

Rethinking conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka: A critical Review

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Abstract

The Sri Lankan ethnic conflict has been interpreted as one of the most paradigmatic protracted social conflicts in recent times. This research traces the rapid escalation and internationalisation of Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict from the early 1980s onwards into a fully-fledged and bitterly fought civil war and reviews the significant peace-building achievements such as the Thimphu Talks (1985), Indo-Sri Lanka accord (1987), ceasefire agreement (2002), Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC 2010). While analysing Sri Lanka's conflict and peacebuilding, we can see domestic, regional, and international contributors. Among these contributors, the contribution of peacebuilding in Sri Lanka should be evaluated to inform future sustainable peacebuilding endeavours. Presently, the fundamental of the Sri Lankan economy is shaken by the more than three-decade civil war. The island is suffering from expensive short-term foreign debt. If Sri Lanka achieves long-term Sustainable peace, it can easily overcome all burden-burning issues. The main objective of this study is to rethink resolution and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka and, secondly, to identify and analyse the significant challenges to sustainable peacebuilding in Sri Lanka and assess how these challenges can be overcome in the contemporary era, with the support and contributions of all ethnic groups. The study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The study was primarily descriptive and analytical, relying on both primary and secondary sources. Moreover, this study recommends a roadmap for achieving sustainable peace in Sri Lanka, drawing on lessons from past peacebuilding and reconciliation experiences.

Keywords

conflict resolution, Sri Lanka, peacebuilding, Constitution.

Introduction

Sri Lanka is located strategically in the Indian Ocean. It has a long history of politics, social, economic and cultural Norms. During the colonial period, Sri Lankans gained some democratic features, such as a representative system, Universal Franchise, an electoral system, and an administrative system. After independence, especially at the end of British colonial rule, Sri Lanka was seen as the most progressive, ethnically harmonious, and politically stable country in South and Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, the transfer of power to the indigenous people in Sri Lanka, the new constitution-making process is questioning ethnic harmony and challenging the rules of democracy. Sri Lanka provides a particularly significant context for a deeper understanding of the root causes of conflict and the peacebuilding process. In fact, the three-decade crucial Sri Lanka's civil war started with political contradiction between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils, which resulted in the massive destruction of population, environment, good governance and economy. That experience should indeed provide valuable insights into conflicts, their social bases, the reasons for their emergence and spread, and the consequences of violent conflict on society, people, and their progress.

Following the transfer of power to the indigenous people in Sri Lanka, the country has faced numerous issues, particularly ethnic and religious issues. The Sinhalese claim that they have a minority complex even though they are the majority on the island. They add the over 50 million inhabitants of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu to more than one million Ceylon Tamils and see them as constituting a clear majority in the Area (Wilson, A.J., Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism, 2011). After the civil war from 2009 onwards, the country has aimed at peacebuilding. The main objective of this paper is to provide an overview of the Sri Lankan conflict, examining its historical roots and the rethinking of a possible path to achieving sustainable peacebuilding. This study employs an integrative approach, utilising both theoretical and empirical data to explore the role of institutions in post-war peace building in Sri Lanka. The final part of the paper concludes that there is a possible opportunity to achieve sustainable peace. In the current Sri Lankan context, the State should promote social justice and facilitate grassroots participation in the post-war recovery process. In the contemporary context, if we achieve Sustainable peace in Sri Lanka, we must address the root causes of the ethnic conflict. Specifically, we should be concerned with a win-win solution between the majority and minority ethnic groups.

- **Theoretical framework**

The term 'peace building' refers to activities that go beyond crisis intervention in conflict management. Peacebuilding is an approach to post-conflict that recognises the need for conflict resolution, the development of capacity for it, and the pursuit of sustainable peace. It involves a full range of techniques, processes, and stages to make transformation more manageable, peaceful relationships and governance structures. Peacebuilding is distinct from both peacekeeping and peacemaking as it is a practice rather than a means of dealing with conflict.

Few peacebuilding theories are significant worldwide. Social theory offers us competing evaluations of the role of conflict in human affairs. Some influential theories have been viewed positively. For example, Marxist social theory views class conflict as the central dynamic that propels human society towards progress and higher stages of development. George Simmel, the 19th-century French sociologist, noted that conflict has many positive functions. It prevents social stagnation and serves as a medium for classifying problems into two types of conflict: destructive and constructive. A conflict can have both destructive and constructive consequences when its participants are dissatisfied with the outcomes and feel they have lost. Similarly, a conflict has productive consequences if all participants are satisfied with their outcomes and feel they have benefited from it. Sri Lanka has a long history of peace processes. Still, there have been no sustainable efforts to continue the peace process because of the communalistic and fundamentalist approach of some Buddhist monks, several politicians, and the misrepresentation of facts. Conflict is an integral aspect of human life. Yet an adequate understanding of conflict requires some theoretical treatment of the concept. Conflict has both negative and constructive functions. Conflict is a relationship between two or more parties who have, or think they have, incompatible goals (Christopher Mitchell). Conflict is opposition among social entities directed against one another (Quincy Wright). Conflict is escalated natural competition of two or more parties who believe they have incompatible goals, and whose aim is to neutralise, injure or gain advantage over the other party or parties.

In conflict management and dispute settlement processes, negotiation among parties is an accepted practice. With experience in complex conflict-negotiation exercises involving experts, negotiation has become a specialised art. In dispute resolution, arbitration has become a specialised art. In disputes, resolution, arbitration and business and management, negotiation is a tool of the trade. In industrial disputes, Labour unions and employers usually have developed traditions of negotiation. Often, labour union leaders in Sri Lanka who may not have formal

educational qualifications are skilful negotiators, successfully bargaining with lawyers and business leaders. Private companies and government agencies often engage in business negotiations. Negotiation is also an everyday skill that all of us already possess, with varying degrees of experience.

In negotiations in such macro-political processes as armed civil war or interstate conflicts, too. Negotiation has been a strategy resorted to by parties in dispute. In international politics and diplomacy, negotiation has long been considered an essential policy tool and a strategic option. However, it is only recently that the value of negotiation has been recognised in resolving intra-state conflict. Its fundamental objectives are to create the social, economic, and cultural conditions for peace at the grassroots level. The primary purpose of this experience thus lies in addressing the root causes of the conflict at the micro level, namely, social, economic, political, and regional exclusion.

Statement of the problem

The story of armed conflict in Sri Lanka is a typical case of a secessionist movement arising from mismanaged autonomy demands. It is the history of radicalised Sri Lankan Tamil youth resorting to Armed means to fight for Separation with the failure of moderate politics. The issue is rooted in the articulation of Language rights by Tamils consequent to the imposition of the “Sinhala only Act” by the then Sinhala-dominated regime in 1956. Later, when Colombo started assiduously pursuing colonisation programmes by settling Sinhalese in the Tamil-dominated eastern parts of the island, the struggle turned into a demand for Autonomy of a Tamil homeland. With the passage of the 1972 Republican constitution, which unambiguously enshrined the dominance of Sinhala Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Tamil political struggle entered its final phase of Self-Determination when the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) passed the Vaddukoddai Resolution in 1976. But the battle was to be very nonviolent. The passage of the standardisation policy in 1972, which gave an advantage to Sinhalese students entering professional courses over Tamil students, whose careers depended on obtaining professional degrees, further stoked the already raging fire. The lack of opportunities in modern society not only frustrated the ambitious, educated Tamil youth but also challenged the privileged positions of existing regions and social groups. Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka turned violent due to the insensitivity of the state in addressing the genuine grievances of the Tamil community and the consequent resort to arms by the frustrated and radicalised Tamil youth.

They organised themselves into groups and began attacking symbols of state power. In 1983 came the major outbreak of Sinhalese violence

against the Tamils in all parts of the island, This Kristallnacht like pogrom was in immediate reaction to an ambush by the Tamil Liberation Tigers of an army Truck in which thirteen Sinhalese soldiers died, It has been suggested that the pogrom had been pre-planned and that some of communal – minded ministers in J, RJayawardene's cabinet were involved in launching the assault on innocent throughout the island (Wilson.A.j SriLankan Tamil Nationalism, 2001) After the 1983 riots, the Indian intelligence agencies provided military training to prominent post-war societies, which often face significant challenges in rebuilding trust and social cohesion among diverse communities. In Sri Lanka, the protracted civil war left deep-seated divisions along ethnic and religious lines, worsening issues such as inequality, displacement and human rights violations. Despite various governmental and international efforts toward reconciliation, progress has been slow and often hampered by political interest and societal mistrust.

The role of government and political parties in this context is crucial, as these Tamil political parties can serve as mediators, facilitators and advocates for inclusive dialogue and sustainable peace.

Objectives

1. To provide an overview of the Sri Lankan conflict, examining its historical roots and implications for peace-building efforts.
2. To understand the strategy adopted by Sri Lanka for its sustainable peace building in the post-war context.
3. To assess challenges and opportunities to achieve sustainable peace in Sri Lanka.
4. To explore potential recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of community interventions in post-war peace-building in Sri Lanka.

Research Questions

1. Why is Sri Lanka suffering from political and social issues?
2. How do communities interact with state mechanisms and other actors in promoting peacebuilding in Sri Lanka?
3. What are the significant challenges in Sri Lanka to achieve sustainable peace after the post-war war?
4. How did Sri Lanka reach Sustainable peace after the post-war war?

Methodology

The methodology used in this study is descriptive and analytical. Both primary and Secondary sources were used. Primary data were drawn from Government publications and Hansard. The researcher conducted extensive, in-depth interviews with stakeholders, including political leaders, bureaucrats, the press, scholars, and members of civil society. The study

engages with prominent scholars specialising in conflict resolution and peacebuilding to gain further theoretical insights.

This paper analyses a wide range of ethnic issues and the connection between conflict and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka.

Ethnic Conflict Root Causes in Sri Lanka

During the late 19th century, the Buddhist upsurge by Anagarika Dharmapala militated against foreigners in urban centres, especially in Colombo. Also targeted then were the Muslims and Malayalis. Against this background, the Sinhala-Muslim riots broke out in 1914, and Hindu Tamil leader Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan went to London to defend the Buddhists against the Muslims. Before the 1920s, Tamil political elites and Sinhala political elites had the best relations in modern history.

Embedded in Sinhala Buddhist nationalism itself was an anti-nationalist phenomenon, which wended its way through anti Muslims, anti-Malayali, anti- Indian sentiments, and finally to anti-Tamil positions. The concomitant argument is that Sri Lanka is an entirely Sinhala-Buddhist country. The Tamils, since ancient times, strove to destroy Buddhist regimes, which they persist in to this day. So they deserve nothing more than mere survival. At official levels, absolutely nothing is spoken of the elemental Sinhala-Tamil cultural affinity, of the contribution that Tamils made to Buddhism or of the Hindu-Buddhist relations.

There are four main nationalities on the island: Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, and hill country Tamils. Sinhala identity is based on the mother tongue. However, since the late 19th century, the emphasis has shifted to Sinhala Buddhism, so that the Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian Sinhalese are viewed with some suspicion by extreme Sinhala Buddhist nationalists.

Sinhala chauvinism developed adherents among the petit bourgeoisie. The right-wing trade unionist A.E. Gunasinghe, a pioneer leader of the trade union movement in the country, targeted the strong Malayali working-class community in Colombo, which played a significant role in building the left-wing trade union movement, particularly that affiliated with the Communist Party.

Tamil nationality generally refers to Tamils from the Northern and Eastern provinces and excludes the Muslims and Hill Country Tamils. Tamil awareness, defined by linguistic identity, faced various constraints and emerged slowly.

The prospect of sharing the spoils with the colonial master implied rivalry among the elite groups. The nature of the rivalry became more clearly defined along ethnic lines following the move towards elected governments and universal franchise. It is, however, Remarkable that

Tamils in the North were the first to articulate progressive political thought: a sizeable section of the educated Tamil middle class and an enlightened section of the elite. Inspired by the Indian independence movement and leaders like Gandhi and Nehru, formed the Jaffna Youth Congress, which was the first organisation in the country to call for independence from British Colonial rule. The youth congress also defied the conservative elite by standing by the woman and the depressed castes to call for universal franchise. Thus, despite awareness of Tamil ethnic identity, the Tamil Leadership of the time thought in terms of the whole country so that a Tamil nation and secession were not serious political considerations. However, betrayal by their Sinhala elite counterparts led prominent Tamil political leaders, P. Arunachalam and P. Ramanathan, to found Tamil political organisations in the 1920s.

Sinhala nationalism, or rather Sinhala-Buddhist ideology, became increasingly assertive in the run-up to independence, and it was against this background that Tamil parliamentary political parties emerged. The All-Ceylon Tamil Congress party (ACTC), the main political party of the time, and other Tamil leaders were willing to barter their support for the Sinhala nationalist UNP in exchange for cabinet posts and other favours. Class interests ensured that this love-hate relationship survived several tests.

The Tamil leaders were offended by the design of the national flag, which they perceived as implying Sinhala pre-eminence. Colonisation schemes, conceived in the Post-World War II years 2 years before independence and implemented since the early 1950s in the Eastern Province, aimed at taking away fertile land from Tamils and Muslims and settling Sinhalese there and thereby reducing the Tamils and Muslims to a Minority in their traditional homeland, did not pass unnoticed, but did not lead to a struggle at the time. The Citizenship Act, which deprived the Hill country Tamils, was supported by several Tamil MPs for various inducements offered by the UNP leadership, but was opposed by the entire left. The ACTC leadership's dubious role in this issue split the ACTC and led to the founding of the Federal Party (FP) in 1949.

It is now history that political parties seeking to destabilise an incumbent regime would rouse parochial ethnic feelings in their urge to secure their vote banks.

During the heyday of the left movement (1930 1954), this tendency was to some extent under control. In fact, it did not emerge as a political slogan. The 1956 changes are significant in left politics because of the Cold War and Russian influence on communist parties in postcolonial countries, which supported progressive regimes. Ignorant of national cultural trends, left parties gradually abandoned their language policy. They endorsed the

SLFP's anti-UNP line, and, finally, in 1964, the two main left parties dropped the two-language policy in favour of Sinhala-only. Language is a key symbol of culture in local politics and the ambience, and the somersault by the leftists made for sharp Sinhala-Tamil polarisation. So, what is significant is that, in the 1970s, when the Tamil liberation campaign took the form of armed struggle, left influence in Sinhala areas had totally disappeared. So, pure ethnic consciousness received a setback in the term.

Sinhala Media have presented a biased picture of the war to the Sinhala masses. In the history of Sinhala print media, Sinhala Buddhist nationalism has a permanent,

Abode Concomitantly, during the last 30 years, the Sinhala masses never got the correct picture of either the horrendous nature of the war or of the justness and legitimacy of the demands of the Tamils. A fallacy that this was a heroic war, fostered at the highest level between 1996 and 2000.

Apart from the pros and these developments, apart from whether these are true or false, our concern is that the Sinhala people have not been psychologically moulded to accept the Tamil demands. Hence, no party in Sri Lanka is in a position to project this political reality. Thus, this has been the chief stumbling block to a peaceful settlement. There is a perceived fear among the Sinhalese, and two factors have surfaced as the culmination of protracted anti-Tamil and anti-Muslim trends, with the emergence of the Sinhala Urumaya and its transformation as Hela Urumaya, also, significantly, the rise of the JVP- a phenomenon that is not easy to comprehend.

Post-1948 class formation in the Sinhala areas, ethnic perceptions within them, the Sinhala-only act, denial of Governmental concessions to grassroots people, opposition to alien forces, and a distorted Marxist ideological orientation are the factors that have compounded to constitute the JVP. The JVP shouldn't be seen through the lens of the UNP or the SLFP. From the politics of its beginnings, the JVP, which has metamorphosed through leadership rivalries to its present position, hesitates to even speak to the minorities. The JVP, which has metamorphosed through leadership rivalries to its present position, hesitates to even talk of the minorities. At the same time, it has a substantial base in both the urban and plantation sectors and strongly seeks to expand its influence among the rank and file of the armed forces. They would want to leave behind the troops they encountered in 1989 and go forward. Thus, it would be wrong to misjudge or underestimate them.

Peace-building milestone in Sri Lanka

1985 Thimphu Talks

In the early period when the Sri Lankan Tamil liberation struggle evolved into an armed struggle, a peace negotiation was held in Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, in 1985 between the Tamil liberation struggle groups and the Sri Lankan government. This peace negotiation was organized under the mediation of the regional power India in order to ensure lasting peace in Sri Lanka. Although the Thimphu Peace Negotiations were broken up into two rounds of talks driven by political interests, they have revealed some of the intimate aspects of the national ethnic issue in the public domain. Especially in the contemporary era, the labeling of terrorism remains a major obstacle in the tug-of-war over the national ethnic issue. However, in the Thimphu Peace Negotiations of 1985, the Sri Lankan and Indian governments also included armed resistance movements as representatives of the Tamils. This ensured the international recognition of the justification of the Tamil people's armed struggle. However, in later years, the contents and expressions of the Thimphu Peace Negotiations have been ignored due to the dominance of political interests.

Furthermore, the joint statement issued by the Tamil group comprising the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TLO), the Eelam Revolutionary Organization (EROS), the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) on the closing day of the first phase of the Thimphu talks on 13 July 1985 has remained the collective political demand of the Tamils to this day. The statement mainly emphasized four contents;

1. Recognition of the Tamils of Sri Lanka as a nation.
2. Recognition of the existence of an identified homeland for the Tamils in Sri Lanka.
3. Recognition of the right of self-determination of the Tamil nation.
4. Recognition of the right to citizenship and the fundamental rights of all Tamils who look upon the island as their country.

This is identified as the 'Thimphu Declaration' and remains the primary example of the political demands of the Tamil people to this day. In 2026, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, in a letter to the Indian Prime Minister regarding the resolution of the Sri Lankan ethnic issue, stated that, 'the representations emphasize the enduring relevance of the Thimphu Principles, articulated by Tamil representatives during the 1985 peace talks facilitated by the Government of India in Bhutan.'

1987 Indo-Sri Lanka accord

The Indo-Sri Lanka accord aimed to resolve the civil war through the devolution of power to provinces, the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces, and the official status of Tamil. It has a few advantages and disadvantages. In the multi-ethnic island of Sri Lanka, the lack of a unitary structure that protects chauvinism is a constant accusation. It is against this backdrop that the ideas of power sharing have been put forward by the Sri Lankan Tamils since 1949. However, the Southern Sri Lankan rulers have consistently rejected the idea of power sharing in the 1972 and 1978 constitutions. In this regard, the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement and the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution have provided the basis for power sharing. However, this is not complete. The Sri Lankan judiciary has confirmed in its judicial review that the unitary structure of Sri Lanka is preserved even after the 13th Amendment. The implementation of such incomplete power sharing has been a constant tug-of-war among the political parties in Southern Sri Lanka. At the same time, the LTTE in the North-East Tamil community also rejected the 13th Amendment to the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, citing the inadequacy of power sharing. The contradiction surrounding the Sri Lanka-India agreement has revealed that, 'In resolving the national ethnic issue, what is deemed insufficient for the Tamil People appears to be considered excessive by Sinhala Chauvinism.'

The first provincial council elections were held on April 28, 1988. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) boycotted the elections in the Tamil areas. However, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front contested. Varadaraja Perumal was elected as the first and last Chief Minister of the united North and East. The united North and East were divided in 2006. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) in the South also boycotted the first elections. The JVP also urged the public to do the same. It is also noteworthy that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was a fundamental factor in the JVP's second insurgency. The JVP, which is currently in power, is campaigning to completely change the 13th Amendment, that is, to abolish the provincial council system. However, the existing provincial council system itself is a weak structure due to the unlimited power of the Governor, the limited financial powers of the Provincial Council, the non-full implementation of the 13th Amendment, and the lack of continuity in provincial elections. People are disappointed with the provincial council system.

2002 Ceasefire Agreement

In 2002, with the slogan of 'finding a negotiated solution to the ongoing ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka', peace talks were initiated between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)

with the facilitate of Norway. In 2007, the peace talks broke down due to mistrust and political rivalries between the two sides over a five-year period, and the fourth phase of the Eelam War began. The peace process focused only on two parties. In particular, the United National Party and the LTTE were the only two parties involved in the negotiations. In 2002, when Chandrika Kumaratunga of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party was the President of Sri Lanka, the United National Party had won the general election. The Sri Lankan government was led by UNP Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in the peace talks. In this context, the conflict in the legislature and executive power sectors of Sri Lanka also hindered the healthy progress of the peace talks or the establishment of a lasting peace.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga and other key southern political elites were largely excluded from the peace process. And they had also expressed opposition to the peace process. During the peace period, the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE had expressed interest in working together in the reconstruction of the 2004 tsunami that affected the entire coast of Sri Lanka. Arrangements were made for this. However, the JVP, the main ally of the government led by Chandrika Kumaratunga, withdrew its support for the government and had moved the court against the government and the LTTE from working together in the tsunami reconstruction. The incitement of such chauvinistic forces and the government's corresponding inaction constituted a major obstacle to continued peace moves. Its breakdown initiated another phase of the Eelam War and led to widespread genocide.

2010 Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC)

After the end of the war in 2009, with the aim of satisfying the international community and UN High Commissioner Ban Ki-moon, who had visited Sri Lanka, the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission was established by the President Mahinda Rajapaksa as a means of campaigning for a solution to the national ethnic problem within Sri Lanka's internal mechanism. In particular, the main task of this commission was to identify the basis of Sri Lanka's national ethnic problem and propose reforms. The report of the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission was presented in Parliament on December 16, 2011. The specialty of Sri Lankan commissions is that the investigations of the commissions formed to protect Sri Lankan governments themselves cannot fully protect Sri Lankan governments. They tend to point out the mistakes of the Sri Lankan government. The Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission also had such a specialty. The report acknowledges the key events and shortcomings that contributed to decades of political violence and civil war in Sri Lanka and makes sensible recommendations on governance, land issues and the

need for a political solution. However, like other governments, the Mahinda Rajapaksa-led government has also ignored the recommendations of the commission it set up without any consideration.

Meanwhile, the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission has not provided a full and independent investigation into violations of international humanitarian and human rights law that the UN and other partners in Sri Lanka have been calling for. This has been viewed as a major failure of the commission in the international arena. It was against this backdrop that the 2012 UN Human Rights Council, led by the US, adopted a resolution calling for reconciliation and accountability by the Sri Lankan government.

Sri Lanka's past decades also contain a vast corpus of experience in dealing with violent conflict through war and coercion, negotiation, external intervention, mediation, and constitutional amendments. Particularly after the civil war from 2009 onwards, the country aims at peacebuilding. While analysing Sri Lanka's post-war sustainable peacebuilding, we should also investigate the root causes of ethnic conflict and the interventions aimed at addressing them. The following facts are very significant.

1. 1978 Second Republic Constitution: Weaknesses and Limitations.
2. Buddhist religious leader's activity
3. Communal political parties
4. Short-term vision of Political Leaders
5. The majority of people with a Minority complex
6. Discriminatory activities against minority ethnic groups

Government Accountability

Sri Lanka is a multilingual country. Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, and Burghers are living there. Basically, the government should treat all ethnic groups equally and recognise each ethnic group's dignity, including its religious and cultural practices. Once a conflict has started, its termination may become exceedingly difficult for a variety of reasons. Conflict resolution can be as complex a phenomenon as the council itself. Therefore, in resolving conflicts, the government should take every step very carefully. According to my research, the Government should fully implement the following matters.

- Announcement or undertaking of economic development in areas affected by the war
- Effective relief and rehabilitation measures for people affected by the war and reconstruction of the war-affected areas
- Save the human rights of war-affected people and punish those soldiers or military leaders who violate human rights.
- Reduce the civil-military conflict in the war-affected areas

- Initiation of the political process, for instance, by holding regular elections and establishing civil administration without any military intervention.
- Initiation of a Long-term political solution, for instance, a federal solution from the constitutional foundation.
- All these measures, if implemented seriously and sincerely, can create a positive road to achieving sustainable peace in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion and major findings

Conflict transformation involves long-term peacebuilding efforts oriented to outcomes, processes, and structural changes. They aim to overcome revealed forms of direct, cultural, and structural violence, transform unjust social relationships, and promote conditions that foster cooperative relationships. In Sri Lanka, there is an urgent need to find a credible and sustainable Political solution to the ethnic issue. No ethnic strife can be settled without addressing its root causes.

For a credible and sustainable political solution, it is vital to acknowledge that it is more than a military victory against the Tamil people. It is essential to win the hearts and minds of minority Tamils. Most importantly, a suitable reconciliation mechanism should be adopted to build bridges among all communities on the island.

Conflict transformation involves long-term peacebuilding efforts oriented to outcomes, processes, and structural changes. They aim to overcome revealed forms of direct, cultural, and structural violence and to transform unjust social relationships. Following the Major findings is essential.

1. The government should remove the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act).
2. The government should implement Transitional Justice.
3. Working together with the government and international organisations can help the community to access more resources and enhance their impact on reconciliation.
4. A peace education program should be offered that teaches values like tolerance and respect for diversity, helping to create a more peaceful society.
5. Minority rights should be safeguarded in the constitution.
6. The fundamental rights chapter should be expanded and strengthened.
7. Creation of a new constitution with the federal stage.

To conclude, in the current Sri Lankan context, the State should promote social justice and facilitate grassroots participation in the post-war recovery process. Only then can Sri Lanka achieve sustainable peace.

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