



## **A Joint Press Release by the Australian High Commission and the Ministry of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs**

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01 March 2017

### **Australia supports business development in Sri Lanka**

On 1 March 2017, Australian High Commissioner Bryce Hutchesson, together with Minister for Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs the Hon John Amaratunga, launched the Market Development Facility (MDF) to support inclusive growth of tourism and related sectors in Sri Lanka.

Under MDF, the Australian Government is contributing up to 1 billion rupees over four years in business grants and development services.

Speaking at the event Mr Hutchesson said “the private sector is the engine of growth and of job creation. Australia is extremely proud of its competitive tourism industry. We are launching MDF today as one way of sharing our know-how and experience with our Sri Lankan friends.”

Minister Amaratunga added that “travel and tourism is the largest service industry in the world. This collaboration between Australia and Sri Lanka has great potential to create many new jobs and to further improve industry standards and the tourist experience in Sri Lanka.”

Working with business, MDF will support the diversification of Sri Lanka’s tourism destinations, products and services. This is important for the competitiveness and sustainability of the industry but also for spreading the economic benefits more widely. MDF will also focus on digital services and locally made products.

Describing the Facility, Mr Hutchesson said, “this initiative will operate like a social venture capitalist. We will invest in businesses to stimulate innovation to reap results that are both commercially sustainable and socially desirable in tourism and related sectors.”

For further information about the Market Development Facility in Sri Lanka, visit [marketdevelopmentfacility.org](http://marketdevelopmentfacility.org)

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## **Photo captions**

**Photo 1:** *Australian High Commissioner H.E. Bryce Hutchesson at the launch of the Market Development Facility Sri Lanka, together with Tourism Minister Hon. John Amaratunga, Chief Minister Eastern Province Hon. Nazeer Ahamed and the president of the National Chamber of Tourism and Industry.*

**Photo 2:** *Australian High Commissioner H.E. Bryce Hutchesson and Mr. Janaka Sugathadasa, secretary to the Ministry of Tourism and Christian Religious Affairs exchange a partnership agreement on support to the Sri Lankan tourism industry through the Market Development Facility. Hon. John Amaratunga, Minister for Tourism looks on.*

**Photo 3:** *Australian High Commissioner H.E. Bryce Hutchesson together with the Market Development Facility team in Sri Lanka and Australian High Commission staff.*