

It gives me great pleasure to extend greetings on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the signing of the Charter that established the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

SAARC reflects the determination of the Governments and peoples of South Asia to work together towards finding solutions to their common problems in a spirit of amity and cooperation based on mutual respect, equity and shared benefits.

Since its establishment in 1985, SAARC has moved forward steadily and into the core areas of trade, economic cooperation and poverty alleviation that are vital for peace, security and development in our region.

It is said that just as much as our shared past, it is the allure of a common future of progress that now beckons and binds SAARC together. The SAARC Charter Day provides an occasion to recall the contribution made by the founders of our Association and to re-dedicate ourselves to furthering the common goals and objectives that we have set for ourselves.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate Sri Lanka's strong commitment to working towards greater regional cooperation through SAARC.

Ratnasiri Wickramanayaka Prime Minister of Sri Lanka