

## SPEECH OF THE INCOMING PRESIDENT MADE AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

“Good morning everyone!

I am humbled by the trust placed in me and I hope I will be able to take the association forward and continue the projects started by Mrs. Alagaratnam. Therefore, I accept this post with some trepidation, because I have to fit into the shoes of someone who is a high achiever and is known to be able to implement what she plans. Mrs. Alagaratnam is known for her unwavering dedication and focus in all of her commitments and undertakes.

I think I speak for all, when I say that Mrs. Alagaratnam led this association with great dedication, charm and tireless leadership. Thank you Madam you made us proud.

It will be an honour and a privilege to follow her and to build upon the tremendous progress she – and her committee – have accomplished during her tenure.

Looking back, the the Alumni Association of the Faculty of Law Colombo is the umbrella body that brings together the alumnus of the university, to keep us connected to two things- the institution that taught us the value of the Rule of Law, and to those to sailed with us on that journey of learning the law.

The simple truth is that for four year of my life- this place, the Faculty of Law, Colombo, was home for me. This is where I met those teachers who taught me how to think, and this is where I developed lifelong friendships. So I see this very much as an opportunity to serve and to give back to the university and community, that moulded me and gave so much to me.

Today, higher education is facing many shifts, and I think we all know that. You can pick up the paper and read about all that’s happening with the landscape that we’re in for higher education: the global economy, demographics, funding of public higher education and exponential advances to technology. There are changes and challenges at every turn.

And this can threaten the very core of our universities. To move forward in this ever-changing landscape, what we need to do is again come together to transform, innovate and reinvent how we approach higher education, and what we get out of it.

I do not want to make grandiose promises about what I intend to do during my tenure. However, I do hope that I can rely on the commitment and assistance of the Vice Presidents and the Executive Committee in taking forward the projects that have been

carried out membership drive, the guest lecture series and the scholarships for needy students. All of this would be possible only if all of us are willing to spare an hour a month on meetings, and some time on giving back to an institution which in my view, has made us distinct from the herd.

If there is anything that we as Alumni can do for the present students, it is helping them navigate university in a way that prepares them so that they have a head start in the legal profession when they graduate. And for this to happen, we need more than one pair of hands.

Thank you.

FARZANA JAMEEL

President's Counsel.