

Colombo International Maritime & Logistics Conference

9th - 11th September 2026

8th edition

NATIONAL GATEWAY

“Building a world around us”

SINGLE WINDOW FOR TRADE
TRANSPARENCY & VISIBILITY: 100%

Register for the conference

Book accommodation



Conference Hotel: Raddison Blu Hotel Galadari Colombo
Accommodation: Hilton Colombo (with extra special rates)



Colombo International Maritime & Logistics Conference
Established in 2015



Colombo International Maritime & Logistics Conference 2026 – www.cimc.lk

New Chapter in Global Shipping

Sri Lanka's maritime and logistics sector has seen renewed interest globally as the premier transshipment port in South Asia. Recent disruptions in the middle east and the vulnerabilities for shipping in key choke points, and cost escalations, Sri Lankan ports make a unique positioning to service the global shipping/logistics and supply chain requirements.

Centrally located in the Indian Ocean Rim, the country lies between west Asia and east Asia, and right at the heart of South Asia, that can securely connect cargo, east bound, west bound and through the Cape of South Africa, without any choke points that could disrupt trade flows. Currently, transshipment and port expansion projects are ongoing in Colombo and Hambantota, while the world's second largest natural port, Trincomalee, will be another option for global supply chains to connect to the two billion strong population in the Bay of Bengal. Historically, Sri Lanka has been known for transshipment. But now the country has lucrative opportunities, in dry docking, repairs, marine engineering, crew changes, ship supplies and other off shore activities, including expansion of ship bunkering. Most importantly, Sri Lanka is advancing specialised "free ports" concepts and tax free zones to facilitate cargo consolidation, packaging and high speed distribution. This is tailored to attract, global e-commerce and fulfillment and value added manufacturing.

The Hambantota multi purpose port, is being heavily promoted as an industrial zone with integrated warehousing and LPG distribution, along with a logistics centre hub in the Indian ocean.

The Colombo International Maritime and Logistics Conference will discuss this new chapter, where Sri Lanka's connectivity to the world will be showcased, to ensure supply chain security and to be a collaborative port for global clients to have options and choices at lower cost with less disruptions to trade. Visit the Colombo International Maritime and Logistics Conference 2026



Draft Programme

Day 1- 9th September 2026

Inauguration



17.00- 17.30-- Registration – meet and greet

17.30hrs -20.30hrs- Inauguration

- Emcee to introduce the event
- Welcome address
- Address by AMCHAM Sri Lanka, Official Chamber for the Inauguration
- South Asia Container Report– Maritime Gateway, India
- Keynote speech-The role of the United States in the global maritime industry, to support trade and economic prosperity- Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, USA



For the first time in South Asia, US Federal maritime Commissioner, appointed by the President of United States government, will be addressing at the 8th edition of the Colombo International Maritime & Logistics Conference. The Chairman will elaborate on the Federal Maritime Commission's mission to ensure competitive and reliable international ocean transportation to support exporters, importers and consumers. Further emphasis will be given on policy framework on the maritime sector adopted by the United States government. This will include, regulatory framework on ports, shipping and logistics.

- Macro view on ports and logistics segment and India's future ports outlook -TBC
- Panel discussion on the macro-economic front on global supply chains, market dynamics that would shape the international trading environment towards 2050. What significant role the ports, shipping and logistics would play in the expanding global trade over the next decades as the future belongs to well connected trading networks, strengthened through technology, market access, regional and global cooperation. How do we build this eco-system, can Sri Lanka be a change agent? A high profile panel discussion to set the stage

- Launch of a special event

20.30hrs -22.00hrs

- Meeting and greeting -Networking Cocktails



Day 2- 10th September 2026

Maritime & Ports Day

Don't put the eggs in one basket.....



We are moving in a century, where smart manufacturing, transportation, inventory management and customer requirements are all bundled through technology advancements to reach billions of consumers around the world. The supply chain resilience is never more important than today's development with challenging, unplanned circumstances occurring faster than anybody could think. Geo-political developments, environmental impacts and market shifts are creating the need for industrial partnerships more than ever before to maintain market stability.

The sessions will discuss different aspects from multiple stakeholders.



8.30hrs – The European Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka-Official Chamber for the Maritime & Ports Day

8.45hrs-9.45hrs

Session 1: “The VUCA World”- Crisis is a new normal, how do we navigate?- Global shipping & ports industry- liner perspective

Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity (VUCA), in the shipping and ports industry has been witnessed over the last decade specifically igniting a greater dialogue since COVID 19. Nations and policy makers have to grapple with the VUCA world and need to be agile and decisive to maintain stable transportation systems, where shipping and ports are considered the key nodes. Compared to world's new developments, how does Sri Lanka including South Asia, fit into the new order?



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9.45hrs- 10.45hrs

Session 2: Is the direction right? Is the Port of Colombo ready in a future logistics landscape in the global value chain by embracing a new model? Is greater stakeholder participation the locked secret? Can we unlock it?



Port of Colombo plays a vital role and has been recognised as a preferred transshipment hub in South Asia, serving as a key node of the Indian Ocean maritime space. However, the business of ports is evolving due to many factors and the choices are becoming greater for the liner shipping industry to fill up the box ships where, modern technologies, IMO led environmental requirements and strong cargo growth in emerging economies. These segments are calling for greater reforms for port modernisation and greater partnerships to secure sustainable business. The session will discuss, the challenges and the opportunities, the port of Colombo and the rest of the Sri Lankan ports including Hambantota would face.

Tea/Coffee open- 10.30hrs -10.45hrs

10.45hrs-11.45hrs

Session 3: Neighbour's advantage as a hub – India's role as an emerging regional giant in container shipping- Indian growth story 2047- is it competition or collaboration?

A two billion population of South Asia, is led by India's industrialisation, joined by Bangladesh and Pakistan linked to the Bay of Bengal region, and has massive consumer market growth, linked with rapid requirements for logistics connectivity for industrialisation. South Asia remains the largest block in Asia that is considered behind its peers in the Asian region. However, Sri Lanka's neighbour is identified as a game changer for intra-Asia trade and global supply chains' key partner in the emerging decades. Should we not collaborate instead of seeing India as a competitor? Analysing trade growth patterns and connectivity, the session will discuss the future shipping and ports partnerships for greater efficiency and security of the sector. It also will give investors an idea of potential opportunities.



11.45hrs-12.45hrs

Session 4: Next line of critical reforms - The World Bank/ADB

The international institutions, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank play a pivotal role in introducing and modernising the global ports and shipping industry through policy advocacy and funding through infrastructure development. This session will discuss, critical reforms that are needed through the experiences of the World Bank and the ADB.



Lunch break- 12.45hrs- 13.30hrs

13.30hrs – 14.45hrs

Session 5: Is manufacturing sustainable or is services the game changer? Connecting to global supply chains, the pragmatic decision



Exports are considered a key pillar for nation building. Specially connected through ocean highways, countries can make a difference to increase production and to be a competitive merchandise exporter. Sri Lanka has new ambitions in export revenues, although it has lagged growth as desired. Can we change this model? What critical three things the country would need to do to be competitive, or is the game changer to be part of the global supply chain by inviting more investments into component production and value addition through supply chain advantages, by being in the middle of the Indian ocean? Wishful thinking or not?

This session will pick the brains of the current top export operators of key products of Sri Lanka



14.45hrs- 15.45hrs

Session 6: Bunkering & investments

It has been a policy discussion that the energy sector must play a critical role to make Sri Lanka a maritime hub. This would enhance the capabilities to attract all types of ships and fuels in our key ports of Colombo, Hambantota and Trincomalee. Trading bunker alone is not going to help to grow the industry. The country needs investments in new fuels, infrastructure and lubricants and expand the storage refinery facilities with global partners. The challenge is to maintain competitive pricing, while the opportunity is to provide supply chain security by establishing different types ships energy storage from west, south to the east coast of Sri Lanka.

The session will discuss, next decades ship energy transformation and preparedness of the ports to meet IMO targets for a greener maritime space.



Tea/Coffee break -Open

15.45hrs- 17.00hrs

Session 7: Fireside chat 1: Transforming a nation, Global us- Bringing the exposure and the experience--The Sri Lankan's overseas

The first fireside chat will focus on the views of Sri Lankans engaged in global operations in ports and shipping. They will discuss their experiences in policy, management, operations, opportunities that their home country can adopt to build a prosperous maritime nation. Their voices will also be translated to build a global Sri Lankan maritime community that can assist local policy makers to drive in the right direction to modernise our nation.



Day 3- 11th September 2026

Logistics & Supply Chain Day

Lateral, divergent thinking, be unconventional moving towards the AI world



Sri Lanka has been embarking on a transshipment focused strategy for more than four decades. The world has moved on, opportunities have sprung. More and more value-added services in the inventory and the supply chain management have emerged and more consolidation and component management for containerised, break bulk and bulk shipping has emerged. Recent developments in the gulf calls for greater supply chain security, choice and sustainability in sourcing and procurement to avoid market distortions due to unforeseen supply chain disruptions. Be it tariffs, border disputes, geo-political developments, choke points or catastrophic environmental disruptions, the attention of logisticians to come up with innovative solutions to support global trade to floor with minimal disruptions is essential. These sessions will cover modern thinking with pragmatic logistics solutions for maritime nations to embrace the new opportunities.



8.30hrs – Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka -Official Chamber for the Logistics & Supply Chain Day

8.45hrs-9.45hrs

Session 8: The god’s best gift for Sri Lanka-World is realigning -Need for logistics spatial planning- Global free ports, where does Sri Lanka fit in?

The concept of free ports and fulfilment centres are emerging trends to support efficient distribution and inventory control for merchandise products, that needs multiple services, time frames and support consumer behaviour. The process helps manufacturers, exporters, traders, buyers and retailers to plan out supply chain requirements and manage cash flow to be competitive with different regions of the world. It may be finished, semi-finished products or intermediaries. Free ports give that edge over standard port to port business. The industry is now valued over trillions of dollars and growing. Sri Lanka is probably one of the most blessed locations to expand the vertical that can massively contribute to the national economy.



9.45hrs-10.45hrs

Session 9: Understanding the logistics markets for trade and economic expansion

Global giants in the transportation industry are looking at backward integration to support companies with new solutions adapting technologies to minimise operational costs and provide speed to market solutions.

This session will discuss different solutions adopted by key players, in transforming the logistics industry. In this context, the experts will discuss regional and global developments including technological solutions that could be adapted by different players and service providers in the supply chain. They will also discuss investment opportunities and consumer trends.



Open for Tea/Coffee - 10.30hrs -10.45hrs

10.45hrs-11.45hrs

Session 10: Future banking- supporting global supply chains and logistics

Supply chain finance refers to a suite of technology driven solutions, provided by banks to optimise cash flow and working capital of businesses connected in a trading network. Supply chains and logistics services are directly linked to efficient financial and value chains in global trade. Proper financing and speeding of documentation and digitalising processes, will create an environment that will help trade and logistics. In this space, electronic bills of lading and simplified data processing and digital solutions for clients will be a key responsibility of future banks.

This session will bridge the gap between, buyers and suppliers, and ensure the logistics industry can maintain sustainable financial flows, through innovative banking tools.



11.45hrs-12.45hrs

Session 11: Speed to new markets, Africa's new logistics opportunities

Africa's logistics sector is undergoing historic transformation, driven by massive infrastructure investments. The market is projected to reach USD 447 billion by 2029, creating high growth opportunities in supply chains, cross border mega corridors and localised fulfilment centres, with new second cities emerging as hubs, that could have potential for warehousing and last mile distribution.

This session will discuss, Africa's trade and logistics opportunities, which includes the African Continent Free Trade Area, which is considered the largest free trade area by population and connecting to intra-African trade.



**AFRICA
LOGISTICS
NETWORK**

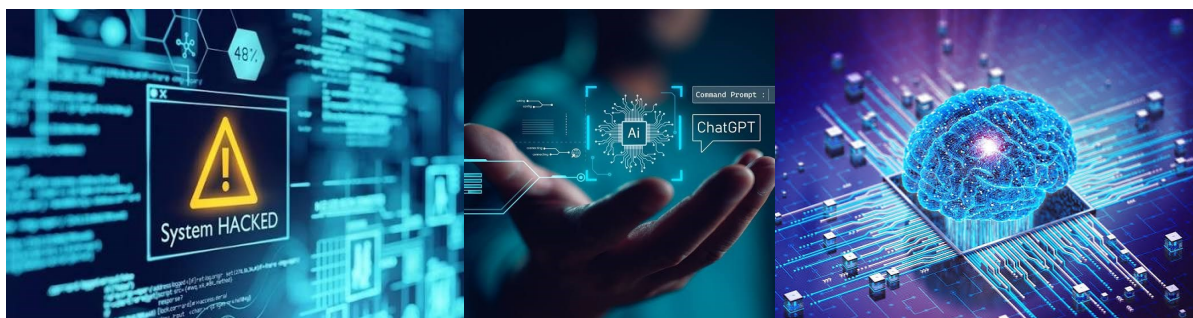
Lunch break -12.45hrs-13.30hrs

13.30hrs – 14.30hrs

**Session 12 - Technology to compete -digital transformation in port logistics
AI challenge and cyber security- the good, the bad and the ugly**

Adapting new technologies, requires shifting the mindset of companies and to embrace tools to build a productive environment that is transparent, efficient and growth oriented. The world has moved to artificial intelligence requiring re-design of work flows and changing the skills sets of employees. The transformation will require modern management practices, where industry leaders will have to invest in human resources who are creative with curiosity and be smart at critical thinking and manage change through emotional intelligence. The adaptation of AI into the ports and logistics sector, will parallelly draw the necessity to face threats through cybercrime.

The session will give an understanding to the logistics industry, a comprehensive view on what to do and what not to do when adapting fast changing technologies. This session will cover, digitalisation and cybersecurity.



1430hrs- 15.30hrs

Session 13: The word of air -sea connectivity-has Sri Lanka got the potential to enter the space?

In multimodal logistics, combining ocean freight and air freight into a single seamless transportation journey, provides a solution to merchandise traders to optimise supply chains and plan out distribution and inventory control. The air-sea connectivity gives project managers, the flexibility to deliver projects on time, where strategic locations can be used for rapid final delivery. It helps cost

mitigation, time reduction and bring in manageable cost structures while it can also help dynamic routing, crisis bypassing and allow businesses to work just in time inventory buffering. This session will discuss the potential for Sri Lanka to be a new air-sea hub and the way ahead to transform the sector.



Tea/Coffee Open- 15.30hrs-15.45hrs

15.30hrs- 16.30hrs

Session 14: Global us 2- TBC

16.30hrs – 17.30hrs

Session 15: - Fireside chat 2- “The politicians”- making Sri Lanka a maritime and a logistics hub-what do they think?

The policy implementation for ports, shipping and logistics, involves translating into a strategic framework. For decades, Sri Lanka has been having a mono policy framework that has stagnated with little or no tangible growth in its contribution to the national GDP, which is considered less than 2.5%. Where as an attractive location, situated in the middle of the Indian ocean, has only gained the populist slogan “the location”, but has failed to get investments, attract new know-how and capital to transform the ports to be recognised as a globally accepted maritime and a logistics hub. The policy makers have been focussing on the 1979 reforms that made Sri Lanka a regional transshipment hub. Beyond this, the country has failed to reform on multiple verticals to be a game changer that could help the national economy to work towards a 10% contribution to the GDP through the ports, shipping and logistics sectors, as shown by other countries. The fireside chat will discuss, the multi-party policy, and how they would transform the country’s direction, as for four decades, the current system has failed to generate the needed financial infusion to the Sri Lanka’s economy.





While attending the conference
Discover the Beauty of
SRI LANKA

Available visits to Port of Colombo and Hambantota Port-pre & post conference

Please note that the programme is in the process of being adjusted and this is not the final version

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