

Key Note Speech by

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Mr. Ananda Piyatilake, President, Sri Lanka Energy Managers Association
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be here and deliver the key note speech of the SLEMA annual sessions and pay my tribute to the work which this institution has done for 26 years since its inception in 1984. I am aware that your institution has been actively contributing towards energy management and energy efficiency improvement of the country.

I wish at the outset to congratulate most heartily the President of the SLEMA, and those who helped him on the most excellent arrangements that have been made in connection with this event. The main theme of today's topic is very timely and appropriate in the contemporary context, where I feel that our country at present requires many of this type of initiatives and will soon have many more not only in Colombo but in other areas as well.

Furthermore, may I express to our distinguished gathering how delighted I am to see key people of many organizations interested in developing Efficient and Effective

Energy Management Systems in their organizations. Your presence here is truly inspiring for all of us at the policy level and we wish to have a constructive dialogue with all of you in the future.

The purpose of this annual session is to discuss the issue of **Energy Sustainability of Buildings** based on relevant standards and best practices and it is expected that this program will have a significant impact in Sri Lankan energy scenario.

Let me have a few introductory remarks on the theme and explain a modest fragment of its relevancy to our country.

Sustainable buildings is the order of the day for all of us. New buildings should use as little energy as possible and preferably none at all. They should produce little carbon dioxide and, ideally, be completely recyclable. But they should also look good. We should consider the eco-standards and environmental friendly aspects of a building from the planning stage, through the construction period to its final stage. Another important dimension is the adoption of sustainable and ecological architecture in our buildings.

I wish to touch upon the principles defines the requirements that a building must meet in order to be meet demands for sustainability. We should aim at buildings which need no power or zero energy, emits no carbon dioxide or no emission, and will leave no waste behind when it is renovated or demolished. This can be described as the Triple- Zero standard. This means that all the parts of the building can be fully recycled if, one day, no one want to live in the building any more.

We should find the ways and means to construct buildings that are eco friendly, resource –saving and economically efficient, as well as comfortable and convenient for their uses. I can see an initial signs of interest and paying attention to climate protection amongst the local companies which is a very positive trend. It is apparent in future

number of eco-property developers will increase and they will also market good products boosting their companies image in turn generating a clear conscience in terms of environmental and climate protection.

We should also look for mechanisms to turning our existing buildings to “**Green Buildings**”

Finance plays a role, too, of course. If you look at the costs of a building over its entire life cycle, perhaps only 20-30 percent stems from its construction; 70 percent are made up of subsequent running costs. Therefore, in view of the rising energy prices, aiming for optimum energy efficiency does more than ecological sense.

Dear friends, this is exactly what we are planning and trying to implement at the current juncture at the policy making level as well. For your information I wish to state that very recently we have formulated and introduced a 15 fold strategy called “**Power Lanka**” based on the concept of triple E’s visualizing **Economy, Energy and Efficiency**.

This is to be implemented by the Ministry of Power & Energy to overcome the dependence on imports of costly fossil fuel and look for more indigenous energy sources, introducing more energy efficient ways and means, shaping the demand curve, and introducing and implementing a more realistic tariff structure to consumers etc.

Our ultimate objective is to cushion the country from much anticipated future price shocks in the world market especially for fossil fuels. This is very important for every country as the availability of cheap and reliable energy sources is a prerequisite for economic development.

As part of the new strategy, in the near future we will be planning to introduce the concept of smart meters which will help us to reduce heavy expenses incurred to meet

the night peak with costly thermal power generation, to encourage the consumers to use energy during off peak periods where there is less demand for electricity.

All domestic consumers will be allowed to generate electricity through solar energy and all other sources of renewable energy within their household block of land and feed the distribution network on “smart metering” basis

This will encourage not only the industries but also the domestic consumers to shift their usage patterns to off peak periods and thereby reducing their bill energy consumption. This will eventually result in cheaper production costs for our local industries resulting in more competitive products in the world market.

Internally, it must be realized that although we have achieved commendable levels when compared with the South East Asian perspective, we are yet to achieve the long term goals of dependence of indigenous sources to the fullest extent. We have already tapped the hydro energy almost to the fullest potential and are looking forward to find means and ways to harness the wind, solar and other sustainable energy sources. I am happy to state that plans are already underway to achieve 100 % electrification by the year 2012 by constructing more than 4000 rural electrification schemes throughout the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a country we are now shifting from the oil based power generation to a coal based power generation. But based on current market fluctuations and increase of demand for coal by the giants such as China and India there is no reason for us to satisfy ourselves that coal prices will not fluctuate like oil. My belief is that coal prices will also rise with the increase of demand and this will greatly affect our economy in future if we are not adequately prepared for the worst.

On the other hand coal is a major contributor in releasing carbon dioxide to our environment. It has been calculated that by replacing our oil based power generation to coal, will increase the per capita carbon dioxide quantum by many fold, which I think is an alarming level even if we are far below in comparison with the world ratings presently. This might have an effect on our goods and services in the longer term, and we should be vigilant not only about the environmental consequences but also about our cost of production.

We are seriously considering the improvements needed for energy efficiency through technology and innovation which will result in reducing the demand for energy for the same level of economic output.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

These are a few of the key elements in our multipronged strategies we contemplate to adopt to face the problems of volatile prices of fossil fuel, issues in climate change, and to achieve the desired targets in our economic growth. This is a strategic shift from fossil fuel to non-fossil fuel, from non renewable to renewable sources of energy, and from conventional to non conventional sources of energy to meet the challenges of facing external shocks.

The need of the hour is to plan ahead and build a prosperous future for our children. This is what we are planning and trying to achieve, the success of which I am sure will lie upon commitment from all the stake holders including the energy professional like you.

As concluding remarks I would like to mention that buildings are among the worst climate killers: their construction, operation and later demolition consumes vast quantities of resources and produces hazardous waste. This makes it all the more

important that energy-efficient and environmental-friendly construction is not restricted to big buildings but also to smaller domestic constructions as well.

It is essential to reduce the costs of production and dependence on oil and coal. It is here that deliberations of this session may be of use to us. They may tell us how we can produce energy saving buildings on a larger scale, adopt better, appropriate, and sustainable techniques than we do now, and lower the cost of energy requirement.

In conclusion, let me assure you that we will respond positively to your suggestions and recommendations in whatever manner and the Ministry of Power and Energy of Sri Lanka will always be happy to look at your proposals.

Thank you