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**PART I : SECTION (I) — GENERAL**  
**Government Notifications**

**NATIONAL POLICY ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**1. The Preamble**

LOCAL Governments are commonly accepted levels of Democratic Governance which has been actively engaged in local development activities in our country, since historical times. It provides basic services and development to citizens in the areas under its jurisdiction. Creating a new vision for local governance is a need of the hour to overcome the Challenges and fulfill the service requirements of the people and the local development needs. In order to revisit the national development objectives afresh and to pursue new goals and targets of national development for upgrading the system of local government, and also considering the enormous service responsibilities that could be delivered by the local governments, the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils hereby submits the National Policy on Local Government.

The fundamental principle of the policy is to “strengthen and broaden the Democratic structure of government and the Democratic rights of the People by decentralizing the administration and by affording all possible opportunities to the People to participate at every level in national life and in government”<sup>1</sup> as spelt out by the The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

**1.1 THE ASPIRATION**

It is peoples’ desire for all local units of human habitat to ‘emerge as micro-centres of growth on modern lines’. The expectation of this policy is to establish an efficient, effective and people’s friendly local governance in Sri Lanka through the active participation of all civil society partners, community organizations and promoting a grass root level governing organization of ‘Jana Sabha’ for a prosperous village government. Likewise the end result will be further empowerment of the general public through advocating a peoples’ friendly governing environment and enhancing the participatory democracy by implementing the required short term and medium term reforms.

<sup>1</sup> The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Article 27(4), PP17.

## 1.2 THE CHANGES OF 'LOCAL GOVERNANCE'.

As the overall medium-term objective of this Policy is to make local authorities an integral part of the system of representative government with the highest permissible level of democratic Decentralization and autonomy, backed by corresponding powers and resources. Towards this overall goal, immediate measures will be taken to build local government capacity to gradually assume the new decentralized role with confidence. The capacity will be built through collective vision, participatory governance, rational review of powers and functions, allied legal and statutory reforms and also the development of necessary infrastructure and human resources. These are essential prerequisites for strengthening optimum devolution, decentralization and autonomy.

## 2. The rationale

2.1 The National Policy on local government is being introduced for the promotion and strengthening of local Democratic Governance based on the following principles.

2.1.1 Noting that local, Provincial and National Development are integral and interlinked,

2.1.2 The Local Government Sector should maintain strong inter-linkages between and among other existing national, provincial and local governments and administrative structures.

2.1.3 More effective inter-relationship should exist between Urban and Rural Economies.

2.1.4 The public participation and social awareness are essential main tools to achieve the highest expectations of the decentralization.

2.1.5 Every citizen has the right to demand optimal basic services, facilities and infrastructure from the Local Government and other Government Departments and Authorities.

2.1.6 That it is the moral and legal responsibility of the local authorities to deliver a reasonable service for the every citizen as enshrined in the Local Government Citizens' Charters.

2.1.7 Such rights are accompanied by duties and responsibilities of the citizens, particularly to participate in and contribute to local planning and development.

2.1.8 In local governance there are some social civil responsibilities and duties that should be performed by the citizen.

2.1.9 For more than hundred years, the local authorities in Sri Lanka have shown unwavering commitment to public well-being manifested through many constructive actions, despite their inherent resource limitations and other impediments.

## 3. The Aim

The aim of the Policy is to establish the necessary institutional and legal framework and build a supportive environment backed by adequate safeguards and guarantees for achieving the highest feasible level of effective local self-government as an integral part of a three-tier representative governance, by :

3.1 Broadening the scope of Local Government with adequate functions, powers and resources.

3.2 Raising the consciousness, vision, commitment, planning and managerial capabilities of Local Authorities and of their civil society partners,

- 3.3 Building the capacity of Local Authorities to fully exercise the powers assigned to them to harness local strengths and resources.
- 3.4 Mobilize stakeholder participation and support for physical and socio-economic development of their area of jurisdiction, within their own distinct cultural setting.
- 3.5 Making local governments more effective, people-friendly and equity-building institutions of democratic governance.

#### 4. The Policy Framework

The policy will introduce practical home-grown solutions to address the deficiencies and impediments in Local Government. It shall ensure that the necessary legal and institutional mechanisms, instruments and tools are in place to usher in an era of effective local self-government, by implementing a multi-pronged strategy that will ensure social harmony, cohesion and ethnic integrity.

##### *Goals and Priorities :*

#### 4.1 OPTIMUM DIVISIONAL DECENTRALIZATION AND DEVOLUTION :

##### 4.1.1 *Encouragement of Peoples' Governance :*

- 4.1.1.1 The Policy seeks maximum devolution and decentralization of authority and powers for participatory decision-making in a manner that respects and upholds *the principles of autonomy, subsidiarity and proximity* in order to empower Local Authorities to regulate and manage the share of public affairs under their purview.
- 4.1.1.2 As a medium-term goal, the Local Government will be accorded the status of an integral part of a three-tier representative government within the ambit of the Constitution of the Republic of Sri Lanka. Local Authorities will thus be transformed from the status of “*dependent institutions*” to ‘*self-governing partners*’ of the other two tiers of government. The main objective is to help them achieve participatory local self-government and empowerment of ‘*Gamey Anduwa*’ or, in other words ‘*Jana Sabha*’ which has been born through the existing State Policy followed by the home grown self-governing concept of ‘*Grama Rajjaya*’ that has a long history.
- 4.1.1.3 The policy will also take measures to strengthen the Local Government in their duties and responsibilities in order to create a democratic and participatory local governance culture and promote civic conciseness and encourage the community based organizations required for such participation.
- 4.1.1.4 The policy expects that the Local Authorities be consulted whenever the related policies are being prepared by considering the fact that the Local Authorities are independent and autonomous unit of governments.

##### 4.1.2 *Primacy of Local Government jurisdiction :*

- 4.1.2.1 The Policy shall devise necessary institutional mechanisms and legislative enactments and cause to implement the already available statutory safeguards diligently to effectively insulate the Local Authorities as the premier governance institution of the area, devoid of any interference from extraneous interest groups and by strengthening the image of Local Authorities and also safe guarding their powers as stipulated in Section 4.3 of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution

of Sri Lanka which states that “*it will be open to a Provincial Council to confer additional powers on local authorities but not to take away their powers.*”.

4.1.2.2 Overall allocation of any local government function or responsibility to any authority or entity other than the local authority will be done purely and only for reasons of technical or economic efficiency and, necessarily, with wider consultation with and agreement of the related local authorities, other appropriate institutions and expert bodies representing the local government sphere of the country.

4.1.2.3. The Policy, therefore, shall call for more profound intra-governmental and inter-governmental consultation, solidarity and collaboration to enhance local autonomy, stakeholder participation and partnership-building. Through a consultative process involving all relevant ministries, necessary guidelines shall be issued clarifying the inter-agency and inter-governmental (tier) functions and issues and defining their relations.

4.1.2.4 The local authority shall be given full discretion and assistance to exercise their authority in regard to planning, administrative, fiscal and financial matters concerning their jurisdiction.

#### 4.1.3 *Rationalization of the institutional scope and capacity of Local Authorities :*

4.1.3.1 The Policy seeks to expand the scope of local authorities from being an agency for public amenities maintenance to be the flagship for goal-oriented local development that contributes to equity, national growth and equitable economic progress. For this, the scope of local government will be widened. The inadequacy of laws and by-laws to deal with the new and emerging functions and subjects will be addressed as an urgent responsibility. The procedures of enacting statutes and by-laws by provincial councils and local authorities will be simplified.

4.1.3.2 immediate support and expertise will be rendered to reorganize and reinforce the local government administration system.

4.1.3.3 Reintroduction of ward representation system and establishment of ward level ‘Jana Sabha’ will be considered within the scope of the national framework of representative governance. The ‘Jana Sabha’ will be actively involved in planning and monitoring of service delivery and of physical and socio-economic development within the area.

#### 4.1.4 *Local Government as the Planning Authority :*

4.1.4.1 The Policy ensures the partnership of the local authority in divisional development planning and create a common environment for well-coordinated integrated rural and divisional planning.

4.1.4.2 The Policy also will pay special attention to bring the Divisional Administration and the local authority to a common platform of planning and coordination by developing appropriate institutional space and mechanisms for harmonious co-existence between the two. The policy envisages that all major partners in local development will integrate their activities in a coherent manner under the coordination of the local authority.

4.1.4.3 The Policy will ensure proper implementation of the National Physical Planning Law under which the local authority is given the status of the planning authority of the area under its jurisdiction. The scope of local authority will be expanded to enable it assume the role of *planning authority* for both physical planning as well as equitable human development of the assigned area.

- 4.1.4.4. Steps will also be taken to ensure that the major local development initiatives in urban areas are also linked directly to, and coordinated by the local authorities deriving strength and support from the Urban Development authority Act and the Urban settlement Development Authority Act. In doing so, due consideration shall be given to allied issues in disaster-prone areas, in order to mitigate disaster concerns and impact.
- 4.1.4.5 In keeping with the Government vision “to recognize local governments as autonomous bodies, accountable to their people and strengthen them by giving adequate manpower, financial and decision-making powers”<sup>2</sup>, the Policy will also ensure that all investments in local development will be linked to local government. The purpose is to achieve a holistic and integrated development planning process, based on the principle of subsidiarity.
- 4.1.4.6 Under this policy, local government shall assume a new meaning as an amalgam of all the area-based development activities conducted by the Development Triad, *i.e.*, the Government, the Civil Society and the Private Sector, assisted by international development agencies. The Policy shall promote, encourage and support partnerships among the Triad constituents. Local Government planning shall be considered an integral part of provincial and National Planning Systems and process.
- 4.1.4.7 To ensure strict adherence to the above, “a set of guidelines for socio-economic development planning’ at the local level will be stipulated through a process of inter-ministry consultation. This will supplement the existing guidelines for physical planning and urban development planning.
- 4.1.4.8 The Policy considers the preservation and improvement of physical environment, of the area of jurisdiction, is the responsibility of the Local Government Authority and thus, environment and hazard parameters should receive highest consideration in local planning.
- 4.1.4.9 The Policy shall also ensure that, as the planning authority of the area of jurisdiction, the local authority shall be pro-actively involved in disaster preparation, mitigation and management within the overall District Framework for disaster management. Obtaining technical guidance and assistance from related Ministries and allied technical authorities, the local authority shall identify the disaster-prone areas, potential disaster-risks and hazards and formulate a comprehensive, area-specific plan of action based on locally Identified strategies and rapid response systems, having regard to the policy and operational guidelines issued for the purpose, as per the Disaster Management Act.
- 4.1.4.10 The Policy will encourage collective enterprise particularly of geographically contiguous local authorities and others that share common problems and opportunities, for economical and effective management of issues such as transport, solid waste, social forestry and watershed conservation.

## 4.2 REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY AND CONSENSUS POLITICS.

### 4.2.1 *Strategic vision and Consensus Politics.*

- 4.2.1.1 The Policy envisages effective implementation of all statutory provisions that help building consensus in local governance.
- 4.2.1.2 To ensure sustainability of participatory local planning strategies and to prevent them from being abandoned in midstream when regime-changes occur, the Policy will entrust local authorities with the onerous task of formulating and implementing a perspective corporate plan with a well articulated vision and strategy for long term development. Necessarily, each local

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Finance and Planning, Department of National Planning website.

authority shall ensure that the said corporate plan will represent the consensus view of all the major parties of its Council and is duly validated through an effective citizen consultation process. The Policy will also emphasize the need for regular progress reviews with all-party involvement.

- 4.2.1.3 The Policy shall work towards creating an enabling environment by promoting a local culture of non-confrontational politics through refinement of participatory planning mechanisms and consensual decision making processes at the local level. It also will encourage civil society partners to under take locally tailored programmes to raise the level of civic consciousness in this regard.

#### 4.2.2 *Rule of Law :*

- 4.2.2.1 The Policy will encourage local authority participation in developing practical means and mechanisms to uphold and ensure the rule of law, irrespective of social distinctions, within the respective area of authority. This will be done using proper communication methods, coordination mechanisms and partnerships with law enforcing and regulating authorities and with fullest participation and contribution from the civil society.
- 4.2.2.2 Avenues will also be explored to develop appropriate consensus mechanisms such as a 'Law and Order Advisory Committee' co-chaired by the Head of Local Authority and the chief of Police of the area along with civil society and private sector representatives in order to hold the elected Heads of local authorities too co-responsible with the Police for maintenance of law and order within the area of local authority.

### 4.3 TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS.

#### 4.3.1 *Transparency and Accountability :*

- 4.3.1.1 The Policy will insist on achieving the highest possible level of local government transparency and effectiveness. Public accountability will be an integral element of the Policy. It will uphold and protect the citizens' right to information and will make the operations of the local authorities transparent, particularly in matters relating to revenue and expenditure, procurement and tender awards, staff selection and promotion, identification and prioritization of development projects and sharing of information. It will help eradicate alleged speculation, suspicion, malpractices, corruption and other such complaints. Regular public consultations and periodical feedback systems on financial and other important issues will be encouraged to enhance accountability.
- 4.3.1.2 Thus, the Policy will insist on strategic medium term vision-building, participatory planning and budgeting, transparent procurement procedures, enhanced unhindered public access to budgets and audit reports and statutory public display of justification of tender awards.
- 4.3.1.3 It will also call for immediate establishment of a well publicized public complaints procedure, an office of ombudsman, and social audit mechanism such as introduction of citizens' report cards, for periodic public assessment of governance at the local level.

#### 4.3.2 *Responsiveness :*

- 4.3.2.1 The Policy shall uphold responsive governance and encourage, guide and support the Provincial Governments in building the Local Government consciousness and capacity to ensure that local authorities are constantly responsive to local aspirations and addressing the pressing

needs of the residents in a spirit of conformity. Toward achieving this objective, the Policy will make sure that peoples' aspirations and needs receive unreserved attention and unhampered priority at all stages of development planning and budgeting.

#### 4.3.3 *Access to information :*

- 4.3.3.1. Local authorities regularly generate a large fund of valuable data. They lie in files and are difficult to retrieve and use at short notice. The Local Government Policy will encourage and ensure that all the Municipalities, the Urban Councils and large Pradeshiya Sabhas will install and continually update and upgrade the required level of facility to operate Information Management Systems and other accessories such as own website and stakeholder inventories, in order to collate and store the said data for easy retrieval, effective planning and indicator-based performance review.

### 4.4 EQUITY PROMOTION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

#### 4.4.1 *Equity in resource distribution, Localizing development goals and Poverty reduction :*

- 4.4.1.1 The Policy views development goals as a veritable vehicle for disparity reduction and equity promotion. It will work closely with the Treasury and the National Finance Commission to help achieve equity in the distribution of public finance among the local authorities, Similarly, it will ensure equitable distribution of local government resources among the resident populations to remove any existing service and infrastructural disparities within their area of jurisdiction. As a medium term measure, local authorities will be encouraged and supported to localize and diligently pursue the development goals and targets. Local authorities will be trained and helped to compile status reports on developments goals, to identify service and achievement gaps in the local area and to formulate and implement a plan of action for removal of such gaps in collaboration with all appropriate agencies.
- 4.4.1.2 The Policy also will provide for regular all-party Parliamentary and Provincial Councils review of progress made by local authorities and the provincial governments in narrowing the regional and intra-regional disparities in development.
- 4.4.1.3 According to the existing state policy, the local authorities will focus on greater planning emphasis on resources for removing intra and inter-area disparities and correct the existing imbalances in regional growth. It will also be requested, guided and supported to develop and implement area-based plans for human development with concerted emphasis on poverty reduction.

#### 4.4.2 *Gender empowerment and Marginalized Groups :*

- 4.4.2.1 The policy will take measures to increase participation of women and of marginalized groups in decision making processes of local authorities.
- 4.4.2.2 The Local authorities shall also take measures to create appropriate procedures and mechanisms to bring representation of women and marginalized groups in to the local level decision-making process.
- 4.4.2.3 Similarly, at the local government level, planning attention and care will be given to address the needs of women, children, and socially dependent and vulnerable populations such as the marginalized and the semi-abled.

#### 4.4.3 *Access to Resources :*

- 4.4.3.1 The Policy recognizes an urgent need to enhance peoples' confidence in the local government system and to improve its image as an effective tier of government. While acknowledging the supreme responsibility of the national and provincial governments to support the local authorities with adequate allocation of resources, the Policy also calls for appropriate measures to further strengthen and galvanize the local government initiative to raise financial and other resources required for local development.
- 4.4.3.2 The Policy will also set in motion a mechanism for stimulating a continuous policy dialogue to identify innovative means of financing the needs of local authorities. It will reiterate immediate introduction of payment of property rate on self-assessment basis to encourage the ratepayers to assess on their own their due rates and make proactive payments without waiting for official notices.
- 4.4.3.3 The current overlapping of sources of revenue between the provincial councils and local authorities will be eliminated through a consultative process. Immediate steps will be taken to clarify the relationship and required coordination between the two levels of government.
- 4.4.3.4 Local authorities will be helped to identify new sources of regular revenue. For this, the scope of regulatory functions will be expanded to cover the activities of private enterprises and informal markets. It will help reorient local governments to be a supportive agency for development of the fast expanding informal sector which has displayed a high potential for poverty reduction and local economic development. On application, local authorities will endeavor and provide, common amenities and infrastructure required by the informal sector enterprises to carryout their operations.
- 4.4.3.5 Adequate safeguards and legal support will be set in place to rationalize and streamline the current revenue channels. The will include arrangements for direct remittance of assigned revenues such as the annual grants from the Finance Commission, the stamp duties and court fines to the local bodies with due and prompt notification to the Provincial Council.
- 4.4.3.6 Similarly, necessary measures will be set in motion to increase the powers of local authorities to achieve a higher degree of autonomy that guarantees freedom and access to raise adequate human and financial resources that commensurate with their development vision, functions and responsibilities.

#### 4.5 SOCIAL INCLUSIVITY, CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS.

##### 4.5.1 *Social Inclusivity.*

- 4.5.1.1. The policy derives its socio-economic and political vision from the pluralistic realities of the nation and encourages respect and preservation of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity as integral to its social tapestry and providing them with equal opportunity and access to power, justice and resources. Therefore, the policy will promote optimum social inclusion in all matters, political, social and economic. This principle will encompass ethnic, religious and all other minority groups and also the marginalized and vulnerable segments of the nation.

##### 4.5.2 *Civil society participation for governance :*

- 4.5.2.1 The policy will encourage conscientious peoples' participation not merely as a tokenist gesture of attending occasional meetings and consultations dominated by the officials and/or political leaders but, as a continuing partnership that is effectively integrated and institutionalized into the local area decision making process as expressed in the Local Government Citizens' Charters.



4.5.2.2 The local government planning process will be refined with appropriate guidelines that will provide for and encourage ward-based, community-level area-planning and participatory budgeting which will engage ward level stakeholders, community-based organizations and voluntary groups under the leadership and guidance of the elected representative/s of the ward. The Policy recognizes the right of local authorities to define and periodically sharpen the modes and mechanisms of civil society participation in local decision making.

4.5.2.3 The Policy will also emphasize the entailing duties that accompany participation rights of the people. Building the institutional capabilities of civil society organizations to take up local responsibility is an integral part of the Policy. Peoples' participation through Working Group mechanisms, City Development Committees, public consultations and through civil society organizations such as the Rate Payers' Associations will be the fulcrum of this participatory process.

#### 4.5.3 *Public -Private Partnerships :*

4.5.3.1 The local authorities will be encouraged to enter into productive partnerships for development activities in the area under their jurisdiction. Appropriate Investment portfolios with other agencies, particularly the private sector, will be encouraged in principle and practice, subject to minimum but adequate safeguards and controls at provincials and national levels.

4.5.3.2 The Policy will provide for establishment of a local development fund at the national level with a special cess, grants and voluntary contribution by the government, private sector and the international donors to assist local development.

### 4.6 MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE

#### 4.6.1 *Inter Agency Co-ordination :*

4.6.1.1 The Policy insists on practical directions to stimulate participatory mechanisms for local authorities to realize the highest possible level of cooperation and coordination with relevant ministers and agencies. It emphasizes the need to strengthen local ownership and cross-sectoral coordination of local governance and development efforts among all involved institutions.

4.6.1.2 The Policy recognizes that local governance requires the highest sense of coordinated ownership and cooperation by all relevant ministries and sectors in order to provide conceptual and technical guidance to local authorities to realize their development vision and goals. For this purpose, in addition to the statutory committees, the Policy recommends and encourages the use of participatory mechanisms such as City and Local Area Watch Groups, Advisory Committees, Residents' Associations, Citizens' Fora, City Development Councils etc., supported by regular inter-departmental and inter-agency progress review and follow-up mechanisms at and among different tiers of government.

#### 4.6.2 *Professionalized human resources management :*

4.6.2.1 With the emerging new trends, functions and responsibilities, there is an urgent need to upgrade and professionalize the knowledge and skills of the local government cadres and prepare them to take up new challenges with a high sense of responsibility, confidence and competence. The Policy calls for immediate measures to professionalize the human resources capabilities of local government institutions. Local government capacity building will, therefore, receive highest attention and support for skills development training and regular performance assessment.

- 4.6.2.2 The Ministry will establish a National Strategy on Local Government Capacity Development which will place emphasis on planned development of local government capacity. Emphasis will be placed on skills development of local government personnel, by networking the training institutions, technical agencies, universities, local government experts and the academia specialized in local governance and participatory planning and development.
- 4.6.2.3. The Policy will also ensure that the technical personnel required for the purpose are provided to the local authorities without delay. Human resource development and management with norms and guidelines for forward planning, recruitment, rigorous performance appraisal, and promotions will form an integral part of this process.

#### 4.6.3 *Information Communication Technology for Management Efficiency.*

- 4.6.3.1. In compliance to the state policy of ‘an efficient and people friendly public administration system will be established in Sri Lanka with the assistance of Information and Communication Technology’, ‘the automation and process re-engineering of local government functions will be done in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local governance with the aim of enhancing its contribution towards upgrading the public service delivery and improving socio-economic development. Thereby, it is also expected to rectify the following weaknesses in the present local government system.

4.6.3.1.1 lack of data management system.

4.6.3.1.2 lack of public confidence in Local Government.

4.6.3.1.3 lack of civil society participation.

4.6.3.1.4 obsolete systems and inefficient resource and revenue management.

4.6.3.1.5 lack of accountability and responsiveness in service delivery.

4.6.3.1.6 lack of facilities for a meaningful democratic representation.

- 4.6.3.2 In this technical transformation, the provincial level capacities will be improved to enable them to provide the technical support services to the local government institutions and the ‘Sri Lanka institute of Local Governance’ and other national level institutions also will be mobilized for the purpose. The contribution and support of the national and international resource agencies will be provided, for the purpose of making capacity development and providing necessary computer hardware in line with the applications of new technology.

#### 4.6.3.3. Information Technology Projection on Local Government - e Local Government.

The Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils with the assistance of Information and communication Technology Agency (ICTA) has already commenced an information technology project on local Government under the title of ‘e-Local Government’ to address the above issues. Moreover, by this project, the solutions based on free software which could be provided freely to all local authorities are designed and implemented.

#### 4.6.4. *Constructive politico-administrative interface and balance :*

- 4.6.4.1. For the optimal functioning of Local government, political authority and administrative leadership must work hand in hand. Therefore, a consultative exercise will be launched, involving the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils, the Provincial Public Service Commissions and National Association/s of the Head of Local authorities to develop and implement suitable

mechanisms that can promote and ensure a healthier and more constructive balance and respectful interface between the local level political authority and the administrative staff of local authorities. For this purpose, a Code of Ethics for Elected Representatives of local authorities, will be adopted for voluntary observance,

## 5. Commitment

### 5.1 NATIONAL COMMITMENT :

- 5.1.1 The objective of this Policy is to remove these inadequacies and impediments that are currently obstructing the local government system in the country from being an effective partner of the government in local development and administration.
- 5.1.2 The Policy aims to empower and strengthen the local self government institutions of the country and create an enabling environment for them to provide authority backed, goal-oriented, people-friendly and proactive support services for development of their localities and residents.
- 5.1.3 For this purpose, the Government of Sri Lanka pledges its support, services and resources to ensure immediate implementation of this Policy for which a well articulate implementation plan will be formulated and carried out by the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils. In turn, it will urge the provincial councils to take necessary measures immediately to ensure that the objects and spirit of this policy are fully incorporated in their policies and statutes.
- 5.1.4 In pursuance of the above, the Ministry shall set up a “National Council for Local Government” which shall be the focal point for implementation of this Policy and to improve democratic governance. It shall have representation of central government, provincial councils, and local authorities and will meet quarterly, or as required, to review progress of implementation and to recommend necessary corrective measures, reforms and actions. It will provide conceptual and technical guidance and tool to the Provincial Councils and local authorities.

## 6. Revision of Policy

- 6.1 In keeping with the spirit of this document, the Policy will be reviewed and updated periodically by the ‘National Council for Local Government’.
- 6.2 In this regard a consultative process will be followed with the involvement of all tiers of government and the civil society.
- 6.3 It will be done with the view to refining and strengthening the local government system progressively, in consideration with the limitation of the existing state policy, *viz-a-viz* its structure, powers, functions, duties, resources and the degree of autonomy.
- 6.4 This will be supported by necessary Policy adjustments and enactment of rules and statutes by the higher level of governments.

JANAKA BANDARA TENNAKOON,  
Minister of Local Government and Provincial Councils.

Colombo,  
18th December, 2009.

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