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

HE Mr. Don Pramudwinai
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Kingdom of Thailand

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and the people of Sri Lanka, and that of my own, it gives me great pleasure to convey warm felicitations to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand as we jointly mark the 65th Anniversary of the establishment of formal Diplomatic Relations between Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The age old, mutually enriching friendship between Sri Lanka and Thailand and their peoples, are built on the timeless philosophy and values of Theravada Buddhism, and has been flourishing for over eight centuries, well before the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1955. This unwavering friendship of all times (*Kalyaana Mittha*) continues to mutually enrich our socio-cultural fabric to this date.

With the resounding mandate received by the Government led by H.E the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, at the General Elections in August this year, Sri Lanka, now has a strong and stable government in office. Its national policy 'Vistas for Prosperity', is based on ensuring a friendly foreign policy with particular focus to Asian neighborhood. As an important hub in the East Asia, Sri Lanka looks forward to work very closely with Thailand in furthering socio-economic development and mutual benefits to our two peoples.

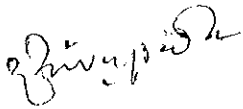
In this context, I hope we could, in the near future, establish a process to revitalize the economic and trade cooperation between our two countries, particularly in exploring new opportunities in trade, technical cooperation and tourism, on the strength of the Memorandum of Understanding of Bilateral Political Consultations signed in 2012. It is my sincere hope that our countries will be able to work hand in hand in the revival of the economy of the two countries in post Covid-19 era and build back better. I am therefore hopeful that the joint consultations between the two Foreign Ministries will identify suitable modality for engagement despite the challenging circumstances to pave the way towards realizing our common goals.

As Thailand prepares to succeed Sri Lanka as the next Chair of the BIMSTEC, I am confident that with the extensive experience and stewardship Thailand has demonstrated in furthering regional cooperation, it will accelerate the progress achieved by BIMSTEC, also benefitting from the solid institutional framework and the more focused sectoral areas developed and agreed under Sri Lanka's tenure. Sri Lanka will always standby Thailand in support of your leadership to BIMSTEC.

While congratulating the Government and the peoples of Thailand for successfully handling the Covid-19 global pandemic, and setting in place many effective measures to minimize the impact of the unprecedented health crisis on the economy of the country, I wish to note that the health services and related sectors in Sri Lanka are making their best efforts to contain the current surge and keep the situation well within the capacities to respond.

The Government and the people of Sri Lanka stand in solidarity with the Kingdom of Thailand and extend sincere support in all bilateral and multilateral fora on issues of mutual interest. I am confident that the close and robust bilateral relations which have happily coexisted will continue to flourish in the coming years,

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your good health, happiness and personal wellbeing.



Dinesh Gunawardena, M.P
Foreign Minister