

**MR SIRADA DE SILVA
SPEAKING NOTES**

His Excellencies at the head table ladies and gentlemen, let me thank the organisers for inviting me to the event Spicing-Up Development assistance.

Slide 1.

Cinnamon , Cinnamon has was used by the Pharaohs of Egypt and Aztecs in Mexico long before Columbus discovered the Americas.

In 1500 BC Queen Hasteputus of Egypt used cinnamon.

When Conquistador Hernan Cortes arrived in the Oaxaca region of Mexico the leader Montezuma offered him chocolates and cinnamon.

When the Sri Lankan spice trade was informed of importance of SPS, GMP, Traceability and comparative advantages, the elderly leaders of the of the spice trade flatly refused to accept the changes taking place in the market place. They said they had been exporting al our spice for centuries meeting competition and our Kings have been using sanitary hygiene for over 2500 years. So a few key young who were willing to accept what was taking place in marketplace led the change and formed the Spice Council.

Slide 2

Instead of being bulk commodities exporters of spice we want to achieve our vision.

Slide 3.

Zeylanicum means from Ceylon, Zeylan was earlier name before Ceylon.

Verum means true, both these mean true cinnamon from ceylon.

For cinnamon and cassia there two separate ISO standards and two separate harmonised codes.

Chemical characteristic are different.

Slide 4.

Spice Council and relevant government departments played a important role in the establishment of a codex subcommittee on spices, condiments and herbs.

we attended the inaugural sessions in India and has been actively playing a key role along with the International Organisation of Spice Trading Associations (IOSTA) of which the spice council is a member.

We were invited by IOSTA to join the coalition called the Codex Reform in establishment of MRL's for pesticides.

Spice Council actively takes part in bi-annual ISO sub committee on spices meetings.

Slide 5.

Galle is the largest growing district and the Cinnamon Training Academy (CTA) is based in Kosgoda in the Galle district.

Now it is expanding to the neighbouring districts of Hambantota, Badulla, Monaragala and specially for the first time in Mullative district in the Northern province.

In the North National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka is working with ILO in project funded by Aussaid to link farmers in the North with exporters.

The spice council hopes to aggressively assist the farmers in Mullative district to grow cinnamon with the assistance of government, donors and ILO.

We are in the process of translating all training material to Tamil for the benefit of the Tamil speaking people.

Slide 6.

The WTO-STDF-UNIDO-TSC Project will improve the standard of families involved in the Cinnamon Industry.

It will have a tremendous impact on their livelihoods.

Slide 7.

Exports are increasing more so in the value added sector and the organic sector
Newer products are being developed for the niche markets.

Slide 8.

Initial surveys found that there was a severe shortage of peelers/processor in the cinnamon industry due lack of recognition and training and mainly due to dignity of labour.

At the beginning the producers wanted to know how much more they will receive if they met they met the best practises. It took a while to convince most of them that it is not how much more but without best practises you may not be able to sell your cinnamon.

This is historic, really historic in agriculture sector in Sri Lanka for National Vocational Qualification accredited nationally for cinnamon industry actors.

We do not have it in tea, rubber, coconut and rice,

Many Minister who attended various programs of the project have highly commended and congratulated the project.

Slide 9.

Launch of the project was attended by three important ministers and officials of the public and private sectors.

Slide 10

Cinnamon Training Academy was officially opened on the 5th of this year.

It was attended by a senior minister representing H.E. President and Governor of the Southern Province.

Foundation stone for the second stage was laid by the dignitaries.

The Government has pledged Rs 50 million(USD345,000) for the second stage through the national budget.

Slide 11

GI a road map has been developed by the project consultant and given to the Export development board (EDB) to follow and obtain GI.

At present the EDB has employed a lawyer in Brussels to make the GI application to EU and we are now preparing the technical dossier.

The delay in Sri Lanka getting its GI law into place and having a GI register.

Pure Ceylon Cinnamon (PCC) certification mark with a lion logo has been launched by H.E. President and registered in EU, USA, Peru, Colombia and WIPO.

A road map of improving the PCC mark implementation and linking it GI has been done and given to EDB for implementation.

For the future we are thinking big. We are planning number of projects for the future.

One is to establish a large number of small/medium/large scale GMP centres.

Second is for CTA to establish a consultancy & advisory service and establish a research and development centre.

Third is on climate mitigation, renewable energy, sustainable watering solution and year around harvesting.

Fourth is along with the Skills Development Ministry we are working on a proposal for the 2017 national budget to assist CTA and enhance its training services and facilities.

EU funded ITC/ Unido project is due to start in the last quarter of this year.

Slide 12

This WTO-STDF-UNIDO-TSC Project has made an extremely valuable contribution in developing and enhancing the cinnamon industry and further enhanced the long standing image of Ceylon Cinnamon.

We do not believe we know and done everything. We had our own difficulties in the implementation of the project but we overcame them.

We are willing to learn and adapt to the changing market place. In my view the best knowledge is to know what you do not know, but the ability to source what you do not know speedily.

Finally I wish to profoundly thank all officials of This WTO-STDF-UNIDO-TSC, Consultants, Government of Sri Lanka and all our partners who worked with us to make this project a success.

And to all of you for patient hearing.

Thank you.