Many scholars at different times and for different purposes have discussed the purpose of education, the rational behind education. However, the definition may be as many as the number of scholars.

2. As I see education is a biological need. It is very much related to living, to leading a meaningful life, both socially and economically. An expectation common to all living beings is to lead an economically and socially meaningful life. For this it is of immense importance to understand the others. This is applicable not only to individuals but also to countries, to nations and to groups of people. Jaques Delors in his report states that “learning to live” is one of the pillars on which the education in the 21st Century has to rest. In this context programmes for international understanding are very much welcome.

3. The mankind has started speaking of a global village. His achievements in the field of Information Technology has made it more than a global village. One day in very near future we may see a global man. Today a message initiating from any point of the globe can reach any other point in a few seconds. This is fast becoming shorter and shorter. Very shortly this will be not seconds but milliseconds. The end result is that whole mankind will learn to think as one living being. The ethnic, cultural or national identities, geographical or political boundaries are going to be mere words in such a situation.

4. Today more than ever before the man has realized the need to live in peace and harmony. He has realized how destructive is the war, how miserable it makes life
for millions of people. Seeing the destruction the 2\textsuperscript{nd} world war has caused all countries will go to any extent to prevent a repetition.

5. All what I have said above may make one to understand how important it is for all countries to launch many of programs of education for international understanding.

6. Understanding this timely need Sri Lanka as far back as in 1974 has established a special centre for international studies. This centre is known as the Bandaranayake Centre for International Studies (BCIS). In addition almost every university of the country has launched programmes on education for international understanding.

7. The Bandaranayake Centre for International Studies (BCIS) is a Centre established under the S.W.R.D. Bandaranayake National Memorial Foundation. Since its inauguration at the Bandaranayake Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) on 9\textsuperscript{th} December, 1974, the Centre has endeavoured to create an awareness among Sri Lankans of Foreign Policy issues from national, regional and developing countries’ perspectives. Its aims and objectives are as follows:

1. to promote an understanding and belief among the people of Sri Lanka in the development of friendly relations amongst: nations in the furtherance of international co-operation, in the maintenance of peace and security and in solving international problems through peaceful means.

2. to encourage and promote the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge on international relations, international law, diplomacy and the like among the people of Sri Lanka.

3. to encourage and promote the study of and research into all aspects of international peace, international relations law and diplomacy.

4. to establish and promote co-operation and friendly relations with institutions, associations or organizations, both national and international with similar aims and objects.

In pursuance of these aims and objectives the BCIS has been conducting regular Post-Graduate Diploma Courses and other short-term courses in International Affairs as well as guest lecture Programmes.
Under its Language Training Programme, the BCIS conducts regular courses in Sinhala for foreigners, Tamil, Chinese and Japanese. The Library of the BCIS which is also a depository for United Nations Publications, is a specialized collection of books and journals relating to International Affairs. The Library is being computerized with a grant from the Ford Foundation.

8. The Centre is both a teaching and a research institute geared towards graduate teaching, research and the advanced study of International Relations with particular emphasis on South and South East Asia and the Third World. The courses offered at the Centre are structured with a threefold objective:

first, to educate and train both public and private sector personnel and others to enable them to serve national institutions as well as international organizations of the area and Sri Lanka’s diplomatic missions abroad,

second, to provide a purely academic and general education in the field of International Relations, and

third, to enter upon activities, including the organization of special programmes, courses, public lectures and seminars and the provision of consultative assistance for the Government of Sri Lanka and regional organizations which are dedicated to strengthening international relations and preserving world people.

9. Regular Courses of Study
For the present, the Centre conducts a post-graduate Diploma Course in International Affairs. This Course is open to persons who are graduates of recognized universities or others who have equivalent professional or other suitable qualifications. Candidates should possess a working knowledge of English and Sinhala or Tamil. The Course leads to the award of a Diploma, which is recognized by the University of Sri Lanka under Section70 of the University of Ceylon Act, No.1 of 1972. The curriculum of the Diploma Course is so structured as to provide instruction of a very high standard with a view to stimulating the interest of students through in-depth analysis.

The duration of the Course is one year and an examination is held for those who
successfully complete the Course. In addition, the students are required to submit a
dissertation on an approved subject.

Lectures are held at the Bandaranayake Memorial International Conference Hall,
Colombo, in the evenings usually between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. Only those who will
be able to attend these lectures regularly are advised to seek admission to the Course,
as no student will be allowed to sit the final examination unless the Centre is satisfied
that he or she has followed an adequate proportion of lectures.

The lectures are delivered in English, but the examination will be held in the Sinhala,
Tamil and English media and students may submit their dissertations in any one of
these languages.

Admission to the Course will be on the basis of a qualifying examination or an
interview of both. Candidates at the qualifying examination are expected to write
short answer to questions on International Affairs, Economic Development of Sri
Lanka and Sri Lanka’s Foreign Policy. There will be an additional paper to test the
candidate’s proficiency in English. Students who sit the qualifying examination in
the English medium will be exempted from this paper.

10. Relations with Foreign Institutions
The Centre has taken a keen interest in establishing and maintaining relations with
institutions of a similar nature functioning in other countries.

The programmes of collaboration with foreign institutions include

1) Exchange Projects
Exchange of scholars, professors and lecturers, and books and publications on
a regular as well as on an ad hoc basis.

2) Research Projects
(i) joint research projects, (ii) mutual support for local research projects, (iii)
planning and development of joint specialized seminars and courses, (iv)
special courses for diplomats, and (v) the holding of international seminars.

11. Universities

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The Universities have launched many programmes in this regard. Exchange of students is among the most important ones and under this programme there are many foreign students coming from many different countries of the World study in the Universities of Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan Students study in the Universities of other countries.

In addition to the regular subjects under different courses of study the students are provided opportunity to learn the following subjects as a part of the education programs for international understanding.

1. International Law
2. International Relations
3. Sri Lanka in World Affairs
4. Economic, Political and Social Development in Sri Lanka, 1931 onwards
5. Comparative Political Systems
6. Political Ideologies

12. The curriculum in schools contain certain elements of international studies under the subject of social studies at the lower secondary level. The assistance of the agencies under the U.N.O. are sought in training of teachers of this subject.

13. With regard to the policy to be followed by ACEIU it is suggested that while conducting activities similar to the activities conducted by the B.C.I.S. and the universities of Sri Lanka the ACEIU should play the role of a facilitator and co-ordinator. The ACEIU can help the member countries in the programs for exchange of students and in research programs to a very great extent. The centre can also launch a program for the exchange of chairs among the universities in the region.

14. We propose that a country co-ordinator be appointed in each of the member countries. There can be annually a general meeting of the country co-ordinators who will help the centre in policy planning and who will also help the process of planning and implementation of education programs in their respective countries with the assistance of the centre.

15. To assure quality and uniformity in the many different programs conducted by the
member countries the ACEIU can develop a set of guidelines to be followed by them.

16. ACEIU can also launch a programme to provide resource persons and financial assistance to the member countries for the implementation of education programs.

17. The Centre can also play the role of a facilitator in bi-lateral agreements within the group of member countries and also between a member country and a non-member country or a multi-national agency.