders in the South Asia region, while fostering friendship amongst our peoples.

As we mark another anniversary since the establishment of SAARC in 1985, it is my firm conviction that new areas need to be pursued to reinvigorate the regional cooperation agenda.

Sri Lanka remains fully committed to the founding principles of the SAARC Charter and will continue to play a constructive role. I reiterate Sri Lanka's fullest cooperation to the SAARC in its efforts to promote regional cooperation in the Subcontinent.

On this auspicious day, I call upon the fellow Member States to celebrate this anniversary with the firm determination to achieve our shared vision of a prosperity for the people of the region.

Dinesh Gunawardena, M.P.
Foreign Minister

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