Greetings to all of you for 2015! May this unfolding New Year bring to each one of you much happiness, success and prosperity, and augur bigger and wider dimensions for the WCIC!

I earnestly hope that all of you had a wonderful time at the Annual Christmas party organized by the WCIC. This event helped to develop camaraderie among our members and fostered good will and harmony towards one another. Let me express my gratitude to all the members who rallied around me to helped in numerous ways to make it a success. I hope to organize many events of this nature in our social calendar to celebrate special occasions and look forward to your continuous support and presence.

There is great power in collective thinking and team work. Many objectives of our chamber can be accomplished through creative synergy and we can go from strength to strength to make an effective national contribution for the betterment of women in our country and those beyond our shores. In this context I’m very proud of a milestone reached in the annals of our history. On the 21st of January 2015, we handed a policy brief on fostering women’s entrepreneurship in the SME sector in Sri Lanka to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce that was fully accepted. We also signed a MoU with the Bangladesh Women’s Chamber for closer cooperation and strengthening of trade and economic ties for the mutual benefit of our countries. Further, special mention must be made of the service offered by the Indian High Commission in providing WCIC members a fast tracked facility for the expeditious obtaining of visas.

I would like to see more member participation at our events and it is on the cards to embark on a membership drive to swell our ranks to transform into a truly active trade chamber to provide more services and better facilities to members. In this context your constructive suggestions and feedback to streamline our services are most welcome.

I look forward to a productive year of achievement!

With kind regards,

Ms. Rifa Mustapha
Chairperson

Chairperson’s Message
**WCIC NEWS IN PHOTOS**

**Awards Ceremony**

In August 2014 the WCIC held their flagship event, the Biennial Women Entrepreneur Awards at the Hotel Kingsbury.

Awards are not given as rewards but more in recognition for the industry, hard work and perseverance of the women entrepreneurs. The WCIC was started by a small group of business and professional women in Colombo, who realized that there were many resourceful women in the towns and villages away from the city. The WCIC Entrepreneur Brand recognizes these women and we are proud to be allowed to be a part of their success.

This year under the seasoned organizers Vidyani and Renuka we had numerous applicants, of which some had an edge but all were winners in their own right. Another first for WCIC was establishing The Commonwealth Woman Entrepreneur Award which opens up the opportunity for women in Sri Lanka to get recognition outside our country.

A big Thank You to the pioneering WCIC award committee of 1998 for starting this prestigious event and giving successive Chairpersons and Boards the privilege of continuing it.

**US Trade Delegation meets WCIC**

The WCIC participants from diverse sectors of Industry discussed with Michael Delaney, Assistant US Trade Representative for Central and South Asia, various strategies to partner with US-based small and medium entrepreneurs.

**29th Annual General Meeting**

WCIC held their 29th Annual General Meeting at the Kingsbury Hotel, on 25th September 2014.

Economic Development Minister Basil Rajapaksa participated as chief guest and Attorney at Law Mrs. Pushpa Rajapakse too graced the event with her presence. Mr. Faizer Musthapa, Deputy Minister for Economic Development also participated at this occasion.

The keynote speaker, Mr. Ajith Nivard Cabraal, Governor of Central Bank of Sri Lanka addressed the delegates, invitees and WCIC members.

Mrs. Rifa Musthapha was unanimously elected as Chairperson for the year 2014/15 at the AGM. In her speech she very humbly thanked the members for nominating her and made a firm commitment to continue the great work done by WCIC since inception.

Her main focus during the next two years will be equality, equal opportunity and fair treatment and find meaningful opportunities with government assistance to provide constructive avenues for women in business.

She also said she will strive to make the chamber accessible island wide, as it is currently limited to urban areas. The Chairperson aims at gradually moving forward towards the international arena with confident and independent Sri Lankan professional and business women.
Come December, it’s the time for the wonderful ladies of WCIC to take a break from the hard work of managing their businesses.

The WCIC Annual Christmas Party was held on the 5th of December at the Hotel Galadari. This event allowed all the attendees to relax and enjoy the evening. This year the diligent organizing committee had lined up exciting events. The band played festive songs joined by the tuneful voices of the audience singing carols. The music livened up as the evening progressed, with everyone on the dance floor. The baila beat made the lady swing away like teenagers.

This fun-filled evening included games and competitions. The highlight for the children was Santa distributing goodies, followed by a sumptuous buffet dinner, with the melodious singing of guest artist Corrine. Before midnight, and before it was time to go home and hang up the glamorous party frocks and relieve aching feet, came another exciting moment. All were expectantly awaiting the announcement of the winner of the Grand Prize of the airline ticket.

So WCIC ladies, another busy and productive WCIC year went by and we look forward to 2015.

We wish a happy New Year to all our Members and their families.

Chairperson Mrs. Rifa Mustapha and members of the board met with World Bank Country Director Ms. Francoise Clottes and their officials on 5th November 2014 at the World Bank Country office. They showed interest in the activities of the WCIC and extended their cooperation in the Policy Advocacy programme chaired by Mrs. Sarrah Sammoon. We hope to work with them in close cooperation in the future.
Awards Ceremony

Chief Guest Hon. Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development with Board Members & WCIC Members.

Commonwealth Woman Entrepreneur of the Year winner from Uganda, Ms. Juliana Omalla with WCIC members, Invitees & Guests

Mrs. Saroshi Dubash  Justice Shiranee Thilakawardena  Mr. Arif Zaman  Mrs. Rifa Mustapha

WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Hon. Basil Rajapaksa presenting the Award to the winner of Woman Entrepreneur of the Year 2014 Mrs. Yolanda Aluvihare

COMMONWEALTH WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Guest of Honor Prof. G. L. Peiris with WCIC Hon. Basil Rajapaksa presenting the Award to the winner of Commonwealth Woman Entrepreneur of the Year 2014 Ms. Juliana Omalla from Uganda

Award winners with the Chief Guest Hon. Basil Rajapaksa Minister of Economic Development and Prof. G.L. Peiris
Awards Ceremony

Chief Executive Officer Continental Insurance Pte. Ltd., Mr. Jerry Gunadasa and Managing Director Lanka Bell Ltd., Mr. Prasad Sameasige presenting the Joint Gold Award to Chandani Bandara.

Mrs. Chole de Soysa (Founder Member WCIC) presenting the Bronze Award to Chitra Ranjani Boteju.

Abans Group Chairperson Mrs. Aban Pestongee presenting the Silver Award to Janaki Kathriarachchi.

Mrs. Chole de Soysa (Founder Member WCIC) presenting the Bronze Award to Chitra Ranjani Boteju.

Deputy Minister Investment & Promotions Mr. Faizer Musthapha presenting the Gold Award to Oranay Siriwardena.

ANCI Chairman, Mr. Bandula Padmakumara presenting the Gold Award to G.W. Shyamalee Deepthika.

Chairperson Mrs. Saroshi Dubash presenting the Silver Award to Janaki Kathriarachchi.

Chairperson Mrs. Saroshi Dubash with Bronze Award Winner Rahimi Fernando.

Chairperson Mrs. Saroshi Dubash presenting the Silver Award to H. A. Udumbara Jayasiri.

Hatton National Bank, Mrs. Merlyn Wijetunga presenting the certificate of Merit to Mrs. Malarvili Anton.

Chairperson Mrs. Saroshi Dubash presenting the Silver Award to Senior Teacher of Stepping Stone Montessori on behalf of winner Charmian Colombage.

Chairperson Mrs. Saroshi Dubash presenting the Gold Award to M.D. Gnanawathi Zoysa.

Co - chairperson Awards Committee Ms. Vidyani Hettigoda presenting the Silver Award to K Sairany.

Chairperson, Mrs. Saroshi Dubash presenting the Certificate of Merit to K Susilawathi.

Mr. Thilak Godamanna presenting the Bronze Award to B. Jayawathi.

Chairperson, Mrs. Saroshi Dubash presenting the Certificate of Merit to Udenika Manel.
Visit by the Chairperson and Board of Management to the High Commission of India.

The Chairperson Mrs. Rifa Mustapha and members of the Board had the privilege of meeting Mr. Y. K. Sinha, High Commissioner of India on 17th November 2014 at the Indian High Commission.

In addition to the cordial conversation, the Indian High Commission has agreed to grant Indian Visa to WCIC Membership on recommendation of WCIC, provided relevant documents are made available and are in order.

In the above setting the WCIC Members will not have to go through the normal process of obtaining visa and can do so by submitting the relevant documents with WCIC recommendation directly to the Indian High Commission. This will fast track the process.

Mannar project
June 20th & 21st 2014

Workshop on making awareness of new business creation and Entrepreneurship Development Skills – two day workshop held at Mannar Women’s Development Federation, Thalavakkadu road, Eluthoor Junction, Mannar for thirty five micro entrepreneurs in that area.

WCIC PLATFORM for MEMBERS

WCIC is offering the members a chance to showcase their products/services free of charge at the GOOD MARKET at the WCIC stall.

An opportunity to:
- Grow your business
- Enhance brand awareness
- Networking
- Explore different markets
- Connect directly to customers
- Free advertising
- Free promotions
- Generate extra income
- Test product

For more info: Refer application form, Facebook or contact WCIC Secretariat on: (111) 2971762 Email: wcicsl@skynet.lk

Apexka Fertility Care
No 4, Pagoda Road, Nugegoda.
Tel: 076 692 11 90

Apexka IVF Center
No 1, 3rd Cross Lane, Borupana Road, Rathmalana.
Tel: 0114 20 10 50

Our Services
- Infertility Diagnosis & Counseling
- Ovulation Induction
- Intra Uterine Insemination (IUI)
- Sperm Bank
- Egg Donation
- Embryo Freezing
- In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)
- Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)
- Egg Sharing Program
- Embryo Donation

When
2nd May 2015
10am-6pm

Where
Good Market
Race Course

Book your space NOW
IT’S FREEEEE
Fill the application form and email it to: wcicsl@skynet.lk

4 Saturdays per applicant
WCIC will also help you set up on your own (If you prefer)

ADVERTISE your products
Bring your own banners, business cards and other promotional material
PROJECTS AND SERVICES

Workshop at the Vocational Training Center, Nuffield School for the deaf & blind, Kaithadi, Jaffna.

A seminar and workshop related to Beauty Therapy and Make-up was held for the students and instructors at The Vocational Training Center (VTC) of Nuffield School on the 26th January 2015. This workshop was organized by member Mrs. Chandani Bandara of 4ever organization and award winner WEA.

Presentations and training were given on how to do facials for different skin types using modern techniques. This productive skills training workshop will be useful to the students when starting their own business.

Drought Relief Assistance Project, Dimbulagala – Pollonnaruwa District

Project was successfully concluded with the donation of 73 packs of dry rations to 73 needy families at Dimbulagala Village in Polonnaruwa.

Each pack contained 10kg Samba Rice, 1kg Dhal, 2kg white Sugar, 2tins Salmon, 200gm Soya, 200gm Tea Leaves, 2pcs Soap, 2Tubes Suprivicky Tooth Paste, Milk Powder & Chick Peas.

We profusely thank our benevolent members who made generous contribution towards this good thought.

Micro credit project

A project to assist the small scale women entrepreneurs in the Mannar district by way of providing a Loan to upgrade their existing cottage industries (3rd Phase). 15 recipients project was funded by Colombo Plan.

WCIC IS ON FACEBOOK

The WCIC is proud to serve you and we are always looking at ways to improve our service. And hence we are now on Facebook. Join the page and like it to get updates on all events and workshops planned, to help grow your business.

It’s soon International Women’s Day, the one day of the year that we devote to celebrating all things female. From the progress we’ve made, to the dreams we have for the future.

International Women’s Day was designed to inspire women and celebrate their achievements.

In honor of this important day we would like you to share your stories on our FACEBOOK page to help inspire other women in our society and all over the world.

This will also be shared by other members and friends and your business will also gain a broader platform of awareness.

https://www.facebook.com/WCICSL

UPCOMING EVENTS TO DIARIZE IN 2015

March 28th 2015 - International Women’s Day
May 2nd 2015 - Good Market (WCIC Platform for Members)
June - Launch of the Updated WCIC Website
July - Fund Raising Event
August - Training Program/Workshop
September - Annual General Meeting
October - Workshop on “Social Media & Free Advertising”
December - Christmas Party (Networking)

WCIC MEMBER BENEFITS

WCIC is a strong organization and we would like to add more value to our strength by increasing our membership. We kindly seek the cooperation of our members to introduce at least 5 members each. You can email their name, email address and contact number to us.

Membership Requirements

Business Women
Minimum paid up capital of Rs. 1 Million and / or 5 Employees

Professional Women
Directors or Senior Managers
Enrolment Fee Rs. 500
Regular Membership Fee Rs.3000
The Women’s Chamber of Industry & Commerce held their First Members’ Day for the New Year at Cinnamon Grand Hotel, 26th January 2015. This event made more interesting by the participation of the members who attended the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) Regional workshop.

Chairperson of WCIC Rifa Mustapha gave the welcome address and emphasized that the WCIC would like to see more participation from our dynamic members.

The event gave all the opportunity to hear first-hand stories of fellow women entrepreneurs from Women’s Chambers of Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

First to share her experiences was Masooma Sibtain Shoaib, the Founder of South Punjab Women’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry. She spoke of the situation in Multan and added that most women entrepreneurs have set up home based industries. Masooma also revealed her endeavors to start an organization to gather women entrepreneurs who create the most exquisite embroidery and make them a part of a larger and more empowered group.

Shamama Arbab from Peshawar was the second guest speaker; her story was about her personal experience on unifying women from her region in order to empower them and therefore find better and larger markets for their products.

Rita Bhandari of Nepal spoke next of this inaccessible region, which has a heavy traffic of tourists because of the Himalayas and the difficulties face by Women Entrepreneurs.

Final speaker, founder President of Bangladesh Women’s Chamber of Commerce & Industry Selima Ahmad recounted her story of breaking the chains of tradition. Hers is an inspirational story of how she got married at the age of 16 and became a mother at 17, leading to the final step of being a woman entrepreneur, leading to the final step that is a woman entrepreneur mentoring other such women in Bangladesh. Hard work, perseverance and commitment to her vision now has her as head of a 1500 strong member organization in Dhaka. She is also the recipient of the prestigious Oslo Business for Peace award along with Sir Richard Branson.

Member of WCIC and Fashion Designer Yasisurie Kiribandara gave us glimpse of her collection as a precursor to the upcoming Colombo Fashion Week 2015.

Members dispersed having spent a fruitful evening of fellowship and networking. We would like to see more members attending such events. Please join us for the next Members Day.