



Australian High Commission

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia and Sri Lanka – working together for inclusive growth

Australia and Sri Lanka have signed a new development cooperation partnership MoU during the Hon Ranil Wickramasinghe's visit to Australia.

The MoU was signed by Australia's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, H.E. Bryce Hutchesson and Sri Lanka's Secretary Ministry of Finance, Dr R.H.S. Samarathunga.

Since 1951, Australia has provided an estimated AUD1.35 billion in assistance to Sri Lanka, with nearly half of this provided in the past twenty years.

The new partnership sets a new direction. As Sri Lanka's economy grows, Australia will support the Government's reform agenda including ensuring that economic growth is inclusive.

The private sector is a driver of growth, of incomes and jobs. And so in 2017, Australia will be launching three new programs that focus on inclusive growth.

The 'Skills for Growth' program will deliver targeted skills development to support job creation and business growth in the tourism sector. Australia's 'Market Development Facility' will support small and medium businesses to expand in a way that provides more job opportunities for all. And our 'Women in Work' program will aim to provide more quality job opportunities for women.

Australia will also partner with the Government to share our experiences in reforming our economy and expanding key sectors like tourism.

Supporting Sri Lankans to study in Australia will remain a continuing element of the development partnership. Over 1,000 Sri Lankans have received scholarships from the Australian Government since the 1950s to complete degrees in fields as diverse as engineering, education, law and gender studies.

The new partnership builds on the many achievements to date and provides for many new and exciting opportunities for Australia to support Sri Lanka's development priorities in this the 70th year of the bilateral relationship.

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