

J **SOME ASPECTS OF INDUSTRIAL LOCATION POLICY IN
THE CITY OF COLOMBO**

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During the past several decades industries have developed in a haphazard manner in the Colombo Urban Area and particularly within the City of Colombo and its immediate environs. The impact of this uncontrolled growth became increasingly evident in the early 1970s. Demiecki, a U.N. Expert attached to the Colombo Municipal Council observed that the rapid growth of industries has caused many serious environmental problems, while the Colombo Municipal Council having discussed the problem at length, passed a motion in 1974 according to which no new industries were to be allowed in the city and serious thought to be given to the gradual shifting of existing industries out of the city. The Colombo Master Plan Project sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme observed that although the magnitude of the problems in the City of Colombo are not as serious as in many third world cities, the time is opportune to take remedial action before such problems reach unmanageable proportions.

The Urban Development Authority which came into existence in 1978 has taken several steps with a view to regulate the development of industries in a conducive manner and for the general environmental improvements within the City of Colombo.

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These include, (a) identification of industries that could be allowed in the City of Colombo, thus preventing major and inappropriate industries being located in the city, (b) identification and planning of areas outside the city which are suitable for the location of new industries and re-location of some industries and warehouses currently located in the city, (c) guiding industries and warehouses to suitable location outside the city and (d) formulation of Development Regulations and maintenance of standards by ascertaining the infrastructure and other needs of industries and warehouses.

These measures undoubtedly set in motion the emergence of a new and desirable pattern of development in the city although there are some problems to be overcome. A more effective mechanism to create public awareness and better integration among the relevant public agencies is a necessary pre-requisite to surmount some of these difficulties.