

## OPENING REMARKS BY DIRECTOR GENERAL (LOGISTICS)



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**Rear Admiral PMND Fernando, USP**  
Director General (Logistics)  
Sri Lanka Navy

Commander of the Navy

Director Generals and Directors,

Senior officers, and officers from sister services and friendly countries,

Eminent Invitees from national universities of Sri Lanka,

Distinguished guests,

Course participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to all of you.

I warmly welcome all of you for the 2nd Logistics conference, hosted by the Naval & Maritime Academy in Trincomalee. Thank you very much for your presence. I know most of you'll travelled long distances to be here today because you recognized the importance of the event. Your presence here is an inspiration for the progress of this Logistics Conference.

The 'Logistics conference, which was inaugurated in year 2016. It was my predecessor Rear Admiral Chandana Kulasekara who took the first step to have this conference with the blessings of the present Commander of the Navy, Vice Admiral RC Wijegunaratne. Today in 2017, we have gathered in Trincomalee, to keep the initiative alive and to have the continuation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, at the outset, let me introduce the concept of having a conference of this nature, with the theme of “Fostering strategic partnership for Maritime Logistics” is to develop a forum to discuss and share the knowledge in contemporary developments and strategic approach in the field of Maritime logistics. It has become an integral part of the Long Logistics Management Course and academic necessity.

So, this is purely a knowledge sharing effort with the view of giving an opportunity for the participants to interact with eminent scholars and the masters of the field of logistics.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today this gathering is represented by eminent scholars in the field of Logistics, officials from Local and foreign naval logistics training institutions, Entrepreneurs who are involved in Logistics gives great honor and pleasure to us. Further, I am sure that, with their innovative thoughts and vast experiences will immensely benefit for all those who are present here to broaden their horizon and to develop their responsiveness and intellectuality.

Therefore, I kindly invite all of you to get the maximum benefit out of this rare opportunity to enhance your knowledge and to achieve your objectives.

Let me re-fresh your minds, why the Logistics is so important? It is believed that origin of word “Logistics” do come from French word call “logistique’ the military term meaning art of transportation, supply, and quartering of troops. In other terms “The art of managing the flow of material and products from source to end user”.

The known origin of Logistics runs back to thousands of years. The Firon have constructed pyramids in the middle of the dessert. I believe building that would have been much easier than delivery one tone heavy bricks to work site, where there were no roads neither nor raw materials available for miles and miles. I feel that is Logistics.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Trincomalee is also known as Gokanna, is a city with a natural deep-water harbor and rich maritime heritage where seafarers from Far East and far West, interacted many centuries ago. The sea-borne ‘silk route’ brought cultures, people and trade together. Trincomalee is one of the oldest cities in Asia, which has served as a major maritime seaport in the international trading history of the South East Asia. Therefore, Trincomalee can be considered as an excellent benchmark in terms of Maritime Logistics.

In recent history, during the Second World War we know in numerous occasions that Logistics support was the decisive factor in winning and losing the Battles. The United States military ensured that the services and supplies were provided at the right time and at the right place. They also provided these services where ever and whenever it was required, in most optimal and economical manner with the best available options to do the task. It was the ability of US Army to provide un-interrupted logistics support to these troops made the defeat of the Germany. In the same way American and Russian could not held on to Afghanistan. One of the main reason, it was not possible for them to provide the needed Logistics support to therein ground troops due to the harsh terrain, which implies logistics is a decisive factor in winning and losing battles.

Further, Falkland war which lasted for few days in 1982 is a classic example. There military used available resources to cater and full-fill the logistics requirements. British's used diversity of ships to the tasks. Tankers converted to carry water and fuel. Freighters were used to transfer food and ammunition and luxury ships converted to carry troops and transferred 100,000 tons of freight, 95 air craft and 9000 troop to the nearest forward base to Falkland

Further, different methods that was used during the wars to provide much needed logistics support later became the new concepts in more advance form as part and partial of Logistics such as just-in-time concept emphasizing procurement in 1970-1980s. The Quick Response (QR) and Efficient Consumer Response (ECR) are techniques that were developed the area of distribution.

Logistics branch in Sri Lanka Navy; it goes back to the era of 1950 of Royal Ceylon Navy. Since then, it went through different transformations; the logisticians of the Navy shouldered some herculean tasks especially, during the humanitarian operation. I can say this without any restriction, as I was the Head of Logistics in northern theatre during the final battle of humanitarian operation. We transformed land master trailer to fuel bowser to transfer much needed petrol to chundikulam more than 90 KM away from northern naval headquarters every other day to keep the momentum of naval operations.

In the Naval scenario, it is obvious that the success and safety of every mission depends on getting needed supplies, materials and equipment at a moment's notice. Therefore, the men who are shouldering the responsibility of facilitating logistics should make sure that Sri Lanka Navy gets what it needs, when it needs it.

As we all know, the Logistics environment is moving rapidly with modern theories, practices and breakthroughs. In such situations, it creates the competitiveness for knowledge. This will be a golden opportunity for the young logistics officers to broaden their field of logistics.

Today we have very professional expertises in the field of logistics today, I am certain that we will be able to have a very fruitful discussion, interactions of thoughts and even productive arguments to profit our theme.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me end my opening remarks by quoting a famous saying by Great Military Strategist, And Philosopher Sun Tzu which highlights the importance of Logistics,

I quote "The line between disorder and order lies in logistics..."  
I unquote.

Finally, I wish all of you a very productive conference to achieving your aspirations.

Thank You