

PRIVATE SECTOR OPPOSES SLPA TARIFF HIKE AT THIS JUNCTURE

The undersigned, strongly oppose the unilateral decision by the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) to increase port tariffs. A Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) which included the undersigned as well as officials of the SLPA was established by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Southern Development, to enable a consensus driven mechanism to resolve the issues relating to the tariff increase. The concerns raised by the private sector at the JCC and through written proposals have not been adequately addressed and thereby rendered the envisaged consultative process a failure.

The opposition to the tariff hike is based on several reasons. Amongst them is the difficult operating environment that the trade is facing, the need to address existing inefficiencies in the Port operations to make Sri Lanka more competitive and the disruption to existing contracts.

The private sector representatives of the JCC are also disappointed to note that the assurances given by the SLPA to refund the excess tariffs already paid (when the hike was brought into effect from January 1st, 2019 to February 7th, 2019) has not been implemented.

We urge that the proposed tariff hike be stayed permitting the private-public consultation process through the JCC to arrive at a suitable solution.

