Implementation of a "National Single Window" for the Government of Sri Lanka

1. Single Window Application

"Single Window" is a Trade Portal which provide a single point of electronic entry to facilitate the lodging of standardized information once to fulfill all import, export and transit-related regulatory requirements. It gives an opportunity for cross-border trade to submit all necessary documents at a single location and to a single entity.

As a member country of World Trade Organization Sri Lanka is bound to implement WTO's Bali Recommendations and as a result, the "National Single Window" has become a top priority for all Regulatory Agencies involved in Cross-Border Trade. Sri Lanka Customs is the hub for receiving regulatory approvals and therefore assumes the role of Lead Agency in the implementation.

Sequel to Bali discussions, a National Trade Facilitation committee has already been appointed and they are working on setting up a project team for the process. This complex process with the participation of all government agencies involved while agree on deliverables accepted to all the parties and therefore Department of IT Management of the Ministry of Finance and Mass Media has undertaken to develop a web service to accept regulatory approvals. File Generation program and the client program to the web service will be provided to all regulatory agencies to transmit their approvals to Customs electronically.

This website is intended to provide a platform for connecting all the agencies involved while granting them opportunities to contribute to enhance the services available on the site. Final goal of setting this website will be to become the single point of contact for all the traders and agencies and eventually enabling the traders to submit a single dataset for the clearance of goods.

This application will ensure the basic principles of good governance such as transparency and accountability. Eighteen agencies have already being identified and they will be linked together through this application.

2. The proposed way forward:

- IT infrastructure and the human resource capacity of the said agencies should be improved adequately.

- Formulating O&M team in the Ministry with other infrastructure facilities to implement the application.

- Project Steering Committee should be established with the participation of above respective agencies to ensure smooth implementation of the application.