

Director General Mr. Francis Gurry,

Hon. Dr. Liam Fox, British Secretary of State for International Trade

Madam Suganthi Kadirgamar,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me extend a warm welcome to all of you to this event today.

The Late Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar was a man of exceptional poise, talent, and character. He was a brilliant legal luminary, a consummate diplomat, an inspiring orator, a clever strategist and a pragmatic leader. Above all, he was truly a great humanist.

The exemplary art of diplomacy and persuasive skills that he had brought to bear upon his new calling in 1994, took Sri Lanka to greater heights. He did that fearlessly until he was most cruelly downed in August 2005. While the office of Foreign Minister was adorned by its holder, it was public knowledge that the holder was very much an accomplished person even before he was inducted to that office in 1994.

It was not surprising that a person of such stature made the culture of diplomacy and professionalism the mainstay of Sri Lanka's engagement with the world. A key attribute of that culture was its emphasis on 'accomplishment' and result-orientation. His highly analytical skill, courage of conviction, careful nurturing of talent, and creative thinking and leadership, all combined to engender a constructive ambiance within the Foreign Office, leading to the flourishing of the Foreign Service and to its professionals

becoming 'accomplished' as well. He had nothing to benefit from politics but politics had way much to gain from him.

That of course, we know well, was his distinct footprint. A footprint which represents a part of his legacy that spans all spheres he strode- the Trinity College and the University of Ceylon, the Balliol College, Oxford Union, the unofficial bar, the ILO and the very place where we stand today - the WIPO, to which he gave of his prime of life.

While the Late Kadirgamar's accomplishments were truly exceptional, I believe he had certain dreams which he wanted to see accomplished as well; The dream of a peaceful, reconciled Sri Lanka, and a secure, stable and sustainable world.

We are aware that many strive hard, even now both in Sri Lanka and abroad, without visibility and without expectation of personal reward, to carry some of his dreams to fruition, through small steps and in small ways. The pivotal role being played by Mrs. Suganthi Kadirgamar, who has dedicated much of her life to the promotion of principles that he had stood for is well acknowledged.

Even this event at WIPO today and the presence of the Secretary of State Dr. Liam Fox, Director General Gurry, officials of WIPO who supported this initiative are significant steps in our path to realising the dreams and ideals of the Late Kadirgamar.

I thank you all.