

## **SEC Sri Lanka hosts IOSCO Policy Committee Meeting in Colombo**

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Sri Lanka (SEC) successfully hosted the International Organization of Securities Commissions' (IOSCO) Committee on Retail Investors (Committee 8) meeting, in Colombo from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

IOSCO, the international body recognized as the global standard setter for financial markets regulation, brings together over 200 members from 130 jurisdictions, representing 95% of the world's securities regulators. SEC Sri Lanka has been a member of IOSCO since 1993.

The IOSCO Board oversees the establishment of principles and standards developed by Board-level task forces and policy committees. SEC Sri Lanka actively participates in two key Policy committees: the Committee on Enforcement and the Exchange of Information (Committee 4) and the Committee on Retail Investors (Committee 8). SEC Sri Lanka has been a member of Committee 8 since 2016, which is comprised of 38 members dedicated to conducting IOSCO's policy work on retail investor education and financial literacy.

The primary mandate of the Committee on Retail Investors is to advance IOSCO's policy work on retail investor education and financial literacy. The Policy Committees meet thrice a year to discuss and enhance their mandates. During the recent meeting, Committee 8 members engaged in meaningful discussions on better educating investors globally. The sessions featured perspectives from academics, industry participants, and other stakeholders.

Mr. Pasquale Munafò, Senior Officer at the Commissione Nazionale per le Società e la Borsa, Italy, and Chair of IOSCO's Committee 8, commented on the meeting's success: "Our sessions provided an important opportunity for members to share experiences and insights as regulators address the challenges resulting from the use of technologies, including artificial intelligence, in the financial markets. We aim to take full advantage of the growing recognition of financial literacy and personal finance as a field of research by the academic community."

Addressing the meeting Chairman SEC, Faizal Salieh said "Retail investors are the backbone of our financial markets. Their trust, confidence and participation are vital for market liquidity and for fostering an investment culture that can drive economic growth. The financial landscape is

constantly evolving, presenting new challenges and opportunities. It is our duty to ensure that retail investors are well-informed and protected in this dynamic, volatile and uncertain environment”.

He emphasized that “SEC Sri Lanka stands steadfast in its mission to foster a robust and inclusive financial ecosystem. Central to this mission is our commitment to retail investor education. We believe that an informed investor is an empowered investor—one who can navigate the complexities of the financial markets, identify opportunities, and mitigate risks effectively”.

He further remarked that “Improving financial behaviour in Sri Lanka necessitates a multifaceted strategy and we have employed some key strategies in this regard. By providing clear, accessible, and practical knowledge, we empower investors to make informed decisions. Our work involves not only designing, developing and delivering a range of investor awareness programs to various segments of society, it also involves cautioning investors to avoid becoming victims to potential scams. Our efforts have already shown positive impacts. Collaborating and exchanging investor education strategies among IOSCO members proves invaluable for jurisdictions, particularly in today's interconnected global markets. This sharing of ideas and initiatives enhances the effectiveness and reach of educational efforts, ensuring investors are better equipped to navigate complex financial landscapes”.

SEC Sri Lanka's hosting of this significant event demonstrated its commitment to foster international cooperation and contribute to the development of global standards in securities regulation.



