

**The London School of Economics and Political  
Science**

*Civil Society, Human Security, and the Politics of Peace-  
building in Victor's Peace Sri Lanka (2009-2012)*

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## Declaration

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## Abstract

This thesis aims to expand scholarship on civil society and peace-building through exploration of civil society's experiences, perspectives, and practices in relation to the politics of peace-building and human (in)security in instances of *victor's peace*, using post-war Sri Lanka as case study. It adopts Human Security as an analytical approach calling attention to insecurities operating on and through Sri Lankans but also the nature of power dynamics underlying these insecurities based on the subjective and political nature of 'peace' itself.

The thesis contributes conceptually and empirically to knowledge of the operation of victor's peace and its implications for civil society in peace-building. This thesis's central contention is that acts of securitization and governmentality carried out by Sri Lanka's central governmental elite within and enabled by the victor's peace have constricted spaces for civil society to articulate alternatives or engage in critical dialogue within the political process fostered under the victor's peace. This study, thus, questions romanticized notions of the potentiality of 'local' resistances to shift structural inequalities and power asymmetries in victor's peace. At a disciplinary level, the thesis also deepens knowledge, first, on civil society as complex and contested sphere. It argues that to conceptualize civil society as homogenous or inherently altruistic risks drastically oversimplifying its highly diffuse nature and politics within the sector in which certain actors may benefit within the victor's peace and engage in 'peace'-building activities in order to both capitalise on those benefits and sustain the victor's peace. Second, the thesis addresses the nexus between civil society and peace-building, and specifically the politics of peace-building, in the victor's peace. In not being constrained by negotiated peace settlement it asserts that, as in Sri Lanka, instances of victor's peace can quickly transition into repressive environments. Here it is unlikely that civil society, despite innovative methods of exercising agency, can significantly alter the trajectories of the 'peace', and further that those civil society actors that support the victor's peace may seek to exploit the benefits they gain from it at the expense of the human security of others.

Finally, the thesis asserts that, ultimately, Human Security's utility may lie not as political agenda that validates external intervention based on a 'responsibility' to intervene, but as a conceptual framework for developing deeper understandings of the nature of (in)security and factors driving (in)security at multiple levels of analysis within different articulations or 'types' of peace.

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# Chapter 1 - Civil Society and the Politics of Peace-building

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## 1.1 Introduction:

In recent decades civil society has attracted widespread interest in relation to assumptions about the impacts that civil society can have on peace-building (Paffenholz 2010; Richmond 2010 and 2005; van Leeuwen 2009; Kaldor 2007; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2006; van Tongeren et al 2005). However, in-depth understandings of the complexities of the civil society concept, its relationship to diverse stakeholders, and its roles, perspectives, motivations, and experiences<sup>1</sup> within peace-building remain remarkably under-investigated. Furthermore, other questions surrounding peace-building, in which civil society figures centrally, often fail to be addressed such as whose peace is implemented, for whom is peace and security sought, and does peace necessarily equal security and vice versa. This thesis engages with these shortcomings head-on, expanding scholarship on civil society and peace-building through an exploration of the politics surrounding post-war peace-building and the experiences, practices, and perspectives of civil society in instances of victor's peace<sup>2</sup>, using post-war Sri Lanka as a case study.

The thesis adopts Human Security<sup>3</sup> as an analytical approach in which to explore and problematize the nexus of civil society-peace-building, including in 'everyday'<sup>4</sup> context, in a

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of this study 'experience' refers to 'the interactions that humans have with their environments as humans perceive or understand them, as they represent settings and events to themselves' (Storkerson 2009).

<sup>2</sup> The term 'victor's peace' refers to post-war settings where one side has militarily defeated the other(s) emerging as the dominant power within society that is then not constrained or held accountable to a negotiated peace settlement that necessitates power devolution nor power sharing. Victors are able to institutionalise a post-war 'peace' that is reflective of its vision for a post-war society, generally with little regard for those vanquished. Although the concept of a victor's peace is hardly new, with respect to instances of intrastate or civil conflict understandings of the dynamics of victor's peace and the relationship of civil society to victor's peace(-building) have not yet been sufficiently explored.

<sup>3</sup> Human Security as analytical approach is outlined in detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>4</sup> This study utilises the 'everyday' in accordance with Robin Luckham's (2009) narrative of human security as 'security from below' that is grounded in the 'lived experience' and perspectives of people who are (in)secure' through sound empirical understandings, in this case of Sri Lankan civil society actors in which their views and opinions function as a form of alternative expertise grounded in their political, social, and economic realities and examination of their practices, rather than romanticised perceptions, and, Mathijs van Leeuwen's (2009) 'everyday'



victor's peace. In this respect, it is important to be clear that this thesis is about the and relationship between civil society and peace-building within a particular context (victor's peace) and that it is not a thesis about evaluating 'human security'<sup>5</sup> as a policy paradigm in which to respond to humanitarian crises. Rather this study seeks to demonstrate that Human Security represents a useful analytical framework for understanding and problematizing the roles and experiences of civil society in relation to the politics of peace-building in victor's peace as it contrasts with the notion and assumptions surrounding 'peace' itself. In this sense the notion of peace is seen to be subjective, political, and to reflect a typology of potential forms of peace, and although it is recognised that broadly speaking peace may refer to the end of organised violent conflict (Galtung and Jacobsen 2000), individuals and groups may continue to experience insecurity based on structural inequalities or because these actors express viewpoints that run counter to those expressed within the dominant discourses associated with the particular articulation and practice of peace being promoted.

This study seeks to contribute to developing deeper understandings of the nexus between civil society-peace-building through analysis of the experiences and perspectives of civil society actors and their constituent members, and, the strategies they adopt in manoeuvring and navigating within the underexplored phenomena of 'victor's peace' as an outcome to civil conflict. It asks how are we to conceive of victor's peace and civil society in Sri Lanka: what do peace and security mean to these actors and what insecurities do they face, what are the experiences and perspectives of civil society as they relate to their practices concerning peace-

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in the context of civil society peace-building that explores both daily experiences and constraints operating on and through people's daily practices.

<sup>5</sup> This thesis agrees with Mary Kaldor's (2007) assertion that 'human security is about the security of *individuals* and *communities* rather than the security of states' (p. 182). Human security has, however, been conceptualised in a variety of different ways that can be traced back to the 1994 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme and has been the subject of much scholarly debate. These debates are discussed below in the section - Competing Visions of Human Security.

building, and how have they navigated and manoeuvred in seeking to realise their particularised visions of peace and security in the victor's peace. The thesis further examines the complex interface between 'global'/'local'<sup>6</sup>, peace/security, state/civil society relationships and how civil society peace-building links to broader forces at work in peace, conflict, security, and development discourses at national and international levels of analysis. As such this thesis contributes to knowledge of civil society-peace-building by opening up exploration of the power<sup>7</sup> dynamics that shape civil society's experiences, the impacts of the contested nature of their views as to what constitutes peace and the actions they adopt toward peace-building in light of these, and the diverse strategies and ways of exercising agency<sup>8</sup> that civil society actors adopt within the context of a victor's peace.

It should be noted at the outset that this study recognises that civil society, like peace, is a socially and politically subjective and contested concept. There exists a multitude of understandings and interpretations that have influenced theoretical debates and empirical research<sup>9</sup>. For the purposes of this thesis, however, *civil society is normatively defined as the arena, sphere, or medium of uncoerced thought, dialogue, and association in which people(s)*

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<sup>6</sup> The categories of 'global'/'local' as they are used within the scope of this study are defined in Section 1.4 Establishing the Parameters of the Thesis: Research Questions, Objectives, and Frameworks and should be viewed as conceptual frames of reference in which to isolate and analyse certain phenomena.

<sup>7</sup> This study adopts a Foucaultian approach to power that looks beyond surface manifestations of material power to focus on how power operates at deeper levels, in larger societal and historical frameworks and between 'emergency'-'everyday', global-local, state-civil society, and elite-grass-roots dichotomies. From this perspective power and struggle constitute a 'permanent limit' on one another in which those with the greatest power shape certain forms of knowledge and socio-political relations as 'truths' and as 'acceptable', which in turn 'normalises' these relations further fortifying existing power dynamics. However, vitally power relations also exist within 'points of insubordination which, by definition, are means of escape' (Foucault 1982, p. 225 in Brighenti 2010, p. 100).

<sup>8</sup> Agency is the ability of a person(s) to act – make choices and decisions and enact them in the world. It is the capacity of people(s) to act independently (though this does not preclude the acts of communal societies) and to make their own free choices in relation to structural constructs or patterned arrangements that influence and shape the choices and opportunities available (Barker 2005). Agency is defined as the 'the actions and behaviour and thinking' of actors that carry out activities aimed at engaging, resisting, modifying, translating, and overcoming dominant discourses and paradigms imposed upon them by peace processes (Kaldor 2003, p.52). It views 'agentic power' as constituted by power structures, interests, legitimacy, hegemony, and opportunity that those exercising agency may simultaneously transform, engage with, and resist or contest (Kostovicova and Glasius 2011, p. 4).

<sup>9</sup> These understandings and interpretations are explored in greater detail in Chapter 3.

*come together to pursue their common or shared interests and purposes, not solely for economic profit, political pursuits and ambitions, or militant/violent aims, but because they see some sort of productive value in the shared pursuit of this commonality.* In this sense, civil society should conceptually be seen as operating primarily, though not necessarily exclusively, outside the public (state and government), private (family), and economic sectors. In practice, however, the boundaries between these sectors do overlap and the ways in which the characteristics associated with civil society are expressed are complex and blurred. For example, civil society actors may not always operate in strictly non-violent or altruistic ways leading to a blurring between civil and uncivil society. Likewise, the complexities and conditionalities attached to the ways in which civil society is funded, which often finds it dependent on external and/or foreign funds for existence, may significantly compromise its ability to operate independently of other political, social, and economic interests and agendas. Furthermore, the ways in which people(s) come together to pursue their common or shared interests and purposes may impede and contradict the realisation of other peoples' interests and, thus, the activities of civil society organisations themselves can be subject to significant contestation and dispute (Spurk 2010, pp. 8-9)<sup>10</sup>.

Peace-building, likewise, has been the subject of much scholarly attention inspiring countless books and articles and has become engrained as an institution in international policy-making and diplomacy. Peace-building is defined here as actions undertaken by international ('global'), national, 'local', and/or community ('grass-roots')-level actors to institutionalise a particular conception of peace, understood broadly as the absence of armed conflict and direct violence (negative peace) (Call and Cousens 2007; Galtung and Jacobsen 2000). It is important to note that the process of peace-building itself can be subject to competing perspectives and

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<sup>10</sup> Such a concept of civil society also extends civil society beyond the confines of many altruistic Western imaginaries to recognise social actors who might be politicised and/or classified as uncivil in the sense of being discriminatory or biased against certain others, 'radical', 'traditional', and/or kinship-based.

interpretations as to what constitutes peace that significantly complicates notions of peace-building and how actors go about carrying out peace-building activities.

In the 1990s liberal internationalism rose to prominence as the dominant approach in which to frame peace-building operations as a ‘peace-building consensus’ emerged around the perceived utility and ability of the liberal peace<sup>11</sup> to respond to and resolve conflicts in a post-Cold War world (Richmond 2010, p.22). The liberal peace has been constructed within a framework of democratisation, the market economy, rule of law, respect for individual human rights, and predominantly externally-driven development and re-construction processes (Paris and Sisk 2009, Jones 2009; Shani 2007; Richmond 2005; Paris 2004). Critics, however, have argued that such an approach to peace-building has tended to depoliticise global and local power struggles, obscured the structural causes and underpinnings of conflict and its resolution, the interests of local actors, politics of identity and security, and the legacies of colonialism on prospects for peace (Chandler 2009; Richmond 2010 and 2005; Baranyi 2008; Jabri 2007; Pugh 2005; Duffield 2001).

Furthermore, in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 (hereafter 9/11) attacks on the United States a shift in thinking about the nature of peace and conflict has occurred that emphasises the blurring of boundaries between internal and external security through ‘new’ threats posed by terrorists and other illiberal actors and the implications to ‘global security’ of violent conflict (van Leeuwen 2009; Tardy 2004). This has led to debate regarding whether a critical moment has arrived signalling a new ‘generation’ of peace processes that links together the liberal peace and global security, conditioned by the War on Terror, to secure the political

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<sup>11</sup> The foundations of the liberal peace date back to the concept of ‘democratic/liberal’ peace put forward by Immanuel Kant who, in *Perpetual Peace* (1795), argued that states with democratic constitutions maintained relatively peaceful relations with other democratic states. This notion has sparked a large amount of literature within International Relations scholarship that asserts a positive causal linkage between democracy and peace both within and between states (See for examples, Chernoff 2004; Russett and Starr 2000; Rummel 1997; Doyle 1997)

and security ends of governments in conflict, those intervening, and their allies in zones of conflict (Eckert and Sjoberg 2009; Call and Wyeth 2008). Another answer to the challenges presented by peace and security discourses and practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been to look to the concept of hybridity, including hybrid peace-building, which represents how hybridity arises from the interaction of liberal peace interveners with actors, norms, and institutions in the places where peace-building occurs and how hybrid peace missions, courts/tribunals, and/or political systems can be injected into peace-building (Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Clements et al 2008; St. Pierre 2007). Following on from this, interest in hybrid peace governance has evolved where different forms of peace governance, including victor's peace, are articulated, however, the concept of victor's peace and even more so its reflection and impacts on different aspects and forms of peace-building remains largely unexplored (Jarstad and Belloni 2012). Paralleling these developments an alternative discourse has also arisen that attempts to re-conceptualise security in relation to peace and conflict by emphasising a more pluralistic form of security, that is, human security as an orthodoxy for thinking about security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, reframing the primary referent of security away from the 'high-politics' of the state toward the individual and community<sup>12</sup> (Roberts 2010; Luckham 2009; Sané 2008; Kaldor 2007). Taken together these developments raise a wealth of fascinating areas of prospective study for those interested in civil society and peace-building.

With respect to the relationship of civil society to peace-building, since the end of the Cold War, interest in the potentiality of civil society to play roles in peace-building has grown alongside the proliferation of theories concerning peace-building (Kaldor 2007; Wanis-St. John

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<sup>12</sup> A community can be conceptualised as a group of interacting people living in a common location and/or bound by common 'culture' and/or history. It refers to a group that is organised around common values, interests, and beliefs within a shared physical, symbolic, or virtual locale. In the case of territorial communities, such communities can form with or without a legal right to the land that they inhabit as in the diaspora, internally-displaced settlements, and refugee camps (See Wilson 2009 for discussion).

and Kew 2006; Paffenholz and Spurk 2006). During the 1990s civil society increasingly, but uncritically, came to be viewed as a complementary and effective alternative to states and international organisations in peace-building due in part to its role in Eastern and Central European political transitions at the end of the Cold War (Mac Ginty 2011; Belloni 2009; van Leeuwen 2009; Richmond and Carey 2005). Such assumptions largely romanticised civil society, however, emphasising an assumed altruistic character as the ‘good society’. Similarly, these perspectives tended to overlook the complex interface between the plurality of political positions, purposes, identities, and power dynamics operating on the spaces in which civil society functions.

For its part, grass-roots civil society<sup>13</sup> has largely been consigned to the position of domestic partner of elite<sup>14</sup> forms of civil society, thus, relegating the grass-roots to the margins of peace-building (van Leeuwen 2009; Pouligny 2005). There is also a perception that grass-roots civil society only matters at the community level, and does not feed into higher-level politics of national and international peace-building discourses. This reflects an assumption of a ‘territorial boundedness’ with respect to the influence of grass-roots civil society in peace-building.

However, as the study of civil society and its inclusion in peace-building processes have gained in popularity, there has been a growing scepticism and questioning of its supposed advantages. The pendulum appears to have swung the other way as there has been a ‘backlash’ against civil society, characterised by growing disillusionment with the previously assumed ‘positive’ attributes of the sector (Howell and Lind 2009). This strand of literature is not new but

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<sup>13</sup> Grass-roots civil society is defined and elaborated on as it is used throughout this study in the Section 1.4 Establishing the Parameters of the Thesis: Research Questions, Objectives, and Framework below.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Elite’ civil society is defined in Section 1.4 Establishing the Parameters of the Thesis: Research Questions, Objectives, and Frameworks

has gained prominence in recent years particularly in relation to 9/11 and the suspicion that has been placed on non-state actors as potential ‘terrorists’. Many sceptics appear to have thrown out the entire concept of civil society and civil society peace-building rather than exploring civil society in relation to the possibilities for it to participate in political life as an entity with political interests, alongside the agency that this recognition entails (van Leeuwen 2009, p. 5). Thus, perspectives advocated by both ‘advocates’ and ‘sceptics’ simplify the ways in which civil society actors are driven and influenced by political, social, economic, cultural, or ethnic biases and *de-contextualise* civil society, taking for granted the universality of its structures, values, and applicability across cultures, religions, and geographic regions or dismissing it altogether as ‘overly-romanticised’ or ‘co-opted’. This stands in stark contrast to studies that have emphasised the multifaceted nature of the issues pertaining to civil society ranging from North-South politics and ‘global’/‘local’/‘grass-roots’ dynamics, to civil society in different contexts, and questions pertaining to legitimacy, accountability, and representation (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, 2006; McFarlane 2006; Richter, Berking and Müller-Schmid 2006; Kiely 2005; Pouligny 2005; Chandhoke 2004; Orjuela 2003; Clark 2003; Encarnación 2003; Kaldor 2003; Lister 2003; Lewis 2002; Hudock 1999; Mamdani 1996).

Despite the rise in studies that seek to ‘deconstruct’ civil society and the proliferation of civil society peace-building initiatives, these have not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in research that explores the nexus between civil society, particularly grass-roots civil society, and peace-building leaving unanswered questions regarding what civil society means to peace-building and, conversely, what peace-building means to civil society, especially across diverse instances of ‘peace’ (Paffenholz 2010, p. vii). Whilst there has been research into civil society and the liberal peace, and, the roles of civil society in internationally-led peace-building

and humanitarian interventions, the *politics* of civil society-peace-building and knowledge of the nexus between civil society and peace-building in instances of ‘victor’s peace’ remain severely lacking. The linkage of civil society peace-building to critical debates surrounding peace, and particularly the liberal peace, raise further questions concerning technologies of governmentality<sup>15</sup> in which peace-building in a variety of contexts of ‘peace’ may be seen as representative of a set of disciplinary apparatuses. From this perspective the activities of civil society must be normalised, managed, and shaped by some combination of domestic and/or international leadership toward particularised ends that attempt to regulate the ways in which civil society behaves in a variety of socio-political contexts. Likewise, in the aftermath of 9/11 civil society has increasingly been viewed as a potential threat to (national and global) security that must be monitored and controlled. In some instances counter-terrorism legislation has enabled practices of repression and ‘clamping down’ on civil society actors that have sought to question or critique the policies of government, predominantly by ‘illiberal’ and authoritarian states but also democratic governments (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010; Howell and Lind 2009; Cortright et al 2008). The contemporary policy environment, therefore, raises significant questions about and challenges for civil society across a range of culturally and politically diverse contexts.

## **1.2 Civil Society and Peace-building within a Typology of ‘Peace’:**

As discussed in the section above, this is not to argue that civil society has not been explored in relation to a variety of different theoretical frameworks and policy-oriented processes pertaining to peace-building, but that many of these have failed to generate rigorous and

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<sup>15</sup> Governmentality is defined as the strategies and techniques used by governments to govern. These strategies are operationalized and/or actualized within and through the habits, routines, activities and perceptions of those governed (Read 2009, p. 12). Further they divide populations and categorize them along particularized lines, such as between sick and healthy, normal and abnormal, criminal and law abiding, inside and outside etc. (Bonnafous-Boucher 2009, p. 81).



multifaceted accounts of the relationships of these actors to peace and security, with notable exceptions<sup>16</sup>. The following section provides an overview of how civil society's relationship to peace-building has been conceptualised within major contemporary frameworks of peace – the liberal peace, 'global' security, hybrid peace, and the relatively less-explored phenomena of victor's peace.

### ***Interrogating the Relationship between Civil Society and the Liberal Peace:***

Within the 'liberal-internationalisation' of peace-building, the liberal peace has been framed not as one conceptualisation of peace, but rather *the* conceptualisation of peace. Whether this pursuit of 'liberal peace' in fact contributes to peace 'on-the-ground' in post-conflict societies, however, has become a central and contentious topic. In 1992 then United Nations (UN) Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali laid the groundwork for what was to become liberal peace-building in *An Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1992). *An Agenda for Peace* was followed up by *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace* in 1995 (Boutros-Ghali 1995), the *Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (also known as the Brahimi Report) in 2000 (Brahimi 2000), *The Responsibility to Protect* in 2001 (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001), and in 2004 *A More Secure World* (Stedman 2004).

Critiques of the liberal peace have tended to converge around arguments that the privileging of democratic and free-market values, systems, and actors as necessary pre-conditions to the successful resolution of conflict have obscured a variety of actors, interests, politics, and exogenous factors such as the globalising economy, geopolitics, the nature of development assistance, and the legacies of colonialism on peace (Roberts 2010; Goetze and Guzina 2008; Richmond 2005). Thus, the roles played by Western actors in recreating their

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<sup>16</sup> See for example: Howell 2012; Kaldor, Moore, and Selchow 2012; Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, 2006; van Leeuwen 2009; Howell and Lind 2009; Kaldor and Kostovicova 2008; van Tongeren 2005; Pouligny 2005.

political, social, and economic systems in post-war societies has raised significant critique leading some to conclude that liberal peace-building is one giant experiment in ‘social engineering’ (Barnett and Zurcher 2009, p. 28). The growing support for civil society in peace-building has partly been in response to the disillusionment with Western governments’ roles in peace-building. In this sense civil society has become a perceived panacea for the realisation of the liberal peace through other modes of delivery (Paffenholz 2010, pp. 36-39; Howell et al 2008 p. 83).

Within liberal peace-building discourses the central focus of analyses with respect to civil society has been on their role and perceived advantage in political transitions and conflict resolution after armed violence. In particular, the focus has been on civil society activities in supporting transitions toward democracy in various regions of the world (Spurk 2010, p. 9). As such, the rationale for civil society involvement in peace-building reflects the widely held belief that civil society is a vital component of a vibrant, democratic society and that the stronger and more developed it is, the more stable the political, social, and economic community(ies) in which it resides are likely to be (Parekh 2004, p. 15).

Indeed, civil society is assumed to play a number of important roles in liberal peace interventions. These roles include: monitoring the state, stimulating participation in public affairs, creating space for the development of democratic attributes such as moderation, compromise, and respect for opposing views, providing channels for the articulation of alternative interests, mediating peace between opposing sides, supporting economic (and socio-economic) liberalisation, and establishing links to good governance and democratic ideals (van Leeuwen 2009, p. 38; Cortright et al 2008, p. 2; Sidel 2006, p. 200; Celichowski 2004, p. 74). Civil society’s perceived altruism has resulted in assertions that civil society possesses particular

aptitude for peace-building that separates it from other actors and makes civil society the more preferable and ‘natural’ choice to engage in peace building activities (Richmond 2005, p. 20). The support of Western governments and donors toward civil society peace-building, however, has had the effect of intimately linking civil society to the further entrenchment of liberal democracy in countries emerging from war (Howell et al 2008 p. 83). In part, this has been achieved through the use of ‘conditionalities’ placed on civil society by Western governments and donors with respect to the types of activities and programmes that civil society actors are expected to undertake in order to receive support (Sidel 2006, p. 202). Civil society has, consequently, come to be seen as a front for powerful liberal states’ interests in the localities in which interventions take place (Richmond 2005, p. 26).

This represents a dual concern with the universalising nature of liberal assumptions, on the one hand, and concerns over how the dynamics of conflict might be reinforced through a process that does not reflect the culture and values of local populations, on the other (Richmond 2007; Easterly 2006). Michael Pugh (2005) asserts that ‘a key to the problem of such universal discourses lies in dialogue with local civil societies’ (p. 32). If the notion of local participation is to be taken seriously in a critique of liberal internationalism then an important question becomes how, and under what conditions, can local legitimacy and participation be achieved. Mark Duffield (2002) also poses a similar argument by asserting that international aid has often functioned ‘as a form of cultural suppression, as it has attempted to reorder the communities into western socioeconomic groups’ (p. 90).

At the ‘local’ level relatively little is known about the sustainability, practices, and spaces for civil society in peace-building (van Leeuwen 2009, p. 5). Much has been asserted about the importance of strengthening civil society capacities within liberal peace-building; however, the

forms in which local civil society already exists and functions are often overlooked in analyses of the successes and challenges associated with peace-building (Gaer 2005, p. xi). The notions of 'bottom-up peace-building' and 'local ownership' have arisen in this context to refer to the capabilities of actors to take responsibility for the construction of peace from inside the conflict environment (Pouligny 2009, p. 174; Richmond 2005, p. 22). These concepts become problematic when one 'opens up' the peace-building process to look at who actually sets the peace-building agenda and determines the activities that civil society ought to engage in as these are often designed by, and undertaken in close association with, donor states, international institutions, and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) (Pouligny 2009, p. 175).

The homogenisation of civil society in many dominant discourses on peace-building is another factor that impedes investigation into civil society-peace-building as it overlooks the diverse values and biases held by civil society actors that makes difficult measurement and research into the nature of civil society's roles, perspectives, and experiences in peace-building (van Leeuwen 2009, pp. 5-6). In this respect, the dominant focus of civil society-peace-building has reflected the roles of INGOs to the extent that they are often seen as synonymous with civil society. This pushes other forms of civil society to the periphery as the measure of a vibrant civil society becomes INGO dependent (Mertus and Sajjad 2005, p. 119). Recent critical interest in civil society peace-building has, thus, been linked to the global dominance of (neo)liberal ideology and liberal peace paradigms that envisage increasingly privatised forms of service delivery through more flexible combinations of governmental and non-governmental actions and programmes (Lewis 2002, p. 571). This raises important questions that warrant deeper reflection concerning whether civil society actors are, therefore, subject to some of the same critiques as those of liberal peace interveners.

### ***Civil Society as ‘Global’ Security Threat:***

Paralleling these developments has been the rise of the ‘global’ security agenda following 9/11 that has added a further layer of complexity to the ways in which peace and security are framed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. To some extent 9/11 and the resultant War on Terror epitomise the character of the ‘global’ security agenda in which state failure and civil conflict are seen as fertile breeding grounds for ‘terrorism’ and, thus, framed as threats to the national security of (Western) states and the broader international order (Goetze and Guzina 2008, p. 328). The effect of ‘state failure’ has been to (re)entrench a state-centric security focus that broadens the number of security threats to states and their populations, whilst promoting post-conflict (predominantly liberal) state-building paradigms that strengthen the capacity of states to govern as a means of protecting ‘global’ security (Call and Wyeth 2008).

Moreover, the urgency with which the world has been presented as changing and the volatility that these changes are seen to produce in the international system has created a vacuum into which ‘new’ problems associated with weak governance and ‘failing’ states, and, illiberal, authoritarian governments have arisen requiring ‘new’ solutions (Eckert and Sjoberg 2009). This post-9/11 ‘global’ security doctrine is both particularly Western and nationalistic in orientation with respect to the promotion of Western political and economic institutions and prioritising national interests and security of the state above that of local populations (Baranyi 2008; Shani 2007). Regarding peace-building, these events have had several implications. On the one hand, they represent an extension of adhering to notions of the ‘informalisation’ of conflict and a ‘responsibility’ to intervene in ‘failing’ states. On the other, the importance placed on ensuring the ‘global’ security of states through military means of intervention breaks with the multi-functional approach promoted by the UN.

Complicating this narrative, however, has been the ways in which the discourses associated with global security have been taken up and used by strong-handed states<sup>17</sup> and repressive governments as ‘tools’ of justification for policies that secure certain segments of the population against human insecurity whilst *securitising* others (Cortright 2008). With respect to the War on Terror, the lack of a universally agreed to definition of ‘terrorism’ has enabled political leaders to utilise this ambiguity for their own purposes to implement counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency measures against potential ‘insurgents’ and/or those deemed to represent a ‘threat’ to government. The ‘global’ security and War on Terror mantras have, therefore, been taken up by political actors and used to justify the nature of their responses that have ranged from unilateral action within the international arena to ‘strong-handed’ counter-insurgency policies internally that have permitted governments to ‘securitise’ groups through the use of fear as a tool in which to institute repressive measures (van Leeuwen 2009, pp. 44-45).

This is also attributable to factors associated to other aspects of ‘global’ security in which traditionally ‘soft’ issues associated with development and peace have come to be intimately linked to sites where terrorism and radicalisation can easily take root and flourish. This has resulted in a ‘hard security’ lens being mapped onto issues and areas where traditionally civil society has operated bringing with it increased scrutiny of the roles that civil society plays in enhancing or detracting from ‘hard’ security measures. In some cases civil society has faced political repression and experienced pressure and limitations as to its ability to operate amidst accusations that civil society actors are ‘terrorist’ sympathisers and/or supporters (Howell and

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<sup>17</sup> Strong-handed and/or authoritarian states are states that, formally speaking, may be democracies, provide a degree of public services to its population, have robust economies, and rule by asserting power through society rather than solely over it. Importantly, however, these states operate in practice as repressive, authoritarian regimes in which majoritarian politics rule without minority safeguards and the state seeks to control and manage the spaces of socio-political action through hegemonic projects that may appear to be for the benefit of the population but actually help it to consolidate power. In this sense strong-handed states can also be classified as ‘failing’ in that such states often fail to protect its population in its entirety against domestic threats, crime, violence, and destruction of property.

Lind 2010; Cortright et al 2008). Similarly, the United States and its allies have leveraged international assistance for security purposes putting pressure on foundations and aid organisations to introduce checks and balances onto partners to ensure that funds are not diverted toward organisations set up to transfer money for terrorist activities (Howell and Lind 2010, p. 288). This is not to argue that some so-called civil society groups have not in fact acted in ways that represent the ‘uncivil radicalisation’ of a particular nationalist, ethnic, and/or religious viewpoint that reinforces this image, or that the label of ‘civil society’ has not been ‘co-opted’ so as to enable would-be terrorists or supporters to channel funds to their causes under the guise of ‘non-profits’ and ‘charities’ (Freedman 2009, p. 110; Adamson 2005). However, it is to assert that in the rush to address the ‘global’ terrorist threat post-9/11 that legislation has been implemented that has enabled the securitisation of genuine civil society groups by those who would seek to repress and silence them (Howell and Lind 2009; Howell et al 2008; Sidel 2006). This has been vividly apparent in the case of Sri Lanka where, though not necessarily a component of victor’s peace in all cases, the War on Terror rhetoric has been picked up and used to justify both actions undertaken by the Sri Lankan military to end the war as well as policies adopted by the government in the victor’s peace. Ultimately, the War on Terror has brought to the fore many questions pertaining to civil society and peace-building and shone a spotlight on them, including civil society as a product of power relations deeply enmeshed within practices of securitisation and governmentality (Lipschutz 2004, p. 205).

### ***Hybrid Peace-Building and Hybrid Peace Governance:***

Hybrid peace-building is viewed by proponents as a powerful lens through which to reconsider local norms and agency in ways that de-romanticise the local (Richmond 2012; Mac Ginty 2011). This emerges from the belief that the intermixing of liberal peace interventions with

existing political, economic, and social institutions in conflict regions produces ‘new’ alternative forms of governance, institutional norms, and practices. These alternative forms occur through the interplay of liberal peace interveners, who seek to enforce and incentivise compliance to their will, with the ability of local actors, institutions, and networks to ignore, adapt, or resist the liberal peace (Richmond and Mitchell 2012, p. 2; Zaum 2012, p. 124; Mac Ginty 2011p. 69)<sup>18</sup>.

Those interested in hybridity as a framework to explore peace-building predominantly examine the relationship between liberal peace agents and local actors that illustrates how they conceive of power in diverse ways (Mac Ginty 2011, pp. 72-73). They ask questions about how local agency and autonomy are achieved and/or sustained by local actors including how they oppose, challenge, or adopt the positions and discourses of international actors (Richmond and Mitchell 2012, p. 2). Importantly this is emphasised as a ‘two-way’ process with both liberal peace interveners and those intervened upon becoming hybridised and taking on values of the other (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 75).

One question that arises in the literature on hybrid peace-building, however, concerns whether a more authentic peace will be realised through hybrid interaction. Some assert that through the hybrid interaction peace ‘interveners’ can seek to connect more meaningfully to local populations and imagine that such an engagement will lead to a more legitimate, locally-situated peace (Richmond and Mitchell 2012). This viewpoint is problematic, however, as more often than not the question is left unanswered as to the *process* by which such a ‘liberal-local’ (Richmond 2010) interaction will produce an authentic peace. Instead it is asserted that such a process is somehow inherently emergent and organic at the intersection where the everyday

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<sup>18</sup> It is important to note that those employing hybridity do not conceive of hybrid interaction as occurring between two pure entities that mix together to produce a third hybrid entity. Rather, such conceptualisations recognise ‘long-standing processes of cultural mixing’ in which terms such as ‘indigenous’ and ‘Western’ represent sources of identification and construction than a singular homogenous category (Mac Ginty 2011; Belloni 2012).



activities, needs, interests, and experiences of local groups overlap with those of international/global peace-builders producing a range of ‘new’ practices, responses, and agencies that hybridise the “blueprints” for peace advanced by international actors’ (Richmond and Mitchell 2012, p. 1). A further aim pertaining to civil society is to realise ‘a locally acceptable form of (civil) society’ (Richmond and Mitchell 2012) through hybridisation, but again questions remain as to how such an acceptable form is to be determined, particularly within post-war settings in which peace may be tenuous at best and certain forms of civil society might be extremely exclusionary, mistrustful, or unacceptable to others.

There is some debate within the literature on hybrid peace-building as to whether liberal peace-building can be ‘saved’ through the grounding of peace interventions firmly in local populations based on the presumption of legitimacy of these structures or whether their ‘local character’ necessarily endows such peace-building with legitimacy as opposed to engendering further exploitation, inequality, injustice, or violence (Zaum 2012; Paris 2010). Likewise, it is unclear how pre-existing hybrid identities and structures within conflict zones and their related power structures are to be accounted for within a hybrid peace-building approach; is the local in all its diverse manifestations assumed to be cohesive or likely to encourage greater peace and security within societies emerging from conflict. However there are possibilities that hybrid peace-building ‘may open up room for the representation of other segments of society. ... the inclusion of other non-state actors, such as local NGOs and community groups, also has the potential of giving representation to important and often neglected segments of the population such as women and grassroots movements’ (Belloni 2012, p. 27). The concern at the heart of the matter remains the thorny issue of how to facilitate the latter whilst deterring the former and still remaining true to the process of hybridity.

This relates to recognition of the different ways in which social groups (rather than the local as a whole) relate to and experience the state (Zaum 2012, p. 129). Such recognition has led to assertions that ‘while the liberal peacebuilding model works from a relatively standardised blueprint that can be typified ... local actors, norms, and institutions are much more varied. They can be liberal, illiberal, or a combination of both and involve a wide range of actors, including warlords, local chiefs, community groups, and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs)’ (Belloni 2012, p. 22). Moreover, different external actors have varied interests and perspectives on the sources of peace and conflict in regions emerging from violent conflict (Zaum 2012, pp. 125-126). The rise of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and their increasing involvement in conflict zones through investment, development, and foreign policy interests adds a layer of complexity to peace-building particularly with respect to their foreign policy ambitions and ability to project significant economic and political influence on ‘client’ states, which can result in the promotion of non-liberal hybrid forms of peace (Belloni 2012, p. 23; Mac Ginty 2011, p. 37). These questions take on new resonance as these actors seek to assert themselves in economic development as investors in countries emerging from war such as China in the Sudan and Sri Lanka. This suggests ‘that a simplistic understanding of hybrid peace governance as the outcome of a fuse between liberal internationals and [potentially] illiberal locals needs to be refined’ (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, 91) and that the relationship of the hybrid condition might be one of tension and antagonism rather than the development of a more legitimate, locally accepted, and sustainable peace (Belloni 2012).

This has led some to reflect on the notion of *hybrid peace governance*. Anna Jarstad and Roberto Belloni (2012), for example, develop a matrix framework comprised of two continuums

(1) *hybrid governance* and (2) *hybrid peace-building*<sup>19</sup> in which four possible models of hybrid peace governance emerge<sup>20</sup>. Whereas hybrid peace-building alludes to the coexistence and interaction of the international and local in ‘liberal-local’ peace-building, hybrid peace governance is used to specifically delineate forms of governance and activities governing this condition in which formal/informal institutions and liberal/illiberal norms, practices, and actors intermix, sometimes coexisting but at others clashing (Jarstad and Belloni 2012; Belloni 2012).

However, whilst the notion of hybrid peace governance as an organisational construct in which to locate victor’s peace is highly relevant for this study (discussed in the section below entitled ‘Victor’s Peace: Wars that do not end through Peace Agreement’), hybrid peace-building as methodology is less-so. First, as discussed above, hybrid peace-building still tends to take as its starting point the liberal peace and its inter-mixing with indigenous and/or traditional forms of peace and politics, generally through some sort of externally-led liberal peace intervention, in countries emerging from violent conflict, something not reflected in the very nature of victor’s peace Sri Lanka. Second, in situations of ethnic conflict hybrid identities can be ‘reinvented’ as being ethnically pure with the groups in conflict reasserting an exclusive claim to previously multi-ethnic geographic, political, religious and cultural spaces (Silva 2002, p. i in Orjuela 2008). In this sense a focus on hybridity can mask efforts to reject ‘hybridity’ and return to a state of ethnic ‘purity’. In Sri Lanka, Sinhalese nationalists have long used identity to reconstruct

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<sup>19</sup> According to this schema the hybrid inter-mixing of liberal and illiberal norms, institutions, and actors function along two continuums - hybrid governance - where, at one end of the spectrum, the ‘ideal-type’ liberal form of governance is theorised based on the Westphalian state whilst, at the other, illiberal governance is characterised by authoritarian and repressive state structures, and, - hybrid peace-building - that represents a violence continuum moving from civil war to occasional clashes of violence and, finally, a ‘peace’ condition where the state has a monopoly over violence committed within its territory (Jarstad and Belloni 2012, 1-2).

<sup>20</sup> The four categories delineated in Jarstad and Belloni’s (2012) model are: Westphalian state, victor’s peace, divided state, and anarchy (pp. 2-3). Type II – the victor’s peace is a situation of ‘peace’ where a truce is combined with illiberal forms of governance. Formal democratic institutions and practices may exist (e.g., elections are held, individual and group rights and non-state actors are recognised to some extent) but there is no war because the opposition has been defeated militarily not because it has voluntarily recognised the legitimacy of the victor’s rule (e.g., Kosovo, Sri Lanka).

Sinhalese and Buddhism as the one natural and true identity for the Sri Lankan nation, which has not only continued in the post-war environment but received renewed revitalisation, whilst Tamil nationalists have historically asserted their right to self-determination (Orjuela 2008; Goodhand and Klem 2005). Third, the strategic adoption (and rejection) of the language of (neo)liberal peace and global security by the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL)<sup>21</sup> and civil society in the victor's peace might be more accurately conceptualised through the discourse of *frictions* (Tsing 2005), that is, the 'unexpected and unstable aspects of global interaction' (Tsing 2005, p. 3) and the problematizing of the dynamic interaction between 'global' orientations to peace and security and their appropriation and reworking by government and non-state actors in the context of a victor's peace.

***Victor's Peace: Wars that do not end through Peace Agreement:***

Within this hybrid peace governance schema the model of *victor's peace* raises ambiguous and problematic issues and dilemmas for civil society peace-building. This is because in a victor's peace power over shaping the peace-building process and socio-political landscape, pre-dominantly, though by no means exclusively, rests with the victorious party as the conditions of the post-war situation are imposed by the victors. The possibility, therefore, exists for violent conflict to (re)emerge in the future as war has ended not because the opposition accepts the legitimacy of the victor's rule but because they have been defeated (Jarstad and Belloni 2012;

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<sup>21</sup> Throughout this study the terms 'Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL)' and 'government' are used interchangeably to refer to the central governmental elite in Sri Lanka encompassing the President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa, and his inner circle of cabinet ministers that comprise the executive of the Sri Lankan government. It should be explicitly noted that the use of GOSL and government are adopted for conceptual ease in emphasising those policies and activities associated with the victor's peace that have been undertaken by the head of government (the President) and his appointed cabinet of ministers. The use of the terms is not intended to refer to all branches of the Sri Lankan government, which represents a democratic mixed parliamentary-presidential system with an array of political parties although many of these function along ethnic lines of representation. Furthermore, their use is not meant to imply that each of these branches exists in harmony with one another in the victor's peace and that there have not been conflicting views articulated by members of both the legislature (made up of 225 members, 196 of which are elected in multi-seat constituencies and 29 by proportional representation) and judiciary (the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, High Courts and a number of subordinate courts) concerning aspects of the victor's peace and its impacts on different segments of the Sri Lankan political, economic, and social systems.

Suhrke and Berdal 2011; Richmond 2005). Victor's peace embodies the institutionalisation of victory as 'peace' where institutions, structures, norms, and practices within post-war society are produced largely in the interests of the victor and its allies and is representative of a 'peace' that is 'associated with using military victory as a solution to civil war' (Walton 2011). Such a situation of military victory is frequently 'seen by the victors as an opportunity for radical change - to institutionalise the gains made through war and to make them irreversible' (Goodhand 2010, p. 359).

According to Anna Jarstad and Roberto Belloni (2012) victor's peace can be defined as

a situation of peace, which could be described as a truce, is combined with predominantly illiberal norms, institutions, and practices. Formally liberal and democratic institutions are in place, elections are held, and individual and group rights are recognized to some extent. But illiberal elements play a decisive role in political, economic, and social life. There is no war because the opposition has been defeated decisively, not because it has voluntarily accepted the majority's legitimacy to rule (p. 2).

In Jarstad and Belloni's (2012) model of victor's peace illiberal elements often refer to an authoritarian or repressive state structure in which a wide array of conditions may exist 'ranging from the formal inclusion of warlords into state institutions, to the influence of informal and traditional institutions and actors (such as clientelism, neo-patrimonialism, and nonstate authorities like local chiefs), to instances where the state may possess formally democratic elements such as periodic elections, but is actually "captured" by narrow, illegal, and even violent groups' (p. 1). In their view both Kosovo and Sri Lanka are examples of this type of victor's peace governance model (Jarstad and Belloni 2012, p. 2). Similarly others have highlighted further dimensions or attributes of a victor's peace that include the (1) continuing militarisation of politics and society, including possibly of post-war reconstruction; (2) growing centralisation of power focused around the victorious political (as well as possibly economic and social) elite; and (3) the suppression of political opponents that challenge the dominant political discourse associated with the victor's peace, including possibly civil society actors, journalists,

members of minority ethnic, religious, cultural and/or political groups, and other ‘dissidents’ within the victor’s peace (Walton 2011; Goodhand 2010).

Therefore, in victor’s peace, no formal allocation for the involvement of political opponents or civil society in determining the nature of post-war ‘peace-building’ is necessarily provided for. The relative absence of formal structures, opportunities, and spaces for civil society participation can exacerbate power inequalities within society and civil society with those actors deemed acceptable given opportunities to engage whilst others are blocked. This raises possibilities for forms of political and social violence to persist and fester within and upon civil society. Furthermore, civil society voices can be suppressed and/or actors ‘securitised’ if they do not mirror or conform to the victor’s vision of peace.

In his analysis of civil war recurrence Charles Call (2012) has noted that the majority of studies have focused on the nature of peace agreements and their implementation in their analyses of why ‘peace’ succeeds or fails in the aftermath of civil conflict, yet have tended to omit cases of civil war that have not ended in the signing of a peace agreement (pp.1-2). Call (2012) continues, however, that such cases of ‘victory’ in Kosovo and East Timor (1999), Afghanistan (2001), Haiti (2004), and Sri Lanka (2009) ‘constitute an important and growing component of civil wars today’ (p. 2). In this sense, cases of victor’s peace may be seen to include both instances of ‘domestic’ military defeat where one party within a conflict defeats the others as well as those where ‘international’ intervention and stabilisation operations have been undertaken that favour a particular side in a conflict and assist in leading to the defeat of other(s). For example, in Kosovo in June 1999 after a 14 week bombing campaign by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against Serbia, the Milosevic regime in Belgrade agreed to a military agreement that ended NATO’s bombing campaign. This agreement, however, hardly

came 'into existence by means of mediation or negotiation at equal footage but rather represents an example of a victor's peace by which the agreement's provisions have been dictated by victorious NATO [in support of the Kosovo-Albanians] in a "take-it-or-leave" option under threat to continue with the bombing campaign' (Narten 2009, p. 23). In 2008 Kosovo officially ratified its constitution, signalling for some an official end to the conflict between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Serbia. For others, however, 'in particular ethnic Serbs in the north, it was only the active warfighting that ended and the prevailing situation was a victor's peace enforced by the international community. A negative peace exists in Kosovo - it was won by those who are currently in Government, and as a result, some do not feel that they have been able to participate in the crafting of that peace' (Algar-Faria 2013).

While more research on the consequences of victor's peace versus negotiated peace agreement is required, according to Hoglund and Orjuela (2011) 'there is evidence indicating that victories to a larger extent than negotiated settlements generate severe consequences for human security. For instance, while military victories are generally more likely to end civil war than are negotiated settlements, genocides are more common in the wake of military victories' (p. 34). For his part Jonathan Goodhand (2010) suggests that 'peace-building operations', led by the West may have reached their peak in the aftermath of Afghanistan and Iraq and that situations of 'victor's peace' war termination like that of Sri Lanka 'may be more representative of contemporary challenges and future trends' (p. 360). Goodhand (2010) continues that '[t]he Sri Lanka example suggests that sovereignty and nationalism are likely to become more significant variables in defining the shape and trajectory of humanitarian action, invasive, 'neo-colonial' humanitarianism is less likely to be tolerated than ever' (p. 360). Within the potential cases of victor's peace, the Sri Lankan case has received the greatest attention in academic

literature at the time of writing although many aspects of the victor's peace in Sri Lanka, including its impacts and influence on both civil society and the nature of civil society-peace-building, have yet to be explored through in-depth and rigorous empirical investigations.

Likewise, Hoglund and Orjuela (2011) assert that a situations of 'basic symmetry between the primary actors involved in the conflict' is often assumed in the literature on peace agreements, post-war peace-building, and conflict relapse prevention due to the presumption of negotiated settlement and a mutually hurting stalemate between the warring parties in which the parties to the conflict have a mutual interest in resolving the conflict (p. 33). However, relatively little attention has been devoted to situations of war termination in which significant power asymmetry exists, 'where there is a clear victor and the victor lacks a political will to address the root causes of the conflict through political reform as well as to use the reconstruction process as a vehicle for building trust. In Sri Lanka conflict prevention is above all carried out through the suppression of opposition' (Hoglund and Orjuela 2011, p. 33). Therefore, in a victor's peace questions surround 'the kind of peace which is currently emerging and how stable such peace will be' (Hoglund and Orjuela 2011, p. 21). Ultimately, the very nature of the military victory inherent in victor's peace as signalling the end of a civil conflict, the asymmetries it produces with respect to power in which post-war structures, norms, and practices within post-war society are produced largely in the interests of the victor, and formally liberal, though predominantly illiberal in practice, institutions characteristic of such a post-war setting differ substantially from the context in which theories on war termination, peace implementation and consolidation, and post-war peace-building have been developed and applied. Such cases of victor's peace not only warrant greater scholarly and policy attention but question and problematise many of the



assumptions, ‘tools’ and theories that have been applied to the condition(s) of ‘peace’, and the practices pertaining to peace-building, particularly as they relate to civil society-peace-building.

### **1.3 Human Security as Conceptual Framework:**

Although Human Security as conceptual framework will be expounded upon in Chapter 2, introducing both the concept and its re-envisioning as analytical framework here is warranted as a means of setting up and delineating the scope and nature of the research agenda with respect to exploring the impacts to civil society and the relationship of civil society to peace-building in victor’s peace Sri Lanka.

#### ***Competing Visions of human security<sup>22</sup>:***

In order to conceptualise how Human Security can function as analytical framework, it is first important to be aware of how it has been deployed from its inception as policy paradigm. Human security as a policy discourse has been presented in peace-building literature in relation to the objective of ‘broadening’ security and reframing its primary referents away from solely the state to individuals and communities. There have been two related but divergent strands of thought in this regard; the ‘narrow’ and ‘broad’ approaches to human security. The ‘narrow’ conceptualisation, most often associated with the Canadian government and the 2005 Human Security Report produced by the Human Security Report Project (HSRP), views human security as the absence of ‘violent threats to individuals’ and sees the individual as the primary referent of security (Human Security Report 2005, p. viii). The ‘narrow’ approach emphasises threats to individual ‘physical security or safety’ but proposes that this individualisation of security can occur through state institutions (Shani 2011). In contrast, the ‘broad’ vision links security to development as advocated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and

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<sup>22</sup> The inherently contested nature of Human Security as policy narrative is elaborated on in Chapter 2 – Human Security as Conceptual Framework.

includes economic, environmental, food, health, personal, community, and political threats (Human Development Report 1994, pp. 24-25). This perception emphasises threats from indirect forms of violence and the promotion of conditions that make possible ‘human flourishing’ seeking to protect the ‘vital core’ of human lives by enhancing ‘human freedoms and human fulfilment’ (Shani 2011; Roberts 2010; Jones 2009). Interestingly, both of these approaches conceptualise roles for civil society, albeit certain civil society actors with divergent emphases. The ‘narrow’ approach looks to NGOs and other liberally-minded organisations to help realise human security, whilst the ‘broad’ approach focuses on the agency of local actors, with some stressing the emancipatory possibilities of human security as an enabling mechanism for local actors (Kostovicova, Martin and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2012; Richmond 2007).

The ‘narrow’ human security definition corresponds most closely to a liberal view of human security in that liberal mechanisms are promoted as a means of institutionalising peace and security in instances of armed violence (Richmond 2007, p. 460). In essence, it offers a ‘top-down’ perspective on human security anchored in internationally-led interventions aimed at (re)building liberal institutions and promoting free markets. It is somewhat ironic that, despite the widespread recognition that conflict is transnational and that the state does not have a monopoly over violence, this view continues to promote the strengthening of liberal state institutions as the primary means of realising an individual’s peace and security.

In this sense, it can be argued that the liberal approach to human security is very much a part of the Western projection of the ‘universalism’ of democratic practices by prescribing onto others what constitutes their essential freedoms. This view sees the sources of human insecurity as mirroring those of the ‘global North’. From this perspective, the degree of local ‘buy-in’ for peace-building is either unintentionally disregarded or includes the views of only a few

‘handpicked’ NGOs. This links to the roles that civil society currently occupies within the liberal peace and, thus, civil society is again conceived of as helping to legitimise both liberal peace and human security (Richmond 2007, p. 462). Furthermore, considerations of ethnicity, religion, and cultural values and practices that are often significant factors in conflict are overlooked or absorbed within another ‘West knows best’ approach.

Liberal human security can, thus, be seen as a ‘technology of governmentality’ involving a process of ‘biopolitics’ in which interveners take on the role of ‘administering life’ in areas emerging from conflict (Duffield 2007, pp. 4-5; Richmond 2005, p. 29). Civil society actors are often entwined in this biopolitical encounter through their relationships with international interveners as well as conditionalities placed on assistance that attempt to engineer the social, political, and economic institutions of post-war society (Richmond 2005, p. 29). This stands in direct contrast to the promotion of civil society actors as altruistic, apolitical and ‘neutral’ actors in peace-building and has led scholars to assert that some civil society associations have been intentionally set up to strengthen the interests of those parties affiliated with post-war interventions (van Leeuwen 2009, p. 41; Richmond 2005, p. 23).

This must be set against the broad approach to human security, first set out by the UNDP, in which human security refers to ‘freedom from want and freedom from fear’ such as ‘safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. ... protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in home, in jobs or in communities’ (Human Development Report 1994, p. 23). This paradigm is similar to what Richmond (2007) terms ‘emancipatory’ forms of human security that are rooted in a ‘bottom-up’ approach associated with individual/community ownership, empowerment, and social values (p. 459) where an ‘emancipatory’ peace might be realised at the grass-roots (p. 463). In this sense, one of

the key roles for civil society is to bring back in 'bottom-up' elements of peace-building through a renegotiation of the liberal peace that reflects the 'everyday' needs of those emerging from conflict. However, such perspectives are relatively silent as to how this renegotiation with liberal peace will occur and lead to 'emancipatory' forms of peace. From a normative perspective this might imply that security should specifically include the perspectives of local actors who, despite increasing recognition of the importance of local 'buy-in', are often left out of mainstream security debates.

### ***Human (In)Security and Civil Society:***

Human Security, as both policy paradigm and conceptual framework, involves taking seriously non-Western conceptualisations of peace and security and what this means for the development of a praxis and theory of human security. Civil society actors from this viewpoint play central roles. As Mary Kaldor (2007) asserts, 'a key component of both security and development approaches is the engagement of civil society. Legitimacy depends on some sort of social contract between the rulers and the ruled. Civil society is the medium through which such a contract is negotiated, debated and struggled for' (p. 195). It is, therefore, vital to understand the ways these debates and struggles are negotiated within civil society, including barriers and enabling factors to such negotiation within society. Both the 'broad' and 'narrow' approaches inevitably lead to questions of a normative and empirical persuasion concerning how security is and should be defined, who defines security, who is included/excluded by these definitions, what assumptions do they make, and what influence these paradigms have on the actions of 'local' and 'global' actors.

Recently, some scholars have sought to approach inquiry into civil society and peace-building through the use of human security as an entrance into developing insights into how

individuals and groups experience (in)security and have begun to explore the relationships between civil society-peace-building and civil society-human security<sup>23</sup> (Kostovicova, Martin, and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2012; Martin, Bojicic-Dzelilovic, Kostovicova, Wittman, and Moser 2012; McDuire-Ra 2009). Regarding civil society-peace-building, this entails exploring *how civil society experiences and understands* peace and (in)security (its meanings) and the specific *practices of power* exercised by actors (including civil society) that *seek to shape or influence* peace and security discourses and agendas, rather than a focus solely on the specific *functions* that civil society *performs* in peace-building. In this sense Human Security as an analytical framework calls our attention to the fact that the diverse articulations of peace outlined above as well as their interaction with civil society are both subjective and political. In fact depending on the politics and power dynamics surrounding the ways in which peace is articulated, implemented and consolidated, certain individuals and groups may continue to experience significant insecurity even during ‘peace’. Moreover, the subjective nature of peace and the orientations of groups toward these diverse articulations of peace mean that the activities associated with peace-building itself are likely to be highly subjective and prone to contestation as they are motivated and driven by particularised visions and experiences of what constitutes peace and security. Therefore, Human Security as conceptual lens is seen as a useful analytical tool because it contrasts with the notion of, and seeks to unpack the politics and power dynamics associated with, how peace is articulated and deployed in which despite the end of organised violent conflict, individuals and communities may continue to experience insecurity.

One of the strengths of Human Security as analytical concept is the assertion that people have the capacity to identify the sources of their own human (in)security, providing possibilities

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<sup>23</sup> The work of the Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit has been a leader in this regard and can be found at: <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/CSHS/Home.aspx>.

for empowerment from existing structures and agents that cause insecurity as well as those tasked with identifying and defining what constitutes human (in)security (Roberts 2010, pp. 22-26; McDuie-Ra 2009, p. 34). A key tenet in this is the *contextualisation* inherent in Human Security that recognises that experiences and perspectives of peace and (in)security are not the same for all people(s) and that the causes and intensity of insecurities will be different, not just across instances of conflict but also within them between different ethnicities, castes, classes, and genders (McDuie-Ra 2009 p. 34). At the core of Human Security as conceptual paradigm is the notion that *'the narrative of human security, in sum, should be grounded more firmly in the lived experience of people who are insecure, as well as the political, social and economic realities of countries'* (Luckham 2009, p. 3, author's italics). The fact that Human Security emphasises possibilities for people(s) to articulate what constitutes a security threat from the 'bottom-up', through their experiences, perceptions, and viewpoints, creates opportunity to draw on these experiences, perceptions, and views as an alternative knowledge base in critically examining and evaluating the kinds of (in)securities that exist in relation to the type of 'peace' being implemented and the nature of the civil society-peace-building activities and practices being carried out.

With respect to analyses of civil society, this opens up spaces in which to explore the ways that civil society actors seek to exercise agency, politicise causes and issues of insecurity, and/or contest the ways in which some issues and causes have been politicised over others (McDuie-Ra 2009, pp. 34-35). However, it is equally important to acknowledge that using Human Security to inquire into civil society in relation to peace and security makes visible the *functioning of power and how different vertical and horizontal modalities intersect and relate* in which actors within civil society may be implicated in the perpetuation of insecurity through

exclusive, repressive, and coercive behaviours (McDuaie 2009, p. 29). This study explicitly extends the use of human security from policy agenda to conceptual approach in which *'top-down'* and *'bottom-up'* structures, institutions, and actors are investigated to explore the experiences and perceptions of (in)security and complexities of the relationships between civil society-peace-building in victor's peace Sri Lanka. This logic follows the argument that the predominant approach in peace-building discourses and practice has been to favour the 'top-down' prioritization of structural stability over 'bottom-up' societal well-being. Within the scope of this research, 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' are conceived of as conceptual frames of reference in which to isolate, operationalise, and analyse certain phenomena. 'Top-down' is defined as internationally and/or national elite-driven (central/executive government and/or those in positions of political and economic power) peace-building efforts focused on security, stabilisation, and developing 'top'-level institutions and infrastructure in order to govern over a 'peace', and, exporting the values and ideas behind these institutions vertically down to other segments of a population emerging from the violent conflict. Conversely, 'bottom-up' refers to individuals and communities, particularly at the grass-roots, and their peace-building experiences, efforts, and capacities for peace based upon how they view their own peace and security needs, and, includes activities aimed at supporting individuals and communities affected by violence to voice their own solutions and strategies to deal with the legacies of the violence and conflict they faced (Lederach 1997). The privileging of either 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' within academic and practitioner discourses has often come at the expense of analyses of the interaction of both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' structures and agents and how they link up (or down) with one another to influence dynamics and characteristics of, and produce diverse

outcomes associated with, different articulations of peace and peace-building (Charbonneau and Parent 2011).

The adoption of Human Security as conceptual framework is not intended to advocate or endorse a particular version of human security as policy orientation or to engage in definitional debate. Rather, it is to call attention to and embrace its utility as a powerful lens for conceptualising how (in)security may persist in times of ‘peace’, asking questions about sources of human (in)security as a frame of reference from which to explore peace and security as politicised and subjective concepts and the interaction of both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ processes, actors, and instruments in reifying or reducing these insecurities. Conceptual frameworks ‘make facts useful’ in that they provide us with ‘a framework for interpreting them and seeing their relationships to one another’ (Manheim and Rich 1991, p. 19). Human Security as conceptual framework, therefore, draws on key concepts such as *contextualisation*, *power*, and *agency* to reveal the processes by which civil society ‘acts’ and is ‘acted upon’ by actors, ideas, values, structures, and institutions within peace and security discourses and the kinds of human (in)securities produced through such interactions (Kostovicova, Martin, and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2012; Roberts 2010; McNay 2009).

#### **1.4 Establishing the Parameters of the Thesis: Research Questions, Objectives, and Frameworks:**

Returning to the overview of the thesis introduced in the beginning of this Chapter, and taking into account its premise that the end of organised violence and declaration of peace may not result in a significant reduction in human insecurity, the central research question motivating this study can be framed as:



*What is happening to and within Sri Lankan civil society, and how can we understand the relationship between the experiences of civil society and the politics surrounding peace-building, within the context of victor's peace Sri Lanka?*

Specifically this research engages with the following sub-questions or sub-issues in investigating the central research question: what is the nature of victor's peace in Sri Lanka and how can it be characterised; what is the status of Sri Lankan civil society and the influence of the victor's peace on the context in which civil society operates, including the human (in)securities it experiences and addresses as well as the internal dynamics and tensions within Sri Lankan civil society including the politicisation, securitisation, and polarisation of aspects of Sri Lankan civil society in the victor's peace; and the relationship of civil society to peace-building concerning features of the 'peace' work it undertakes, the perceptions of 'peace' and 'security' this work is based upon, and the ways in which different civil society actors navigate and manoeuvre within the victor's peace including sites of engagement and resistance in relation to the political dynamics of the victor's peace. Based on the central research question and taking account of the sub-questions above and issues for consideration described in the preceding section on civil society and peace-building, the four research objectives of the thesis can be articulated as:

- 1) To contribute to understandings of the complexities and nuances of civil society as sector;
- 2) To advance knowledge of civil society and peace-building by developing deeper understandings of the experiences, perspectives, and practices of civil society, including *grass-roots* actors, in relation to peace-building and the strategies they adopt in navigating and manoeuvring within a victor's peace in seeking to realise their visions of peace and security;

- 3) To add to scholarly literature on peace and peace-building through an in-depth investigation of both internal and external dimensions and dynamics of an often overlooked and under-investigated form of peace governance – victor’s peace;
- 4) To contribute to the development of Human Security as ‘conceptual framework’ which provides a ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ analysis of the politics and dynamics of human (in)security that emphasises the perspectives and experiences of actors and their relationships to the diverse interests and institutions involved in peace processes.

The study contributes to knowledge in each of these areas by adding to ‘problematizations’ of civil society that consider the efforts, motivations, and influence of civil society actors in shaping peace processes in particular ways but also their impacts *internally* on other actors within the sphere of civil society. In this sense it is argued that competing perspectives on what ‘peace’ and ‘security’ mean and look like in peace-building often exist not just between combatants but equally within society, which are reflected in the diversity of perspectives held by civil society actors that need to be taken explicitly into account rather than simply assuming that civil society can be ‘plugged in’ to an already negotiated peace process. Using Human Security as analytical framework opens up the study to examining the nature of power asymmetries and technologies of governance that rule over civil society in victor’s peace. However, it also argues that civil society possesses its own agency through the strategies it adopts in manoeuvring and navigating within victor’s peace.

With respect to the principal research question, this thesis’s central contention is that the victor’s peace in Sri Lanka has produced a situation of significantly reduced political space in which for civil society to function, articulate alternatives, or engage in critical dialogue of the political process fostered under the victor’s peace, under accusations that particularly ‘liberal’-

oriented civil society represent a threat to victor's peace<sup>24</sup>. This assertion, thus, raises questions concerning romanticized notions of the potentiality of civil society resistances to shift structural inequalities and power asymmetries in the victor's peace. The vision of peace propagated by the victor's peace and resultant lack of political will to address the root causes of the conflict due to the ways in which the war, and its causes, are framed within the victor's peace has extended to the ways that spaces (or lack thereof) for civil society have been carved out by the GOSL.

This has occurred wherein 'liberally'-oriented civil society and those that have been critical of the ways in which the victor's peace has been rolled out in Sri Lanka are subjected to acts of securitization and governmentality carried out by Sri Lanka's central governmental elite, in which 'liberal' civil society is variously framed as 'un-Sri Lankan', working in the interests of the global 'West', having been supportive and/or sympathetic to the LTTE, and seeking to undermine (the victor's) peace, hence producing knowledge about Sri Lankan civil society that frames certain actors as 'threats' to the (victor's) peace and sovereignty of Sri Lanka. Such civil society actors have themselves, thus, been made increasingly insecure by the victor's peace. Contentious relations between the GOSL and civil society are not a new phenomenon and within the context of the victor's peace should, therefore, be viewed as an extension and deepening of this occasionally tense relationship.

Consequently, the peace-building practices and activities of civil society at least as far as these extend to political dimensions of the victor's peace as well as activities commonly associated with 'positive' peace-building (Galtung and Jacobsen 2000), such as psycho-social, human rights, and social justice activities, and, those that address inequality, discrimination, and

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<sup>24</sup> The terms 'liberal' and 'liberally'-oriented civil society are used throughout this study to refer to a group or category of civil society that politically speaking reflect liberal values and support liberal-democratic political structures and often express elements associated with the liberal peace (and peace-building) in their mandates, objectives, and activities.

other forms of structural violence, are limited by the politics of the victor's peace. This is due to (1) threats and physical violence against civil society allegedly carried out by the GOSL and its institutions such as the military, supporters of the post-war governmental regime, and members of (un)civil society in the form of radicalised Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalist extremists; (2) the related use of 'fear' and sustained militarisation to dissuade civil society actors from engaging in 'political' and/or 'positive peace' peace-building activities; (3) government allegations of illegal, corrupt, and criminal activity within civil society that has led to audits and investigations of the leaders of prominent 'liberally'-oriented civil society organisations; (4) political legislation and constitutional amendments passed by the central government executive that regulate and censor civil society and its peace-building activities; and (5) the de-legitimisation of civil society through practices associated with securitisation and governmentality exercised by the GOSL that frames 'liberal'-oriented civil society as a 'threat' to the victor's peace, consequently enhancing the insecurity of these civil society actors within the victor's peace.

This study further contends that civil society actors engage in peace-building discourses and practices in diverse and contested ways within the victor's peace based upon their perspectives as to what constitutes peace and their orientation to the victor's peace. Therefore, in line with this thesis's contention that peace is subjective, it is also asserted that peace-building and the processes surrounding it are subject to politicisation with mixed and possible unequal application and results. As the victor's peace inherently depicts a peace that is achieved and sustained through power asymmetry which favours and reflects the victor's vision of peace, so too is peace-building seen to be political in the sense of creating 'winners' and 'losers' within Sri Lankan society and amongst civil society with regards to those that benefit from the victor's peace. Such realities it is argued enable societal tensions and existing fissures within civil society

to be exacerbated through the kinds of peace-building activities and practices permitted and promoted in the victor's peace. In the case of Sri Lanka, those civil society actors, and particularly Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalist associations, that are supportive of the victor's peace or those that have chosen to engage in 'a-political' activities, such as in service delivery, have been able to engage in 'peace'-building activities relatively unencumbered. As might be hypothesised, those actors that have sought to engage in more 'positive peace' and 'liberal' forms of peace-building have faced the most significant constriction of their political space to function within Sri Lanka's victor's peace. Moreover, those civil society actors that benefit from the victor's peace have engaged in 'peace'-building activities in order to capitalise on those benefits and sustain the victor's peace, and in addition, especially those actors that blur the line between civil and uncivil society, have sought to exploit the benefits they gain at the expense of the human security of other civil society actors and Sri Lankans that fall outside the purview of the victor's peace. Therefore, it is not only that civil society may represent a contested sphere from a definitional or conceptual perspective, but that in the victor's peace those actors within Sri Lankan civil society that strongly support the victor's peace have purposively acted against other civil society actors in ways that have intensified their insecurity.

In not being constrained or held 'in check' by negotiated settlement or power-sharing arrangement, this study calls attention to the fact that instances of victor's peace can quickly transition into highly repressive environments. In such settings it is unlikely that civil society, despite innovative and creative ways of exercising agency, including resistances<sup>25</sup>, can significantly alter the trajectories of the victor's peace. Furthermore, through in-depth

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<sup>25</sup> This study views resistance according to Andreas Brighenti's (2010) definition as an act *against* something: 'against command, against exploitation, against imperialism, against power and so on'. The second assumption, 'related to the former yet not equivalent to it, is that resistance operates *from below*, or is bottom-up rather than top-down' (p. 95). Resistance is thus viewed as a 'counter-action', that is, an action which reacts, in various guises, against a dominant arrangement or system (Brighenti 2010 p. 95).

examination of the ‘inner workings’ of victor’s peace this study finds that there is a complex interplay at work between aspects of the liberal peace, global security, and victor’s peace paradigms. These reveal themselves through the politics surrounding ‘external’ conceptions of peace and security and the corresponding ‘internal’ impacts of the ways they are taken up and reworked in victor’s peace in ways that (re)produce diverse forms of human (in)security that can be characterised as a unique form of *frictional* encounter. Finally, this study develops Human Security as conceptual framework and finds that in drawing on the simultaneously ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ approach it embodies, boundaries of inclusion/exclusion are revealed that construct the spaces that enable and/or prevent voices to speak out about socio-political change not only with respect to vertical relationships between international actors, state, and civil society, but also horizontal contestations and in/exclusionary elements within civil society itself. Thus, Human Security can assist in developing more comprehensive conceptions of the complexities and politics involved in the relationship between civil societies and peace-building that incorporates elements overlooked within many other such frameworks that purport to assess civil society-peace-building.

***Research Methodology - Sri Lanka as Instrumental Case Study:***

As alluded to in this Chapter’s introduction, a case study approach is adopted as research methodology. Case study is ‘best defined as an in-depth study of a single unit (a relatively bounded phenomenon) where the scholar’s aim is to elucidate features of a larger class of similar phenomena’ (Gerring 2004, p. 341). Sri Lanka functions predominantly as an *instrumental* case illustrative of a victor’s peace and the politics surrounding the civil society and peace-building nexus in instances of victor’s peace (McNabb 2004; Stake 2000). An instrumental case study is used in exploratory research to provide insights into a particular issue or phenomenon, develop

or refine hypotheses, and because it illustrates a specific characteristic or problem (McNabb 2004, p. 358). However, the case is also *intrinsic* in that the findings are highly relevant in and of themselves for those interested in civil society and the socio-political dynamics governing post-war Sri Lanka (McNabb 2004; Stake 2000).

The utility of case study research emerges in situations where the researcher wishes to better understand complex social phenomena and highlight the complexity of individual cases. A core strength in the case study approach involves the amount of detailed information that is generated by a case that presents a more complete account than with other methodologies. It enables the study of narratives and selection of what is important to be developed from the richness of data rather than having to rely on the study of a particular set of variables. It has been argued that: ‘We know what we (think we) know about the political world because we have studied a few cases, and from these cases we hopefully extrapolate general knowledge about other, similar cases, and try to determine under what conditions our research conclusions apply to them’ (Burnham et al 2008, p. 178). As such this thesis is best seen as providing a detailed exploratory study of the experiences, motivations, and perspectives of civil society in peace-building in response to (in)security, the nature of insecurity, and in relation to the dynamics of victor’s peace Sri Lanka that refines questions and raises areas for future study, rather than offering a definitive argument regarding the nexus between civil society and peace-building in all instances of victor’s peace. In other words, the thesis provides a detailed platform, set of refined questions, and frame of reference in which to guide further study and comparative analysis, but is not necessarily representative of civil society-peace-building across other cases of victor’s peace.

The conflict in Sri Lanka is characteristic of a ‘textbook example’ of a (1) *protracted ethno-national civil conflict* evoked by economic, political, and cultural issues of self-determination and (2) *victor’s peace* in which post-war Sri Lanka is ‘caught between’ elements of ‘liberal’ and ‘illiberal’ governance that includes the innovative ways that the War on Terror and emerging global security paradigm have been drawn upon by the GOSL both in the latter stages of the war and in the post-war period as a strategic instrument to assist it in propping-up, consolidating, and sustaining the victor’s peace (Jarstad and Belloni 2012; Uyangoda 2012; Hoglund and Orjuela 2012; Goodhand 2010). Longstanding ethno-nationalist grievances culminated in a violent rebellion against the state led by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which viewed the government as representing the majority ethnic Sinhalese to the detriment of the minority Tamil population (Thompson 2007; Uyangoda 2007; Orjuela 2003). From 1983 to the official end of the war in May 2009 that culminated in the defeat of the LTTE by government forces, a battle was waged over ethnicity, marginalisation, disenfranchisement, self-determination, and power that resulted in approximately 100,000 lives lost to the violence<sup>26</sup>.

Victor’s peace Sri Lanka denotes the current post-war<sup>27</sup> ‘peace’ led by the GOSL that is indicative of its militarily imposed political settlement, which includes dual focus on security and stabilisation seen through counter-insurgency and economic development agendas (Goodhand 2010). The military victory has produced a political situation in which the GOSL is not forced to engage in negotiated settlement or peace process that takes account of the interests of perceived

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<sup>26</sup> The number of reported deaths attributable to the war is the source of some dispute, varying widely depending on the sources one consults. A report to the Berghof Conflict Group approximates the total number at 140,000 but acknowledges that the number reported by the GOSL, mainstream media, and some donor agencies puts the number closer to 65,000-70,000 (Vimalarajah and Cheran’s 2010, p. 5). The UN’s humanitarian co-ordination office has estimated that 80,000-100,000 deaths occurred (‘Up to 100,000 killed’ 2009) and a study by Harvard Medical School and Washington University puts the number as high as 215,000 (Obermeyer, Murray and Gakidou 2008).

<sup>27</sup> The term post-war is used as opposed to post-conflict to reflect the view conveyed by many of the research participants in this study that whilst the war may be officially over, the roots of conflict continue to play an active role in shaping the socio-political dynamics of present day Sri Lanka (See also: Shanmugaratnam 2010).



‘others’ within the confines of the conflict. Thus, the shift toward more authoritarian and illiberal governance that began during the war has intensified and accelerated in the post-war period (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 90). In a similar vein to the ways in which the GOSL conducted its military campaign in the last stages of war, in the post-war period it has committed to consolidating its victory by centralising power within the hands of a few key leaders in the country, building up a strong domestic base by appealing to Sri Lanka’s majority Sinhalese, including ethno-nationalist and religious actors, and maintaining a heavy military presence in areas it views as High Security Zones (HSZs) (Goodhand 2010, p. 346).

The GOSL has been able to consolidate power using patronage and nationalist ‘patriotism’ as key ideologies of the state (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 93). Furthermore, the GOSL appealed to the War on Terror and global security through its counter-terrorism strategy in order to justify its actions in the final stages of war and continues to insist that ‘there is no ethnic conflict in the country, and that the bloodshed of the past three decades was solely a “terrorist” problem’ (Uyangoda 2012). One potential consequence of the military defeat of the LTTE has, thus, been that minority groups outside the purview of the GOSL’s post-war ‘peace through development’<sup>28</sup> paradigm may be more vulnerable to human insecurity due to claims that multi-ethnic harmony is being restored set against the realities of Sinhalese nationalist dominance and silencing of minority grievances.

The case of Sri Lanka further elucidates how geopolitical divisions between ‘liberal’ and ‘illiberal’ actors and ambitions at the international level can reinforce victor’s peace and are necessary to consider in relation to how these factors impact on civil society. As Kristine Hoglund and Camilla Orjuela (2012) argue:

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<sup>28</sup> For more on the GOSL’s ‘peace through development’ agenda see: Sarvananthan 2010b; Lund 2010).

In Sri Lanka, illiberal international powers (i.e., those not subscribing to the liberal peacebuilding ideals of reconciliation, democratisation, and accountability for human rights violations) have been gaining influence and contribute toward shaping the situation domestically. Illiberal politics are justified through mobilisation against the liberal peacebuilding interventions of mainly Western powers, which Sri Lankan leaders perceive not as liberal but as power hungry and driven by self-interest (p. 91).

This contrasts with the interests of Western powers, including India, who have retained political and economic interests in Sri Lanka dating back to colonialism and engaged in several, ultimately unsuccessful, attempts at implementing liberal peace processes during the war and are keen to maintain a foothold in post-war Sri Lanka<sup>29</sup>. These dynamics have manifested themselves in an ‘East-West’ divide with ‘liberal’ and ‘illiberal’ actors seeking to exercise influence over post-war developments in Sri Lanka.

### ***Research Methods:***

The thesis adopts a qualitative methodology and post-positivist orientation toward the nature of social ontology and epistemology. The philosophical claims about knowledge and the conceptual framework adopted denote a way of interpreting the world that holds that conceptions of reality are based in social interactions, institutions, experiences, and socially-constructed meaning systems rather than the existence of a universally objective and singularly knowable world (Vasquez 1995, p. 221). Meaning-making is subjective, operating through such processes as unequal power dynamics, identity politics, structural inequalities, legacies of colonialism, and interactions between different individuals/communities. Within the thesis this involves developing an understanding as to how power is perceived, experienced, and exercised to shape agencies that are enabling and those that are repressive as well as the meanings that are attached to different perspectives and experiences of peace and (in)security. Ultimately, with respect to

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<sup>29</sup> There have been a number of past attempts to reach a negotiated solution to the Sri Lankan conflict with five separate peace initiatives between the two main factions having failed to culminate in a lasting peace agreement and long-term cessation of hostilities. These include the Thimpu talks in 1985, the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, the Premadasa-LTTE talks in 1988-90, the Kumaratunga-LTTE talks of 1994-95, and the Norwegian-led Ceasefire Agreement between 2002 and 2006.

research design this ‘directs us toward researching how language, conceptual frameworks and paradigms shape the world’ of Sri Lanka’s victor’s peace (Vasquez 1995, p. 222).

Developing in-depth understanding of the experiences and practices of Sri Lankan civil society in the post-war period as a window into extending our knowledge of civil society-peace-building within a victor’s peace requires recognising Sri Lanka’s civil society actors as the true experts within the scope of the research. In this study this involved utilising both ‘elites’ as key informants (including elites in civil society and other elites within Sri Lankan society) and ‘grass-roots’ civil society actors as alternative experientially-based knowledge and expertise, asking these actors to reflect on their own experiences, perceptions, and beliefs with respect to the victor’s peace. Key informants are a select group of people who are particularly knowledgeable or experienced about certain issues or problems whose positions within society in a particular research context give them specialist knowledge about what is happening around them as well as the views of those they represent, which offers in-depth, extensive, and overarching insights into the research setting (Payne and Payne 2004; Marshall 1996). The incorporation of both elite key informants and grass-roots civil society actors was viewed as a way to avoid ‘elite’ bias where ‘the key informants who come from elite groups, such as senior government officials, university professors and researchers, project and program staff, and elected officials, tend to be articulate and have a sense of authority that leads the investigator to give more weight to their opinions than to those of other groups’ (Kumar 1989, p. 31).

Concerning experiential knowledge, such knowledge is gained based upon one’s experiences, implicit learning, and perceptions as to the meanings attached to such experiences rather than formal, learned, or ‘expert’ knowledge (Storkerson; Berg 2008). It ‘signifies a way of knowing about and understanding things and events through direct engagement’ (Berg 2008).

Beatrice Pouligny (2005) further illustrates the importance of acknowledging the knowledge that people have of their own situation and experience when she asserts that ‘we have difficulty taking into account local knowledge and resources as major inputs ... the UN or other international organizations will more commonly cite reports from northern human rights NGOs than local ones, even though local organizations may possess a more profound knowledge of the situation’ (pp. 501-502). Pouligny (2005) concludes by asking ‘how can we pretend to support processes aimed at changing a local social and political fabric when we merely ignore what local knowledge, resources and wishes are?’ (p. 509). As such, the views, perspectives, knowledge, conceptual frameworks, paradigms, and meanings attached to particular aspects of the conflict and victor’s peace on the part of Sri Lankan civil society needed to be central in the research process and are treated as either key informants (in the case of elites) or as a form of alternative expertise (in the case of grass-roots participants) with respect to interpreting and using the data within the thesis.

Within the scope of the thesis this involved combining a ‘bottom-up’ methodology (that is a focus on the views, experiences, and practices of Sri Lankan civil society actors and how these link-up to ‘top-down’ considerations) with a ‘top-down’ one (that explores the impacts of overarching structural issues, dynamics, and efforts to institutionalise peace, as well as the post-war policies exercised by the Sri Lankan government on civil society and within the wider Sri Lankan society) in the context of the victor’s peace in order to provide an in-depth picture of the broader themes, politics, and cross-cutting issues that characterise victor’s peace and the politics surrounding peace-building in Sri Lanka. From the ‘bottom-up’ perspective consideration of civil society actors, particularly those at the grass-roots, as ‘experts’ or forms of alternative expertise in the thesis follows the logic that as they are on the front lines in direct and indirect ways, either

by experiencing themselves and/or working with individuals and communities that are impacted by the victor's peace, logically, they are in a strong position to express the impacts of the victor's peace, what (in)security means and looks like for themselves and their constituents in the communities they work with, and how such articulations of 'peace' have influenced and oriented the nature and scope of their peace-building work. As Roberts (2010) asserts, it is often the case that the 'people who know best' are the 'least influential' in determining what, and the means by which, peace and security is to be worked for and established (pp. 136-137). From this perspective, civil society actors with first-hand knowledge of and influenced by decisions made concerning peace and security ought to be front and centre in articulating how these decisions have impacted them and the communities they work with.

A further aspect concerns legitimacy and authenticity in methodological decisions involving the co-production of knowledge, theory, and praxis that is based on the recognition that different kinds of knowledge exist, ranging from academic to experiential that can be brought to bear on challenges during conflict and post-conflict peace processes. According to Alexandra Colak and Jenny Pearce (2009) 'research methodologies involving people in the co-production of knowledge in the field of security could help to increase the possibilities of articulating alternative visions of security that are locally relevant and that can have an impact on public institutions' (p. 17). Therefore, research methodologies and strategies in peace and conflict research that not only place research participants that are representative of the actors and developments that they are speaking toward at the centre, but give their perspectives weighting alongside other 'experts' (or key informants) can help contextualise peace and security in ways that are relevant and meaningful to these populations. In their study of human (in)security in Kosovo, for example, Denisa Kostovicova, Mary Martin, and Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic (2012)

use dialogue as a methodological tool in ‘recognition of the agential power of the researched in the construction of knowledge of human security, as well as providing insights into the complexity of lived experiences of insecurity’ (p. 571).

For the reasons outlined above, *in-depth, qualitative, and open-ended interviews* with both key informants and actors with alternative expertise based on their experiences that emphasised Sri Lankan civil society’s understandings of the ending of the war and post-war victor’s peace were employed as one of the primary methods of acquiring data for the thesis. Qualitative interviews are appropriate and effective when ‘the researcher is interested in hearing respondents’ opinions in their own words, particularly in exploratory research, where the researcher isn’t entirely clear about what range of responses might be anticipated’ (Palys 2003, p. 176). Such interviews ‘have the advantage of allowing the researcher to discover unanticipated patterns in people’s answers. They also prevent the researcher’s selection of response options from biasing answers or concealing information’ (Manheim and Rich 1991, p 116). Qualitative interviewing requires listening carefully to hear meanings, interpretations, and understandings that give shape to the worlds and worldviews of respondents (Burnham et al 2008).

The qualitative interviews took the form of an *adapted restorative enquiry approach* and *semi-structured ‘elite’ interviews*<sup>30</sup>. The adapted restorative enquiry approach is utilised to draw on grass-roots civil society’s experiential knowledge and is somewhat akin to narrative interviewing, which encourages and stimulates a research participant to tell ‘stories’ about some significant event in their life and social context through unstructured, in-depth interviews (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2007; Cortazzi 1993). Experiential knowledge itself ‘is often expressed in

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<sup>30</sup> Detailed explanation of the research methods and coding system utilised throughout the thesis can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B provides examples of the types of adapted questions that were asked to research participants at each stage in the restorative enquiry process. In addition, segments of participant’s actual responses to questions are included in order to illustrate the restorative enquiry process and types of responses it elicits. Appendix C provides a list of the types of semi-structured questions posed to different categories of ‘elite’ actors.

the experiential form of narratives. ... people will nearly always make sense of their experiences by constructing them in story form, and sometimes (but not always) they will proceed from these stories to infer or deduce generalizations' (Baumeister and Newman 1995). In these types of unstructured interviews 'the researcher is interested in learning what the respondent perceives as important and relevant to the research and let the respondent's observations suggest what questions should be asked to gain useful information. The interviewer is concerned with discovering facts and patterns rather than with measuring preselected phenomena' (Manheim and Rich 1991, p. 140).

Such adapted restorative enquiry-based interviews were conducted with 'grass-roots'-level participants in the study as a means of presenting experientially-based knowledge from the 'bottom-up'. The knowledge, experiences, and perceptions expressed through the adapted restorative enquiry interviews were then supplemented by semi-structured interviews with key informants who represented the 'elite' research participants interviewed throughout the research. Semi-structured interviews, 'defined both in terms of the target group being studied, an 'elite' of some kind, and the research technique used, most characteristically what is known as semi-structured interviewing' also formed the basis for the collection of research data (Burnham, Lutz, Grant and Layton-Henry 2008, p. 231). Though still open-ended and qualitative the semi-structured interviews conducted in this study tended to be less narrative in orientation and more directed and focused on having 'elite' key informants speak to their views on various aspects of the victor's peace and wider geopolitical dynamics given their particular positions within society as 'elites'. These included, for example, questions concerning the nature of the victor's peace, policy-making in Sri Lanka, the GOSL's centralization of power, securitization of civil society, roles and views of the international community and diaspora, geopolitics and the global political economy, and ethnic and religious relations and nationalism<sup>31</sup>. *Field notes* in the form of

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<sup>31</sup> Appendix C provides a sample of the types of semi-structured questions posed to different 'elite' actors.

*journaling*, and *document-analysis* of a variety of print and web-based materials belonging to Sri Lankan media, civil society and citizens' media, and most fundamentally, government speeches, documents, and press releases round-out the research methods utilised and helped to triangulate the findings presented in this study.

Throughout the thesis the term 'grass-roots' is characterised by the politics of 'community/ies' and is community-organised, predominantly focused on the impacts of events and policies on communities, and populated by community members, though not necessarily only physically located within the geographic boundaries of a localised community. The grass-roots is often marginalised within dominant peace-building discourses, however, it should be noted that the grass-roots is not a singular, unitary category and actors operating at this level can benefit from the marginalisation of other grass-roots actors and reinforce existing inequalities and power imbalances within society. The definition of the grass-roots utilised throughout this study with respect to Sri Lanka has been adapted in part from John Paul Lederach's (1997) 'peace-building pyramid' that defines the grass-roots as encompassing community leaders including community religious/spiritual and cultural actors and politicians, leaders of indigenous groups/NGOs, community developers, rural development groups, community health officials, community/village-level women's groups, NGOs and cultural/member's unions, refugee camp and internally-displaced groups, local peace commissioners, grass-roots trainers, and those trained in prejudice reduction, psychosocial work and post-war trauma (p. 39).

In the context of this study, 'elites' are defined along the spectrum of Lederach's (1997) 'middle-range' and 'top' level leadership, which includes political, military, economic, legal, and religious actors both foreign and domestic operating in or on Sri Lanka with high visibility, academics and intellectuals, and humanitarian leaders and managers including in the form of



both ‘global’ and ‘local’ NGOs. ‘Elite’ civil society is defined according to its members’ ability to access resources, visibility, and representation of the intellectual civil society elite. They can be representatives of INGOs and/or members of the ‘professional elite’ – that run institutions, such as service-delivery, peace, or human rights, and/or are research-based, including within universities; the ‘floating elite’ – that shift between government and/or international institutions and civil society; or the ‘transitional elite’ – that are institutionally part of civil society but seek to form future political structures (Shafi 2004). In the case of Sri Lanka, ‘elites’ include leaders within civil society, religious and other ‘ethnic’ leaders, academics and university professors both within and external to (though whose work focuses on) Sri Lanka, representatives of the Sri Lankan government, military, and other political and economic elites, foreign diplomats and representatives of foreign governments, senior members of think-tanks, INGOs, and leaders of diaspora civil society outside of Sri Lanka. Within the confines of the study ‘global’ refers to actors, institutions, processes, networks, events, policies, and activities that are initiated in the ‘transnational’ or ‘global’ spaces of international relations, or are foreign and/or external to a particular ‘local’ area, as well as conceptually located ‘above’ the national. The term ‘local’ denotes actors, activities, institutions, processes, networks, decisions, policies, and events that conceptually reside and are made ‘below’ the international within the state in provinces/regions/states, cities, towns, and communities/villages (also referred to as the ‘grass-roots’). However, it is recognised that both the ‘global’ and ‘local’ can and do operate ‘transnationally’ linking up or down, ‘above’ and ‘below’ the state, participating in and constructing ‘transnational spheres of connectivity’ and that the classifications of ‘global’ and ‘local’ function more as conceptual tools of analysis and for organising material than concrete and fixed categories that exist in the real world.

Throughout the thesis efforts are made as feasible (whilst seeking to maintain the anonymity and security of the identity of research participants) to attribute the ‘type’ of actor, their roles, and their location to the data presented so as to validate the authenticity and expertise of the arguments and characterisation of the victor’s peace articulated throughout as well as to contextualise the experiential knowledge in the form of perceptions, views and experiences expressed grass-roots civil society. Efforts have also been undertaken throughout to ‘double-check’ factual information provided by research participants via reports produced by think-tanks, NGOs, and international institutions; scholarly works; and media reporting. Steps have further been taken to substantiate the strength of the viewpoints expressed as to developments taking place in victor’s peace Sri Lanka and their impact and influence on civil society, as well as the nature of civil society and the nexus between civil society-peace-building, through emphasising that the data presented has originated from a particular key informant interview or from interviews conducted using the restorative enquiry approach. Finally, in setting up claims and assertions that were unverifiable either through further supporting evidence or that represented an outlying perception, viewpoint or unique experience that was not communicated in other interviews but represented an interesting perspective and opinion, it has been indicated in the text that the material presented is indicative of the subjective experience, belief, of perception of research participants rather than ‘factual’ evidence. Nevertheless, these statements are believed to contain a certain explanatory power as they help to ‘lay bare’ and make evident the ways that these views and beliefs inform both the perspectives of various ‘types’ of civil society actors and their practices in relation to other civil society groups, the victor’s peace, and also the peace-building activities and practices of civil society actors.

In assessing the strength and reliability of the key informants' responses a number of criteria were used to discriminate between 'good' and 'bad' informants and to give greater credence to the comments and observations of the former. The reliability of key informants is assessed across several criteria: 'knowledgeability' (a good key informant has first-hand knowledge of the issues and is in a position to give accurate information); 'credibility' (the key informant answers questions thoughtfully and candidly and is perceptive about the issues, often based on their position within society); 'impartiality' (a key informant may have an ulterior motive for providing inaccurate and/or exaggerated information, in general a good rule of thumb is to assess that a respondent whose comments are overly positive or negative does not make a good key informant); 'willingness to respond' (if an informant was not fully cooperative during the interview, their hesitancy should be considered during the data analysis stage); 'outside constraints' (this includes the presence of superiors, multiple interviewers, and/or those of a higher socioeconomic or political position during interview that can influence the nature of responses) (Kumar 1989, p. 30). To this list Marshall (1996) also highlights 'role in community' (that their formal roles should expose them to the kind of information being sought by the researcher) (p. 92).

Likewise in order to help verify material, often similar questions or responses that had come up in interviews were also inquired into during interviews with other key informant research participants and new ideas, themes, and issues that arose during an interview were added to the semi-structured interview guide and brought up in subsequent interviews as a means of helping to validate the importance and accuracy of information conveyed in the interviews. In this sense the key informant interviews helped 'provide flexibility to explore new ideas and issues that had not been anticipated in planning the study but that are relevant to its purpose. ...

The investigator can pursue this issue with other key informants, even though it was not included in the original interview guide' (Kumar 1989, p. 3).

Therefore, a cross-section of the typology of Sri Lankan civil society actors focusing on issues of 'peace' and 'peace-building' within the victor's peace were interviewed in both the restorative enquiry process and semi-structured elite interviews and further complemented by semi-structured interviews with other key informants representing 'elites' that are knowledgeable of aspects of the victor's peace. In reflecting on the importance of ensuring representativeness of Sri Lankan civil society across the research participants, in addition to triangulating the data through drawing on reports produced by scholars, NGOs, think-tanks, and international organisations on Sri Lanka as well as other documentation, such as policy documents and media reporting, it was noted that interview data fell into a pattern that was familiar and came up across interviews with similar 'types' of actors within Sri Lankan civil society. This is consistent with assertions that interviews 'should be conducted with enough informants to ensure adequate representation of different types of experiences. The interview should be carried out to a point when researchers will find that additional interviews do not provide new insights and the answers fall into a pattern with which they are already familiar' (Key Informant Interviews 2011). However, as Krishna Kumar (1989) notes, 'the decision on the number of key informants to interview for a study is generally based on the availability of time and resources, complexity of the issues involved, and the information available from other sources' (p. 9). Therefore, as above with respect to triangulation, where additional interviews were not feasible due to time, resources, or willingness of potential research participants to engage in the research process, steps were taken to 'review the findings carefully to ensure that the perspective, needs, or concerns of the missing group or organization have been considered

for analysis purposes' again via the cross-checking of information with available print documentation and discussion with applicable key informants with knowledge in the particular areas where any 'gaps' in information appeared (Kumar 1989, p. 29).

Fieldwork was conducted in Sri Lanka in April-May 2011 and July 2012 with a variety of actors representing a cross-section of Sri Lanka's civil society whose interests and/or work involved focus on post-war peace and security including human rights, advocacy, research-oriented, peace, women's, religious, and ethno-nationalist organisations, local offices of INGOs, community-based, internally-displaced, arts/performance-based, (rural) development, and 'Gandhian' groups, as well as cultural member's associations and unions. These were supplemented by discussions with political 'elites' such as representatives in government (Ministers, Members of Parliament, and Public Service), academics, economists, media figures, foreign diplomats stationed in Sri Lanka, leaders of 'global' civil society organisations in Sri Lanka including INGOs, and members of think tanks, and diaspora groups outside Sri Lanka. It also included informal conversations with a variety of Sri Lankan citizens. In total, 80 individual and group (interviews which took place with two or more members of a particular organisation) interviews were conducted with both 'grass-roots' and 'elite' members of Sri Lankan civil society, and, 'elites' within and that focus on Sri Lankan society in their work. The interviews were conducted across Sri Lanka in many areas where the war was fought and in both urban and rural locations. The break-down of interviews by location consists of 45 in Colombo, 5 in Kandy, 6 in Batticaloa, 2 in Trincomalee, 3 in Puttalam, 1 in Marawila, 1 in Vavuniya, 2 in Mankulam, 10 in Jaffna, 1 in Point Pedro, 2 in London, England and 2 in Toronto, Canada. With respect to the 'types' of research participants represented in the interviews, research participants as

described above were categorised as grass-roots versus elite as well as along a continuum between global and local-level actors.

Regarding the research participants that were involved in this study, interviews were conducted with 8 ‘global’ actors and 73 ‘local’ ones (the total of 81 interviews recorded here takes account of the fact that on one occasion a group interview took place with both ‘global’ and ‘local’ actors). With respect to interviews with ‘elites’ versus ‘grass-roots’ actors, 52 took place with elite actors and 29 with grass-roots ones. Other ways that the research participants can be classified are by gender (28 involving at least one woman and 58 involving at least one man) and ethnicity (35 Sinhalese; 24 Tamil; 14 Muslim; 5 Burgher, and 3 Other).

Predominant focus in choosing research participants was devoted to civil society actors that either explicitly labelled themselves and their activities in relation to ‘peace’-related activities or actively sought to address issues related to post-war governance and victor’s peace, including influencing ‘peace’ in ways that reflected their views on realising ‘peace’ and ‘security’ in Sri Lanka. Therefore, not all actors interviewed for the study acted in non-violent ways or sought to take steps to reduce inter-ethnic tensions and issues seen as underlying causal factors in the conflict. Groups in Sri Lanka were initially approached through independent searches for civil society organisations and on the recommendation of contacts in Sri Lanka and abroad as to actors in country that I might endeavour to connect with and engage in the research process. Once on the ground in Sri Lanka many research participants, particularly at the grass-roots, were introduced and coordinated through informal recommendations from both ‘elite’ and other grass-roots actors that I had met with and involved as research participants.

Perhaps the most direct method of selecting key informants is to consult strategically placed experts working in the area under study who should be able to recommend the most

informative, experienced, and analytical individuals. To increase the likelihood that the informants will be useful, it may be necessary to select those informants who have been recommended by several sources, especially if the different sources are known to have dissimilar points of view (Key Informant Interviews 2011). Thus, in selecting potential research participants I would often ask research participants to recommend others that they believed I should involve in the research process when I was conducting interviews with them. Questions included: ‘Who else in the field do you believe it is necessary to speak with in carrying out my research (can you assist in helping me to in touch with them etc.)?’, ‘Who sits on opposite side of the fence from you so to speak in terms of viewpoints on post-war Sri Lanka and the roles of civil society that you would recommend I speak with in order to develop a full picture of the post-war political landscape?’, and ‘What else do you believe I need to know or that you would most like me to say in my research about the current socio-political climate/present-day Sri Lanka and the experiences of civil society actors in peace-building today?’ This is consistent with Kumar’s (1989) statement that ‘the common practice is to consult several knowledgeable persons in order to prepare a list of the possible informants’ (p. 9). Therefore, a ‘snowball’ technique was incorporated from the beginning into the research design to assist in the selection of, and obtaining access to, those research participants that were not easily locatable and/or that others in the field and that hold expert knowledge of Sri Lankan affairs with respect to peace-building and the victor’s peace deemed necessary to meet with in the research process.

Ultimately then, a wide range of civil society actors representing different functions, ethnicities, classes/castes, genders, socio-economic status, and geographic and geopolitical locale were accessed. This was considered particularly vital for engaging with grass-roots civil society actors who might be isolated and/or not have websites, email addresses, or

promotional/educational materials in which to locate them independent of personal connections and introductions. Such ‘informal’ introductions to potential research participants were deemed to be vital to reaching civil society actors within the securitised environment of victor’s peace Sri Lanka and also because often times, grass-roots civil society actors in particular lacked websites, email addresses, and publicised existence that made contacting them plausible by another format. This was also important in framing me as researcher as a ‘safe’ and legitimate individual to meet with.

The realities of Sri Lanka’s victor’s peace environment, concerning paranoia amongst some civil society groups with being seen to be closely connected to or cooperating with foreign Western actors must be acknowledged with respect to its impacts on accessing and conducting interview with research participants. Likewise, interest and suspicion toward Western presence in sensitive, war-torn and ‘high security’ areas of Sri Lanka (particularly in the North where the last phases of the war were fought and the government continues to maintain numerous high security zones) presented challenges to research design with respect to both gaining access to, developing relationships with research participants. Further considerations involved maintaining the anonymity and safety of research participants throughout the study. Nevertheless, efforts were made throughout the research process to ensure that a cross-section of civil society actors were involved in the research that represented the breadth and scope of the sector (see Chapter 5 for a detailed overview of Sri Lanka’s civil society sector in both historical and contemporary context).

Interviews were largely carried out in English but also Sinhala and Tamil with the use of a translator. In cases where interviews were conducted with a translator care was taken to ensure that translators were from the same ethnic community, gender, and/or geographic community as



research participants or someone that they already knew and felt comfortable with such as a family or community member, spouse, or another civil society partner. The nature of the research and research process were discussed with translators prior to meetings with research participants in order to reduce challenges associated with interpretation and ensure that they were clear on the meaning of the research and research questions. However, as translators were from the same communities as research participants and were often closely connected via a prior relationship, the likelihood of them misinterpreting the meanings behind research participant's responses was significantly reduced.

### ***Delimiting & Limitations of the Study:***

The thesis investigates the time period from May 2009 to March 2012, beginning with the declaration of the end of the war on 18 May 2009 and terminating with the adoption of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Resolution 'Promoting Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka' (A/HRC/19/L.2) that was adopted on 22 March 2012 at the 19th session of the UNHRC in Geneva<sup>32</sup>. This demarcation can be viewed as a means of carving out an initial 'phase' in Sri Lanka's post-war victor's peace. It illuminates a distinct and identifiable trajectory of the government's post-war governance strategy, the GOSL's official history of the war's end, and enables several key events, policies, and actions of the GOSL and international community to be explored in relation to their influence and impacts on civil society in Sri Lanka.

These include: the fall-out from the military's actions in the final months of the war with respect to allegations of human rights violations and the deaths of tens-of-thousands of civilians; the rolling out of the government's post-war peace and development policies, including the release of its Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) Report in December

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<sup>32</sup> See for more information: 'Resolutions & Voting Results of UNHRC 19th Session' 2012; United Nations Human Rights Council A/HRC/19/L.2 2012; and Weaver and Chamberlain 2009.

2011<sup>33</sup>; ‘liberal’ - ‘illiberal’ politics between China and the ‘West,’ including India and the Sri Lankan diaspora; and public opinion in response to the 12 April 2011 UN Report of the Secretary-General’s Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka that found credible reports of war crimes and serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law committed by the GOSL and LTTE and called for ‘genuine investigations’ into the allegations that culminated in the UNHRC Resolution in March 2012<sup>34</sup>. That this period is framed as representing one phase in Sri Lanka’s victor’s peace does not imply an end to the victor’s peace but rather functions as a way of demarcating the study in order to carry out a well-defined and complete piece of research given the challenges of conducting research in a dynamic and evolving contemporary environment. Separating out analyses of Sri Lanka’s victor’s peace into ‘phases’ also provides a framework in which different stages and aspects of the victor’s peace can be examined over time and comparative research on Sri Lanka’s victor’s peace in relation to instances of victor’s peace in different contexts and across various periods can be explored.

Certain ‘limitations’ in the study also pertain to methodology. The methods utilised are intended to ground the research in the experiences and perceptions of research participants and in on-the-ground realities for civil society in victor’s peace Sri Lanka. This enables a detailed and in-depth picture of a particular case and type of peace to be developed. The study does not, however, attempt to address the full magnitude and range of civil society’s experiences of peace and (in)security, notably, prior to and during the war. Thus, whilst case study enables theory on a particular area of study to be refined, further testing and analysis are required in order to determine the applicability of the findings to other cases outside the scope of the research.

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<sup>33</sup> For the full Report visit: <http://slembassyusa.org/downloads/LLRC-REPORT.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> The resolution urged Sri Lanka to probe allegations of summary executions, kidnappings and other abuses, but stopped short of calling for an international investigation.

In order to develop an in-depth picture of the experiences and perceptions of civil society and the relationship of these actors to peace and (in)security within a victor's peace, and again due to the necessity of delimiting the thesis in terms of space and time constraints, only civil society actors primarily physically located in Sri Lanka and working on, or concerned with, Sri Lankan issues pertaining to the 'peace' are included as the central focus of the study. These actors are most directly and immediately impacted by the policies, structures, and power dynamics of the victor's peace and can, therefore, speak most intimately to their experiences and perceptions of victor's peace, the impact and importance of the numerous factors at work within post-war Sri Lanka, and their views on research questions that this thesis seeks to address. This choice is not to suggest that other forms of civil society, particularly diaspora civil society, are not important actors or impacted by aspects of the victor's peace as many see themselves as actors in the post-war process. Yet as they are physically situated outside Sri Lanka, for the purposes of this study, the diaspora is discussed in relation to its functioning as an actor in the international community.

It must also be acknowledged that research participants viewed me as researcher in particular ways and made assumptions about my motivations, background, and ability to be of use to them based on these inferences. Every research participant 'will make hypotheses about what the interviewer wants to hear and what they probably already know' (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2007). It is irrefutable that my status and perceptions of me concerning my identity as foreigner, white, Western, and woman influenced participant views of me, even if only subconsciously, that may have influenced their responses in our dialogue with one another. That interviews were conducted in an open-ended fashion aimed at eliciting narratives and having the research participant guide areas of the interview that were expanded upon did go some way to guide research participants away from answers they thought I might want to hear as the dialogue revolved around them as expert.

Associations with Westerners as donors also meant that particular attention was paid to setting up interviews, introducing myself, explaining who I was, and the nature of my research, especially my identity as student and researcher *not* as member or representative of any particular government or donor.

Finally, to the extent possible steps have been taken throughout the thesis to maintain and uphold the anonymity of research participants, often at their own request, due to the climate of fear, secrecy, and paranoia that pervades Sri Lankan society. This reflects concerns on the part of research participants for their and their family's personal security in response to violence, threats, and the disappearances of persons within society often believed to be orchestrated by, or at least carried out with the complacency of, government agents. Such realities in highly sensitive conflict zones and post-war societies necessitates creative thinking on the part of the researcher as to ways to denote the representativeness of the sample of research participants whilst minimising safety concerns to the extent possible. In this case, a list of research participants, interview dates, and locations was provided to examiners during the thesis viva that corresponds to the anonymous identification system of numbering interviews used throughout the thesis. However, specific communities, both in terms of geography and categories/functions of civil society actors, are referred to in order to relate the types of experiences, perceptions, and/or strategies adopted to specific civil society actors to build deeper understandings and insights into the politics and dynamics of civil society and peace-building in victor's peace Sri Lanka.

Interestingly, in some cases it was noted by research participants that they deliberately and publicly oppose the government and its policies as a strategy of resistance to politics of securitisation. This phenomenon is explored in greater depth in Chapter 7 but is intriguing to call attention to here as means of highlighting the diversity of civil society responses to power and

the perseverance of many actors in the face of significant threats to their safety and security. This precaution of anonymity does raise further interesting issues and questions, though, concerning the effectiveness of the Rajapaksa regime in disciplining the conduct of civil society through fear and violence and whether this is symptomatic of dynamics and technologies of governmentality in other instances of victor's peace that warrants consideration in future research.

### **1.5 Structure of the Thesis:**

In the remainder of this Chapter the structure of the thesis is outlined. The following Chapters each work toward addressing the central research questions and meeting the objectives of the thesis.

Chapter 2 elucidates the conceptual framework for the thesis. It examines the debates surrounding human security concerning definition, its adoption into policy agendas, and critical interest in relation to discourses on peace- and state-building. The Chapter sets out Human Security as conceptual framework illuminating key features. It concludes by outlining how the approach enables investigation into 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' dynamics and the experiences, practices, and politics concerning civil society-peace-building.

In Chapter 3 a literature review is conducted that captures central questions and considerations in exploring civil society and peace-building brought up through adoption of Human Security as analytical lens. Such framing provides multilateral and multidisciplinary perspective into the how civil society has been defined and conceptualised historically, the nexus between civil society and peace-building has been studied, and contemporary literature encompassing tensions both *external to* and *within* civil society relating to 'global'/'local', Western/Non-Western, North/South debates and perspectives, but also ways civil society is seen to exercise agency, including resistances.

Chapters 4 through 8 adopt Human Security to analyse civil society and peace-building within victor's peace Sri Lanka. Chapter 4 introduces Sri Lanka as case study, providing an overview of the historical complexities of the conflict before focusing on events surrounding the war's end and implications of the most recent failed attempt at implementing a liberal peace process from 2002-06. Significant attention is devoted to the current victor's peace as well as the interaction (and its consequences) of 'liberal' and 'illiberal' actors and policies within victor's peace Sri Lanka. The Chapter explores socio-political dynamics of protracted ethnically-motivated armed violence and sets up exploration into power politics underlying the peace and civil society peace-building in victor's peace Sri Lanka.

Chapter 5 'unpacks' civil society historically within the Sri Lankan socio-political landscape with particular reference to the origins of civil society, civil society during the war and tsunami, through to the contemporary dynamics of victor's peace. This includes investigating the nature of Sri Lankan civil society, contextualising and grounding it within historical, ethnic, religious, and cultural context. An analysis of the human insecurities addressed through civil society's 'peace' work in the victor's peace is also undertaken in order to understand the kinds of human insecurities Sri Lankans, including civil society, face and how perceptions of peace and security factor into the activities that civil society undertakes.

In Chapter 6 tensions, challenges, and areas of contestation and contradiction within Sri Lanka's contemporary civil society arena are investigated. It focuses on structural dynamics inherent to the Human Security approach, informed through *intra-sectoral* contestations within civil society. In particular, the Chapter explores questions concerning what constitutes an 'authentic' Sri Lankan civil society and power dynamics within civil society, including tensions

between different ethnic, religious, caste/class, and gender-based dimensions of Sri Lankan civil society.

Chapter 7 explores the politics and boundaries of inclusion-exclusion that reinforce dominant power paradigms within post-war Sri Lanka, with particular reference to the impacts of victor's peace and influence of 'top-down' socio-political and ethnic dynamics and actors on Sri Lankan civil society. As in Chapter 6, the Chapter emphasises structural dimensions of the 'structure-agency' debate, that is, the deconstruction of forms of GOSL governance through an engagement with power dynamics and an analysis of how knowledge and discourses get constituted and sustained through conditions of governmentality and securitisation.

Chapter 8 adopts the agency side of 'structure-agency' using Human Security to explore strategic practices in exercising agency aimed at lessening the conditions in which the oppressive power structures explored in Chapter 7 rule over human and socio-political life. It enquires into the nature of the strategic practices adopted by Sri Lankan civil society in responding to manifestations of the victor's peace, but also elements of the liberal peace. It explores the ways in which different civil society actors navigate and manoeuvre within the victor's peace, including sites of engagement and resistance.

The concluding Chapter draws together the findings and conclusions from the preceding Chapters into an overarching analysis of the experiences, perceptions, strategies, and politics of civil society-peace-building in victor's peace Sri Lanka, with specific attention toward addressing the research questions and examining dominant dynamics that emerge from the study. The Chapter sets out findings and implications for further study of the dynamics of victor's peace and civil society-peace-building both in Sri Lanka and in other similar cases. Particular attention is paid to placing the thesis in the proper perspective between past and future studies,

with reference to potential cases for comparative analysis, 'testing' of the findings, and research questions for further enquiry arising from the study.



## Chapter 2 – Human Security as Analytical Framework

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### 2.1 Introduction:

As discussed in Chapter 1, human security has gained prominence for asserting that the primary referent of security ought to be reframed away from state-centric conceptions of national security to focus on the protection of individuals and communities from a diversity of threats and vulnerabilities<sup>35</sup> to human life. Since the UNDP's 1994 Human Development Report human security has been associated with a potentially transformative project that seeks to broaden traditional security discourses and bring to the forefront actors and issues that have often been left out of conventional accounts of security. Bringing security outside the realm of state-centricity enables consideration of the underlying dynamics driving (in)security at multiple levels of analysis (Richmond 2012 and 2007; Roberts 2010; Kaldor 2007; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). By broadening conceptions of security utilising both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' analyses Human Security can identify forms of (in)security experienced, perceived, and practiced by diverse groups that are often disguised within many mainstream conventions of security, peace, and development that focus solely on *either* 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' accounts. Furthermore, Human Security recognises that 'secure' states as well as those that are at 'peace' can contain insecure peoples, that forms of 'peace' and 'peace-building' can exacerbate these insecurities, and that narrow approaches to such issues can themselves lead to, and be the cause of, greater insecurity (McDuié-Ra 2009, p. 26).

As an arena or sphere of uncoerced thought, dialogue, and association civil society can potentially be a highly insightful medium for delineating the nature and complexities of peace and (in)security in particular localities and across specific issues. As a socio-political actor it can

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<sup>35</sup> A threat is regarded as an external cause of harm that is identifiable and often immediate, requiring response. Vulnerabilities focus attention toward the 'risk' of defined potential threats occurring and can be both 'internal and external in exerting complex influence' (Liotta and Owen 2006, p. 45).

seek to make insecurities visible and exercise a range of agencies in order to address them directly or indirectly by bringing them to the attention of those with the capacity to do so. However, civil society is also revealing of a diversity of power asymmetries in situations of ‘peace’ and human (in)security that can illuminate politics, societal inequalities, and biases underlying ‘peace’ and human (in)security in which certain causes and instances of ‘peace’ and (in)security are prioritised over others. This consequently means that purported peace-building activities are also subject to these same politics, inequalities, and biases and may reinforce rather than alleviate them due to the nature of the peace and (in)security that such activities seek to address (McDuie-Ra 2009, p. 27).

Human Security can be conceptualised as a ‘paradigm in the making’ for enhancing knowledge of the evolving threats and vulnerabilities that impact on populations and the wide array of actors involved in both exacerbating and alleviating such (in)securities (Sané 2008, p. 6). This represents the ‘thickening’ of security discourses and ‘deepening’ of our conceptualisations of what (in)security means in order to recognise a wider range of threats and vulnerabilities associated with human well-being and their relationship to peace and peace-building discourses and practices. It further denotes a multidimensional, holistic, and gendered understanding of what human security comprises. This includes the intersection of direct and *in-*direct violent threats and vulnerabilities, such as poverty, disease, and environmental degradation, on human life with reference to gendered relations and masculine institutions of power (Newman 2010; McDuie-Ra 2009).

However almost since its inception, human security has been subject to contestation and debate concerning its definitional aspects, precision as policy agenda, value-added to current discourses on contemporary challenges, and its emancipatory potential versus roles in furthering

hegemonic power through imposition of (neo)liberal regulation and order despite claims to the contrary (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo 2012; Hynek and Chandler 2011; Mack 2002; Paris 2001). This Chapter first examines the charges that have been laid against human security in the literature including how a conceptual approach to Human Security can address and help to resolve these critiques. The Chapter then sets out the analytical approach to Human Security. It argues that such a paradigmatic shift is able to avoid falling victim to prescriptive and dualistic stalemates concerning human security solely as either challenge to, or reproduction of, power. Rather, as conceptual lens Human Security brings multiple forms of human (in)security into a framework of analysis in which to consider issues pertaining to human well-being including the roles of power in challenging *and* reproducing inequalities.

The final section explores how a Human Security framework can be grounded in empirical analysis and operationalized in practice. This includes how Human Security provides a language in which to express and concretise the experiences and perspectives of those experiencing and/or working in areas of human (in)security either within instances of human security as policy agenda or in cases in which human (in)security arises. Such a language foregrounds Human Security's potentiality as analytical foil in undertaking rich empirical investigations of human security policy agendas and programmes as well as human security-related phenomena, such as violent conflict, environmental disasters, or famines.

## **2.2 Addressing Criticisms of Human Security:**

The following section addresses and responds to several of the core criticisms that have been put forward against human security suggesting how in developing a conceptual framework for Human Security several of these criticisms can be overcome. Amongst the most persistent critiques have included accusations that human security is vaguely defined, incoherent, lacks

precision, and is overly broad to provide policy-makers with guidance as to how to respond and prioritise incidences of human (in)security and academics with an idea of what is to be studied (Hynek and Chandler 2011; Mack 2002; Paris 2001). In their work Richard Jolly and Deepayan Ray (2007) identify five central critiques of human security levelled by critics:

- 1) Human security simply renames problems already recognised and named in other contexts; little is gained by combining them under a singular new label;
- 2) Human security lacks clear definitional parameters; ‘anything and everything’ could be considered a human security risk;
- 3) Human security complicates rather than clarifies international mechanisms for dealing with threats identified through its interconnection of issue areas;
- 4) Human security risks bringing the military into issues best addressed through non-military measures;
- 5) Human security as conceived of under the UN risks raising expectations of the UN’s capacity beyond that which it can fulfil (p. 459).

Interestingly, however, in empirically exploring how human security has been treated in the National Human Development Reports (NHDRs) in 13 countries since 1997, they find significant utility in the concept of human security both analytically and politically. Jolly and Ray (2007) argue that ‘broader definitions of human security are operational for both analysis and policy making’ (p. 547) and that it is ‘robust in providing answers to criticisms, and operationally useful in identifying policy measures and action to tackle serious problems of insecurity of people within the countries concerned’ (p. 459).

According to critics one key challenge lies in human security’s conceptual vagueness and failure to clearly define the range of insecurities that are encompassed by the term. This is claimed to represent the impossibility of coming to agreement over a ‘universal, generalised vision’ given the ‘vastness of different possible insecurities that could be felt by individuals’ worldwide (Roberts 2010, p. 21). Consequently, critics assert that human security’s utility both analytically and politically is weakened by its definitional imprecision (Ewan 2007; Jolly and Ray 2007). It follows that as human security does not have any definite parameters, ‘anything

and everything' could be considered as a threat to human security (Paris, 2001). Human security, thus, risks becoming an 'empty signifier', an 'amorphous and unclear political concept' that represents everything and yet nothing at once (Hynek and Chandler 2011).

In a similar vein Andrew Mack (2002) questions the utility of the laundry list of possible human security issues and areas as merely an exercise in 're-labeling phenomena that have perfectly good names: hunger, disease, environmental degradation' (p. 6). For critics the broad approach risks widening definitional meaning to the point that human security loses conceptual and analytical clarity. The central objective then becomes the task of delineating a 'narrower, more manageable approach that can help to reduce its "laundry list" dimensions' (Ewan 2007, pp. 182-183).

However, by the same token consideration must also be given to the question of the conditions under which human security loses its meaning and conceptual reflexivity by becoming *too narrow* to accurately reflect insecurities driving conflict at multiple levels of analysis. Furthermore, such a narrow definition risks further disempowering people(s) by overlooking conditions of insecurity that they experience and identify with, thereby, denying them the potential 'emphasised by human security to "re-imagine security" in counter-hegemonic ways' (Ewan 2007, p. 187). As analytical approach Human Security provides a broad framework of potential insecurities that are then populated, and the scope of analysis defined, by context. This places experiences and perspectives at the centre of the analysis, giving meaning to the concept through the voices and views of those experiencing and working in (in)security first-hand. This allows for emphasis to be placed on the interconnectedness of variables so that their analysis becomes about something more than simply the reiteration of a 'laundry list' through

deeper inquiry into the causes and effects of human (in)securities and their relationship to one another (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007).

Critics have further argued that human security could have the ‘contradictory’ effect of actually facilitating in the greater application of military or violent solutions in response to the challenges posed by contemporary political, social, and economic problems (den Boer and de Wilde 2008; MacFarlane and Khong 2006; Paris 2001). A key concern here relates to the consequences of human security ‘securitising’ issues as it broadens security and that violence might be legitimated in the name of protecting human security and punishing its violators (Newman 2010, p. 81; de Wilde 2008, p. 246). Similar concerns surround the question of how to judge ‘self-help’ initiatives and groups in terms of human security if they employ violence as part of their strategy – for their supporters they may be considered champions of human security but by their victims’ offenders (de Wilde 2008, p. 246). This pertains to accusations of human security being wrapped up in the (neo)liberal project of expanding its global governance through ‘biologisation, dehumanisation and globalisation’ often seen through (neo)liberal development, peace- and state-building paradigms that since 9/11 have increasingly encompassed aspects of the global security agenda in their mandates (Hynek and Chandler 2011).

For those who view human security from the perspective of a ‘foundational concept’ (UNDP 1994), however, its ‘broadness’ is intentional as threats and vulnerabilities delineated by human security cannot be defined in narrow, concise terms as they are *context*-dependent (Fukuda-Parr and Messineo 2011, p. 13, italics added). In other words, just as ‘one-fits-all’, ‘blueprint’ approaches to peace-building have been criticised by those sceptical of the liberal peace, so too could narrowly-defined conceptions of human security be subject to the same fate. From this standpoint the utility of Human Security lies in its functioning as ‘analytical tool,’

which focuses on understandings of human security that are not imposed from above but rooted in the viewpoints and concerns of people(s), including uncovering how these differ from one another, are contradicted, and contested (Jolly and Ray 2007, p. 461).

It, therefore, does not seek to securitise ‘any critical and widespread challenge to the physical integrity of the individual as a security threat’ nor does it solely recognise ‘security providers’ as responders to security challenges (Newman 2010, p. 81). Instead, by employing a power and agency-based perspective Human Security commits itself to examining the conditions under which issues and actors become securitised and the implications of this to human (in)security including opportunities to ‘lessen the power of oppressive structures over human life’ through a process of de-securitisation (Shani 2011). Security can, therefore, have both positive and negative connotations and the complexities surrounding how diverse actors employ different methods in seeking to realise their conceptions of human security must be explored, including how these may contravene the viewpoints of others, providing a more complete (and complicated) picture of instances of human (in)security.

An additional critique of human security involves assertions that the purported universality of human security assumes an abstract individual ‘unencumbered’ by notions of culture, ethnicity, religion, or power (Hynek and Chandler 2011; Shani 2011). Against this backdrop some scholars have appealed to the ‘emancipatory’ potential of a ‘radicalised’ critical human security approach (Richmond 2012, 2011, and 2007; Begby and Burgess 2009; Ewan 2007). This ‘emancipatory’ vision aims at enabling ‘local autonomous agencies’ in negotiation with ‘post-liberal’ forms of peace-building toward the ‘emancipation of citizens in a civil society’ (Richmond 2011, pp. 44-45). The question of what a ‘post-liberal’ peace or ‘radicalised’ human security framework actually means ‘on-the-ground’ and how these translate into strategic

practices and responses from within societies, particularly those characterised by high degrees of repression and securitisation, however, remain sources of considerable contention (Hynek and Chandler 2011).

Moreover, such analyses run the risk of making assumptions regarding the possibilities that exist within many societies experiencing insecurity for emancipation and of abstracting the ‘local’ without engaging in analysis of how power actually functions and operates in enabling and *disenabling* ways. This is not to argue that human security, whilst perhaps stopping short of emancipation, cannot offer empowering<sup>36</sup> potentiality. It is to assert, though, that this must reside in deep-level, applied understandings of the ways that power works in settings and societies at multiple levels – grass-roots, local, national, and global.

Finally, human security has in recent years become something of a catchphrase inserted into a variety of peace, security, and development projects. In response some have concluded that this has allowed ‘bureaucrats working in government and international institutions to highlight and target some issues traditionally ignored in the state security discourse, while not challenging their positions or that of their governments/organisations, or straying into the dangerous waters of critiquing the global structures of economic and political power’ (Hynek and Chandler 2011, p.6). Rather than dismissing human security altogether, however, the expanded interest in human security in policy discourses emphasises the necessity of cultivating richer and well-developed conceptual frameworks of Human Security. The framework delineated in the following sections represents one such approach.

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<sup>36</sup> Empowerment is not conceptualised as a Westernised notion of giving or teaching empowerment to those disempowered. Rather empowerment is defined along the lines of Alternative Dispute Resolution literature that views empowerment as ‘the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to handle life’s problems’. Empowerment does not include ‘power balancing’ in order to ‘protect’ weaker parties, nor does it involve ‘controlling or influencing’ outcomes to produce ‘an empowered’ outcome but rather focuses on building capacity for people to determine their own empowerment (Bush and Folger 1994, p. 2).



### 2.3 Towards Human Security as Conceptual Lens:

As alluded to above, it must be acknowledged that Human Security as conceptual framework does inherently acknowledge the *possibility* for human security to provide a *potentially* empowering alternative paradigm to guide and frame responses, particularly of the international community, to a range of contemporary phenomena. However, such an approach does *not* accept that as policy agenda human security will necessarily be implemented and practiced in emancipatory or empowering ways.

Such a perspective does recognise that pervasive threats and vulnerabilities are often multidimensional and interdependent such that conceptualisations of security are not exclusively concerned with armed violence but also with other factors that impact on prospects for human well-being, such as poverty, disease, and/or environmental degradation and the ways in which these threats intersect with one another to intensify human (in)security (Roberts 2010; Begby and Burgess 2009; Luckham 2009; Oquist 2008; Sané 2008). Human Security argues that whilst armed violence is one component of human security, (1) violence is not confined only to acts of physical violence and (2) armed violence is often intrinsically linked to other areas of insecurity such that insecurity can be seen as a *consequence* of poverty and underdevelopment not solely as their cause (McCormack 2011; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). Likewise, the impacts of this interconnectedness can exacerbate existing human insecurities such as the impacts of the tsunami (and response) in Sri Lanka on the re-hardening of ethnic lines of division within the conflict that aggravated an already tense situation of stalled peace talks.

The orientation to Human Security advanced here, therefore, necessitates thinking through the linkages between ‘grass-roots,’ ‘local,’ ‘national,’ and ‘global’ to address issues, areas, and actors that are currently left out of, or excluded from, dominant discourses as a means

of developing deeper knowledge of human (in)security in a variety of environments (Jones 2009; Goetze and Guzina 2008; Richmond 2007; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007).

Human Security is concerned with raising questions about sources of human (in)security and dynamics between those who attempt to provide security. It asserts that ‘rethinking security’ in a ‘world divided by profound inequality and ongoing conflict’ demands rigorous empirical analyses of causes and contexts including identifying spaces which exist for change (Luckham 2009, p. 3). As a result individuals and communities are not envisioned only as ‘bystanders and collateral victims of conflicts, but core participants in protection strategies and post-conflict peace-building’ (Cilliers 2004, p. 11). At the same time it is important not to over-romanticise the roles of individual/community-level actors. It must be recognised that individuals and communities can also be implicated in the continuation and reproduction of human insecurity through (in)direct means such as support for terrorism, rebels, and/or insurgents as well as forms of political and social violence including the perpetuation of majoritarian politics, actions that intensify economic and/or social inequalities, and/or worsen environmental degradation.

Human Security responds to the critique that dominant approaches to security have failed to consider ‘what security means to different people; who decides who and what is to be secured; from what risks and threats are they to be secured; and from what these risks and threats arise’ (Roberts 2010, p. 15). It does so by contending that understandings of human security in a particular setting or case ought to be grounded in the views, experiences, and knowledge of those impacted by that specific setting or case and contextualised in the social, political, and economic history of the environment(s) in which the setting or case occurs. Human Security draws on the typology of human security indicators first set out by the UNDP Report (1994) as a broad-based foil or framework for exploration but gives specific form and meaning to these variables by

*contextualising* them within the perspectives, identity, and histories of those experiencing (in)securities first-hand such that they frame what ‘counts’ as a condition of (in)security. This is then mediated through the constructs of *power* and *agency* in order to better comprehend the ways that structures and agents both challenge and reproduce asymmetries of power. The Human Security approach, therefore, enables investigation into both ‘top-down’ *and* ‘bottom-up’ dynamics rather than emphasising one over the other in exploring the experiences, practices, discourses, and politics surrounding peace, conflict, and (in)security. It is, thus, defined by the subjective and politicised experiences at the ‘micro level’ in terms of people’s experiences and perceptions, and, the ‘disciplining’ of populations by the domains of the local, national, and global (Roberts 2010, pp. 22-26; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, p. 10). Human Security provides a useful analytical framework for developing deeper understanding of the nature of civil society and peace-building in the context of victor’s peace Sri Lanka. This involves taking seriously non-Western conceptualisations of peace and security and what this means for the praxis and theory of Human Security.

#### **2.4 Operationalizing Human Security:**

The following provides an overview of how Human Security as conceptual framework can be grounded and operationalized to enable empirical investigation of the experiences and strategic practices of civil society concerning peace and (in)security in victor’s peace Sri Lanka. This section explores what it means to advance a Human Security approach as analytical tool by ‘flushing out’ the conceptual framework of Human Security. As one of the central objectives of human security is to protect the ‘vital core of people’s lives from critical and pervasive threats’ an important component in developing an analytical approach to Human Security ‘is to identify critical and pervasive threats to the vital core of people’s lives’ (Alkire 2003, p. 29).

According to John F. Jones (2009) ‘the term “vital core” is not meant to be precise; it suggests a minimal or basic or fundamental set of functions related to survival, livelihood and dignity’ (p. 24). Therefore, in line with the *contextualisation* of Human Security (discussed in greater detail below in the Section - *Contextualising Human Security*), the ‘vital core’ does not specify the exact elements of human security that are relevant in all contexts. Rather, ‘the vital core refers to that subset of human capabilities that people judge should be protected even in times of turmoil or want. ... Yet the dimensions of this core, and the threshold of what is vital and what is not, are open to ongoing discussion. This means that operationalization of human security ... will always require specification’ (Alkire 2003, pp. 28-29). By putting those experiencing human (in)security front and centre in any analysis invoking Human Security, this approach trusts people to identify (in)securities with respect to their ‘vital core’.

It further involves politicising and deepening knowledge of the underlying structural dynamics driving how actors manoeuvre and navigate within instances of human (in)security as well as complicates our understandings of agents and the rationale and strategies behind the actions they undertake and their influence on other actors. The following, first, outlines the broad-based typology of human (in)security indicators delineated by the UNDP before, secondly, explaining how these characteristics are contextualised through the histories, perspectives, and experiences of those subject to forms of human (in)security first-hand. Third, an analysis of how knowledge and discourses get constituted and sustained through power, particularly conditions of governmentality and securitisation is provided. Finally, the nature of empowerment and agency are explored as a means of directing attention to areas and issues that might be capitalised upon to alter the relationship and linkages between ‘actors’ and ‘objects’ in order to reformulate power dynamics toward greater human security.

### ***A Broad-based Typology of Human Security:***

The human security indicators identified by the UNDP provide both a window into framing investigation into the experiences and practices of civil society in relation to peace-building within victor's peace and a means of connecting these to their views on what constitutes peace and security. Keeping the components of human security intentionally broad recognises that 'insecure and excluded people perceive security in very different ways from the dominant narratives and indeed from each other' (Luckham 2009, p. 3). Therefore, in considering what 'counts' as forms human (in)security, local and particularly grass-roots actors whose experiences and perspectives are often assumed or worse excluded and/or obscured by other actors who seek to subsume their voices must be given space in which to construct human security. By broadening what does and does not 'count' as a component of peace and security we can develop richer accounts of the activities and viewpoints of actors that are left out of dominant accounts and how strategies of (dis)engagement, conformation, empowerment, and resistance are linked to their realisation.

Furthermore, taking account of the analytical necessity of being able to frame the scope of one's analysis so as to enable research findings and conclusions to be reached and verified through comparative investigation, the UNDP's human security components provide flexible and adaptive yet defined parameters for investigation. The UNDP Report seven key human security indicators are:

***economic insecurity:*** poverty, inability to meet basic human needs, vulnerability to local, national, and global economic shocks;

***food insecurity:*** famine, physical and economic non-availability of food, inadequate nourishment, vulnerability to environmental and climatic events;

***health insecurity:*** disease and infection, unsanitary conditions, inadequate or non-existent health services and health education or inability to access them;

***environmental insecurity:*** pollution, environmental degradation, climate and ecosystem stress and extreme events, land and resource mal-distribution and/or scarcity;

**personal insecurity:** *physical and psychological threats of and actual violence, vulnerability to conflict, armed violence, and other forms of human insecurity;*  
**community insecurity:** *threats to family and/or community/group integration, cohesiveness, culture, and survival, vulnerability to exclusion and marginalisation as well as cultural globalisation and pressures to normalise and conform to dominant norms, values, and practices;*  
**political insecurity:** *political repression/oppression, voting manipulation, threat of intimidation and violence for political beliefs held or expressed, vulnerability to coups, violent conflict, dictatorships (Human Development Report 1994, pp. 24-25)<sup>37</sup>.*

These seven attributes form a broad-based typology for investigating and organising the types of activities, perspectives, and experiences of (in)security expressed or witnessed in a particular setting, environment, or context. Each can be defined individually or in conjunction to enable a conceptualisation of human security in the context of specific cases to be established.

Ultimately, the seven attributes separate human security into distinct, yet interconnected, characteristics through which human (in)security manifests itself that enables one to identify which aspects feature most prominently in diverse instances or settings of human (in)security, whilst remaining focused on the ability of individuals/communities to shape what constitutes human (in)security in context. The approach is also inclusive of an array of factors that cross into areas traditionally associated with development and humanitarianism. As P. H. Liotta and Taylor Owen (2006) contend ‘even as the above components fracture human security into separate identities, the focus remains on the human citizen and people’s ability to live without dramatic hindrance to their well-being, whatever the cause’ (p. 42).

Human Security focuses on the ‘margins’ within sites of human (in)security through its recognition of the ‘gendered’ aspects of security. Gendering security roots security analyses not only in unequal gender relations, but also in the interaction of a broad range of variables that transcend and/or intersect with gender enabling us to capture the socio-cultural dimensions of

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<sup>37</sup> A more detailed description of each component is provided in Appendix D alongside an overview of the types of roles and activities that civil society might undertake in both enhancing and denying human security.

human (in)security (Moussa 2008, p. 81). Through this focus Human Security incorporates categories of ‘otherness’, such as gender, ethnicity, culture, and religion into its analyses and examines the spaces in which local and community-based voices attempt to be heard. This ‘gendering’ of security highlights the importance of the UNDP’s broad framework that enables consideration of the different ways people experience and understand (in)security. Women and children are often particularly vulnerable to threats to their human security including from sexual violence, human trafficking, unwanted pregnancy, (sexual) slavery, torture, poverty, and socioeconomic inequalities. Furthermore, because human security threats impact distinct individuals/communities differently, those already disempowered and marginalised within society are more vulnerable to shocks to human security, particularly during moments of humanitarian crises. Through the gender-security interface the varied ways in which human insecurities and power structures impact various actors and preserve gendered hierarchies can be brought to light (McDuie-Ra 2009, p. 27).

Traditionally since security discourses have been framed along national and paternalistic lines it is important to reframe security narratives in ways that better reflect the specific insecurities felt by individuals/communities. By highlighting gendered aspects of security the notion that the security of a state or regime is identical to that of its citizens can be called into question, particularly with respect to highlighting how state security can contravene human security and disempower individuals/communities, especially women, to improve their political, social, and economic status within society (Moussa 2008, p. 82). With respect to those most marginalised, this includes consideration of work that has traditionally been confined to the informal or domestic sector; cultural norms, values, and traditions; the ‘feminisation’ of poverty; (in)direct forms of violence against local populations; and reflection on how local and

marginalised actors have mobilised against oppression (Gbowee 2009, p. 50; Luckham 2009, p. 4; Gibson and Reardon 2007, p. 59). Bringing recognition of gender into Human Security discourses, therefore, necessitates consideration of the cross-cutting impacts and influence of gender on conflict including the ways in which it challenges, reshapes, and/or reinforces dominant security discourses. With respect to the typology above, this brings us back to the notion of the *contextualised* ‘vital core’ as not every issue or event will be determined to be a human security issue that threatens or enhances vulnerability.

### ***Contextualising Human Security:***

As previously alluded to, one of the key considerations in constructing a conceptual approach to Human Security involves contextualisation, that is, human security must be rooted in the perspectives, knowledge, experiences, histories, and forms of knowing of the local in the setting under exploration. Jolly and Ray (2007) argue that a common thread across definitions of human security that they address in their study is a concern with the need to ‘*contextualise* the experiences of insecurity, and develop policy responses based on this more nuanced understanding’ (p. 460). In their opinion ‘limits to define a core of high-priority concerns with human security can be set after exploring the concerns of people in specific situations rather than before’ (Jolly and Ray 2007, p. 457).

With respect to (post)conflict cases this implies that perspectives of peace, (in)security, legitimacy, and authority are redefined in terms of the experiences and perceptions of those experiencing and working within instances of peace and (in)security (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, p. 10). The importance of ‘bottom-up’ engagement in exploring peace and security in (post)conflict settings is rooted in the notion that individuals and communities are most closely connected to the threats and risks to human security posed by violent conflict as they experience



them directly. Therefore logically, they are in the best position to express what (in)security means and looks like. As Roberts (2010) asserts, it is often the case that the ‘people who know best’ are the ‘least influential’ in determining what, and the means by which, security is to be worked for and established (pp. 136-137). From a Human Security perspective, those most impacted by and intimately connected to decisions made concerning human security must be front and centre in articulating their human security needs. Jolly and Ray (2007) explain that they ‘focus on the insecurities felt subjectively by people or experienced objectively by them. We do not set limits in advance on the types of insecurities that we consider as dimensions of “human security”, but rather let the focus and range emerge from the situation or analysis’ (p. 459).

It should also be noted, however, that actors are often tied to particular religious, cultural and/or ethnic sub-groups, thereby, raising questions concerning the biases and motivations, and/or end-goals connected to their activities, articulations of human (in)security, and roles in furthering sources of human (in)security. However, this does not deter from the importance of rooting inquiry into instances of human (in)security in the experiences and perceptions of those with first-hand knowledge, either directly or indirectly, of the case under examination . In fact, if anything it further highlights the importance of understanding the experiences and knowledge of those closest to instances of insecurity in order to explore what the nature of the solutions to the problems of insecurity might encompass and what issues need to be addressed (Roberts 2010, p. 136). Thus, with respect to peace-building whilst actors involved in implementing and consolidating peace are by no means a homogenous entity, grounding Human Security in their perspectives and knowledge provides a rich basis for exploration of the experiences and practices of actors in peace-building as a window into the types of peace and (in)security issues, and their corresponding complexities, that exist within different localities of conflict.

Although Human Security intersects with aspects of human rights, to some extent it also challenges the universality asserted by the institutional and legal frameworks of human rights, recognising differences in interpretation and perception stemming from diverse standpoints concerning what constitutes one's 'essential freedoms'. Whilst Human Security does not advocate for a wholly relativist approach to international relations, through the principle of contextualisation it asserts that contrasting perspectives need to be recognised in ways that do not simply prescribe universal rights, values, and frameworks onto others, but seek to address the interests, needs, and underlying beliefs of those experiencing, working in, and/or studying the particular instance of insecurity. A central question behind this focus becomes how 'free' are individuals and communities within conflict to shape peace and security in ways that reflect their particular interests and needs, and to develop an understanding of the constraints that operate upon these freedoms. The role and place of culture and history within these constructions is of paramount importance. This becomes evident in Georgio Shani's (2011) claim that it is culture which 'permits the individual to have a *bios*: to enjoy a life endowed with meaning and dignity' and that it is through Human Security that communities might discover a language in which to express difference thereby moderating the assimilationist tendencies of 'modern nation state belonging' and/or (neo)liberal globalisation (p. 65).

The commitment of the contextualisation principle emphasises the importance of identifying how and where populations emerging from violent conflict experience peace and (in)security by focusing on both global and local causes and capabilities. This 'multidimensionality' involves tapping into the wealth of knowledge existing at the local or domestic level rather than devaluing this knowledge and the belief systems of indigenous populations (Roberts 2010; Kaldor 2007). It also implies the necessity of developing more

nuanced understandings of the underlying dynamics of insecurity that do not assume that causes and capacities can be ‘mapped’ from one setting onto another. This represents a shared scepticism toward a ‘one-fits-all’ approach and through contextualisation the prioritisation by individuals/communities of different attributes of human security to suit their needs, interests, and identities. This shifts the ‘actor-object’ relationship such that populations are no longer conceptualised as the ‘objects’ of peace and security, but as legitimate agents whose views and experiences should be at the forefront of analyses (Richmond 2007, pp. 468-469).

Contextualising human (in)security implies utilising a people-centred methodology that works through and with people to specify what peace and (in)security looks like and how these views translate into strategic acts in seeking to exercise agency. Importantly, this includes exploration of the motives and rationale behind strategies of (dis)engagement with state, military, and/or global civil society actors. Robin Luckham (2009) outlines a four-pronged rationale behind the need to ground and contextualise human security in local views, actions, and experiences. These are: (1) ‘because security itself is unequally distributed, reinforced by discriminations between rich and poor countries, among social classes, against women and minorities, and spatially between regions’; (2) ‘to recognise the agency of those who suffer insecurity, violence and poverty and the many different ways they struggle not just to cope, but also to assert their rights and speak truth to power’; (3) ‘to ensure that security from below is grounded in sound empirical understanding rather than over-romanticised perceptions of grass-roots institutions and initiatives’; and (4) ‘because the poor may see the state itself as complicit in the insecurity visited upon them’ (Luckham 2009, pp. 3-4). To this rationale should also be added (5) that populations may perceive other local and global actors as representing domestic and/or foreign policy interests, thereby, believing them to be, at best, unintentionally complicit in

the perpetuation of unequal relations and/or insecurity. In essence, contextualisation within this study focuses on experiences and perceptions of peace and (in)security of civil society actors as these connect to broader developments within the victor's peace and encourages inquiry into the values, norms, and perspectives that inform their responses, including perceptions of 'otherness' and recognising that forms of 'othering' may mobilise groups to collective action in ways that heighten insecurity amongst diverse segments of a population rather than alleviate it.

***The (Em)Power(ment)*<sup>38</sup> *Interface:***

From the perspective of exposing the implications of victor's peace in Sri Lanka for civil society and the relationship between civil society and the politics of peace-building in the victor's peace, , this study adopts a Foucaultian analytics of power approach. As Kyle Grayson (2011) alleges 'every project, whether emancipatory or otherwise, is constitutive and productive of relations of power' (p. 182). Therefore, from early on, discourse on human security has been related to 'emancipation from oppressive power structures - be they global, national or local in origin and scope' (Thomas, 1999 in Jolly and Ray 2007, p. 460). Adopting a Foucaultian perspective pushes us to look beyond surface manifestations of power to focus on how power operates at deeper levels, in larger societal and historical frameworks, and between 'emergency'- 'everyday', global-local-grass-roots, state-civil society, and elite-grass-roots dichotomies. Even Jaap de Wilde (2008) despite his guarded stance towards human security stresses that the 'strongest incentive to talk about human security is that it highlights the changing nature of coercive power in world politics' and 'captures many of the dilemmas that are involved in the contemporary use of violence' (p. 226). In this sense it is important to study how populations are

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<sup>38</sup> I have chosen to represent (em)power(ment) in this way here as a means of drawing specific attention to the complex and often 'blurred' interface between 'power' and 'empowerment'. In external peace-building operations the notion of 'empowerment' can disguise the functioning of power 'over' others such as final decision-making authority remaining in the hands of 'experts' or through the ideological imposition of values, norms, and processes as to how to be 'empowered' or 'emancipated' (Paris 2010; Donais 2009).

deliberately secured within power relations, including who is conceived of as representing a ‘threat’ to the peace and (human) security of populations, how the physiological and psychological necessities of life are (mis)managed, including through so-called peace-building activities themselves, and who holds the ability and capacity to access human needs.

As a theoretical concept, the notion of power is often thought of as abstract and ambiguous, even though its consequences are actual and tangible. Human Security explicitly engages with power dynamics and boundaries of inclusion-exclusion as they pertain to broader social, historical, and political paradigms. It also focuses on questions of agency that seek to draw attention to the politics of the ‘actor-object referent’, which recognises individuals and communities as ‘actors and agents’ rather than solely ‘objects’ of change (Abdullah, Ibrahim and King 2010, p. 39). With respect to analyses of civil society-peace-building this includes spaces that exist for social change – both in the form of empowerment and resistances, but equally through the (re)production of power asymmetries, including forms of governmental power. This relates to Oliver Richmond’s (2010) insistence in foregrounding the ‘everyday’ in relation to hidden agency and resistance but his caution that this foregrounding not romanticise the agency of the ‘everyday’ (p. 5). Any analysis of power must focus ‘on how particular discourses and narratives make some things important and others insignificant, how they include some participants and exclude or marginalise others’ (Fischer 2006, p. 25). This involves an exploration of how knowledge, ideas, discourses, politics, and practices get constituted and sustained through conditions and relations of power, including politics of inclusion/exclusion that factor into the ability of certain groups to carry out activities relatively freely, whilst others cannot, and asks what are the dynamics underlying these differences.

*Conceptualising Power:*

Michel Foucault's (1977) conception of discourses as the relationship between power and knowledge helps to elaborate on how asymmetries of power function to produce social and political spaces that include certain groups, beliefs, and ideas whilst excluding, and/or securitising, others. According to Foucault power is 'a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise the power just as much as those over whom it is exercised' (Foucault 1980, p. 156 in Hornqvist 2010 p. 15). In other words no power relation is brought into existence solely from above, it is also reliant on the internal, those involved in the power relation itself; no power relationship can exist without an associated foundation of accepted knowledge and, likewise, there is no knowledge without an existing power relation that brings that knowledge into being (Hornqvist 2010 p. 11; Arac 1988, p. 184). Power, thus, works not only on people but through them. It is mediated through identity, values, context, and systems of knowledge as well as peoples' responses to the ways in which power is exercised (Foucault 2000).

Power inequalities persist through this power-knowledge interface in that those who wield the greatest power within societies are able to shape and reinforce forms of knowledge and socio-political relations as 'truths' and as 'acceptable', which in turn 'normalises' these relations within society further fortifying existing power asymmetries. Relations of power are interwoven with other relations (e.g., politics, economics, ethnicity, religion) that produce and are produced by them thereby activating power in particularised ways. Power in this sense connects to aspects of Foucaultian rationales of governmentality in which governments implement regulatory measures that represent the 'disciplining' of, and 'calculated management' over, human life within its territorial jurisdiction by strategically formulating policy that focuses on the shared 'needs' or 'conditions' of populations (Foucault 1978/1979 In Burchell, Gordon, and Miller 1991).

These technologies operate both through the logic of discipline as well as a desire to produce autonomous individuals where power functions not solely in a centralised domain but instead (re)produces outcomes that help to organise and shape society along multiple sites that correspondingly maintain the domination of the state, whilst increasing its economy of power (Roberts 2011; Wilson 2009, p. 36). According to Magnus Hornqvist (2010), both ‘control’ and ‘disciplinary’ societies can exist simultaneously, those who are included socially exist within the control society whilst those excluded or perceived as being ‘abnormal’ or ‘threatening’ form part of the disciplinary society (p. 155). Disciplinary power is often also particularly evident and enforced in repressive regimes where agents within society are placed under a system of surveillance that becomes pervasive enough to move them to interiorise the disciplining structures such that citizens, ultimately, oversee their own conduct through self-discipline and monitoring the conduct of others for ‘suspicious’ or ‘abnormal’ behaviour (Wilson 2009, p. 34). Repressive forms of power, thus, exist within disciplinary society that punishes law violators, stops rebellions and/or resistances, and excludes certain peoples, whereas ideological forms of power seek to ‘control’ or influence texts, dialogue and debate, and shapes and/or manipulates reality at the societal level to reflect particular perspectives and prevent new or ‘challenging’ insights (Hornqvist 2010 p. 10). The sites where ‘disciplinary’ and ‘control’, or ‘repressive’ and ‘ideological’, power are exercised include those aspects of ‘everyday’ life that frameworks of ‘security from below’ are concerned with (Luckham 2009). This makes the incorporation of Human Security as conceptual framework the exploration of exercises in dominance but also responses that represent the strategic absorption and engagement with values and ideas as well as resistances (Hynek and Chandler 2011; Shani 2011; Roberts 2010; Richmond 2007).

Steven Lukes (1974) has similarly described three dimensions of power. The first is the visible manifestation of power in decision-making behaviour by those in leadership positions. The second concerns the question of who has the power to determine which issues are relevant; that is what conflicts and issues are actually put onto the agenda. The third dimension takes into account latent conflicts and power asymmetries such as those that permeate or are endemic within society that people are unconscious of, or where people may not view their position as disadvantaged as such but rather a consequence of the natural order relative to their status within society. Likewise, it is important to consider the different ‘faces’ that actors in conflict and peace-building display to different stakeholders and how these ‘faces’, in turn, play out and impact the activities of different actors (van Leeuwen 2009, p. 77). Ultimately, Mathijs van Leeuwen (2009) argues for the importance of ‘taking into account everyday practices in organisations’ that involves following how actors ‘manoeuvre to realise projects’ and seek to ‘make sense of people’s motivations, ideas and activities by taking into account their past and present surroundings, social networks and histories’ (p. 77).

With respect to civil society-peace-building the composition (structure and linkages) of different aspects and actors within society is important in an analysis of the functioning of power within this relationship. This composition forms a complex network of power relations intersecting at multiple points in forming the ‘sociopolitical regimes of power’<sup>39</sup> and ‘wider, structural socio-political processes’, which operate both *on* and *through* civil society, thereby also implicating civil society in the production and perpetuation of spheres of domination within society (Hynek and Chandler 2011). Such multi-level networks are driven by vertical, ‘top-

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<sup>39</sup> In the context of peace-building ‘regimes of power’ encompass the apparatuses of government including the national government, its executive (if applicable), and regional government agents; international actors including foreign governments, international institutions and interveners, and forms of ‘global’ civil society as well as diaspora actors; ‘mid-level’ national actors such as societal ‘elites’, the military, or police and other security forces; and power relations and ‘tensions’ *within* civil society itself and amongst citizens within society.



down' power, that flows in the case of internationally-led peace-building operations, from international actors, interveners, and national government to 'mid-level' actors such as regional government agents, the military, and societal elites to citizens where power is then sub-divided further horizontally by class, caste, ethnicity, religion, gender, and wealth constructing new vertical axes of power.

*Foucaultian analyses of power within Human Security:*

To date, most analyses of human security that have adopted a Foucaultian approach have done so from the perspective of emphasising how regimes of liberal power and order operate within and through human security as policy agenda or 'tool' of Western interventionism. These writers have argued that human security has been deployed as a strategy of governmental control by Western governments and global regimes with varying opinions over the degree of intentionality or co-optation behind such deployments (Chandler 2011; Hynek and Chandler 2011; Duffield 2007, 2001). According to this perspective, under the guise of 'emancipation' projected through international interventions, development projects, and peace-building, human security actually reinforces the contemporary (neo)liberal order and exacerbates existing inequalities of 'global' power. This viewpoint sees human security as either having been co-opted by the liberal peace and global security agendas or, conversely, argues that current liberal peace-building practice and the 'global war on terror' fit neatly within the linkages already made by human security between poverty, failing states, and terrorism (McCormack 2011). According to these authors this has had the effect of justifying greater international intervention, or at least influence, where (neo)liberal rationales of economic and political 'liberalisation' are embedded in multi-layered regulatory instruments of global governmental control (Roberts 2011). In this sense, 'global governmentality' like other forms of governmentality, is framed as seeking to

exercise its 'global' power or reach through the regulation, control, absorption, and incorporation of 'global', as opposed to territorially-bounded, populations within a human security agenda.

There is no need, however, for Foucaultian analyses of power to be used solely in the service of studies that purport to examine how regimes of liberal power operate 'within the area of human security' as policy agenda or 'project' of liberalism (Hynek and Chandler 2011). Indeed, many such critical analyses of the operation of human security as policy agenda remain more theoretically-oriented and conceptual themselves rather than grounded in concrete empirical evaluations and impacts of instances, or cases of human (in)security. This suggests that instead of constructing discourses of human security solely as a singular modality operating in the interests of 'global' liberal governmental order, more nuanced narratives are required in order to build an understanding of the nature of human (in)securities at multiple levels of analysis . Moreover, such critical (de)constructions of human security represent a debate over where power rests and the role of power in the agendas of those seeking to use human security as a policy framework. Building a conceptual framework for Human Security, thus, necessitates placing the question of power in terms of context and distribution at the forefront of the analysis.

By employing a Foucaultian power analytics approach to Human Security, the study of how actors, events, and issues become securitised can be undertaken as a means of exploring how some are made secure by relations of ruling whilst others are securitised. Most famously securitisation has been conceived of according to Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde (1998) as an extreme version of politicisation that permits the use of extraordinary measures in the name of security (p. 25). According to Buzan et al (1998), for the securitising act to be successful, it must be accepted by the 'audience' to which it is focused. The role of securitising frameworks in relation to the ways in which power is used in this study represents a strategic or

pragmatic practice that takes account of the ‘interactionist’ elements of securitisation between speaker, audience, and context in which securitising acts take place that is highly context dependent, audience-centred, and laden with power dynamics (Balzacq 2005, p.178). Moreover, ‘acceptance’ of the securitising discourse from this viewpoint is not a pre-requisite for securitisation to occur as forced compliance and coerced acceptance are also plausible outcomes.

Thierry Balzacq (2005) asserts that securitisation as strategic or pragmatic act can be broken down into two interrelated levels, that of the agent and that of the act (pp. 178-179). The agent level pertains to (1) the position of power and the identity of the person, both personal and public, ‘doing’ security; (2) the social or cultural identity that operates as both a constraining and enabling mechanism for the securitising actor; and (3) the nature and capacity of the target audience, including any alternative and/or oppositional voices within the social grouping addressed through the securitising act (Balzacq 2005, p. 179). The level of the act, conversely, contains two aspects: (1) the ‘action-type’ that refers to the appropriate language to use in performing securitising acts within the given context and (2) the actual context itself with respect to the types of heuristic and symbolic acts that will help facilitate the kinds of responses in the audience that the securitising actor intends (Balzacq 2005, p. 170).

This perspective on securitisation enables us to take account of both the internal (security threats that depend on the speech act event and are rooted in performativity) and external (security threats, such as natural disasters, that exist outside of linguistic identification as well as the wider discursive setting from which the securitising actor and speech act gain their power) contexts in which securitisation take place. In addition, it considers the influence of the psycho-cultural orientation of the audience and the differential levels of power between speaker (actor) and listener (subject) (Balzacq 2005, p. 174). According to Holger Stritzel (2007) this involves

‘embedding securitisation’ in shared meanings, power, and reflexivity between agents and structures in which agents act within a particularised structural context that constitutes them and produces enabling and constraining conditions. Correspondingly, structures also need agents to translate their characteristics into dynamics of action, change, or continuity in the first place (p. 368). This study takes account of both agents and structures within the ‘agent-structure problem’ in order to develop a more nuanced understanding of the trajectories and functioning of post-war power relations in Sri Lanka.

*Conceptualising Agency and Empowerment:*

For Foucault, ‘it would not be possible for power relations to exist without points of insubordination which, by definition, are means of escape’ (Foucault, 1982, p. 225 in Brighenti 2010, p. 100). Power and struggle, thus, constitute a ‘permanent limit’ and ‘point of possible reversal’ to one another. This is because power is relational, although power is omnipresent it is not omnipotent, it is not one directional, there are always potential spaces for confrontation and resistance (Brighenti 2010; Foucault 1977).

All relationships, discourses, and interactions are, therefore, constituted by power relations but vitally produce and alter relations of power (Grayson 2011). As Suvi Alt (2011) asserts, from a Foucaultian approach the political agency of those experiencing human (in)security must be foregrounded in the analysis. Important questions that this study addresses in seeking to understand the power dynamics and politics of peace-building within victor’s peace Sri Lanka from the ‘top-down’, therefore, become: (1) What technologies of power are adopted to shape human conduct, in what ways are they intended to influence such conduct, for what purposes and with what outcomes? Equally important, though, from the ‘bottom-up’ perspective are (2) the ways in which actors seek to exercise agency, navigate and manoeuvre within these

power relations as a means of altering and transforming them, for what purposes and with what outcomes?

In seeking to grapple with these questions, rather than advancing an ‘emancipatory’ notion of Human Security *per se*, this study adopts a view of Human Security that emphasises strategic practices in exercising agency and empowerment aimed at lessening the conditions in which oppressive power structures rule over human life (Shani 2011, p. 60). In particular, this includes the responses of local actors that range from the adoption and adaptation of ‘external’ practices and values to forms of resistances and social mobilisation (Hynek and Chandler 2011). This approach to Human Security ‘eschews emancipatory ideals’ in favour of developing deeper understandings of the ‘manoeuvring’ of actors within dynamics of (in)security as a means of resisting and strategically engaging with regimes of power within peace-building (Hynek and Chandler 2011; Shani 2011). Human Security recognises the agency and empowerment potential of local actors at the same time as it recognises that not all local actions necessarily lead to greater empowerment and enhanced security. This helps to explain why the responsibility for protection and delivery of human security and peace lies at multiple levels and cannot be taken for granted by any one type or level of actor.

Closely associated with agency and empowerment is the thorny issue of ownership. This principle speaks directly to the debate concerning who decides what security means and who is the primary referent of security. It also involves placing ownership over peace-building processes in the hands of the populations experiencing human insecurity first-hand. It is imperative here to differentiate between ownership and participation as participatory consultations and stakeholder engagements may be carried out only to be ignored at a later date if they do not meet the expectations or reinforce the doctrine of those undertaking the

consultations (Roberts 2010, p. 136). In this context Human Security enables critique of dominant peace and security discourses with respect to their (in)ability to foster ownership or respect traditions, culture, expectations, and belief systems within a 'top-down' framework. This includes critical deconstruction of some hybrid peace-building theories for their assumption that elements or institutions of hybrid peace will be integrated or accepted on more than a cursory or strategic level. Although hybrid peace governance has begun to recognise some of these complications, the question of what process or framework might be adopted to develop deeper understandings of the complexities of such governance models remains unanswered indicating an area where Human Security could be exceptionally valuable in eliciting such insights.

The empowerment aspect of ownership derives from a focus not only on consultation and control but also on the empowerment and/or enabling of populations to exercise their agency within peace-building discourses and operations. Empowerment is, therefore, not an externally driven version of 'Western empowerment' imposed from above, but a locally-owned process that reflects the beliefs and values of those who live and experience insecurity societally. This also implies that individuals and communities ought to be empowered so as to negotiate and develop a vision of human security that is tailored to their needs and is focused on building the capacity and the necessary tools to enable them to do so. As Richmond (2007) asserts 'this, by necessity, focuses on a broad notion of human security and on its external providers, but is aimed at local agency as its ultimate expression' (p. 461). Human Security, thus, promotes a vision of empowerment that explicitly engages with the 'freedom' to lessen the hegemonic asymmetries of power that operate over one's life. These 'freedoms' are not only from those who would threaten peace and security from within, but also externally from those who would intervene in conflict to

achieve their own ends with a ‘we must help them’ attitude relegating local populations as the ‘objects of change’ rather than agents of their own change (Roberts 2010, p. 136).

Empowerment in this sense is achieved through the interaction of agency, resources, and achievements, where agency reflects how choices are made and put into effect, resources are the medium through which agency is exercised, and achievements are based on evaluations of the outcomes of agency (Moussa 2008, p. 94). Concerning the relationship of civil society to peace-building, it is also related to the power of civil society actors to choose how and where to participate and/or resist peace processes and the capacity to act on these choices safely and securely. As a ‘fundamental component of human security’ empowerment ‘brings a variety of practical issues to the individual level. Whereas rights provide the moral foundation for action, empowerment implies the ability to act upon rights’ (Burgess 2009, p. 59). At the ‘grass-roots’ it articulates the ability of these actors to participate in decisions that impact their peace and security based on notions of what this means in the ‘everyday’, in their homes and communities, to have access to or be deprived opportunities and resources to exercise agency, and to have the power to exert control over their own lives.

## **2.5 Conclusion:**

This Chapter has presented an alternative framework for conceptualising the experiences and perspectives concerning peace and (in)security within victor’s peace Sri Lanka, the strategic practices adopted by civil society, and the ways in which power dynamics and relations of ruling influence their ability to exercise agency in the context of victor’s peace Sri Lanka. Particularly, given the transnational realities and interconnections between diverse human (in)securities, this Chapter has argued that the development of frameworks that take account of multidimensional approaches to conceiving of civil society-peace-building are increasingly relevant. The analytical

framework presented concerning the utility of Human Security identifies and calls attention to human (in)securities that are at the ‘vital core’ of human well-being but importantly puts local actors at the centre in determining what ‘counts’ as (in)security. This includes those perspectives that are overlooked or purposefully subjugated by dominant discourses. Human Security considers both factors that make people feel (in)secure and the practices adopted as a means of enhancing peace and security for themselves and their communities. It necessitates moving beyond the confines of institutional approaches to peace and security and taking seriously the voices of those experiencing and working in instances of (in)security, highlighting the importance of imagining new political, social, and economic landscapes through the perspectives of these actors. Human Security postulates that to truly understand human (in)security, one must come to comprehend the needs, perspectives, interests, and histories of those experiencing it.

Furthermore, it calls on us to critically (re)consider how certain views and opinions get mobilised whilst others do not. It is necessary and important to continue to ‘un-pack’ the implicit and explicit assumptions and power relations that are embedded within discourses on peace, security, and development (including how they are studied). This study argues that Human Security as conceptual ‘tool’ can be effective in developing robust and in-depth analyses of what is occurring in peace- and state-building practice and post-war reconstruction with the intent of better understanding ‘(in)security from below’ (Luckham 2009). This perspective offers a potential way forward with respect to re-imagining Human Security as analytic framework, locating its utility not as an agenda that validates external intervention based on a ‘responsibility’ or ‘right’ to intervene on behalf of those made insecure, but rather as a framework for uncovering and exposing dynamics driving (in)security at multiple levels. This necessitates consideration of not only vertical (top-down) but also horizontal and ascending (bottom-up)



networks and technologies of power that are activated and acted upon in an attempt to manipulate, alter, maintain but also resist socio-political structures.

From this perspective, Human Security can add value to understandings of the politics of peace-building by rooting analyses in empirical investigations of the experiences and perceptions of (in)security that are human-centred and focused on the political, social, and economic structures and agents that give rise to them. This represents the space(s) where diverse relations and regimes of power meet and are mediated within the complex interplay of externally-imposed peace paradigms, state policies (and politics), and/or 'elite' and 'grass-roots' discourses. Drawing on Foucaultian conceptions of power and framing these concepts within the context of human (in)security enables one to unpack the diverse ways in which peace and security discourses get taken up and reworked at multiple levels of governance to (re)produce and (re)constitute subjects within peace- and state-building discourses and practice.

Consequently, one of the aims of Human Security is to destabilise the logics we draw on to make sense of conflict, intervention, and post-conflict peace-building by uncovering the contradictions, contestations, underlying motivations, and hidden interests underlying these practices and policies at all levels. Undertaking empirical inquiry can enable the relationships between civil society-peace-building to be explored and deeper understandings of the nature of these relationships, including the ways in which their strategic practices get taken up and interpreted, to be delineated. This can provide insights into how civil society navigates and manoeuvres within conflict in attempting to realise peace-building goals and their motivations for undertaking such actions. It involves asking what civil society, security, and peace mean and look like to these actors and exploring how these become politicised, absorbed, and informed by the agendas of peace-building agents, both domestic and foreign, and to what ends, including

how this complicates our conceptions of civil society. The development of the conceptual approach to Human Security elaborated throughout this Chapter has paved the way for this, but empirical investigations and cross-comparative evaluations are also required to begin to apply Human Security and ‘test’ the depth of its insights and assertions. The next Chapter undertakes a literature review of civil society, and specifically civil society in relation to peace-building, framing the analysis around issues and themes that have arisen around Human Security as conceptual paradigm, and deconstructing civil society historically and within contemporary debates and perspectives before introducing the case of victor’s peace Sri Lanka in Chapter 4 that becomes the focus of the subsequent empirical chapters of the thesis.

## Chapter 3 – Re-conceptualising Civil Society in Diverse Political and Cultural Contexts

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### 3.1 Introduction:

The concept of ‘civil society’ originated in early modernity in Western Europe, becoming a central feature in the works of prominent political theorists associated with Enlightenment before falling out of ‘fashion’ until its revitalisation in the revolutionary discourses of Eastern Europe and Latin America in the 1970-1980s. Interest in civil society grew in the 1990s as Political Science, International Relations and Global Governance discourses were extended to take account of the proliferation of civil society associations with significant attention devoted toward considering civil society’s roles and influence in helping to build peace in regions beset by conflict (Paffenholz 2010; van Leeuwen 2009; Edwards 2009; Glasius, Lewis and Seckinelgin 2004; Kaldor 2003; Clark 2003; Lister 2003; Florini 2000; Salamon, Anheier and Associates 1999; Keck and Sikkink 1998). This newfound enthusiasm was short-lived, however, as in recent years there has been a ‘backlash’ against civil society, characterised by growing disillusionment with its supposed ‘positive’ characteristics and in the aftermath of 9/11 civil society has been subject to forms of ‘securitisation’ that have restricted the spaces available for civil society organising and its access to resources (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010; Howell et al 2008; Glasius, Lewis and Seckinelgin 2004).

Despite the diverse ways in which civil society is comprehended and the variety of forms that it has adopted within different political and cultural contexts, there have been several dominant ‘trends’ in civil society scholarship. These include: (1) recognition of the assumed potentiality of civil society; (2) that civil society is institutionally separate from the state and market, though these boundaries may be blurred; (3) the growing tendency of civil society to work with non-traditional partners; (4) a rise in questioning of its supposed advantages; and (5)

the increasing ‘globality’ of civil society (Spurk 2010; Glasius, Lewis and Seckinelgin 2004; Clark 2003; Lister 2003; Kaldor 2003; Florini 2000; Salamon, Anheier and Associates 1999; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Proponents of civil society, particularly with respect to its roles in peace-building, argue that civil society possesses ‘comparative advantage’ and is uniquely positioned to engage in peace-building activities, access different levels of society, encourage widespread participation, and build trust, support, and even lead reconciliation and reconstruction efforts (Paffenholz 2010; van Leeuwen 2009; Edwards 2009; Clark 2003; Lister 2003; Lederach 1997). In part these perceived advantages are due to unique organisational characteristics that civil society is believed to possess that separates its members from the market and state. The assumed linkage of civil society-peace-building to liberal peace discourses, however, raises questions concerning (1) the degree of legitimacy attributed to civil society in conflict societies and (2) ‘global governmentality’ in which civil society’s peace-building activities are managed and shaped by liberal peace-builders toward particularised ends that attempt to regulate civil society in a variety of socio-political contexts.

This chapter takes stock of the literature that has been produced on civil society framing this analysis through the lens of Human Security to explore the politics and power dynamics surrounding the ways in which civil society has been taken up and translated within different geopolitical landscapes with a view to developing deeper insights into civil society and its relationship to peace-building. This includes asymmetries of power that civil society faces from North/South, state/society, and ‘global’/‘local’/‘grass-roots’ politics as well as questions pertaining to legitimacy, accountability, and representation in engaging in peace-building. The Chapter is not intended to provide definitive answers or solutions to challenges associated with defining civil society and civil society-peace-building. Instead, in utilising Human Security

particular kinds of questions are asked about civil society-peace-building and the analysis is refined and framed around a number of important issues toward the development of reflective inquiry and re-conceptualising civil society-peace-building in multiple localities. These include: (1) developing simultaneously ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ accounts of the politics of civil society-peace-building and influence of actors at multiple levels of analysis; (2) the relationship between civil society and wider (often politicised) objectives of socio-political change within peace-building; (3) whether civil society is a part of the ‘Western’ projection of liberal peace or possesses a more emancipatory, organic potential; (4) how to contextualise and yet account for civil society as a sector across different localities and cultures; (5) the utility in speaking of a ‘global’ civil society and debates surrounding whether ‘global civil society’ simply masks power imbalances, inequalities, and mechanisms of governmentality at work within the ‘sector’; and (5) questions of securitisation relating to barriers of political engagement at ‘local’ and ‘global’ levels.

### **3.2 Theorising Civil Society: Dominant Discourses and Historical Roots:**

In considering how civil society has been taken up in various contexts, particularly with respect to conceptualising civil society-peace-building, it is perhaps most pertinent to return to the historical ‘roots’ of the concept to trace the evolution of dominant discourses that have been used to define it. Civil society is neither a new term nor new phenomenon, with its first known reference dating back to the Roman Empire that contrasted the *societas civilis* with natural society (that of animals) and used the term to refer to the rational, law-governed society of humans (Banerjee 2009, p. 153; Parekh 2004, p. 15). Western European scholars began to articulate the concept in earnest in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century as an expression of Enlightenment (Parekh 2004, pp. 15-16). Despite the fact that civil society is now widely applied in a variety of locales

around the globe, there remains no single normatively agreed-to definition of whom and what constitutes civil society (Spurk 2010, p. 3). Rather, it remains the subject of significant debate and a point of contestation.

Early on civil society was conceived of as synonymous with the state. ‘Civil’ was thought to be the opposite of the state of nature and ‘uncivilised’ forms of political organisation such as despotism and authoritarianism (Spurk 2010, p. 4). For political thinkers including Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Hugo Grotius, and Charles de Montesquieu humans could not flourish in the unregulated state of nature without the existence of an ordered society that would help assure them the freedoms to pursue their self-determined purposes (Parekh 2004, p. 15). Here ‘civilized’ society was not considered separate from the state, rather it was seen to properly constitute it by virtue of its emphasis on forming a single society that represented a consensually-based public authority sharing in the practice of ‘civility’ within the confines of the law (Parekh 2004, p. 16). In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, however, a shift occurred in theorising civil society introduced by thinkers of the Scottish Enlightenment, notably Adam Ferguson and Thomas Paine, who began to conceive of civil society as ‘differentiated’ from the state, endowing civil society with its own set of values and principles (Spurk 2010, p. 4; Banerjee 2009, p. 153; Lewis 2002, p. 570). Thus, civil society came to be theorised not only in relation to the state but also in opposition to it, with civil society acting as a limit on state power.

It was G.W. Friedrich Hegel who extended this ‘differentiation’, asserting that civil society represented an intermediating realm positioned between the state and family, with civil society constituting the product of economic relationships within modern capitalist society (Spurk 2010, p. 4; Kaldor 2004, p. 192; Lewis 2002, p. 579). For Hegel, civil society was potentially unstable based on unequal distributions in wealth and aptitude which could result in

the establishment of a 'rabble' characterised by discontent and conflict (Parekh 2004, p. 17). Like Hegel, Karl Marx asserted that civil society was unique to modern bourgeois society and that it referred to the 'whole communal and industrial life of a given stage' (Marx and Engels 1973 in Parekh 2004, p. 17). Marx extended the notion of the inherent instability of civil society arguing that it constituted a perpetual state of conflict between the organised classes in which civil society represented the foundation for capitalist domination by the state and bourgeoisie (Spurk 2010, p. 5). In Marx's view this conflict would continue until the relationship between civil society as the 'base' of productive and social relations for the state was radically reconfigured with the abolition of the classes, reclaiming of power by the people, and implementation of a planned economy (Parekh 2004, p. 18).

Within Marxism, it was Antonio Gramsci who took up theorising on civil society. Unlike Marx, Gramsci saw civil society not so much as constituting solely material relations but also cultural and political ones that in turn shaped the values of its members and through problem-solving aided the survival of capitalist hegemony (Parekh 2004, p. 18). Gramsci drew a distinction between hegemony based on consent and domination based on coercion, wherein the working classes and their intellectuals must contest coercive domination through class struggle not only in the public sphere but critically within the realm of civil society (Kaldor 2004, p. 192; Parekh 2004, pp. 18-19).

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century thinker, Alexis de Tocqueville is perhaps most associated with the development of 'liberal' civil society, viewing voluntary associations as its foundation and 'schools' of democracy in which democratic thinking, attitudes, and values could be fostered (Spurk 2010, p. 5). According to de Tocqueville, voluntary associations represent a balancing force to the state's monopoly over power and means to build the networks of solidarity necessary

to create a society characterised by civic virtues of tolerance and trust, later associated with ‘social capital’ (Spurk 2010, p. 5; Parekh 2004, p. 19; Putnam 2000, pp. 19-26).

Drawing from its Western European foundations, the contours of civil society have been moulded in particular ways emphasising certain political, social, and cultural attributes and histories, whilst marginalising others. This includes emphasis on associative freedom, separation of civil society from the state, market, and family, and a focus on secularism and related Enlightenment values of rationality, individual rights, and morality. These dominant ‘roots’ raise questions regarding the universal applicability of civil society to non-Western societies. For example, some societies place limitations on associative freedoms, whilst others are deeply religious, and/or highly reliant on associations based on kinship, ethnicity, or caste. How are these characteristics to be conceptualised within a ‘Western’ continuum of civil society. These considerations are dealt with in the section *Western versus. Non-Western Conceptions of Civil Society* below. First, however, the revival of interest in civil society that has occurred in recent decades is explored.

### **3.3 Positioning Civil Society in Late Modernity<sup>40</sup>: Classification and Contextualisation:**

In the 1980s civil society underwent a revitalisation such that civil society has come to be viewed as a ‘sector’ (often referred to as the third sector) or ‘sphere’ in its own right (Spurk 2010, pp. 6-7; Kiely 2005, p. 198). Since then, civil society has acquired increased attention in scholarly and policy-oriented discourses with respect to its potential to influence frameworks of global governance, peace-building, and development (Spurk 2010; Paffenholz 2010; van Leeuwen 2009; Clark 2003; Kaldor 2003; Lewis 2002). Scholars have taken steps to ‘open up’

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<sup>40</sup> Late modernity, as opposed to post-modernity, has been chosen to refer to the current era or condition of society recognising that specific changes, largely associated with globalisation processes, mark the current era but that these do not represent a new ‘post-modernity’, but rather an extension of the same forces that shaped modernity – only de-traditionalised, accelerated, and radicalised (See for example Giddens 1991).



civil society discourses to recognise greater plurality and develop deeper understandings of the actors and functions constituting civil society.

This ‘revitalisation’ is often associated with social movement activism that played roles in the revolutions ‘from-below’ in Eastern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s-1980s (Parekh 2004, p. 20; Kaldor 2004, p. 193). These revolutions brought into consideration the broader processes *and* politics of globalisation, democratisation, privatisation, migration, and civil conflict that led to complex and multifaceted relationships between state-society and global-national-local actors and institutions (Glasius, Lewis and Seckinelgin 2004, p. 8). The 1990s saw the growth of NGOs, especially INGOs, social movements associated with the ‘New Left’, and transnational networks seeking to bring attention to international issues such as landmines, blood diamonds, abject poverty, and human rights violations (Spurk 2010, p. 15). This coincided with a rise in the notion of ‘global civil society’<sup>41</sup> (Kaldor 2003) and a corresponding association of civil society with democratisation, good governance, humanitarian assistance, and peace-building (Spurk 2010; Paffenholz 2010; van Leeuwen 2009).

Jürgen Habermas is one of the most influential thinkers in articulating the notion that civil society contains the means to improve democratic governance and encourage open debate on public policy and society through the ‘public sphere’. Habermas developed civil society through his theory of ‘communicative action’ that asserts that the legitimacy and consensus of political systems are based on the spaces for communicative dialogue amongst the public on matters of mutual concern that represents the basis of a civil society (Spurk 2010, p. 6; Fleming 2000, p. 1). From this perspective civil society is seen as a necessary ‘bulwark’ against the regulating powers of state and market (Fleming 2000, p. 1). Habermas believed that the

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<sup>41</sup> It should be noted that the concept of global civil society has been the subject of intense debate within civil society discourses. These debates are discussed in greater detail in the section Global Civil Society Dynamics and the Politics of North-South Relations later in this Chapter.

articulation of public interests could not be left solely to political parties and that it was necessary for these actors to obtain public opinion beyond established power structures (Spurk 2010, p. 6). However, Habermas remains largely silent on the issues of unequal access and ability to make interests heard within the public sphere bringing up the necessity of including an analysis of power dynamics within investigations into civil society.

Accompanying this assertion debates have arisen concerning who is (or ought to be) 'included' and 'excluded' within civil society. In recent years there has been an explosion of organisations, associations, and actors that have been grouped together under the rubric 'civil society'. Though the specific organisational entities that are included varies, the broad array of actors that have been incorporated into civil society have included sports teams, neighbourhood and community groups, cooperatives, churches, indigenous peoples, environmental, and women's organisations, academic centres, unions, (I)NGOs<sup>42</sup>, mass public protests, and social movements (Paffenholz 2010; Cortright et al 2008; Kaldor 2003; Clark 2003; Lister 2003; Florini 2000; Salamon, Anheier and Associates 1999; Keck and Sikkink 1998). Further complicating matters, civil society may or may not have legal recognition and less tangible institutions such as a tradition of free speech or voluntarism on which many understandings of civil society are based may not exist (Clark 2003, p. 93). Similarly, political parties have generally been excluded from civil society on the basis that they belong to the 'political sphere', but the status of political associations or groups with known political affiliations remains less clear (Paffenholz 2010; Spurk 2010).

The relationship of the media and social media to civil society has also become an area of debate with respect to defining the boundaries of civil society. This issue has become particularly

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<sup>42</sup> (I)NGO denotes both international non-governmental organisations and/or local non-governmental organisations that may or may not be affiliated with INGOs.

acute in light of the so-called ‘social media uprisings’ associated with the ‘Arab Spring’ and the hand that social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter have played as enabling platforms for these mobilisations. Some authors have argued for the inclusion of new ‘dot-cause’ organisational forms – that is web-mediated associations to promote specific interests (Clark 2003, p. 93), whilst others assert that the media usually does not belong to civil society as mass media comprises professional associations not voluntary ones, thereby, ‘belonging’ to the economic sphere (Spurk 2010, p. 8). However, this fails to account of the masses of mostly youth that use social media to post, promote, record, organise, and ‘blog’ information and ideas, necessitating consideration of where and how to draw boundaries around the linkages between civil society and social media.

Equally contentious is the issue of how to relate non-state actors that may engage in violence, commonly identified as ‘uncivil’ society, to ‘civil’ society. Mary Kaldor (2003) has identified a ‘post-modern’ version of civil society that includes ‘nationalists and fundamentalists’ and ‘other territorially bounded institutions’ based on the ‘type of society prevalent during certain periods’ (Kaldor 2003, p. 78-108). Conversely, actor-oriented approaches define civil society along specific ‘civil’ types of behaviour, excluding ethnic/fundamentalist groups that are not transparent or that engage in behaviour deemed ‘uncivil’ (Spurk 2010, p. 20). This approach can obscure rather than reveal on-the-ground realities for civil society in many contexts around the globe as well as overlooks the fact that there may be times when violence is deployed as a means of resisting and overcoming incivility that might later serve to form the basis for the development of a civil society marked by tolerance and pluralism (Banerjee 2009, p. 156). Of course it must be recognised that the notion of civil society is subject to manipulation and can be

used as justification for violence by insurgent groups. Thus, the principle of non-violence should remain an ‘ideal’ of civil society (Banerjee 2009, p. 156).

Associations with civil society as the ‘good’ society (Edwards 2009) also tend to overlook the potentiality for civil society to act uncivilly in relation to the interaction of civil society actors with one another. As alluded to in Chapter 1 one must be careful not to ‘romanticise’ the ‘local’ as often ‘local’ practices and norms reinforce rather than transform power asymmetries within society and are exclusionary in their treatment of those traditionally less-powerful such as women, minorities, and youth (Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; van Leeuwen 2009). Particularly in instances of conflict, actors including those comprising civil society are at risk of retreating into ethnic and xenophobic enclaves that reproduce and aggravate existing tensions and social cleavages (Belloni 2012). In this sense it is imperative to be aware of exclusionary aspects of civil society where ‘civil society is not only constrained by the state, but by civil society itself’ as civil society legitimises existing inequalities and politicises certain issues and events over others (McDuie-Ra 2009, p. 23). Altruistic and homogenising conceptualisations of civil society must, therefore, be thrown out and replaced with more nuanced understandings and investigations. These should unpack civil society not only in relation to the pursuit of progressive change and exercising agency against oppressive power structures, but for how it constrains and marginalises certain actors and issues and works to uphold dominant power paradigms both within societies and through international institutions and peace-building interventions (McDuie-Ra 2009; Cox 1999). Therefore, civil society itself is simultaneously both ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ in its operation and structure.

Other definitions of civil society have been developed based on ‘classifying’ groups according to whom they serve, the means by which they achieve goals, and the ‘functions’ they

perform. These approaches see civil society less as the product of a particular historic form and more as analytical category (Spurk 2010, p. 21). A first classification is based on ‘member-serving’ organisations, such as sports clubs, labour unions, and cooperative associations (Wang 2006, p. 9). Second, ‘public-serving’ organisations include a variety of funding intermediaries and a range of educational organisations, social welfare agencies, and advocacy groups that are established to provide services for people who are not their members (Wang 2006, p. 9). Third, civil society has been classified by those organisations that seek to realise goals through engagement in dialogue with government and/or international institutions and, conversely, those that operate externally and/or aim to challenge or transform them. Whilst the former is the vehicle of firmly established associations, the second is favoured by social activists (Richter, Berking and Müller-Schmid 2006, p. 14). Recent attention has also been paid to ‘everyday’ forms of engagement that consist of routine, informal interactions including communities jointly participating in festivals as part of the fabric of civil society (Banerjee 2009, p. 154; Varshney 2003, p. 425).

Given the increasing breadth of civil society in the ‘globalising’ world of late-modernity there is a danger of reaching ‘civil society gridlock’ due to the multiplicity of claims and actors vying for a position with the potential to ‘paralyze’ social and political life (Lewis 2002, p. 576). This represents the countervailing danger of moving from a position of universalisms to one of cultural relativism if recognition of the historical specificities of different civil society actors goes so far as to negate any commonalities amongst elements of civil society across diverse contexts (Cortright et al 2008, p. 2; Blaney and Pasha 1993, p. 5). There is a need to account for differences amongst civil society and its constitutive forms that resists the temptation to organise civil society into an overtly normative, universal set of socio-political beliefs and activities but

which links 'local' realities to emerging 'global' norms (Lewis 2002, p. 584). This could involve locating the internal dynamic or principles of movements and contextualising them within historically and culturally specific narratives.

### **3.4 Civil Society in Peace-building Research:**

Despite calls for the development of better understandings of the complex political dimensions of peace processes, relatively few studies have sought to inquire in rigorous theoretical and empirical ways into the nexus between civil society and peace-building. Studies have tended to focus on:

- 1) *actor-oriented questions* (that is developing or using models that delineate the specific features of civil society and/or analyse the roles of specific civil society actors (e.g., Human Rights groups or NGOs etc.), usually within the framework of the liberal peace but also more recently within the hybrid peace-building framework) or;
- 2) *impact and effectiveness assessments* (that measure and evaluate particular civil society actors and/or their initiatives; and country-specific civil society case studies, which can fail to link back to broader questions about the nature of civil society and peace-building more broadly) (Paffenholz 2010).

Recently there have been two other interesting developments in civil society peace-building research that have shed light on civil society and peace-building, expanding the boundaries and pushing the frontiers of research in this area. The first, *functions-based approach*, was initiated by John Prendergast and Emily Plumb (2002) and involved delineating a list of peace-building tasks undertaken by civil society: supporting democratisation and human rights, encouraging collaborative community activities, indigenous mechanisms and training in conflict management, assembling peace committees, creating peace media, organising problem-

solving workshops, and addressing trauma (p. 334). A five-function model of civil society (protection, intermediation between state and citizens, participatory socialisation, community-building and integration, and communication) was also developed by Wolfgang Merkel and Hans Joachim Lauth (1998) that framed civil society as analytical category as opposed to specific historical form.

Adapting and extending Merkel and Lauth's (1998) five-function approach, Thania Paffenholz and Christoph Spurk (2010 and 2006) developed a theoretical framework facilitating comparative research and systemic analysis of the roles of civil society in peace-building. Their framework emphasises an *extended functions-based approach* consisting of seven civil society functions in political, social, and development processes (protection, monitoring, advocacy and public communication, in-group socialisation, social cohesion, intermediation and facilitation, and service delivery). Additionally, there are three other major elements – *context* (depicting each country case study in relation to socio-political, economic, cultural, regional, and global environments in which conflict and peace take place, including the status of civil society within each case), *assessment of civil society functions in peace-building* (involving understanding each function in context, assessing the relevance of functions in light of context, identifying the activities of civil society at defined phases of conflict and peace-building, and assessing the effectiveness of civil society activities in each function against clear criteria defining what constitutes the threshold for effectiveness), and *conclusions* (assessing the importance of the functions, relations between functions, causation, and drawing overall conclusions) (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, pp. 65-76).

The second research framework, though less-clearly defined as a specific research agenda, is concerned with developing empirically-based insights into the lived, everyday

practices and experiences of social actors, including civil society, in peace-building (Kaldor, Selchow, and Moore 2012; Kostovicova, Martin, and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2012; Kostovicova and Glasius 2011; van Leeuwen 2009; Jolly and Ray 2007; Pouligny 2005). This includes how these actors navigate and manoeuvre within the complexities of political, social, and economic institutions through their everyday experiences and daily interactions with these institutions. Such research adopts dialogical, agency-centred, and experientially-based approaches to research.

### **3.5 Western versus Non-Western Conceptions of Civil Society:**

Hegel was amongst the first intellectuals to claim that relations between civil society actors are not harmonious but rather inherently conflictual (Spurk 2010, p. 4). This has been reflected in the discourses concerning how to comprehend of civil society in diverse political contexts and geographic localities. The following sections represent a cross-section of current challenges and tensions for civil society related to identity and power that are brought out by a consideration of civil society and human (in)security as described in Chapter 1 and further conceptualised within the Human Security framework.

A central feature of contemporary discourses on civil society is the growing tendency to work with and recognise ‘non-traditional’ partners as segments of civil society. For example, Oxfam International ‘is committed to working with others and learning from the achievements of other movements to foster the notion of “global citizenship” and “global economic and social justice”’ (Clark 2003, p. 3). Marlies Glasius, David Lewis and Hakin Seckinelgin (2004) argue, however, that ‘place matters’ geographically, politically and socially when thinking about civil society (p. 8).



As discussed above, historically Western European perspectives have dominated conceptualisations of civil society, with non-Western actors initially overtly overlooked as ‘backward’ because they were perceived to lack a ‘civilised’ society (Parekh 2004, p. 16). Dominant discourses continue to have ‘built-in’ biases against ‘traditional’ forms of association, based on the belief that individuals should be free and self-determining, not constrained by the authority of associations that they have not chosen to be a part of and that they cannot leave at will (Banerjee 2009, p. 153; Parekh 2004, p. 21). Thus, associations based on caste, clan, tribal, ethnic and/or religious community are generally viewed unfavourably. However, do these not represent a communicative, associational space and to some extent encourage bonds of solidarity? Whilst these associations do have obvious potential drawbacks, they are often reflective of deep bonds based on shared collective memory, history, and experiences of struggle and triumph that create a sense of social obligation, mutual commitment, and provide networks of readily available support (Parekh 2004, pp. 21-22). The emphasis on Western notions of civil society has led to the marginalisation and omission of other forms of civil society as well as significant debates regarding the transferability of Western forms of civil society to the non-Western world.

In discussing the ‘contentious’ relationship between ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ civil society some scholars have pointed to the importance of the directionality – vertical or horizontal – of relations between different civil society actors. Horizontal linkages describe contacts, dialogue, and experiences that have an inspirational, positive or empowering effect, whilst vertical relations reflect unequal relationships and the imposition of particular external viewpoints, often (neo)liberal in scope, of the ‘appropriate’ vision of civil society actors (Glasius, Lewis and Seckinelgin 2004, p. 5). In his analysis of civil society in African contexts,

David Lewis (2002) proposes four plausible scenarios regarding the relevance of civil society in non-Western contexts. These are that civil society: (1) is unequivocally relevant in non-Western settings based on a universal view of the desirability of civil society as part of the project of democracy building and promotion; (2) is unequivocally *not*-relevant to non-Western settings as civil society emerged at a distinctive historical moment in Europe and can have little to no meaning across different cultural and political settings; (3) has adaptive relevance, civil society is relevant in non-Western contexts, it will take on localised, differentiated meanings, and should not be applied too rigidly; and (4) the ‘relevance’ of civil society is the wrong question as the idea of civil society, whether explicitly recognised or not, has long been implicated in colonial histories of domination and resistance, thus, adopting a broader perspective on civil society in relation to historical and cultural context is necessary (Lewis 2002, pp. 574-575).

Across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America scholars have engaged in debate concerning the meaning and utility of civil society given the different historical, political, social, and economic environments in which non-state actors have arisen. It has been argued, however, that civil society in these regions is somewhat comparable given the prevalence of authoritarianism historically and the widespread legacies associated with colonialism (Spurk 2010; Pearce 2004; Celichowski 2004). Additionally, the questions of values and identity have been raised in relation to applying Westernised concepts of civil society to non-Western contexts (Spurk 2010; Parekh 2004; Lewis 2002). One of the principal critiques of the universality of Western assumptions concerning civil society has been that the conditions upon which Western civil society is based – that is, an urban civilian infrastructure that has gained some degree of independence from the state – simply does not exist in many post-colonial settings (Spurk 2010, p. 11; Avritzer 2004, p. 53). The legacies of colonialism have been presented as one reason for

the ‘Westernisation’ of civil society across non-Western states. Colonial rule is seen to have fostered the emergence of a small urban elite civil society that has ruled over the majority of the population continuing to treat them as ‘subjects’ rather than actors in their own right (Spurk 2010, p. 11). Mahmood Mamdani (1996), for example, famously argued that (civil) society in (post)colonial settings is ruled over by the small section of urban intellectual elite to the exclusion of grass-roots actors. Similarly, the colonial state may have ‘constrained associational space so tightly’ that the institutions of civil society that have arisen become associated with ‘Westerners’ or grass-roots forms of civil society go un-counted because they do not reflect Western civil society (Lewis 2002, p. 577).

Thus, in non-Western contexts the three sector model common to the West – of state, market, and civil society – may not reflect realities on the ground where sectoral boundaries may be blurred. Additionally, normative views of civil society that subscribe idealised ‘positive’ values onto civil society may not match up with the mixture of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ institutions and affiliations in non-Western countries (Lewis 2002, p. 579). Mamdani and Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba (1995), however, have argued that many groups in Africa that are ethnic, religious and/or ‘traditional’ in nature take part in political struggles and should be included as civil society in order to reflect realities in Africa (in Spurk 2010, p. 13). Similarly, Amy Freedman (2009) argues any Islamic civil society organisations hold religion to be an important part of their identity and regard piety as central to understandings of tolerance practiced within civil society (p. 111). These examples highlight the complexities of excluding ‘traditional’ organisations or comprehending of civil society solely along secular lines.

Accounts of civil society have further tended to treat the concept as static and ‘a-historical’, thereby, obscuring the specificities of the construct (Blaney and Pasha 1993, p. 5).

Western norms of civil society, however, are also culturally and historically specific and, therefore, should not be promoted as reflective of universal norms that ought to dictate the development of civil society globally or can be exported from one context to the next (Parekh 2004, p. 23; Lewis 2002, p. 572; Blaney and Pasha 1993, p. 4). Thus, by embracing plurality, contextualisation, and locating the discourses of civil society in ‘new geographies’ and ‘imaginaries’, rather than fitting civil society into a ‘one-fits-all’, generalised definition, new analytical frameworks and conceptualisations can be constructed around ‘actually existing’ civil society in their political and social contexts as advocated through Human Security (Banerjee 2009, p. 154).

### **3.6 ‘Global’ Civil Society and the Politics of North-South Relations within Civil Society:**

Since the 1980s, when primarily Western-based (Northern) human rights groups began to take up international conventions, rules, and institutions as a medium through which to mobilise activism, there has been a flourishing of transnational, or ‘global’, civil society. Recently these opportunities have increased dramatically, with globalisation processes ‘opening up’ spaces for enhanced communication and transnational activism that has been made more explicit by the rapid growth in mobile technologies as sites for social networking, mobilising and information dispersal. Indeed, it has now become common for international institutions such as UN and World Trade Organisation (WTO) to regularly consult with civil society (Alger 2005, p. 8). ‘Global’ civil society has, thus, become a ‘catchphrase’ for the global civic sphere carved out as a result of the ‘cause-effect’ influences associated with the processes of globalisation most often dominated by Northern (Western) INGOs (Batliwala 2002, p. 393). Such processes have led to a questioning of the legitimacy of ‘global’ civil society to claim to represent the diversity of civil society as concerns over internal hierarchies of power and access within the sector as a whole,

including the influence of INGOs and Northern (Western)-based civil society over Southern (non-Western)-civil society, have been put forward (van Leeuwen 2009, p.6).

At the core of 'global' civil society activity is the production, exchange, and strategic use of information, intensifying the interactions between many non-state actors (Tarrow 2005; Clark 2003; Kaldor 2003; Florini 2000). Transnational networks and coalitions seek to push specific issues onto the agendas of governments and international institutions and to influence discourses in particular ways (Florini 2000, p. 212). Voices that are suppressed in their own societies may find that through transnational linkages they can create political spaces to amplify their interests, which in turn can reverberate back to their own countries (Chandler 2005, p. 158). Termed 'leverage politics', or the 'boomerang' effect, this refers to the leveraging by 'local', or domestic, groups of more powerful 'global' allies that can bring external pressure to bear on states from the outside, in order for 'weak' groups to gain influence far beyond their ability to influence states directly (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Some authors argue that underlying these new opportunities is a broader cultural shift that represents an awakened globally 'active citizenship', a growing self-organisation in which individuals can directly seek to influence the conditions in which they live that in turn reinforces the globality of civil society (Kaldor 2003, p. 8). In this sense 'global' civil society is seen to offer a way of understanding how human agency can operate within the processes of globalisation.

The notion of 'grass-roots globalisation' has recently been raised in connection to citizen-organising around the World Social Forums and in conjunction with protests held in Seattle in 1999 at the WTO's Ministerial Conference (Batliwala 2002, p. 396). The recent revolutions associated with the 'Arab Spring' could also be conceived of as representative of this notion. The idea of 'grass-roots globalisation' challenges the proposition that any category of political actor

can be treated as a static entity with limited agency in a globalised world. It should be acknowledged, however, that the majority of activities associated with ‘grass-roots globalisation’, whilst being composed of citizen-led groups, have in actuality been attended by very few of those most marginalised and excluded from globalisation processes (Batliwala 2002, p. 396). ‘Global grass-roots’ can, thus, disguise power asymmetries, barriers to access, and dominant ideologies active within civil society that limit the agency of the grass-roots who are most directly impacted by such frames of reference (Batliwala 2002, p. 397). Nevertheless, it does raise the possibility that the nature of ‘global’ or transnational has been altered with grass-roots coming to be conceived of less as a territorially-bounded category, as previously imagined, and more one that is ‘community’-organised and populated (though not necessarily physically located within the geographic boundary of a specific territory). However, one must not assume that the grass-roots necessarily speaks for the counter-hegemonic or subaltern, driven by the politics of the ‘excluded’.

The nature of civil society dynamics are, thus, intensely debated, with some viewing ‘global’ civil society as a reflection of wider globalisation processes with the potential to positively influence the architecture of global governance (Spurk 2010; Kaldor 2003; Clark 2003). Others argue that it lacks legitimacy and is dominated by Northern (Western)-based organisations (Howell et al 2008; Batiwala 2002; Johnson and Wilson 2000; Hudock 1999). Claims have been made that transnational networks are particularly good at getting what might otherwise be neglected issues onto the agendas of national governments and international institutions through advocacy and the dispersal of information to the public (Florini 2000, 211). However, which questions, whose priorities, and what interests are served by ‘global’ civil society remain subject to significant debate. It has been argued that Northern civil society, and in

particular INGOS, have failed to support the institutional development of those in the South. The nature of relationships between Northern and Southern civil society is such that Southern civil society has largely been rendered dependent on their Northern counterparts through external support, resources, and ‘expertise’ provided by Northern actors (Batliwala 2002, p. 395; Johnson and Wilson 2000, p. 1892; Hudock 1999, p. 5).

This brings into consideration notions of participation and partnership that ‘global’ civil society is assumed to embody that reflect positive norms but in practice are subject to diverse interpretation, meaning, and contestation. For example, the language of partnership in peace-building and development discourses often disguises the ‘asymmetrical’ nature of relationships between Northern and Southern civil society organisations (Johnson and Wilson 2000, p. 1891). These relationships are conditioned by power dynamics to the extent that in many transitional, developing, and post-conflict countries civil society has become equated with NGOs due to the unprecedented rise in the number of such organisations that high levels of donor funding and the support received by INGOs from Western governments has brought about (Howell et al 2008, p. 84). Moreover, ‘local’ civil society is increasingly expected to speak the language and abide by the operational ‘requirements’ of INGOs and the donor community (Mertus and Sajjad 2005, p. 123; Chandhoke 2004, p. 38). The result is increased pressure on Southern civil society to ‘conform’ to existing donor visions and NGO templates of what ‘success’ looks like.

The ‘NGOisation’ of civil society has caused disquiet amongst scholars and practitioners concerning the legitimacy of INGOs and other forms of ‘global’ civil society that claim to represent and ‘speak for’ the concerns of Southern civil society amidst accusations that they are more accountable to foreign governments and interests than to local communities and constituencies they claim to represent (Howell et al 2008, p. 84; Reimann 2005, p. 46; Batliwala

2002, p. 400). Some scholars have even gone so far as to contest the entire civil society concept because these, generally INGO, actors do not actually challenge the state 'from below' but effectively take over some state functions in areas such as service delivery and, thus, represent 'horizontal contemporaries' working within and alongside the wider institutions of national and global governmentality (Lewis 2002, p. 578). 'Global' civil society can, therefore, be seen as a 'microcosm' for the kinds of mechanisms of governmentality that characterise global policy-making (Batliwala 2002, p. 397).

This notion has led scholars to argue that civil society has been 'tamed' by the growth of INGOs with its increasing professionalization and formalisation, in addition to, increased dependence on foreign funding that subjects it to the particular will of donors (Kaldor 2003, p. 13). This has been accompanied by criticism that the increasing formalisation associated with the 'globalisation' of civil society is leading to the 'de-radicalisation' of the sector (Howell et al 2008, p. 84). There is also the reality of many grass-roots groups having to compete for 'ear-marked' project funding or to mirror the mandates and objectives of INGOs or donors to secure funding. This is reflected in the fact that many grass-roots organisations have become constrained by the necessity of designing and implementing projects that reflect donor assessments and objectives, rather than those that focus on the strengthening of their constituencies (Mertus and Sajjad 2005, p. 124). The great irony for civil society may perhaps be that despite the rhetoric of democratic dialogue, ultimately, those actors that 'lack voice' are excluded and lose out to the more powerful voices of dominant actors.

### **3.7 Securitising Civil Society in a Post-9/11 World:**

Changes to counter-terrorism legislation after 9/11 are one example of the potential dangers associated with the 'securitisation' of civil society as the activities and practices of many



actors have come into question with respect to examining the roles and functioning of civil society in ‘securing’ or ‘threatening’ ways of life (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010; Howell and Lind 2009; Duffield 2007; Sidel 2006). Bringing ‘securitisation’ discourses into civil society and peace-building raises not only a quantifiable question of more or less security, but whether these actors, and processes should be treated as security issues (at least in so much as security is traditionally defined) and if so what type of security issue do they represent (Duffield 2007, p. 3). Though not a new phenomenon, the rhetoric of the War on Terror provides new justification, and opens up possibilities, for equating non-state actors with terrorists and ‘uncivil’ society, making it more difficult to determine where groups sit along the spectrum between transnational advocacy and networks of terrorism and/or crime (Adamson 2005, p. 57). Securitisation within this context concerns itself with how civil society is acted upon in order to support (particular kinds of) collective life and how this creates and deepens divisions between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’, the developed and underdeveloped, those ‘at peace’ and those ‘in conflict’ (Duffield 2007, p. 5).

Restrictive security policies have helped to facilitate the growth of a climate of fear and suspicion toward civil society, with Islamic, grass-roots, and minority civil society, in particular, being negatively impacted by reforms and assumed to be working in the service of political and/or military insurgents or terrorists (Freedman 2009, p. 110; Howell et al 2008 p. 84). Governments have invoked the logic of 9/11 in an attempt to ‘manage’ the activities of civil society and assert the necessity of using conventional security means and methods to uphold national security, applying the terrorist label to groups that may be seeking social justice or to contest power inequalities as a means of instilling fear in populations (Sidel 2006, p. 201; Cortright et al 2008, p. 3). This threatens to close off spaces for alternative forms of dialogue

where genuine discourse might flourish (Howell et al 2008 p. 87). It also prescribes onto populations how to behave according to societally dominant norms maintained through defined parameters of ‘normalcy’ and self-disciplining the behaviours of populations that might seek to push outside these ‘normalised’ or ‘securitised’ boundaries (Lipschutz 2004, p. 201).

In securitisation power is, thus, embedded within hegemonic and/or coercive discourses and actions that construct notions of ‘normalcy’ that reproduce themselves by managing and directing civil behaviours in particular ways and regulating what counts as acceptable by making certain other behaviours illegal or punishable (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010; Lipschutz 2004). Within these securitising mechanisms there is little room for people to decide what kind of system they want as individuals and communities must fit within certain pre-prescribed ‘boxes’ in order to be assigned a ‘normalised’ position within the system (Lipschutz 2004,p. 202). Through techniques of governmentality governments provide a set of incentives to civil society actors to encourage them to submit to national laws and regulations or to adopt specific accounting and governance procedures (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010). Penalties are also placed on civil society groups that refuse or are unable to comply with these regulations and grass-roots civil society actors that do not have the capacity or resources to follow through on these are vulnerable to being denied legal status and/or face criminalisation (Cortright et al 2008, p. 5).

There is often a thin line between counter-terrorism and ‘policing’ programmes that aim to thwart terrorists, and repressive policies whose scale of actual impact can threaten negative repercussions for civil society and other non-state actors. For example, strengthened law enforcement regulations can be effective in enhancing security when they prevent would-be attackers, however, these same programme can have extremely negative impacts on other socio-

political actors when they lead to greater repression and limit conflict resolution, development, and other activities that uphold human rights and freedoms of speech (Cortright et al 2008, p. 4). These acts have culminated in restrictions on the diversity of civil society by placing emphasis on meeting regulations and technical service delivery activities at the expense of activism (Howell et al 2008 p. 88).

Governments have, thus, created a ‘governable terrain’ where community and civil society discourses are ‘hijacked’ and transformed into a government-regulated and ‘professionalised’ vocation (Taylor et al 2010, p. 148). In states characterised by long-term violence and insurgency, civil society faces pressure from both armed rebels and government, becoming ‘squeezed’ between the warring factions in attempting to undertake its work (Cortright et al 2008, p. 7). The securitisation of civil society has significant implications for the future of the sector including considerations pertaining to the prominence of counter-terrorist measures and concomitant increase in security-related, as opposed to humanitarian, responses to humanitarian crises that continue to threaten and constrict the spaces for civil society action (Howell et al 2008 p. 83).

### **3.8 Exercising Agency: Resistances and Engagement:**

On the other side of the spectrum, just as indigenous approaches to peace-building emphasising ‘local ownership’ and ‘local participation’ have become fashionable in recent years, so too is it becoming popular for peace-building literature to focus on resistances, generally in relation to the ways in which the ‘local’ can exercise agency in instances of conflict but also in peace-building, particularly as ‘localised’ responses to liberal peace interventions (Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2009). Within indigenous approaches to peace-building the notion of resistances has also emerged concerning efforts to contest the external

imposition of values and/or practices related to colonialism and/or peace interventions and to return to indigenous norms and traditions that are often romanticised and framed as ‘pure’ or ‘unpolluted’ (Mac Ginty 2011, pp. 49-52). Furthermore, hybrid approaches to peace have embraced resistances through a focus on the ability of ‘local’ actors to resist and create ‘distortions’ within peace operations as a result of their power to subvert, resist, adapt and/or renegotiate peace interventions (Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2009).

With respect to resistances and civil society, there appears to be a natural affinity between the concepts with resistances being conceived of as an ‘act *against* something: against command, against exploitation, against imperialism, against power’ and as operating ‘*from below*, or is bottom-up rather than top-down’ (Brighenti 2010, p. 95, author’s italics). Within research on social movements, for example, notions of resistance have often been guided by ‘protest behavior’ with respect to ‘interactions between protesters, their targets, and third parties such as the state and the general public’ (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, pp. 537-538). James Scott (1990) frames resistances as a form of relationship that occurs between the dominant and subordinate classes within societies. Resistances, Scott argues, are found in the ‘everyday’ assemblage of the ‘weapons of the weak’, including such behaviours as false compliance, dissimulation, looting, feigned ignorance, foot dragging, defamation, arson, or sabotage (Brighenti 2010, p. 98-99). Similarly, other forms of resistances are more overtly ‘visible’ or ‘public’, involving tactics such as verbal, written, or symbolic acts of protest against the status quo and/or attempts to inform and persuade others to adopt different viewpoints and/or support particular causes (Merriman 2009). The absence of direct confrontation does not mean that power necessarily goes unchallenged in societies emerging from violent conflict as many actors

are adept at finding ways to subvert, resist, and renegotiate asymmetries of power as a strategy of exercising agency against oppressive structures (Dudouet 2005). Additionally, actors may cooperate on some aspects of peace processes, whilst resisting others, such that all forms of resistances are not necessarily overtly ‘subversive’ (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 84). In looking for practices of resistances an important focus is on spaces beyond ‘hierarchical assemblages’, where ‘alternative’ forms of life exist or come into being that represents spaces of the excluded (Karatzogianni and Robinson 2009, p. 140).

It follows that many aspects of civil society activity are latent or ‘submerged in everyday life’ and are missed in analyses of ‘overt’ or ‘public’ social mobilisations alone (Karatzogianni and Robinson 2009, p. 159). Particularly acute in highly repressive and/or securitised societies where physical, psychological, and structural sources of violence and insecurity serve to inhibit social activism, this insight points us toward the importance of a focus on the ‘everyday’ activities of civil society actors inherent in their ‘daily’ lives and practices in challenging repression. This has led some to conclude that resistances are likely to take the form of ‘everyday’ agency and action (Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Watson 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Luckham 2009; Shinko 2008; Pouligny 2006). Michel de Certeau’s (1984) work on the everyday in relation to the ways that individuals navigate within institutions of power seeking to carve out spaces that culminate in peoples taking over ownership of these institutions so that they are contextualised within and reflect their own lives rather than structures or systems imposed upon them remains fundamental in relation to ‘everyday’ forms of resistances.

In contrast to everyday resistances, strategies of nonviolent protest and persuasion involve explicitly targeted techniques of resistance that consist of verbal, written, or symbolic acts of protest against the status quo and/or attempts to persuade people to support a movement

or ideal. Examples of protest and persuasion tactics include petitions, rallies, sending letters, distributing literature, displaying symbols, singing songs, street theatre, vigils, public statements, and the use of the internet and social media (Merriman 2009, p. 24). Protest and persuasion tactics communicate what a group or movement is for or against, but unlike everyday resistances do not generally involve shifts in people's 'day-to-day' engrained behaviours, instead seeking to mobilise support for their cause, undermine loyalties toward opponents, and attract the attention and support of third parties (Merriman 2009; Keck and Sikkink 1998). The purpose of nonviolent political struggle is to mobilise, not paralyze, oppressed and disempowered people. The choice of nonviolent methods is made out of collective conviction that only these means can ensure political change will be truly 'remedial' rather than 'temporary' and 'superficial' (Crow and Grant 2009, p. 35). Likewise, particularly in light of the 'Arab Spring' revolutions, much has been made, both in support of and from a sceptical vantage point, of the likely impacts of a variety of social media in disseminating information on social protest as well as enabling the mobilisers themselves to organise and promote their messages accelerating their organisational capacities and operations (Christensen 2011; Lynch 2011; Swenson 2011; Gladwell 2010).

One of the central issues in the literature on resistances pertains to the issue of intentionality, or consciousness, with respect to whether the individual or group carrying out the act must be aware and intending to partake in an act against something in order to 'count' as resistance (Hollander and Einwohner 2004). For his part Scott (1985) argues that intent is a strong indicator of resistance, even more so than the act's outcome, as some acts of resistance may not necessarily realise their intended impact (p. 290). The ways in which resistance is used within this study adopts this viewpoint that 'intent' or 'consciousness' is a key factor in classifying behaviour as a form of resistance.

Scott (1985) has further suggested that we can ‘reasonably infer intent from actions’ as ‘a peasant soldier who deserts the army is in effect “saying” by his act that the purposes of this institution and the risks and hardships it entails will not prevail over his family or personal needs. A harvest laborer who steals paddy from his employer is “saying” that this need for rice takes precedence over the formal property rights of his boss’ (p. 301 in Hollander and Einwohner 2004, pp. 542-543). Indeed this is similar to the common practice in interest-based mediation of a mediator seeking to infer the underlying interests and needs of those engaged in inter-personal conflict based on deciphering intentionality and meaning behind both their actions and perspectives expressed concerning the issue in conflict (Chicanot and Sloan 2003). Thus, both actions and perspectives, or expressed motivations and feelings, are considered important in inferring intentionality within acts of resistance.

Engagement is widely accepted as a vital tool in peace-building, aimed at boosting the accountability of governments, strengthening public policy decisions, and increasing the effectiveness of peace-building and development (Papagianni 2010, p. 244; Paffenholz and Spurk 2006, p.1). For example, engagement with democratic attitudes is often seen to contribute to socialisation, social capital, and the fostering of an active citizenship toward a culture of peace (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010; Putnam 2000). Likewise, in order to (re)build trust in societies emerging from violent conflict active civic engagement aimed at social cohesion by facilitating ‘bridging ties’ across previously warring groups is considered vital (Paffenholz and Spurk; Putnam 2000). Engagement efforts can fail, however, when these become too ‘commercialised’, actors are disconnected from the people(s) they seek to involve and/or represent, not all relevant parties have been brought to the table, and/or the various sides are too wedded to their positions to partake in a genuine effort to connect with one another (Orjuela 2008; Paffenholz and Spurk

2006). Engagement can also represent liberal forms of governmentality when regulatory and administrative mechanisms associated with peace-building interventions seek to produce forms of civic action that are most conducive to instrumentalising aspects of the liberal peace, but which tend to reduce civil society to a generalizable and idealised ‘image’ of ‘non-partisan’, ‘a-political’ NGOs (van Leeuwen 2009, p.41). Moreover, engagement, whether civic or in relation to peace processes or development schemes, may not be ‘cross-communal’ nor facilitate in building and/or strengthening inter-group bonds (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 187).

The notion of ‘leverage politics’ and corresponding ‘boomerang effect’ (Keck and Sikkink 1998) represent another form of engagement well documented in the literature as one strategy available to domestic groups to target more ‘powerful’ international actors and bring about policy changes domestically. This strategy of establishing advocacy and information-based networks with transnational actors can be particularly effective in shifting power dynamics in cases where repressive governments or regimes have attempted to isolate civil society using intimidation tactics, taking control over state media, and ‘clamping down’ on civil liberties. This can be achieved through the exercise of both material leverage (tying military or economic aid and continued diplomatic relations to policy changes) and moral leverage (holding the behaviour of the domestic actor up to international scrutiny as a means of enticing them to alter policies) (Keck and Sikkink 1998, p. 23-24).

### **3.9 Conclusion:**

The purpose of this Chapter has been to address issues, debates, and central concepts found in the literature on civil society-peace-building. A range of literature has been surveyed with a view to directing a critical eye toward interrogating both the ways that civil society is taken up in practice and the historical foundations or ‘roots’ governing how it is theorised. By



considering some of the key facets of the Human Security approach introduced in Chapter 2, the analysis has called attention to a range of perspectives that currently exist in the field that helps make clear challenges inherent in attempting to arrive at a definitive conceptualisation of the actors and practices encompassed by civil society-peace-building. This Chapter has argued that far from assuming that civil society is inherently democratic, altruistic, and/or equitable, it is multifaceted, diverse, and ‘plural’, often subject to inconsistencies, inequalities, and contestation.

Given the complexity of relationships and diversity of activities and actors that are referred to collectively as *civil society*, how can deeper understandings of the plurality of the structures, purposes, and motivations of these actors be developed whilst still comprehending of them as retaining some sense of cohesive and common identity? In its most elemental form the question remains what does it mean to be a part of civil society. As this Chapter has asserted, civil society cannot be conceived of as static, frozen in particular forms that replicate themselves throughout the world. Rather, it must be understood in relation to the political, historical, cultural, ethnic, and religious contexts in which its ‘members’ exist.

At the same time, civil society must be considered as expressing some commonalities in terms of the values that underlie its members and the boundaries that define its contours (although in practice these boundaries may be somewhat blurred), even if the ways in which these values get enacted and boundaries drawn do not mirror one another exactly in practice. Otherwise civil society becomes a hollow ‘catch-all’ term that can potentially be imported onto any organisational entity to serve its interests, ultimately robbing civil society of its potential as analytical category subject to rigorous analysis and investigation.

Normatively speaking, civil society ought to be characterised by discourses that are counter-hegemonic, which allow for and facilitate plurality of thought and respectful opposition

and debate. They should be driven by politics and interests common to its particular ‘community’ and be populated by that ‘community’ (though not necessarily physically located within the boundaries of a tangible geographic community such as village or neighbourhood). In practice of course no organisation perfectly reflects the characteristics it is defined by and ought to be held accountable to perfectly all of the time. There are inter-connections and overlap between institutions, roles, and activities and these continually evolve, sometimes adopting violent means and/or merging into hybrid institutional types that become difficult to categorise or classify. As a sphere or arena it should, thus, be recognised that civil society actors may compete for influence and reflect or reinforce the interlocking power structures and inequalities that exist in the societies in which they operate.

This calls on us to contextualise inquiries into civil society exploring, as delineated in this Chapter’s literature review, the central features that characterise articulations of civil society across the globe, civil society’s roles and experiences within different instances and manifestations of peace and (in)security, and power dynamics and asymmetries both external and internal to the sector itself. These relate to the historically Western roots of the concept, debates over who and what ‘counts’ as civil society, and how civil society has been investigated in peace-building research. Furthermore, there is need to investigate how modalities of power intersect and connect to one another, constraining, yet also enabling the exercising of agency. This involves not only government that seeks to assert its political sovereignty and international institutions and/or INGOs that attempt, through ‘managing’ peace-building, to establish ‘expert’ sovereignty, but also those who claim to speak on behalf of civil society, particularly tensions between Western/non-Western conceptions of civil society and politics of global civil society and North/South relations. Thus, it is necessary to explore external (vertical) and internal

(horizontal) power dynamics impacting simultaneously on the sector. This includes consideration of who exercises power, how it is exercised, who benefits, and in what ways actors seek to transform socio-political structures to enable (or prevent) wider participation of a diversity of actors. In conclusion, it is imperative for research into civil society-peace-building to assert the value of contextualised, multilateral, and ‘everyday’ approaches to the study of civil society in areas emerging from violent conflict. It is vital to explore the ways in which civil society contributes *and* impedes the realisation of greater peace and (human) security as well as possibilities to enrich discourses that seek to conceptualise civil society in diverse political and cultural contexts. The forthcoming Chapters now turn to the empirical components of the thesis adopting the Human Security framework and taking account of issues raised throughout this Chapter to explore the politics and dynamics surrounding victor’s peace and nexus between civil-society-peace-building in victor’s peace Sri Lanka.

## Chapter 4 – Sri Lanka: Anatomy of an Ethnic Civil Conflict & Victor's Peace

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*'The absence of war doesn't [mean] peace' (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna)*

### 4.1 Introduction:

On 18 May 2009 the GOSL declared victory over the LTTE whom they had been at war with since 1983. The last military offensive was characterised by heavy violence and accusations of numerous human rights abuses carried out by both sides, including the shelling of civilian areas, using civilians as 'human shields', and blocking food and medicine for people trapped inside the conflict zone (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 5; Francis 2010). Despite the end of the war, the contemporary period remains far from having reached a sustainable and peaceful resolution. Post-war resettlement and reconstruction are mired in controversy, the voices of victims have been silenced by fear and insecurity, a humanitarian crisis prevails disproportionately impacting those in the North and East, and human rights and land issues continue to ignite tensions across the country.

This Chapter provides a historical and contemporary analysis of structural factors and agents that have shaped both the Sri Lankan conflict and contemporary victor's peace<sup>43</sup>. This Chapter argues that although the war is 'officially' over, Sri Lanka remains a case of significant importance with respect to insights to be gleaned concerning the:

- (1) complexities of protracted instances of ethnically motivated armed violence and the human (in)securities this engenders;
- (2) interface between global-national/local, grass-roots, state-civil society dynamics with respect to contemporary peace and security discourses and practice, and wider

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<sup>43</sup> For a historical introduction and background profile on Sri Lanka see Appendix E: A Historical Introduction.

geopolitical context involving the influence of ‘rising’ powers such as China and India in shaping the ‘global governance’ landscape; and

(3) contested spaces in which non-state and civil society actors’ manoeuvre in attempting to influence peace and security within conflict, disaster response, and victor’s peace.

The Chapter begins with an overview of the characteristics of the ethno-nationalist conflict including the politics of identity and the ways in which the label of ‘terrorism’ in relation to the LTTE influenced both the trajectories of the conflict and connected it to broader ‘global’ security discourses. The Chapter then explores the final attempt at negotiating an end to the conflict led by the Norwegian government, involving the participation of a range of international actors, donors, and civil society as representative of a failed attempt at liberal peace-building. The response of the international community to the tsunami that hit Sri Lanka on 26 December 2004 is also examined as a, though largely unsuccessful, attempt to implement a liberal development and reconstruction programme in Sri Lanka. Similarly, the breakdown of the peace talks and return to war represents the failure of the liberal peace to end the conflict, with the war terminating instead through military means signalling the wider emergence of ‘hard’ security practices in order to institutionalise and consolidate ‘peace’ by ‘defeating terrorism’, thereby calling attention to the human security costs of the victor’s peace. In this sense, Sri Lanka can be argued to be ‘caught between’ elements of the liberal and victor’s peace agendas that continue to seek to shape the trajectories of the post-war environment, often in highly divergent ways (Stokke and Uyangoda 2011; Goodhand et al 2010; Orjuela 2010b). In the last section, consideration is directed toward geopolitical forces including regional and transnational influences such as India, China, and the Sri Lankan, and particularly Tamil, diaspora on social, political, and economic affairs in Sri Lanka.

## 4.2 The Anatomy of an Ethnic Civil Conflict:

Ethnic tensions between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils<sup>44</sup> date back to British colonial rule as Tamils were thought to be favoured by colonial administrators with some arguing that tensions were ‘consciously promoted’ (Lakshman and Tisdell 2002, p. 23). Under British rule the Sri Lankan Tamils achieved educational and civil service predominance through Britain’s ‘divide and conquer’ strategy that facilitated ethnic divisiveness in Sri Lanka conducive to maintaining a colonial administration (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010)<sup>45</sup>. This strategy, however, also had the effect of further polarising ethnic identities.

Ironically, another legacy of colonialism was to establish Colombo-centric political and economic systems that largely ignored rural and often dominantly Tamil-populated areas in favour of Colombo and its nearby plantations (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010). The physical resources of the Tamils, therefore, fell largely outside of the central economic interests of the ruling colonial power despite the prevalence of Tamils in public sector positions. These factors helped lay the groundwork for post-independence Sinhalese domination over the political and economic infrastructure of Sri Lanka through the government’s pursuit of anti-Tamil policies and claims that the Tamils had been favoured during British colonial rule.

After independence the Tamils found themselves living in a Sinhalese-dominated state where they were increasingly discriminated against through anti-Tamil policies of

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<sup>44</sup> The Sinhalese represent Sri Lanka’s dominant ethnic group composed of 73.8% of the population, 7.2% are Sri Lankan Moors, 4.6% Indian Tamil, and 3.9% Sri Lankan Tamil. Buddhism is the dominant religion (69.1%) and Sinhala the official and most widely used language (74%), followed by Tamil (18%), Muslim (7.6%), Hindu (7.1%) and Christianity (6.2%) with English spoken by about 10% of the population (The CIA World Factbook - Sri Lanka Country Profile 2010).

<sup>45</sup> Based on the Colebrook recommendations of 1833 the British decided to employ ‘local’ peoples to mid-level positions in Sri Lanka’s public sector. Sri Lankan Tamils received these positions in greater numbers than the Sinhalese (and Muslims) due to their grasp of English that was a result of education they had received under American missionaries (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010. p. 13).

marginalisation pursued by the Sinhalese elites<sup>46</sup>. After the 1977 elections and the banning of the political party, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) from parliament this process of Tamil marginalisation began to shift into armed militancy (Thompson 2007, p. 296). Sinhalese nationalism post-independence was, thus, legitimised through a discourse of righting historical Sinhalese grievances (Sorbo et al 2011).

Early Tamil activism from the 1950s-1970s took the form of demands for federalist constitutional reforms toward the realisation of greater Tamil regional autonomy as a means of countering what Tamils saw as moves toward the establishment of an ethnic-majoritarian Sri Lankan state (Uyangoda 2007, p. 12). Nationalist revival on the part of the Sinhalese, however, was aimed at the restoration of Sinhalese language, culture, and religion that the Sinhalese believed had been suppressed during colonial rule with more radical Sinhalese nationalists viewing federalism as ‘too extreme’ a policy that would inevitably lead to separation and the break-up of the state (Uyangoda 2007, p. 12). Ironically, this resistance served to reinforce Tamil separatism and had the effect of further polarising the two communities by firmly establishing dualistically opposed ethnic positions. These positions consisted of Sinhalese resistance and inflexibility to state reform and intensified Tamil separatist sentiment and secessionist tendencies. Successive decades since the first anti-Tamil riots in the 1950s have, therefore, been marred by civil violence between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority, with Sri Lanka’s Muslim population largely caught in the cross-fire, over issues of nationalism and nationhood, language, education, job preference, identity, and ethnicity (Uyangoda 2007; Devotta 2005; Nubin 2002).

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<sup>46</sup> Sinhalese preferential laws included the Citizenship Act No.18 of 1948 and the Ceylon Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act No. 48 of 1949 that set out guidelines for acquiring citizenship and the right to vote (Navaratna-Bandara 2002, p. 61). The Sinhala Only Act (1956) established Sinhala as the only official language in Sri Lanka and the Universities Act No. 16 (1978) favoured Sinhalese through a communal quota scheme developed for university entrance.

By the 1970s the Sri Lankan government faced increasing opposition from Tamil economic and political unrest in the Northern and Eastern provinces as moderate Tamils began to lose out to growing militancy and separatism, particularly amongst Tamil youth (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010; Devotta 2005). Meanwhile a Marxist Sinhalese group, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), attracted thousands of jobless and disenfranchised young men in and around Colombo leading to successive armed uprisings in the 1970s and 1980s against rural-urban and class inequalities (Sorbo et al 2011; Uyangoda 2007; Nubin 2002). However, ethnic identity proved a stronger factor than economic insecurity as rioting and violence against Tamils, in combination with Tamil nationalism, helped facilitate the emergence of the militant LTTE founded by Vellupillai Prabhakaran in 1972 that sought to establish an independent Tamil homeland in the North and East by force if necessary. The LTTE gradually expanded into suicide raids that transformed the LTTE into a full-fledged anti-government guerrilla movement. The turning point that sparked the outbreak of civil war, however, is marked by the events of July 1983 in which violent anti-Tamil riots were carried out by Sinhalese mobs in retaliation for the deaths of 13 Sinhalese soldiers in an ambush by Tamil militants that resulted in the death and displacement of several thousand Tamils (Thompson 2007, p. 296; Uyangoda 2007, p. 20; Navaratna-Bandara 2002, p. 69). This strengthened and hardened the drive of Tamil separatist forces and ignited the ethnic tensions into full-scale ethnic conflict.

From July 1983 to the war's official end in May 2009, the war was characterised by violent acts committed by both sides, with several relatively brief pauses that saw failed peace initiatives attempted between the government and the LTTE. The LTTE is believed to have been responsible for the assassination of numerous political leaders, including President Ranasinghe Premadasa in May 1993, moderate Tamil leaders, and former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv



Gandhi in May 1991 (LePoer 2002, p. 4). Suicide bombers reportedly committed attacks on banks, temples, airports, and other transport facilities, including a July 2001 attack on Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport that destroyed one-third of the fleet of Sri Lankan Airlines (LePoer 2002, p. 4). The GOSL, for its part, also declared states of emergency, took control of media through censorship, banned public meetings, authorised arrests and raids without warning, and is accused of widespread human rights violations, justifying its means through claims of protecting the state against a terrorist threat *as well as* preventing Sinhalese backlash against Tamils (LePoer 2002, p. 4, italics added). Indeed a Wikileaks cable released in 2010 reveals that both the GOSL and the LTTE are alleged to have committed human rights abuses including extrajudicial killings, child trafficking, prostitution, attacks on civilians, and civilian recruitment during the war<sup>47</sup>.

### **4.3 Constructing the 'Other': Understanding ethno-nationalist identity politics and their impact on the conflict:**

The use of identity in inter-group conflict through the 'othering' of distinct identity groups is a powerful tool in perpetuating the image of a 'dangerous other' and in polarising society along ethnic, religious, regional, and gendered lines. This works to reconfigure the social fabric of a country such that fear is used as a means of control by dominant identity groups against others. From this perspective, the human security of the dominant ethnic group comes to be framed in relation to the securing and disciplining of the 'dangerous other'. In Sri Lanka, both Sinhalese and Tamil nationalisms have existed in a relationship of 'antagonistic inter-

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<sup>47</sup> The Wikileaks communiqué was reported on by numerous news sites including: OneWorld South Asia – (<http://southasia.oneworld.net/todaysheadlines/wikileaks-sri-lanka-govt-ltte-committed-human-rights-abuses>); The Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/111710>); The Daily Mirror (<http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/wikileaks/8975-ltte-committed-hr-abuses-us.html>); and the BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12025153>).

dependence' drawing on the notion of a threatening ethnic other to seek to legitimate their claims (Sorbo et al 2011 p. 20).

Furthermore, identities are 'collective' in the sense that they extend beyond a geographic area, so that people often feel injured when persons sharing their identity characteristics are subjected to violence or discrimination even if they themselves have been unaffected (Kriesberg 2003). This has been an important component in the Sri Lankan conflict in terms of the roles that the Tamil diaspora and Tamil Indians have played in influencing, and in some cases helping to perpetuate, the conflict through direct and indirect support for the LTTE and Tamil Eelam. James Thompson (2007) argues that Sri Lanka could be conceived of as a 'hybrid island' in which generations of multi-ethnic intermixing and interaction beginning during colonialism has taken place through the movement of peoples both in Sri Lanka and abroad and introduction of performance arts, religious, cultural, and political ideas and practices from external sources (p. 299).

He continues, however, that the notion of Sri Lankan hybridity should not be advanced as a means of reducing power inequalities between the different ethnic groups, as practices and discourses of nationhood have restricted the spaces for the development of alternative or counter discourses, identities, and practices, hardening ethnic cleavages (Thompson 2007, p. 299). For example, even in areas such as language in which Sinhala is no longer the only official language where concessions have been made that could represent an opening for the notion of Sri Lanka as a hybrid identity, such concessions have largely been rhetorical as many Sri Lankans, not solely Tamils, continue to receive official communications from government and its legislative bodies in Sinhala only (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 92; Field Notes Colombo, July 2, 2012). In addition, this restriction of spaces has been further constricted by class, caste, and gender

dynamics as well as association with Western actors in the ‘international community’.

Nationalists, for example, have drawn on negative stereotypes concerning foreign interference, neo-colonial imperialism, and pro-terrorist/separatist accusations in seeking to discredit both the ‘West’ and Sri Lankan actors that are seen as having close ‘Western’ ties (Sorbo et al 2011; Orjuela 2010a).

In situations of ethnic conflict identities are often ‘reinvented’ as being ethnically pure with the groups in conflict reasserting an exclusive claim to previously multi-ethnic geographic, political, religious, and cultural spaces (Silva 2002, p. i). In the case of Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese have used identity to reconstruct Sinhalese and Buddhism as the one natural and true national identity for Sri Lanka. The notion of devolving power to the Tamils has, therefore, always been opposed by Sinhalese nationalists who construct such opposition by framing power devolution as a ‘threat’ to Sri Lankan national identity, a capitulation to the demands of the LTTE, and/or as enabling the LTTE and its supporters to regroup and push for secession (Uyangoda 2007, p. 68; Devotta 2005, p. 6). The framing of the LTTE, and more recently in the post-war period, those who have attempted to critique Government, as ‘terrorists’ combined with the government’s linking of its battle against the LTTE to the War on Terror has added a further layer of complexity to identity and power relations. Under President Rajapaksa’s current regime the GOSL has perpetuated the image of the threatening ethnic ‘other’, extending ethnic cleavages in which ‘critical’ or ‘oppositional’ voices have been framed as ‘anti-Sri Lankan’ and supportive of separatism as a means of consolidating its power by exploiting the fears of many Sri Lankans and projecting itself as working to protect their interests and security.

The actions of past governments in this respect can be understood within the scope of Sri Lanka’s polarised ethnic identity politics and the necessity of playing to powerful Sinhalese

groups. For one thing, some Sinhalese oppose federalism, instead subscribing to an ethno-nationalist vision in which the majority population should feel safe and secure from the ‘threat’ of ethnic minorities (Uyangoda 2007, p. 11). Second, feelings of mistrust and ethno-nationalist tensions run deep amongst Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists who insist that the Buddha designated Sri Lanka to be the homeland of Buddhism and as such that the island rightfully belongs to the Sinhalese Buddhists (Devotta 2005, pp. 174-175). This viewpoint is strongly influenced by perceptions of the ‘ideal’ and ‘true’ identity of the Sri Lankan nation and its people. Some nationalists have even gone so far as to espouse that the Sinhalese are superior to the Tamils and that historically Westerners and Tamils have been responsible, to the point of conspiring together during colonialism, for keeping the Sinhalese down (Devotta 2005, p. 175). Any concessions with respect to devolution under these conditions are impossible, as the LTTE, the Tamil community *writ large*, and Westerners cannot be trusted, are not Buddhist and, therefore, are not ‘true’ citizens of Sri Lanka. Within the framework of ethnic politics and nationalist uprisings that have been resistant to power-sharing, the government’s capacity to address minority demands has, therefore, been limited and restricted to adhering to a unitary state framework further polarising Sri Lankan society along ethno-nationalist lines (Uyangoda 2007, p. 10).

Similarly, the identity politics of Tamil nationalism in which the LTTE functioned in seeking to project itself as the primary representative of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka also resulted in the perpetuation of in-group power inequalities amongst the Tamils. Rather than acting as an enabler for the mobilisation and empowerment of different Tamil groups, the LTTE can also be accused of prioritising its ‘state-building’ ambitions above meeting the human security needs of Tamils (not to mention Northern Muslims who often bore the brunt of LTTE violence and expulsion from areas deemed a part of Tamil Eelam) (Uyangoda 2007, p. 10). The

accusations that accompanied the failure of humanitarian aid to reach some communities in LTTE-controlled areas in the North and East in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami gives strength to the argument that the LTTE was often more concerned with its own political survival than with the struggle against inequality experienced by the Tamil people on which it was founded (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009). Furthermore, through the use of coercion, terror tactics, and in asserting itself, often violently, against other Tamils that sought to promote a wider range of Tamil identities; the LTTE effectively excluded and diminished the spaces for other Tamil political groups and civil society (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 97). In this sense the LTTE also functioned as an exclusionary and authoritarian presence in the North and East even as it claimed to represent the Tamil people.

The Muslim population further complicates the ethnic landscape of Sri Lanka. The Muslim 'question' contains both bipolar and tripolar attributes with respect to its impacts on the conflict. It is bipolar in the sense that to a certain extent Muslims in the North and East undermined the strength of the LTTE's assertion that the North and East (where the majority of Sri Lanka's Muslim population live) should be joined to create a separate state for the Tamils (Uyangoda 2007, p. 26). It is also tripolar in that the Muslim community represents the third major ethnic actor within the overall framework of ethno-national relations in Sri Lanka.

The conflict over regional autonomy between the Sinhalese and Tamils has also given rise to a desire for a degree of autonomy amongst Sri Lanka's Muslims. This sentiment has largely been driven by feelings of insecurity on the part of Muslims who constitute approximately one-third of the population living in the East concerning their future if the North and East came under Tamil sovereign control (Uyangoda 2007, pp. 12-13; Navaratna-Bandara 2002, p. 70). Muslim self-determination, therefore, emerged in relation to the war and violence committed at the hands of

the LTTE including the large scale eviction of Muslims from Jaffna in the 1990s, the killing of Muslims, and destruction of Mosques (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 21). Politically, Muslim self-determination has asserted itself in the form of an exclusively Muslim political party, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) running on a platform of Muslim rights and representation but in practice has tended to adopt a more moderate stance supporting government in exchange for ministerial portfolios (Uyangoda 2007, p. 28; Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Tamil-Muslim tensions in the East have further intensified these politics, resulting in the rise of a politically active and disenfranchised Muslim youth as well as population displacement and violence propagated against civilians (Uyangoda 2007, pp. 27-28). Furthermore, questions pertaining to the role that the Muslim population should play in the long-term settlement of elements at the heart of the conflict and how they are to be represented in the post-war and perhaps one-day post-conflict future of Sri Lanka remain ambiguous (Interview 14, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Again, then, the challenging question of how to grapple with the issue of transforming socio-political dynamics such that the human security of one ethnic community does not come compromise the human security of 'others' arises in considering Sri Lanka's Muslims.

#### **4.4 Terrorism and the LTTE:**

The invocation of terrorism to describe the actions of the LTTE is hardly a new phenomenon within the context of the Sri Lankan conflict, nor is it a consequence of the reach of US foreign policy in the aftermath of 9/11 and the War on Terror to Sri Lankan shores, though this has had an impact. Prejudices against the ‘ethnic’ other have long helped to construct the contours of the conflict in terms of ‘terrorism’, on the one hand, and a ‘liberation struggle’ on the other (Orjuela 2003, p. 202). The language of terrorism has served to frame the conflict and post-war environment in narrow, binary terms of a legitimate state seeking to ‘fend off’ a threat to its sovereign integrity from an illegitimate ‘terrorist’<sup>48</sup>. This process began prior to 9/11 with the adoption of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) in 1979<sup>49</sup>, which conflated terrorism with the Tamil independence project and contributed to the intensification of Tamil insecurity and vulnerability (Sisk 2009, p. 152; Nadarajah and Sriskandarajah 2005, p. 89).

Likewise, the Kumaratunga government’s (1995-2001) active lobbying of Western countries to brand the LTTE as a terrorist organisation, thereby, changing the manner in which these states differentiated between the LTTE as ‘terrorist’ and the Sri Lankan government as ‘legitimate sovereign’, has been described as one of Kumaratunga’s central ‘achievements’ in legitimating her government’s ‘war for peace’ campaign (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 112; Devotta 2005, p. 175). Therefore, the LTTE was painted not only as domestic security threat but also linked to global security discourses through recognition globally of it as an international terrorist organisation. Kumaratunga’s campaign against the LTTE, in combination with, the LTTE’s activities in waging war, led to the government gaining an upper hand over the LTTE and served to legitimate many of the government’s policies against them with

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<sup>48</sup> See for example the ‘Humanitarian Operation’ timeline provided by the Ministry of Defence and Urban Development on their website at: <http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=Humanitarian>.

<sup>49</sup> Initially created in 1979 and intended to be temporary, the PTA has continued to be drawn on in the post-war period to restrict civil and political freedoms under the auspices of fighting terrorism and combating political violence.

disproportionate effects on the rest of the Tamil population (Devotta 2005, p. 175). This language of terrorism was, thus, rationalised on the basis of protecting the state's sovereign integrity and connects closely to the politics of ethnic 'othering' within the conflict.

Arguably, the impacts of the framing of the LTTE as terrorist intensified both internally and externally in the aftermath of 9/11. From the perspective of international context, 9/11 and the resultant War on Terror made it less possible for non-state armed groups to portray themselves as legitimate actors acting for self-determination in the global political climate (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 75). The deliberate conflation of the War on Terror with the Government's 'war for peace' strategy was reweaved into the GOSL's discourse as a means of justifying its military offensives and casualties ensued toward the end of the war in the name of upholding national *and* global security (Senanayake 2009, p. 2; Nadarajah and Sriskandarajah 2005, p. 88). As will be seen this appeal to the ability to 'defeat terrorism' through military means and bring about (victors) 'peace' has continued to be effectively promoted by the Rajapaksa government in the aftermath of the war. From 30 May to 2 June 2011, for example, the GOSL hosted 41 countries at a Workshop entitled 'Defeating Terrorism Sri Lankan Experience' in which representatives 'shared their knowledge on Counter Insurgency and enumerated contributory factors in militarily defeating the LTTE, the most ruthless terrorist organisation in the world' (Defence Seminar 2011)<sup>50</sup>.

This linking to the War on Terror has also been reflected in agreements made with Pakistan, a country at the centre of the War on Terror, to 'defeat terrorism' that has 'stressed the need for continued intensive cooperation to counter this [terrorist] menace' ('Pakistan, Sri Lanka vow to defeat terror' 2010). Moreover, the GOSL has become a symbol in the region of the possibility of militarily defeating 'terrorism' as countries such as Burma and Thailand have also

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<sup>50</sup> Information on the event can be found online at: <http://www.defseminar.lk/about-us/2011Seminar.php>.



sought out the government's expertise in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency to confront similar challenges in their own countries (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 92; 'The Sri Lanka Option' 2010).

The framing of the LTTE and Tamil activism more broadly as representing terrorism has also been taken up in the discourse of Sinhalese nationalists as a means of propagating their national unity agenda in the post-9/11 era. Prior to 9/11, Sinhalese nationalists used anti-Tamil rhetoric to argue that devolution would ultimately lead to the country's separation. After 9/11 these same nationalists espoused compassion for the Tamil masses whilst arguing that any form of devolution would constitute a victory for LTTE-sponsored terrorism that could also threaten global security from terrorism worldwide (Uyangoda 2007, p. 44; Devotta 2005, p. 177). The nationalists, therefore, were able to successfully modify the justification for their opposition to devolution from a threat to national unity to a struggle against separatist terrorism even whilst ensuring their preferences have stayed the same. This, ultimately, helped mobilise support for the nationalist cause through reinforcing the conflict as a 'righteous' struggle against clearly demarcated enemies (Orjuela 2010a, p. 318).

Furthermore, the LTTE was internationally disadvantaged with respect to its position in relation to the government during the war as a result of the banning of the LTTE in several Western countries and its designation as a terrorist organisation, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11 (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 112). The LTTE was first labelled a 'foreign terrorist organisation' in 1997 by the US, an action which later brought the LTTE into the Bush Administration's War on Terror, albeit on the periphery, and motivated the LTTE to consider a negotiated end to the conflict as a means of avoiding the fate of other 'supporters of global terror', such as al-Qaeda (Sisk 2009, pp. 158-159; Thompson 2007, p. 297). Many other Western

countries, including the UK (2001), Canada (2002), and Australia (2002) subsequently followed suit in declaring the LTTE a terrorist organisation (Nadarajah and Sriskandarajah 2005, p. 95).

On the one hand this labelling resulted in mounting indirect pressure on the LTTE to reach a negotiated solution to the conflict as anti-terrorist legislation implemented by Western governments threatened to criminalise the transnational diaspora networks that the LTTE relied on to finance its activities (Sisk 2009, p. 158; Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 98; Thompson 2007, p. 297). The War on Terror, thus, had significant implications for the LTTE with respect to not only the withdrawal of monetary but also political support from those in the Tamil diaspora in light of concerns regarding being branded a terrorist or terrorist supporter. On the other hand, however, the banning of the LTTE from a number of Western countries actually negatively impacted peace talks between the GOSL and the LTTE when in 2003 the government was invited to an international donor meeting in Washington, DC to discuss Sri Lanka's peace process but the LTTE as a 'terrorist' organisation was excluded. The LTTE's protests of its exclusion fed into its eventual decision to suspend negotiations, which, ultimately, contributed to the breakdown of the peace talks and the renewal of hostilities in 2006 (Uyangoda 2007, p. 36).

The portrayal of the LTTE in foreign media also contributed to its portrayal as a terrorist organisation with negative implications for Tamils living in the diaspora. This can be seen in an article entitled 'Sri Lanka – Living with Terror' produced by Frontline World, an American national public television series whose focus is on bringing stories about the global community to American viewers (Rubin 2002). The article states: 'They [the LTTE] are one of the world's most notorious terrorist groups. In their unrelenting drive for a separate homeland on the island, the Tigers have carried out more suicide bombings than Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda combined' (Rubin 2002).

Whilst the Tamil community in the diaspora faced racism and discrimination prior to 9/11 these acts have intensified post-9/11. For instance, one study found that employers have remarked about Tamil terrorists in front of their Tamil employees and Tamil employees have been let go due to fears over trusting a Tamil (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 26). Likewise, Tamils have reported attempting to avoid emphasising their ethnicity for fear of being branded a terrorist (Orjuela 2010a, p. 313). In part, this carries the potential to significantly diminish the spaces for Tamil gathering within and outside of Sri Lanka, most often reserved in Western democracies for civil society, and reduces opportunities to engage in debate and for raising discontent with the policies of government for fear of being considered a terrorist. Conversely, however, Tamil civil society organisations that have survived do provide a rare space for Tamils to express and celebrate their culture, despite the fact that civil society groups have themselves been subject to accusations of supporting terrorism in the victor's peace (Orjuela 2010a, p 313). Ultimately, the international community's, and even more significantly the GOSL's, projection of terrorism onto the LTTE (and other Tamils) has had a multitude of impacts on various aspects of the conflict and post-war setting as well as on Tamils both within and outside of Sri Lanka through their reconstitution as threats to national and global security.

#### **4.5 Norwegian Peace Efforts and the Liberal Peace in Sri Lanka:**

There have been a number of past attempts to reach a negotiated solution to the Sri Lankan conflict with five separate peace initiatives between the two main factions having failed to culminate in a lasting peace agreement and long-term cessation of hostilities. These include the Thimpu talks in 1985, the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, the Premadasa-LTTE talks in 1988-90, the Kumaratunga-LTTE talks of 1994-95 and the Ceasefire Agreement (CA) between 2002

and 2006<sup>51</sup>. This section focuses on the Norwegian-led CA process that has been framed as an ultimately flawed ‘test’ of liberal peace-building that is reflective of a shift in international discourses and practices on peace and security in the new millennium (Goodhand, Spencer, and Korf 2011; Stokke 2011).

With respect to the influence of the liberal peace in Sri Lanka it is through Norwegian-led peace initiatives and particularly the CA that the dynamics of liberal peace-building can be seen. These reflect many tenets and ideologies associated with the liberal peace including the belief that a political settlement to the conflict could be reached by external mediation, that peace needed to be linked to democratisation of the state through some form of power devolution, and that economic growth through market liberalisation would help strengthen security for Sri Lankans by creating a ‘peace dividend’ (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 71).

The peace process was characterised by several factors that helped to precipitate an environment conducive to peace negotiations. These included a degree of military parity between the state and LTTE based on a series of military failures after the end of previous negotiations in 1995, economic fatigue and perceptions of the unwinnable nature of the war on both sides, and feelings of necessity on the part of the LTTE to address Tamil suffering in order to try and continue to project their representativeness of the Sri Lankan Tamils (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 96). These factors each contributed to fostering an environment of a ‘mutually hurting stalemate’ (Zartman 2000, p. 228) conducive to entering into peace negotiations and ‘created a unique opportunity to pursue the option of a negotiated liberal peace, thereby making Sri Lanka a test case for internationalised liberal peacebuilding’ (Stokke 2011, p. 23)<sup>52</sup>. In line

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<sup>51</sup> For an overview of past peace initiatives that sought to bring about a negotiated end to armed conflict see Appendix F.

<sup>52</sup> Internationalisation of the peace in the context of the CA refers to the international facilitation of negotiations and ceasefire monitoring; international aid attached to specific aspects of the peace process and activities related to both

with the liberal peace, the CA provided opportunity for Sri Lanka's (largely Western) donors to connect development assistance and humanitarian aid to peace-building as 'precursors' to conflict resolution (Stokke 2011, pp. 18-19). However, at the same time both the GOSL and LTTE entered into the CA remaining committed to their cause and without making any 'significant shift' in how they conceived of an acceptable political outcome (Sorbo et al 2011, p. xv).

Negotiations were suspended in April 2003 and afterward little consensus remained between the two parties concerning the basis for further peace negotiations despite six rounds of talks (Harris 2005, p. 60). The LTTE gave two reasons for its withdrawal from the negotiations in 2003. The first was the failure of Government to implement measures concerning development and reconstruction that had been jointly reached during negotiations (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 95). Second the LTTE, having been branded a 'terrorist' organisation, was not invited to participate in the Washington, DC donor conference in April 2003. The LTTE believed this represented the intention of the international community to treat them as a 'junior partner' in peace talks and expressed anger at the refusal to acknowledge their 'parity of status' (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 94; Uyangoda 2007, p. 15; Interview 1, Former Head of South Asia Programming, International Alert, London). Intra-LTTE clashes further complicated matters in March 2004 when Colonel Karuna split from the LTTE forming a splinter group called Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Perani in the East that shifted the balance of military power back in favour of the GOSL (Sorbo et al 2011, p. xvi; Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 632). War, therefore, resumed once again in June 2006 due to both the LTTE's and the newly elected government's (under Mahinda Rajapaksa) unwillingness to compromise or

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liberal peace and (neo)liberal development; and the introduction of international discourses on the nexus of liberal peace, neoliberal development, and neoliberal visions of security into Sri Lanka (Stokke 2011, p. 18).

reconcile their demands with respect to the longstanding issue of devolving power to the Tamils (Uyangoda 2007, p. 67).

Likewise, Norwegian-led efforts, in conjunction with the UNF government, to internationalise the peace process through ‘security guarantees’ negotiated by the UNF<sup>53</sup> and the use of donor aid to push for (neo)liberal economic reforms in an effort to ‘buy peace’ played roles in sparking national backlash in Sri Lanka. This ultimately enabled the nationalist-oriented government of President Rajapaksa to come to power and pursue a military ‘solution’ to end the war (Sorbo 2011, pp. xvi-xvii). Moreover, the assumptions on the part of the international community that (neo)liberal development could realise peace by addressing the consequences of the conflict rather than its underlying causes ultimately proved flawed (Sorbo 2011, pp. 7 and 110). This reflects the viewpoint that aid could be used simultaneously as a ‘vehicle to promote peace and economic liberalisation, in the belief that the two were mutually reinforcing. However in practice ... [a]id had very limited leverage and it proved impossible to short circuit complex political processes through the provision of economic incentives’ (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 137). This had the effect of glossing over political issues at the heart of the conflict with aid functioning as a band-aid solution to confronting deeper contestations that have continued to fester in the aftermath of the war. These factors bring to light concerns regarding the assumed links made by the liberal peace with respect to developmental aid, peace, and security that the Sri Lankan experience brings to the fore.

In the post-war period the ‘West’ has been somewhat less effective in seeking to encourage liberal peace and development practices in Sri Lanka as well as perhaps less assertive given the wider geopolitical dynamics that sees Sri Lanka developing closer ties with ‘illiberal’

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<sup>53</sup> ‘Security guarantees’ refers to reassurances the UNF government extracted from the US and India that they would back the government in the event that the peace process broke down (Sorbo et al 2011, p 71).

regimes such as China<sup>54</sup>. The ‘West’ has, however, continued to seek to influence relations in Sri Lanka in the direction of the liberal peace both in response to lobbying pressure from the respective diaspora populations living in the ‘West’ and to mitigate the roles of ‘illiberal’ governments in Sri Lanka and the Asia-Pacific region more broadly. In response to international pressure to inquire into the alleged violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the final stages of the war, for example, the UN Secretary General appointed a three-member panel of experts in June 2010 to advise him on accountability issues (Charbonneau 2010).

On 12 April 2011, the *United Nations (UN) Report of the Secretary-General’s Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka* was published that found credible reports of war crimes and serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, committed by both Government and Tamil rebels and called for genuine investigations into the allegations, thereby, representing a distinctly different version of events to that of the GOSL<sup>55</sup>. The GOSL also came under fire at the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva that began on 27 February 2012 and culminated in the 22 March 2012 adoption of a US-backed resolution urging Sri Lanka to probe allegations of summary executions and kidnappings, but stopped short of calling for an international investigation (‘Resolution on SL adopted, 24-15’ 2012). Likewise, a number of human rights groups have repeatedly called for investigations into the GOSL, military, and LTTE’s conduct during the war. On 9 December 2010 Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International called for an official UN investigation after a five-minute video showing the execution of a man at close range, the bloody face of a woman affiliated with a LTTE television station, and several other individuals lying dead next to her emerged, allegedly linking Sri Lanka’s military to the execution of prisoners (‘New video

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<sup>54</sup> The Sino-Sri Lankan relationship is explored in greater detail in the section below 4.8 Regional and Transnational Dynamics.

<sup>55</sup> The full Report can be accessed at: [http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri\\_Lanka/POE\\_Report\\_Full.pdf](http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/POE_Report_Full.pdf).

allegedly shows Sri Lankan war crimes' 2010). Furthermore, an article in *The Boston Globe* cites damaging evidence revealed in cables released by WikiLeaks that disclose an American diplomat's confidential assessment that the 'responsibility for many alleged crimes [in Sri Lanka]' rests with 'President Rajapaksa and his brothers' ('Probe both sides in Sri Lanka' 2010).

Other aspects of the liberal peace have had negative repercussions for Western nations and Sri Lanka. Amongst them is the declaration of Sri Lanka as a middle income country that resulted in many Western donors pulling out and/or reducing aid to Sri Lanka, which has had the unintended effect of pushing Sri Lanka closer to 'ill-liberal' countries such as China (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 117). However, according to a Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Colombo, continued income disparities and suffering associated with the tsunami, and conflict, compounded with the reductions in aid, have left many more vulnerable to human insecurity (Interview 15, Colombo). Where Western governments and donors have continued to fund civil society organisations, civil society groups have faced accusations of being anti-Sri Lankan and working in the service of Western interests (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 96). Nevertheless, the UN Panel Report and continued pressure to investigate human rights abuses do represent an opportunity to possibly shift the internal dynamics surrounding the victor's peace.

#### **4.6 Impacts of the 2004 Tsunami:**

The tsunami that struck Sri Lanka on 26 December 2004 had the potential to realise a major shift in the trajectory of the conflict causing the death of approximately 37,000 Sri Lankans and massive destruction (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 638). Despite the magnitude of the disaster and huge amounts of humanitarian assistance which followed, the moral will and material incentives necessary on the part of the LTTE and GOSL to bring about an end to the conflict failed to be generated (Silva 2010; Blaikie 2010; Beardsley and McQuinn 2009;



Uyangoda 2007). In fact it has been argued that rather than lessen tensions, the tsunami actually served to further solidify the fissures that had emerged during the CA leading to greater volatility and human insecurity (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009; Thompson 2007). In the end, not only did the tsunami fail to bring about a political settlement, as it did in Aceh, but both the government and LTTE used the crisis, and the international humanitarian response it provoked, as a way to consolidate their respective power bases (Interview 1, Former Head of South Asia Programming, International Alert, Colombo). Therefore, human insecurities caused as a result of the tsunami with respect to the loss of livelihoods, homes, loved ones, caregivers, and heads of households were compounded by existing insecurities related to the conflict that continued to fester after the tsunami despite the influx of international aid.

Indeed, in 2004 when the tsunami hit Sri Lanka the CA had already effectively reached an impasse. The tsunami, thus, presented a unique, though ultimately unrealised, opportunity for the two sides to reinvigorate the peace process focused around post-tsunami reconstruction and rehabilitation. This was in large part due to the fact that the areas struck by the tsunami included both those controlled by the LTTE and GOSL and, further, that it impacted all three of the largest ethnic groups in Sri Lanka (Silva 2010, p. 64). Indeed the tsunami damaged more than 70% of Sri Lanka's coastline, with five of Sri Lanka's nine provinces affected, particularly the Eastern coastline that disproportionately impacted Muslims and Tamils who had already experienced first-hand the effects of decades of armed conflict in their communities (Silva 2010, p. 64; Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 625).

With the support of the US and India, amongst others, the Post-Tsunami Organisational Management Structure (P-TOMS), also referred to as the Joint Mechanisms (JM), were signed on 24 June 2005 between the government and LTTE. The P-TOMS proposed an administrative

structure to plan, implement, and coordinate post-tsunami reconstruction that would involve three committees - national, regional and district/community-level - and would be made up of representatives from government, the LTTE, and Muslim political parties (Silva 2010; Uyangoda 2007). The signing of the P-TOMs, however, consequently led to the JVP breaking away from the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) government under President Kumaratunga over claims that as the LTTE was identified with terror there was no legally valid basis for the government to enter into an agreement with them on the P-TOMS (Blaikie 2010, p. 2; Uyangoda 2007, p. 25). On 15 July 2005, the Supreme Court ruled that there had been no illegality in the signing of the P-TOMS but did authorise a stay order on four main points of the P-TOMS agreement (Dias 2005; 'Sri Lanka's Supreme Court issues stay order against P-TOMS' 2005). Nevertheless, the arrival of the presidential elections in November 2005 and the election of President Rajapaksa of the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP), with the JVP as a key coalition partner, ultimately, rendered the P-TOMS 'effectively null and void' (Thompson 2007, p. 298). Therefore, the P-TOMS created unexpected frictions in the internationally-led process of post-tsunami recovery and reinforced factors underlying the stalled peace process.

Furthermore, the management of post-tsunami aid has been cited as a factor in the inability of the tsunami to drive the government and LTTE toward peace that further contributed to anti-Western sentiment in Sri Lanka in the context of the victor's peace (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 626). The tsunami generated a massive humanitarian response, expanding UN, foreign governmental agencies, and foreign civil society (mostly in the form of INGOs) presence in Sri Lanka (Silva 2010, p. 65). Between 2004-2005 total assistance to Sri Lanka grew from US\$500 million to US\$1.2 billion (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 108). The influx of aid compounded by poor coordination in its delivery factored into the failure of the tsunami to alter the trajectories

of the war over the longer term. These tensions revealed themselves through violence with ambushes and assassinations resuming soon after the tsunami and both sides returning to the building up of their militaries and arms (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 54).

Aid mismanagement played a central role in contributing to renewed tensions as governments and INGOs were criticised for poor aid coordination, lack of appropriate knowledge and competency regarding the type of work that (I)NGOs were undertaking, and competition over project support leading to the politicisation of aid and undermining its effectiveness (Frerks and Klem 2011, p. 168; Brun and Lund 2010, p. 16). This can be seen in the fact that some INGOs actually disrupted the 'traditional power balance' between international governance organisations and INGOs. For example, the Red Cross Movement became larger in terms of personnel and cash flows than the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which had traditionally played a significant role in shaping the donor environment in Sri Lanka, giving the Red Cross more power over determining the trajectories of post-tsunami aid (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 16). Many of the efforts to build housing settlements were also insensitive to livelihood needs, such as access to the sea, and traditional settlement patterns in Sri Lanka based on class, caste, ethnicity, and extended family dwellings. They also overlooked the availability of local skilled labourers to be involved in reconstruction including Carpenters in the East who reported that they were never approached to assist in resettlement projects even in instances where it was their homes being rebuilt (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 16; Interview 41, Members of a culturally-based members union, Batticaloa). These dynamics, ultimately, weakened the status and legitimacy of many (I)NGOs in conflict and disaster management in Sri Lanka and later helped enable the GOSL to de-legitimise the claims of (I)NGOs at the end of the war by criticising their actions in relation to tsunami relief.

With respect to the LTTE and GOSL, the LTTE took active steps to ensure its control over the distribution of aid in areas it controlled by denying INGOs access to impacted regions and ordering all relief agencies to channel aid through its own aid body the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 639). In part this was undertaken with the intention to help legitimise the perception of LTTE authority in the North and East (Silva 2010, p. 66). It has also been asserted, however, that the LTTE may have used the disruption from the tsunami to rearm for the renewal of war (Beardsley McQuinn 2009, p. 639). Furthermore, the presence of INGOs represented another type of threat to the LTTE's survival; that of continuing to project itself as the preeminent and legitimate representative of the Tamil people, and Tamil Eelam, in Sri Lanka (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 109; Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 639).

The government, for its part, attempted to control resource flows and reconstruction in a manner conducive to maintaining power at the centre of the state. It established new administrative machinery under the direct control of the President to coordinate relief, recovery, and rehabilitation operations (Silva 2010 p. 66). Centralised state structures created for coordinating relief were used to strengthen and extend political bases to secure support for the government often through the leaking of tsunami aid to those unaffected by the disaster (Silva 2010, p. 67). For example, the approach to housing reconstruction followed two principle models: owner-driven and donor-driven. The owner-driven model involved people who were permitted to remain on their land and rebuild homes damaged by the tsunami that received monetary compensation in instalments to carry out the work (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 14). Conversely where people were relocated from their previous areas of residence to settlements away from the coast, resettlement followed a donor-driven model in which the government selected land for international organisations to build homes (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 14).

Decisions pertaining to distribution and allocation of land were the responsibility of government whilst the actual building of homes fell to INGOs (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 14).

Housing in this sense became an important tool for establishing a government-controlled post-tsunami reconstruction process, with the GOSL concentrating its efforts overwhelmingly on the South and leaving many of the harder hit tsunami and conflict-impacted areas in the North and East to INGOs or Tamil and Muslim local authorities, thus, facilitating in the politicisation of reconstruction (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 14). One case in point is the fact that 3,645 more homes than were actually devastated by the tsunami were constructed in President Rajapaksa's home district of Hambantota in the South whereas 4,888 too few were built in Batticaloa, 5,595 in Trincomalee, and 9,082 in Ampara, all located in the East (Brun and Lund 2010, pp. 14-15; RADA 2006). Therefore, the tsunami created the opportunity for the development of inter-ethnic solidarity amongst those impacted on all sides by the tsunami; however, both the state and the LTTE, ultimately, squandered the opportunity to respond to the disaster in a way that might have brought about long-term cessation of the conflict.

#### **4.7 The Defeat of the LTTE and Victor's Peace Sri Lanka:**

On 18 May 2009 the government declared victory and the total official military defeat of the LTTE by government forces (Lund 2010, p. vi). According to the UN, at least 7,000 civilians were killed in the last five months of fighting and approximately 250,000 non-combatants were detained in camps (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010; Francis 2010). It is estimated that in the last stage of the war hundreds of thousands were displaced in the North within a 'No-fire Zone' with limited humanitarian assistance as the government imposed severe restrictions on the access of international organisations (Lund 2010, p. vi).

The GOSL has sought to construct events surrounding the end of the war so as to convey the image that the ends justified the means by which the war was ended. The GOSL has been particularly active in seeking to frame its last military offensive in this regard beginning with the ‘war for peace’ narrative that was reinitiated on 2 January 2008 following the bombing of an army bus in Colombo and the official withdrawal of the government from the Norwegian-brokered ceasefire process (Manoharan 2008). Subsequently, the GOSL reinitiated a multi-pronged strategy labelled ‘war for peace’, based on the argument that peace could be brought to Sri Lanka only through the military defeat of the LTTE, which was again further promoted as the only reasonable option remaining for the government to pursue in order to end the war (Manoharan 2008). The government, however, has been accused of using the ‘total defeat of the LTTE’ to ‘ignore the political rights of the country’s ethnic minorities’ (Uyangoda 2012). This has led many to assert that the war may be over but the conflict remains as ‘[t]hree years after the Sri Lankan government successfully concluded its military campaign the country has done little to address the root causes of the ethnic conflict. ... The debate on how to resolve the ethnic conflict has been reopened not to promote a constructive solution, but only to reproduce the conflict in new forms’ (Uyangoda 2012).

If recalled from Chapter 2, Lukes (1974) described three dimensions of power: (1) visible manifestations of power in decision-making behaviour by those in leadership positions, (2) who has the power to determine which issues are relevant; that is what conflicts and issues actually are put onto the agenda, and (3) latent power asymmetries such as those that are endemic within society that people are unconscious of, or where people may not view their position as disadvantaged but rather a consequence of the natural order within society. In Sri Lanka these dimensions have manifested themselves in numerous ways, including how the GOSL has

exercised its sovereign power through its decision-making authority implementing and amending regulations and legislation in ways that enable it to consolidate its 'victory'. Likewise, as a consequence of its victory over the LTTE, the GOSL as the sole remaining party to the war has been able to dictate which aspects of the Sri Lankan conflict make it onto the post-war agenda and which are overlooked. For example, whilst the GOSL claims that it has 'resettled all but 8,000 [former Tamil IDPs] in their former places of living' thousands of Muslims that were displaced from the North by the LTTE in 1990 remain internally-displaced 'forgotten', rarely if ever mentioned by the government ('Sri Lanka: Post-War Progress Report' 2011; Field Notes Puttalam, May 3-4, 2011). Finally, latent or 'unconscious' forms of power asymmetries are deeply embedded in Sri Lankan society as a consequence of caste and class relations, and, gender dynamics that may cause individuals to accept subordinate positions within society as a 'natural' consequence or outcome of their identity. Even in everyday social relations, as Jonathan Spencer (1990) has observed, 'caste is always present, but almost never seen' (p. 191 in Uyangoda 2010, p. 58).

The centralisation of power in the hands of the state that began in the 1950s with the establishment of a state-sponsored welfare system has intensified in the post-war period. President Rajapaksa has taken steps to consolidate power through such actions as the passing of Amendment 18 to the Constitution in September 2010 that effectively removes legislative safeguards against abuse and places the responsibility to legislate, administer policy, and articulate the law even more tightly with the governmental 'elite' ('Lively discussion on 18th Amendment and Beyond' 2011, 'Sri Lanka's Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution Represents an Assault on Constitutional Democracy' 2010; 'The 18th Amendment To Sri Lanka's Constitution' 2010). This has helped enable the continued centralisation of President

Rajapaksa's rule within a small group of individuals representing President Rajapaksa's inner circle that includes key ministerial posts of Defence Secretary and Minister of Economic Development respectively assigned to his brothers, Gotabaya and Basil Rajapaksa, with other important positions awarded to loyal supporters. In part this relates to a shift in the political balance of power as previously the war and LTTE acted in concert in influencing the 'political balance of forces between the state and ethnic minorities. These factors gave Sri Lanka's ethnic minorities a degree of bargaining power ... The end of the war has altered the equilibrium in the UPFA-led government's favour' (Uyangoda 2012).

This also represents the weakening of Sri Lanka's public sector, with the President taking over control of who is represented in government and of governing certain functions and policies from the centre rather than devolving power outward to departments and other political actors within the civilian administration. This includes, for example, the Ministry of Defence that at present performs functions better suited to a civilian authority, such as the registration for local and international organisations offering humanitarian and development assistance (Field Notes Colombo, July 6, 2012). Such acts of centralised governance enable the government to not only monitor which organisations are seeking to do what and what types of groups are actually permitted to work but also to implement 'disciplining' mechanisms over those who might espouse viewpoints that run counter to the GOSL's by limiting and/or banning their legal status and permitted activities<sup>56</sup>. Likewise, the 13th Amendment that is intended to give the provinces policing powers and limit centralised control over land has not yet been implemented by government, who argue that to do so would embolden separatist groups and threaten state sovereignty (Uyangoda 2012). The centralisation of legislative power has, thus, somewhat

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<sup>56</sup> For discussion as to how such actions are being used by a range of states in conjunction with the global security agenda see Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010; Howell and Lind, 2010 and 2009; Cortright et al 2008; and Sidel, 2006. This is specifically investigated as it pertains to Sri Lanka in Chapter 7.



paradoxically been achieved ‘democratically’ by using the democratic process itself and playing to nationalist sentiment to implement new policies in the post-war era that benefit the majority Sinhalese, highlighting the possibility for democratic governance structures to become ‘tools’ of governmental manipulation in cases where power is centralised in the hands of governmental elite<sup>57</sup>.

Seeking to shape perspectives concerning the end of the war in ways that further enables the centralisation of power in the hands of the GOSL can also be seen in the government’s May 2010 establishment of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC). Initially having refused to allow an independent UN-led team into the country to investigate whether war crimes were committed during the final phase of the war<sup>58</sup>, the GOSL charged its own Commission with inquiring into events that took place between February 2002 and May 2009 including the facts and circumstances which led to the failure of the CA, whether any person, group, or institution is directly or indirectly responsible, the institutional administrative and legislative measures necessary to prevent any recurrence of such events in the future, and to ‘promote further national unity and reconciliation among all communities’ (Proclamation & c., by the President 2010). Hearings of the Commission were generally public, open to media, and held in Colombo as well as war-affected areas including Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, and Vavuniya with field visits conducted to detention centres where surrendered LTTE combatants were being held (Reddy 2010). The LLRC submitted its Report to the President on

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<sup>57</sup> This is further elaborated on in Chapter 7.

<sup>58</sup> On 18 December 2010 it was announced that the GOSL would ‘backtrack’ on a previous refusal and allow a UN team to visit the country and gather evidence into whether war crimes were committed during the final phase of the war. The GOSL previously resisted the move, calling it an ‘infringement’ on sovereignty and declared that visas would not be issued to the UN team. However, the allowance was made solely to enable UN investigators to ‘share the evidence’ with the GOSL rather than ‘to undertake any [independent] investigation’ (Francis 2010).

15 November 2011 and was made public on 16 December 2011 containing 285 recommendations for advancing national reconciliation.

The LLRC has been criticised for its limited mandate, flawed structure, lack of independence, and failure to meet minimum basic international standards to offer protection to witnesses who testified as well as simply reinforcing the government's 'official' narrative of the CA and end of the war (Reddy 2010; 'Sri Lankan war inquiry commission opens amid criticism' 2010). For one, the Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly has accused the LLRC of being nothing more than 'eyewash', undertaken because the GOSL wishes to avoid inciting international intervention and to convey the impression that it is taking actions to seriously address reconciliation, but that it is unlikely to alter structural inequalities and realities for many Sri Lankans (Interview 18, Colombo). Likewise a Sister in the Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners' Children has questioned the actual findings of the LLRC based on the argument that many were fearful and suspicious of the process and as witnesses giving testimonial received no security or protection, many chose not to act as witnesses during the process (Interview 5, Colombo). In a statement the TNA noted that: 'The report of the LLRC is a serious assault on the dignity of the victims of the war in Sri Lanka, and as such, has not only gravely damaged the chances of genuine reconciliation but has further alienated the victims of the war' ('Report on the LLRC', sent via Member Listserve January 9, 2012). On both accounts the process is viewed as inherently biased, using fear to dissuade witnesses and establishing the Committee as a means of avoiding external intervention (Interview 5, Sister in the Catholic Church and member of the Association for Friends of Prisoners' Children, Colombo).

Equally, however, according to the Executive Director of a Colombo-based non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka Sinhalese nationalists have also been critical of the Report accusing the Commission of going beyond its mandate, acting as an international instrument against the GOSL, and calling on government to discredit the Report (Interview 42, Colombo). Such reactions are potentially more problematic than criticisms from the international community as the GOSL relies on the nationalists as an important electoral base and, therefore, needs to play to them in order to maintain their support (Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented civil society organisation, Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This raises questions as to whether aspects of the LLRC that the Sinhalese nationalists are displeased with will actually be implemented despite the fact that the Report states that ‘a political settlement based on devolution must address the ethnic problem as well as other serious problems that threaten the democratic institutions’ (Senaratne 2011). Moreover, the Report has not been translated into Tamil or Sinhala to make it more widely accessible to Sri Lankans (Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This represents a form of disempowerment as a report that was based on the narratives expressed by Sri Lankans themselves, and particularly those most impacted by the war, is now limiting the ability of those it claims to represent to access it and see their views clearly expressed in the document.

Similarly, the continuation of the PTA, which allows persons to be held for up to 30 days with unlimited extensions, causes concerns over the constriction of Sri Lankan freedoms in the context of the victor’s peace. Combined with the Emergency Regulations (ERs)<sup>59</sup>, the PTA has

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<sup>59</sup> In Sri Lanka the ERs have facilitated in the establishment of military checkpoints throughout the country and awarded sweeping powers to government authorities to search and detain suspects in detention centres for up to 21

provided the GOSL with two separate (although largely similar) legal frameworks in which to justify arrests, detentions, and other punitive actions carried out against civilians. The PTA allows the government to arrest civilians for a broad range of offences<sup>60</sup>, makes confessions to police admissible as evidence, permits detention without charge for up to eighteen months, and awards government officials' immunity for acts done in good faith and pursuant to any order under the PTA ('Sri Lanka: Post-War Progress Report' 2011; Bateman 2011).

The GOSL's continued use of conventional military means of upholding security throughout the country have also been subject to accusations that this deployment has been undertaken more in the name of monitoring the actions of actors critical of the GOSL than in protecting civilians from an imminent 'threat' to the national integrity of the Sri Lankan state (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This can be viewed as a means of legitimising militarised responses to the 'problems' presented by 'oppositional' or 'critical' actors. Any public event in Sri Lanka's Northern Province, for example, has to have a GOSL official and someone from the military either present or having given consent for the event in order to ensure that those attending are not secretly holding an LTTE or anti-GOSL meeting (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). Such militarisation

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months without a court appearance. Thousands of people have been detained over the years in official and unofficial detention centres under the ERs, many without formal charges, in violation of international law (Bateman 2011). It should be noted that on 25 August 2011 President Rajapaksa announced that the ERs would not be renewed, however, the government has extended several of the most controversial powers by issuing parallel regulations under the PTA suggesting that very little has changed 'on-the-ground' and that the termination of the ERs has been undertaken as a means for the GOSL to outwardly appear to be taking steps toward de-securitisation than any real change to the environment within Sri Lanka.

<sup>60</sup> These include causing 'mischief' to public property, causing 'religious, racial or communal disharmony or feelings of ill-will', and interfering with 'any board or other fixture' in a public place (Bateman 2011).

has also taken the form of violence as opposition political party members were attacked on Independence Day in 2011 by government-backed mobs and numerous nationalist-led demonstrations involving members of the Buddhist clergy have taken place against the ‘threat’ of minorities, further contributing to an environment of fear, violence, and retribution against those that are critical of government (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 92). Likewise, the return of talk of enforced disappearances in the form of ‘white-van’ abductions raises concerns for the human security and rights of Sri Lankans that express criticism of Government (UNSG-Panel Report 2011, p. 17, para 63). This fear was expressed by a wide range of different civil society actors interviewed for this study, ranging from human rights activists to members of political parties such as the TNA reflecting the belief that ‘white van’ disappearances continue to be practiced and impact one’s perception of their own security. A human rights actor explained the nature of this reality for him and his colleagues when he stated that they wonder ‘when will our turn be, the white van could come for me’ (Interview 68, Member of Parliament, Tamil National Alliance, Colombo; Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 44, Executive Director Human Rights Organisation, Colombo; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna).

Another aspect where militarisation can be seen concerns the issue of land (re)registration and resettlement programmes amidst accusations of the ‘colonisation’ of land in the North by the army and GOSL, and, the continuation of HSZs in the North. Although many of the checkpoints in the North along the A9 highway have been withdrawn, the Jaffna district is still a HSZ and the military maintains several HSZs having set up military installations and bases including on lands that Northern Tamils and Muslims were displaced from during the war (Phillips 2013; Field Notes Jaffna, May 9-12, 2011 and July 15-17, 2012). The army is extensively involved in

economic activities, such as farming and fishing as well as the opening up of shopping centres and ‘hotels’ (small Sri Lankan restaurants). For example, Gibson Bateman (2011) argues that ‘when it comes to reconstruction in post-war Sri Lanka, the military, rather than, say, technocrats, has its hands in practically everything, from infrastructure to tourism and even to Colombo’s “urban renewal” programmes”. There have also recently been claims that have not been possible to substantiate that land has been confiscated to build 10,000 houses in Kilinochchi and there have been further accusations of the military taking land off the A9 Highway between Mankulam and Mullaitivu to build homes for the families of army members that have been relocated to the North rather than for those displaced by the conflict (Interview 66, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna). This has led to assertions that the GOSL is seeking to create new administrative divisions in the North both to facilitate Sinhalese ‘colonisation’ or ‘Sinhalese’ and enable the government to construct new electoral zones that include more Sinhalese in areas traditionally dominated by Tamil voters in an attempt to decrease the number of Tamil politicians elected to parliament and diminish claims of Tamil Eelam in the North (Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Furthermore, accusations of colonisation have also included that Sinhalese fishermen receive preferential access to the coasts in the North and East and that resettled Tamils are pushed to the interior of the country thereby denying them access to areas where many make their livelihood (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace

Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo).

The GOSL's moves both economically and politically away from 'liberal' toward 'illiberal' nations, particularly seen through the GOSL's push to attract private investment from China, have further intensified asymmetries of power and inequalities within Sri Lanka. By painting the Sri Lankan conflict as solely a 'terrorist' problem the government has been able to focus its nation-building project on economic development, through tourism, infrastructure, and resettlement rather than the need for a political solution to the conflict (Uyangoda 2012)<sup>61</sup>. Extensive commercial loans and investment from China, for example, are being put toward developing major ports such as in Hambantota and Colombo, highways, and a coal power plant, which has resulted in China being granted an exclusive economic zone in an effort to attract further Chinese investment (Lund 2010, p. vii; Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo; Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury, and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo). Likewise, as part of the government's 'Nagenahira Navodaya' (Eastern Awakening) the coastline of Passekuddah Bay has been declared a strategic Tourism Development Zone along 140 acres of beachfront land with 14 resort complexes and public areas including open-air bazaars, craft and art galleries, shopping complexes, theatre, cycle paths, nature trails, and sports centre being created as part of the Zone<sup>62</sup> (Field Notes Passekuddah Bay, July 12, 2012; Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo; Interview 47,

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<sup>61</sup> For more information on the GOSL's efforts to secure tourism and infrastructure investment in Sri Lanka see: <http://www.slttda.gov.lk/faqs>.

<sup>62</sup> For more detailed information on the development of tourist resorts on Passekuddah Bay see 'Dawn in the East' at <http://www.serendib.btoptions.lk/article.php?id=765&issue=30> and 'Passikudah Resort' Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority at [http://www.slttda.gov.lk/passekudah\\_project](http://www.slttda.gov.lk/passekudah_project).

Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). This is taking place in the context of increased GOSL aversion to the conditionalities often attached to liberal peace and development assistance and a shift in the nature of donors from West to East, who do not attach conditionalities to support (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 110).

The slow 'trickle down' effect of investments to local populations, however, including questions as to what extent locals will benefit from such 'developments', whether they will be hired to work on the construction of roads and ports, in hotels and resorts (particularly in managerial positions), as well as concerns surrounding the repayment of loans by the GOSL threatens the long term economic stability of the country (Sarvanathan 2010b; Lund 2010; Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo; Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo). This suggests the significant risks of debt for economic (in)security. According to one official at the Ministry of Planning and the General Treasury (1) the rapid build-up of short term foreign commercial debt from approximately US\$500 million in 2005 to US\$8 billion in 2012, and, (2) Chinese, and to a lesser extent, other large capital injections for development-related projects in Sri Lanka from the Asia Development Bank (ADB) and World Bank may represent the short term misallocation of resources on part of the GOSL, which it may not be able to pay back (Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo). With no 'checks and balances' in the current system, according to a previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of the External Resources Department within the Ministry of Finance and Planning the resultant outcome could be a



‘Greek-type situation here in Sri Lanka where, unable to cover its debts, the government begins to default on loans’ (Interview 67, Colombo).

Ultimately, the end of official war can be viewed as both a disruption to the continuity of Tamil Eelam discourses and narratives associated with the conflict itself (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 5). Importantly, the end of the war did offer the opportunity to re-write the narratives of Sri Lanka’s future if spaces were created that allowed for the voices of those affected by conflict to be heard and processes implemented that enabled a sense of social justice to be brought to those who have suffered for more than a quarter of a century at the hands of the government and the LTTE. Unfortunately, however, four years on from the end of the war the realities of victor’s peace Sri Lanka do not inspire great confidence that such opportunities are likely to be realised in the foreseeable future.

#### **4.8 Regional and Transnational Dynamics:**

##### ***Relations with India:***

Regional dynamics have further helped to shape the trajectories of peace and conflict in Sri Lanka, significantly involving the influence of India in the region. Regionally speaking, the ‘internationalisation’ of the conflict, particularly during the Indian peace-keeping mission and again during the CA, complicated Indo-Sri Lankan relations to an extent that they have never fully recovered from. During the colonial era, many Tamils who had lived in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu moved to Sri Lanka. This resulted in the development of some shared sense of common identity between Indian and Sri Lankan Tamils and a deep sympathy amongst the Indian Tamils for the discrimination experienced by those in Sri Lanka. At the same time, the Indian government has sought to extend its reach and project India as a regional power in South Asia. Both of these factors have significantly influenced the policies adopted by the Indian

government toward Sri Lanka. At the beginning of the 1980s Southern India supported the Tamil separatist movement and exerted pressure on the Indian government such that India went so far as to declare that the Sri Lankan government's 'genocide' was responsible for thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees into India (Ross and Savada 2002, p. 91). After 1983, India began to push for a political solution to the ethnic conflict (Uyangoda 2007, p. 21). The Indian engagement in the Sri Lankan conflict can, thus, be seen as a reflection of regional geo-politics through the desire on the part of India to extend its reach as a rising global power in its own right.

In the 1980s India made several attempts to mediate a settlement to the Sri Lankan conflict and introduced the discourse of power devolution by attempting to convince the Sinhalese leadership that any agreement to end the conflict ought to include provisions for political structures aimed at devolving power in the North and East (Uyangoda 2007, p. 21). Indeed the Indo-Lanka Accord (1987) was constructed under the assumption that the exercising of leverage politics could bring about a politically acceptable solution to the conflict (Uyangoda 2007, p. 32). The Indian government committed itself to putting forward a political process of power devolution in Sri Lanka that took the form of greater regional autonomy via provincial councils, believing that by exercising its political and military clout through its peace-keepers that all of the sides to the conflict would have to accept the peace process (Uyangoda 2007, p. 32). The mobilisation of Sinhalese nationalist forces against the devolution proposals and Indian involvement in the conflict, in combination with, Tamil resistance to unwarranted Indian hegemony effectively augmented the violence in Sri Lanka disrupting personal and community insecurity further when LTTE forces clashed with the Indian peace-keepers that led to the collapse of the entire peace-keeping mission (Sisk 2009, p. 154). In the end India lost both 1200

peace-keepers and its position of neutrality in Sri Lanka before the withdrawal of the peace-keeping force in 1990 (Thompson 2007, p. 297). Moreover, the souring of relations caused by this episode contributed to the motivating factors behind the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by a LTTE suicide bomber in May 1991 (Thompson 2007 p. 297). Ultimately, relations with India have historically been important, but the ethnic crisis has negatively impacted them, with Sri Lanka accusing India of harbouring Tamil terrorists and India accusing Sri Lanka of using tactics in violation of human rights.

During the CA when talks stalled, security and geopolitical concerns in the region motivated Indian actions. Fearing that adopting a tough position toward the GOSL concerning its role in the collapse of peace talks might drive the government closer to the Chinese, the Indian government sided with the GOSL in the war providing intelligence and radar surveillance to the GOSL (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 76). In the aftermath of the war, India has continued to seek to play roles in the socio-economic reconstruction of Sri Lanka. For instance, the Indian government has implemented a housing project to fund the construction of 50,000 houses in Sri Lanka, the bulk of which are expected to be in the Northern Province (Kamalendran 2011). The focus has been on providing shelters for internally displaced persons (IDPs), which are intended to fill a critical shortfall in terms of donor and government commitments to housing construction.

A report completed by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) in December 2011 states ‘the fact that the Cabinet Memo and the Land Circular of 2011 makes specific mention of the IHP [Indian Housing Project] makes clear the importance attached to this project by the Sri Lankan government. Through this project Indian Government is not merely providing housing, but also impacting land policy and civilian access to and ownership of land’ (Fonseka and Raheem, 2011, p. 95). The IHP, however, has not been without its own share of controversies

including confusion as to how the project will be implemented, the allocation of land, visas, and movement of construction material as well as delays related to the Indian government claiming that they were waiting on a beneficiary list to be handed over by the GOSL (Ferdinando 2011; Fonseka and Raheem 2011).

The IHP has created other disputes, such as over the labour that would be used to construct the homes that led to the Indian High Commission issuing a statement officially denying that it would send 20,000 Indian workers and would instead use Sri Lankan labour (Ferdinando 2011; Fonseka and Raheem 2011; ‘50,000 Indian housing project underway’ 2010). Undoubtedly, the future path of Indo-Sri Lankan relations will be highly impacted by the legacy of the IHP and opportunities for India to continue to be involved in, and influence the nature of, Sri Lanka’s post-war development, particularly in relation to the role of China in Sri Lankan affairs.

### ***Relations with China:***

Whilst India and the US were somewhat reluctantly willing to support the GOSL when war resumed after the collapse of the CA, and the EU and Japan were less enthusiastic, China, Pakistan, Russia, and Iran were far more forthcoming in their economic, military, and political support, with China becoming the largest provider of arms toward the end of the war (Sorbo et al 2011, p. 78). Wanting to gain a strategic foothold in Sri Lanka as part of its larger geopolitical strategy, China established a reciprocal relationship that enabled China to develop Sri Lanka as a ‘port for business’, in extending its global reach as ‘regional kingmaker’ (Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo). From this viewpoint China is seen to be developing a multinational ‘arch’ of geopolitical and strategic control in the Asia-Pacific through economic investments in Sri Lanka, Myanmar/Burma, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and parts of Africa

(Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo; Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo).

Such investments have significant political implications. Kristine Høglund and Camilla Orjuela (2012) assert that ‘illiberal international powers’, particularly China, enable illiberal politics in Sri Lanka that are gaining influence through economic investment and tacit support for Sri Lanka in international milieu such as the UN (p. 91). Indeed, China has tended to favour the ‘sovereignty principle’, being willing to support states in their struggles against ‘terrorism’ with little regard as to how such states deal with their ‘terrorist problem’ (Høglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 95). In the post-war period, ties with China have continued to strengthen as China has invested billions in Sri Lankan commercial and infrastructure projects in order to secure and extend Chinese interests including the building of a major harbour in Hambantota with control over oil de-bunkering facilities (Høglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 95; Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo; Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo). However, whilst Chinese loans to the GOSL have no political conditionalities attached to them, concerns have been raised regarding the fact that the loans have shorter repayment times and higher interest rates than those that could have been acquired through the ADB (Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo; Interview 19, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo). The estimated costs to build Hambantota harbour according to a prominent Sri Lankan Economist are US\$500 million with only a one year grace period before the loan comes due at a 6.25% interest rate over

a 10 year period in which to pay back the loan (Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo).

According to Høglund and Orjuela (2012) this indicates the strategic political importance of the Sino-Sri Lankan relationship above solely commercial (p. 96). Further concerns pertain to the fact that in downplaying human security in favour of national security, the Chinese investment strategy has enabled the displacement of Tamils to be exploited by not resettling them to the areas from which they were displaced, freeing up land for large-scale tourism and commercial development that has also resulted in the relocation of some Sinhalese particularly near Hambantota harbour, with highly detrimental impacts to livelihood (Høglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 96; Field Notes Hambantota, July 21, 2012).

Finally, the Sri Lankan conflict must also be set against wider geopolitical dynamics in the region, including competition between India and China as rising powers and the regional strength of Indian but most importantly Chinese economic and political growth. For example, regional assistance in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation has appeared in the form of both Indian and Chinese investment in Sri Lanka as well as plans to bolster local agricultural production and decrease Sri Lanka's dependence on imports, although the actual socio-economic impacts to local populations remains to be seen (Lund 2010, p. vii). This has led to assertions of the possibility of a 'great power confrontation' in the Asia-Pacific region (Høglund and Orjuela 2012, p. 95).

### ***The Diaspora:***

In contrast to the experiences of Tamils in being a minority population in Sri Lanka, in the diaspora Tamils are for the most part better organised politically than the Sinhalese, shifting majoritarian-minority dynamics in favour of the Tamils (Orjuela 2012). In the aftermath of the

1983 riots, thousands of Tamils fled Sri Lanka mostly to India but also in large numbers to Canada, the UK, and Australia resulting in the formation of a vibrant Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora that has continued to play a role in the evolution of the civil conflict and calls for Tamil autonomy<sup>63</sup> (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010; Fair 2007). In the past the Tamil diaspora was instrumental in supporting and funding the LTTE's activities as well as actively lobbying governments in host countries to pressure the GOSL concerning the treatment of Sri Lankan Tamils (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 633). In 2006 Human Rights Watch estimated that approximately one-quarter of the entire Sri Lankan Tamil population, or some 600-800,000 people, formed part of the diaspora (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 644). Numerous temples and churches, festivals, television and radio channels, newspapers, and sport and professional associations provide spaces for Tamil social organising and community-building and a large number of development and humanitarian groups represent a significant political force abroad that seeks to influence events and activities in Sri Lanka (Orjuela 2012, p. 99; Interview 79, Associate Professor at University of Toronto, Leader within the Tamil Diaspora Community, Toronto). Unlike the Tamils, the Sinhalese diaspora has rarely migrated due to the war, although some politically active Sinhalese did leave during the socialist-motivated uprising in the 1980s (Orjuela 2012, p. 100). As of 2012, the Sinhalese diaspora has largely been composed of migrant workers who have left Sri Lanka in search of work in the Middle East, which offers employment opportunities for the poor and particularly women who often transfer remittances from abroad back to families in Sri Lanka, although there are approximately 100,000 Sinhalese located in the West (Orjuela 2012, pp. 100-101).

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<sup>63</sup> As of 2009 Canada is the country with the largest Tamil diaspora, followed by India, various countries in Europe, and Australia (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 633).

Historically, financial support for Tamils living in Sri Lanka as well as remittances to the LTTE came from within the Tamil diaspora including profits from legal and illegal international business activities with estimates reaching upwards of 90-95% of the LTTE's war budget being traced back to investments and businesses abroad (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009, p. 633). Further monetary support is also believed to have come from the forcible extortion of monies from the Tamil diaspora in order to finance the LTTE's war efforts (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 7; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Arms procurement shipments represented another source of interaction with the diaspora and other 'sympathetic' states that included countries in Asia, the former Soviet Union, South-Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Africa (Bhatt and Mistry 2006, p. 14; LePoer 2002, p. 4). Views of the Tamil diaspora as a threat to the integrity of Sri Lanka and, therefore, in many ways also threatening to their personal and/or community security has a long historical legacy and is a source of significant tension and distrust between the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka and those living in the Tamil diaspora (Interview 79, Associate Professor at University of Toronto, Leader within the Tamil Diaspora Community, Toronto).

The diaspora has further played an active role through advocacy, demonstrations, and organised events in calling attention to the plight of the Tamils living in Sri Lanka. During and after the war, the Tamil diaspora has continued to be involved in the widespread dispersal of information concerning the number and intensity of casualties experienced in the North and East and vocal in calling for human rights investigations into atrocities committed during the war (Interview 80, National Spokesperson for the Canadian Tamil Congress, Member of Tamil Diaspora, Toronto). TamilCanadian in Canada and the Tamil Information Centre in the UK, which are designed to provide information about the culture, history, and current situation of the



Tamils in Sri Lanka, are just two examples of the vast information and advocacy networks that exist within the diaspora<sup>64</sup>. Indeed the Tamil Information Centre's (2009) stated mission is to 'empower people, particularly those suffering persecution and subjected to human rights abuses, valuing the distinct identities and differences among them and to improve the quality of life through access to knowledge'.

The end of the war saw a rise of transnational Tamil diaspora activity. For example, from January to June 2009, demonstrations were staged in major cities of the diaspora including London and Toronto on an unprecedented scale (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 6). A human chain, approximately 5 kilometres long and composed of several thousand people was formed during a demonstration in Toronto at the end of January 2009 ('Tamils forms human chain in downtown T.O.' 2009) with protests continuing throughout the year that numbered 100,000 in London in April 2009 ('Truce call as 100,000 rally in London Tamil protest' 2009). Likewise, in Chennai, India newspapers and magazines reported on events surrounding the end of the war at great length and human chains, rallies on beaches, and public meetings sought to bring the attention of the Indian government to Tamils experiencing violence and displacement in the North (Rajagopalan 2009). For those Sinhalese residing in the diaspora, however, the ending of the war was seen as cause for celebration of the victory of the government over separatist terrorism with celebrations, the hoisting of Sri Lankan flags, and the raising of funds for 'heroic' Sri Lankan forces taking place in Sinhalese communities in host societies (Orjuela 2012, p. 92).

The relationship between Sri Lanka, on the one hand, and the Tamil diaspora and receiving states, on the other, is complex with respect to the potential roles and influence of the diaspora on the political situation in Sri Lanka and the policies adopted by the governments of

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<sup>64</sup> See for example, TamilCanadian: <http://www.tamilcanadian.com/> and the Tamil Information Centre: <http://www.tamilinfo.org/home.php>.

receiving states. Vimalarajah and Cheran (2010) argue that the transnational politics of the Tamil diaspora in the aftermath of the GOSL's 'victory' will continue to be an extremely important and influential component of post-war dynamics. This is due to the political beliefs regarding Sri Lanka held by the Tamil diaspora, their activism, and their financial influence that results in a significant degree of pressure on receiving state governments to respond in particular ways to the political situation in Sri Lanka (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 4; Interview 80, National Spokesperson for the Canadian Tamil Congress, Member of Tamil Diaspora, Toronto; Interview 79, Associate Professor at University of Toronto, Leader within the Tamil Diaspora Community, Toronto; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Whilst many in the diaspora disliked the violence pursued by the LTTE, they did share in Tamil hopes for a separate state for all Tamils in Sri Lanka (Interview 79, Associate Professor at University of Toronto, Leader within the Tamil Diaspora Community, Toronto). It has, thus, been argued that despite the defeat of the LTTE and loss in the war that those in the diaspora may not have abandoned their hopes of one day realising their own homeland. In this sense it can be argued that the politically active diaspora reflects many of the same ethnic cleavages and socio-political divisions that exist in Sri Lanka and, therefore, cannot be separated from a consideration of ethno-national relations and tensions in Sri Lanka (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 8). However, some in Sri Lanka have argued that they see a potentially positive role for the diaspora to play politically in Sri Lanka as the diaspora can bring international pressure from the UN and its institutions and host governments to bear on the GOSL and can assist the villages from which they migrated from through investment and fundraising for post-war development and reconstruction (Interview 68,

Member of Parliament Tamil National Alliance, Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

The impacts of 9/11 on the mobility of diaspora populations and heightened interest in their affiliations ‘back-home’ also continue to influence relations both within and outside Sri Lanka. Diasporas within state-security paradigms continue to be viewed as ‘breeding grounds for terrorism’ particularly given the emergence of ‘Fortress Europe’, ‘National Security’, and ‘Homeland Security’ in the post-9/11 era (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 25). Furthermore, the ‘securitisation’ of transnational movements and migration, the implementation of passports with biometrics, and strict border control and travel regulations post-9/11 have ‘vastly strengthened the national security state apparatus’ both in Sri Lanka and abroad (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, pp. 10-11). For example, in 2007 the US Treasury Department froze the assets of the Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation in Toronto, claiming that it ‘passed off its operations as charitable when in fact it was raising money for a designated terrorist group responsible for heinous acts’ (Bell 2008). Anxieties have further been raised for Tamil diasporans due to the fact that the term ‘diaspora’ has been re-introduced into the political discourse in Sri Lanka in a ‘sinister’ attempt to separate the views and beliefs of the Tamil diaspora from Tamils in Sri Lanka in order to weaken the ‘political project of the Tamils’ (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010, p. 8). Such views differ significantly from the ‘unproblematic’ ways in which Sinhalese diasporans have often been characterised in Western host societies due to their middle class backgrounds, educated status, and less overt political advocacy in comparison to their Tamil counterparts (Orjuela 2012, p. 101).

These perspectives have also served to maintain the integrity of the nationalists’ vision of a unitary and ‘whole’ Sri Lankan state and to some degree insulated it against mounting

international pressure and calls to inquire into human rights violations and restrictions on citizens by validating the right of the state to protect its borders, particularly in light of the fact that the Tamil Diaspora has been painted in Sri Lanka by the GOSL as ‘enemy number 1’ representing a major threat to Sri Lankan stability (Orjuela 2012, p. 115; Lund 2010, p. vii; Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo). According to one moderate Sinhalese nationalist supporter in Colombo, for instance, in the diaspora ‘war continues in different ways’ as ‘they [Tamil Diaspora] seek to get into Sri Lankan affairs and politics through [the] back door’ (Interview 43). This perspective has also been reiterated by Sinhalese diasporans that have sought involvement in politics of ‘protecting’ the ‘homeland’ against ‘Tamil terrorism’, therefore, representing continuity between Sinhalese nationalist discourses both within and outside Sri Lanka. It should be noted, though, that Sinhalese nationalism abroad remains less internationalised than that of the Tamils who use foreign countries as a space to organise and preserve their identity (Orjuela 2012, p. 101). That the activism of Sri Lanka’s Tamil diaspora has been framed with such suspicion, with impacts both at home and abroad, suggests the need to continue to critically interrogate the politics behind the framing of those politically active in the Tamil diaspora as ‘terrorist’, particularly in the context of the post-9/11 War on Terror.

#### **4.9 Conclusion:**

This Chapter has provided a historical and contemporary analysis of dynamics influencing the ethnic civil war and continuing conflict in victor’s peace Sri Lanka. This analysis emphasises that although the war may officially be over, ethnic-based tensions and asymmetries of power related to the ‘root’ causes of the continuing conflict have culminated in an environment characterised by high levels of human insecurity related both to actual events during the war *as well as* prejudices and strategies of governance and activism that have shaped

perceptions of the conflict in particularised ways. These include: identity politics that construct the image of a ‘threatening’ ethnic other, continuing efforts to embed the war and post-war environment within the global security paradigm and discourses of ‘terrorism’, the failure of liberal peace and development projects that has facilitated in the growth of anti-Western sentiment and a shift to ‘illiberal partners’ most prominently China, the centralisation of power and militarisation associated with the GOSL’s ‘victor’s peace’, and, finally, how struggles for and notions of ‘homeland’ playing out in the diaspora represent significant factors for those seeking to carve out a dialogical space both in the diaspora and Sri Lanka to assert their views within the complexities of the Sri Lankan political landscape.

As has been seen throughout the Chapter, in many ways Sri Lanka functions as a microcosm for the kinds of political complexities and geopolitics taking place around globe associated with violent ethnic conflict and playing out in Sri Lanka with respect to liberal peace, ‘global security’ and the most significantly consequences of ‘victor’s peace’. The question of what the future holds for Sri Lankans, majority and minority alike, and whether a long term peace can be realised remains for the moment unanswered. Much depends, however, on whether the ethnic polarisation of relations and conflicting notions of nationhood, nationalism, and power politics in Sri Lanka can be overcome.

Civil society in Sri Lanka offers one prospect for developing deeper understandings of the impacts of ‘peace’ and ‘security’ within ‘victor’s peace’ Sri Lanka that threaten to marginalise and securitise certain populations and for asserting ownership over the external and internal forces at work in shaping post-war Sri Lanka by creating spaces for dialogue and exercising agency. However, civil society in Sri Lanka is itself highly politicised, polarised and, ultimately, contested. The subsequent Chapters will explore the multilateral dimensions of civil

society and peace-building in relation to victor's peace Sri Lanka, including the issues and insecurities that civil society seeks to make visible and politicise, the complexities and power asymmetries that shape these insecurities, and the diverse methods of exercising agency that civil society actors adopt in confronting human (in)security and seeking to realise peace and security for itself and its constituents.

## Chapter 5: Contextualising Civil Society in Sri Lanka

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### 5.1 Introduction:

The forthcoming two Chapters challenge many dominant conceptions of civil society within peace-building literature, and particularly those associated with the liberal peace, by developing deeper understandings of the complexities and tensions within civil society. This involves using the Human Security framework to *contextualise* civil society within the historical, cultural, ethnic, and religious experiences, legacies, and biases of its members, and, analyse *power dynamics* between civil society actors that politicises and makes visible some insecurities whilst overlooking and reproducing human insecurity for others within dominant discourses concerning what constitutes peace in victor's peace Sri Lanka. It also involves questioning the assumed universality of civil society's altruism, and generating rigorous accounts of the relationships of these actors to the politics surrounding peace and (human) (in)security, including how such politics are revealed through the nature of the 'peace' work that civil society engages in and the human insecurities that civil society seeks to address.

Such an analysis interrogates assumptions about what civil society is that are often framed by liberal and 'Western' preconceptions and expectations of civil society. This unpacking of 'myth' versus 'reality' is vital in instances of conflict where civil society may reflect interlocking power structures and long-standing inequalities and prejudices against the 'other', in order to better conceptualise and understand civil society and its motivations in specific instances of peace and security. Without an adequate in-depth grasp of the socio-political realities in these settings, these dynamics can (re)constitute themselves in post-war societies, particularly where there has been a 'victor', in ways that continue to segregate and divide populations rather than representing a beacon of hope for a more united post-war society.

Orjuela (2010) asserts that at least on the surface Sri Lanka could be conceived of as having a vibrant and rich civil society that includes tens of thousands of community-based organisations, (I)NGOs, strong trade unionism and cultural associations, and politically speaking has been structured as a democracy since independence in 1948 (p. 300). The foundational roots of modern-day Sri Lankan civil society can be traced back to colonialism and the missionary work undertaken by Christian associations as well as ancient Buddhist texts dating back to the 6th Century Mahavamsa, which helped lay the groundwork for the emergence of a Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalist consciousness that represents a civil society force growing in power today, although amidst accusations of the blurring of lines between civil and uncivil society activity. Sri Lanka also has a strong history of trade unionism beginning in the 19th Century, although by the 1920s the labour movement had shifted its political power largely out of civil society and into the political sphere with the establishment of the Ceylon Labour Party (Orjuela 2008, pp. 103-104; Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 116). Today, the majority of Sri Lanka's trade unions, comprised of approximately 1900 unions are strongly tied to political parties resulting in a highly politicized labour environment (US Department of State 2013 Investment Climate Statement - Sri Lanka 2013). Civil society organisations dedicated to 'peace' work, including in the areas of human rights and political reform toward greater democratisation and power devolution arose in the 1970s and continued to gain momentum, particularly around peace processes including the 2002-06 Ceasefire Agreement that saw a surge of new donors and civil society actors entering Sri Lanka. This was further extended by the influx of (I)NGOs and other humanitarian donors in the aftermath of the tsunami that struck Sri Lanka's coast on 26 December 2004. Indeed Sri Lanka does possess a wealth of civil society entities that existed prior to and during the war, of



which many continue to function in the victor's peace, albeit within a reduced political space and limitations to freedom of action.

This constriction of political space is due to threats of and actual violence, as well as sustained acts of militarisation and securitisation against many civil society actors, which has helped to establish an environment of 'fear' and 'paranoia' for Sri Lanka's civil society sector, particularly hard-felt amongst 'liberally'-oriented civil society such as human rights and peace actors, those advocating for power devolution and international investigations into war crimes alleged to have taken place at the end of the war, and that promote greater direct and/or participatory democracy including increased involvement of civil society in Sri Lanka's political system.

Accusations of the questionable use of funds amongst some of Sri Lanka's most prominent 'liberally'-oriented civil society relating to the realities of continued reliance on foreign funds amongst many civil society organisations, purported monetary ties to the LTTE Peace Secretariat during the war, and allegations that monies intended to benefit Sri Lankans have been used in ways that have gone against the 'national interest' have further hindered civil society both during the war and in the victor's peace. In contemporary times the reality exists that most of Sri Lanka's civil society organisations have been created and/or funded by external sources and assistance, generally originating in the global 'West' in the form of multilateral or bilateral funding on the part of political actors or through INGOs and donor support (Orjuela 2010, p. 301; Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 166). This has led to allegations of the de-politicisation of civil society (Wickramasinghe 2001) as well as significant suspicion toward NGOs and 'liberal'-oriented civil society as serving the interests of 'Western' powers to the detriment of Sri Lanka's sovereignty. The political and legal environment in which civil

society organisations function has become increasingly difficult in recent years as legislation has been introduced to facilitate greater governmental control of civil society through various means, including tighter control of the receipt of foreign funding as well as political legislation and constitutional amendments passed by the GOSL that regulate and censor civil society and its peace-building activities (Edrisinha 2010; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

Contentious relations between the GOSL and civil society are not a new phenomenon and within the context of the victor's peace should be viewed as an extension and deepening of this sometimes tense relationship. Historically, the state has engaged in the repression of public protest against, for example, socialist uprisings in the south in the 1960s and 1970s, and anti-Tamil responses to non-violent Tamil activism beginning in the 1950s (Orjuela 2010; Uyangoda 2007; Devotta 2005). More recently in the victor's peace, civil society organisations in the North have been required to obtain military permission in order to hold meetings and even informal gatherings in homes require governmental permission. Moreover, the government has been accused of resorting to a heavy-handed approach, including accusations of GOSL sanctioned police brutality, in responding to public protests that are critical of government policy or the victor's peace ('Assault on Sri Lanka's Dissent' 2013).

As Sahadevan and Devotta (2006) assert the 'state's political structure can influence what civil society groups demand and how they go about making those demands' (p. 111). Sri Lanka's post-independence political history which has emphasised majoritarian-minority ethnic relations and power dynamics through its largely ethnically-based political parties has further enabled 'particularistic and ethnic-based groups to hold sway – leading to ethnocentric groups triumphing over interethnic and inclusive groups to generate adverse political change and illiberal

governance' (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 111). In turn, ethnocentric groups, and particularly Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalists, have contributed to the victor's peace and the promotion of its 'illiberal' tenets, including even at times adopting violence as a means to pursue their goals, thereby, leading to a blurring between civil and uncivil society in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, in a similar way to that which the Sri Lankan conflict has been heavily shaped and influenced by ethno-nationalist politics so too has civil society, and tensions between actors in the sector have developed along these contours. This has resulted in 'a competition for public space, attention of political leaders and the opinion of ordinary people, and for shaping the discourses on the ethnic issue' that plays out in Sri Lankan civil society through the tense dynamics between the traditional 'liberal'-oriented 'elites' and the Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalists, who are emerging as a new form of rural and nationalist-'elite' within civil society in the victor's peace (Orjuela 2008, p. 145). These actors sustain exclusionary aspects of the victor's peace that continue to hold up and deepen the notion of Sri Lanka as belonging first and foremost to the Sinhalese Buddhists.

Ultimately, the years of conflict, legacies of colonialism, ethno-nationalist socio-political setting, and intensifying centralisation of governmental power have compounded challenges for civil society. Notwithstanding this significant contestation concerning 'appropriate' and 'legitimate' types of civil society in Sri Lanka, civil society has nevertheless spanned a wide range of organisational forms from grass-roots, religious and community associations, the labour movement, credit, trade, and cultural unions, and cooperatives, to human rights, advocacy, and peace entities, INGOs and their local affiliates, and nationalist mobilisations.

This Chapter 'unpacks' and contextualises Sri Lankan civil society with particular reference to its manifestations across different historical periods and ethnic, religious, and

cultural contexts. It begins by tracing the evolution of civil society in Sri Lanka from its origins through to the years following independence, the war, including liberal peace efforts associated with the CA, devastation caused by the tsunami, and, finally, the impacts of the ‘victor’s’ peace on the trajectories of Sri Lankan civil society. The Chapter argues that wider dynamics and structures of power operate through, and are reflected within, civil society and are vital in understanding how we can comprehend of the contradictions and complexities inherent in civil society in Sri Lanka’s contemporary landscape. The last section of the Chapter provides an overview of the forms, issue-areas, and types of human insecurity that civil society groups are seeking to address in the victor’s peace.

## **5.2 Situating Sri Lankan Civil Society in Historical Context:**

To truly understand the nature of civil society in Sri Lanka, and the regimes of power that shape the sector in the victor’s peace , it is imperative to reflect back on the origins of civil society, tracing the contours of civil society’s development within Sri Lankan society. The trajectories of civil society’s evolution can be traced back to two central and related aspects that have thread themselves throughout Sri Lankan history, and, are intimately interwoven within the fabric of Sri Lankan victor’s peace society. These are (1) the legacies of colonialism and (2) ethno-nationalist sentiment dating to the 6<sup>th</sup> Century (Orjuela 2003; Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 48, Chief Ministerial Candidate of the Tamil National Alliance and Former Supreme Court Judge, Colombo; Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy).

‘Ethno-nationalist’ civil society, long a reality within the Sri Lankan civil society sector, may at first appear to be a contradiction in terms but as P. Sahadevan and Neil Devotta (2006) explain ‘it is only when it tolerates, or supports totalising goals or perpetuates violence that it

leaves the civil society arena' and enters that of *uncivil* society (p. 111). Orjuela (2008) also asserts that comments often made by Sri Lankans that Sri Lankan civil society truly represents uncivil society, reflects a problematic misconception between civil society and civility and that in reality associational life and social mobilisations have often taken place along ethno-national, and even ethnicised<sup>65</sup> or racial lines (p. 108).

Drawing on ancient texts dating back to the 6<sup>th</sup> Century Mahavamsa, which purports to legitimise Buddhism's prominence in Sri Lanka through assertions that the Sinhalese Buddhist's ancestors from Northern India were the first to reach Sri Lanka's shores, the Sinhalese have laid claim to being the first settlers in Sri Lanka (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006; Interview 52, Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of Kurunegala, Kandy). According to one retired Supreme Court Justice, these texts were created and extolled by Buddhist priests as a means of pushing forward the notion that Buddhism is inherent or indigenous to Sri Lanka that has now steeped into the minds of the Sinhalese as 'truth' (Interview 48, Chief Ministerial Candidate of the Tamil National Alliance and Former Supreme Court Judge, Colombo). This understanding has helped lay the foundation of the Sinhalese nationalist consciousness that envisions an idealised pre-colonial Buddhist society which has reinforced assertions playing out in the victor's peace that Sri Lanka belongs first and foremost to Sinhalese Buddhism (Orjuela 2008, pp. 69 and 102; Interview 48, Chief Ministerial Candidate of the Tamil National Alliance and Former Supreme Court Judge, Colombo).

Colonialism brought Christianity to Sri Lanka and with it missionary activities that resulted in the marginalisation of Buddhist institutions and other local religious and cultural customs by the colonial administrators (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, pp. 35-36). In the 1800s

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<sup>65</sup> Ethnicisation is defined as the process of infusing and/or intertwining economic and political contestations or conflicts with presumed 'ethnically-pure' collective identities through the formation of political, economic, and/or social boundaries aimed at 'protecting' the integrity of ethnic-cultural heritages and practices.

Christian missionary work undertaken by groups such as the Baptist Mission and the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations focused on education and social work for those disadvantaged in society. This also facilitated in the rise of similar organisations, modeled on Christian associations, founded by Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims as a means of seeking to diminish the influence of Christian missionaries (Orjuela 2008, p. 102; Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 121; Wickramasinghe 2001, pp. 76-77).

The pre-cursors to rural development organisations, cooperatives, credit unions, and micro-credit organisations also began life during colonialism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. British colonial rule can, thus, be seen to have facilitated in the establishment of a civil society foundation rich in associations (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 110 and 125; Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Therefore, despite the predisposition toward organisations based around exclusively ethnic and religious identities, more 'inclusive' organisations have also played a role in the evolution of Sri Lanka's civil society landscape. The establishment of these movements, however, cannot be viewed as having been independent of colonial rule as most were inspired by, or indeed originated within, Western enlightenment ideals associated with the temperance and cooperative movements for example, that continue to be largely funded by, and affiliated with, Western donors thereby questioning the independence of aspects of Sri Lankan civil society.

Sri Lanka's labour movement can in some ways also be traced back to the paternalistic politics of colonialism that witnessed the rise of labour activism alongside struggles for Sri Lankan independence (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Sri Lanka's strong civil society base in trade unionism and organised labour historically reflects the influence of social activism rooted in Marxist socialism in Sri Lanka

(Interview 75, Member of the socialist political left in Sri Lanka and writer for the World Socialist Web Site, Colombo). Indeed, early labour activism was inspired by middle-class professionals, students, and Buddhist monks returning from abroad who had been exposed to socialist ideas and became politically vocal in the 1920s, with labour eventually achieving universal suffrage in 1931 (Orjuela 2008, p. 103; Goonatilake 2006, pp. 265-267). However, by the 1920s the labour movement had shifted its political power largely out of civil society and into the political sphere with the establishment of the Ceylon Labour Party and many unions continue in the victor's peace to remain entrenched in Sri Lanka's political culture allying themselves with leading political parties rather than with civil society (Orjuela 2008, pp. 103-104; Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 116). This remains true of contemporary Sri Lanka, with the ability to mobilise mass protests being vested principally in the political parties, with peace-and human rights oriented groups having less success in drawing the masses to their cause.

### **5.3 Civil Society after Independence:**

Post-independence, Sri Lanka witnessed a continuation of ethno-centric nationalism and religiously-based associations within the arena of civil society. The privileges that had previously favoured English-educated Tamils under colonial rule that gave rise to Sinhalese nationalism and resentment now enabled the tables to be turned in favour of ethnic majoritarian rule post-independence. The political practices of the post-1948 administration continued the 'monocultural' and 'unitarist' policies that had been favoured by their colonial predecessors, however, now with the effect of shifting political relations in favour of the ethnic majority, disadvantaging and marginalising minority groups. In the lead up to the 1956 election and the signing of the Sinhala-Only Act, for example, many powerful Buddhist monks, or *bhikkhus*, supported the Sinhala-Only language policy (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p.43). Sinhalese

nationalists and the Buddhist revivalist movement viewed such policies, and continue to do so, as a legitimate response to the fact that the British gave special advantages to the Tamils and Christians at the expense of the Sinhalese and protested the importance given over to Western values (Goonatilake 2006, p.270; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo).

Subsequently after 1956, Tamil civil servants were increasingly replaced by Sinhalese under requirements that government officials be proficient in speaking Sinhala. The resultant lack of state and private-sector employment opportunities and standardisation schemes in the universities fed into the emergence of a 'radicalised' Tamil nationalism, particularly prevalent amongst Tamil youths (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 56). However, until the mid-1970s, moderate Tamil nationalism continued to seek to redress grievances through the 'ballot box' and established parliamentary procedures in pursuing a negotiated solution to ethnic-majoritarian politics (Bullion 2005, p. 117). It was then that a new generation of Tamil youth, disillusioned by the failings of mainstream politics to achieve change, decided to adopt a more radical path, forming several militant groups that by the late 1980s saw the LTTE emerge as the dominant actor in Tamil nationalism (Bullion 2005, p. 117). The Sinhala-Only Act of 1956 can, therefore, be seen as a symbol of the beginning of acute Sinhalese-Tamil ethnic animosity that has overwhelmingly characterised Sri Lankan political and social relations (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 30). Paralleling Tamil nationalist uprisings, Marxist (largely youth) rebellions and general strikes propagated in large part by the JVP (People's Liberation Front) also represented a form of contentious political action against the mechanisations of government during this time.

The expansion of the state and public sectors in the 1950-70s also contributed to the development of a culture of passivity and submissiveness that has negatively impinged on the growth of independent civil society as the state heavily regulated the system of distribution of



socio-economic needs in the form of jobs and welfare to citizens (Orjuela 2008, p. 106-107; Wickramasinghe 2001, p. 78). This contributed to deeply rooted expectations amongst ordinary people of themselves as the passive recipients of whatever politicians delivered. This culture of passivity was further extended in the 1970s with the opening up of the Sri Lankan economy to market-driven politics that saw an exponential increase in foreign aid and INGOs entering into the Sri Lankan civil society sector that reinforced and intensified these expectations (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). This trend was again reinforced after the outbreak of the war between the GOSL and the LTTE in 1983 and the expansion of civil society groups oriented toward peace in Sri Lanka (Orjuela 2005, p. 124).

#### **5.4 Civil Society during the War:**

The impacts of the destructiveness of the war on the living conditions of Sri Lankans as well as their ability to be secure from the violence resulted in the proliferation of civil society groups, including those connected to INGOs, which advocated for a peaceful resolution to the war (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 139 and 159). Within this context development and aid organisations, conflict resolution and women's groups, research institutions, religiously-based centres, relief workers, and advocacy and human-rights actors began to emerge and proliferate as individuals disillusioned with leftist politics pursued new avenues for engagement. It was also during this time that individuals holding liberal ideals and democratic values within 'elite' classes of Sri Lankan society began to move into more prominent positions within the civil society sector and evolving peace movement (Orjuela 2005, p. 118).

However, the actors within the peace movement tended to take up issues in isolation from one another such that they did not build up larger and stronger networks of support by linking insecurities so that economic suffering and poverty were connected to devastation caused by the

war as a means of building further support for the cause of peace (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). As one Sri Lankan economist explained, part of the problem with aid during the war was that donors in the form of international institutions, INGOs, and donor governments were all preoccupied with trying to convince the others they were right rather than in coordinating aid more effectively (Interview 19, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo). Moreover, actors within the peace movement also had difficulty exerting any significant influence over the political process, as peace groups were often drawn in to support and legitimate the government's 'pacific' intentions during ceasefires only to be marginalised within wartime strategies, such as then-President Chandrika Kumaratunga's 'war for peace' strategy that saw calls for a negotiated end to the war branded as 'unpatriotic' (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 140). This is revealing of the historical trend of successive Sri Lankan governments seeking to uphold their power and end the war on their terms rather than any sustained interest in facilitating in the development of a vibrant Sri Lankan civil society.

In fact in Sri Lanka there exists a long history of the government of the day using both its security and political apparatuses to 'clamp down' on civil society organisations that it views as potentially 'threatening' to its public image and continued role as leader and purveyor of services to the country<sup>66</sup>. For example, one of the central impediments to civil society activities during the war was in the military-controlled war zones where civil affairs coordinators and intelligence representatives in charge of the allocation of freedom-of-movement passes, food supplies, and

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<sup>66</sup> For a discussion of political Acts that sought to regulate civil society during the war see: Orjuela 2008, p. 107 and Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, pp. 114-115.

transportation saw to it that no independent civil society activity was permitted (Orjuela 2005, 129; Interview 39, Pro-Tamil Sinhalese activist, Jaffna).

Likewise, civil society groups were harassed by government agents who were ordered to investigate, interrogate, and even imprison members of groups deemed ‘suspicious’, with the GOSL forbidding local government agencies from collaborating with civil society and purposively denigrating such groups in state media (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 114). For its part, the LTTE also sought to regulate civil society setting up puppet ‘civil society’ organisations in order to transfer funds from abroad into the country. In LTTE-controlled areas the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation regulated local NGOs and was the organisation through which all international aid was channelled (Orjuela 2005, p. 130). Independent civil society groups were, thus, often squeezed during the war, unable to operate outside of the purview of the government and military in the South and the LTTE to the North.

Interestingly two civil society actors that were able to operate with some degree of freedom were groups related to the Catholic Church and associations of women who had lost loved ones and family members in the war. For its part the Church gained credibility for its long-term history of operation in Sri Lanka and the Church became known for its commitment to working with the people and providing them relief during the war (Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam). Moreover, members of the Church’s clergy were able to perform informal investigations into wartime conduct, informing the international community about human-rights abuses as they were protected by the strong international institution of the Church and their relationship to members of the clergy outside of Sri Lanka meant that they could draw on for support when required (Orjuela 2005, p. 130). This was not without criticism, however, as nationalists have accused the Church of having ‘at times spoke out with [an] LTTE

voice' claiming that it was, and continues to be, biased in favour of Sri Lankan Tamils (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo).

Similarly during the war a network of war-affected women, representing mothers, wives, and family members of soldiers missing in action or killed in the war, were able to travel across enemy lines carrying communications and acting as 'go-betweens' helping to negotiate between the government and LTTE (Interview 26, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). In part this was due to the fact that the women were viewed as 'neutral' and shown respect for the loss to their families and loved ones that they endured during the war (Interview 26, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). In many ways this ties to the powerful symbolic imagery of 'mother' that associations of war-affected women and mother's against the disappeared have appropriated to garner socio-political power in the realm of civil society and through which 'have found a great deal of political maneuverability which even politicians, caught within the same ideological construct, are hard pressed to overcome' (Coomaraswamy 1994, pp. 45-46).

In addition to seeking closure to their grief through learning the truth of what happened to their loved ones, the aim of these groups has been to transform networks into those for peace through the active participation of war-affected women in women's rights and advancement, democracy, good governance, and socio-economic development (Interview 26, Founder and Chair of an Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action, Kandy)<sup>67</sup>. Therefore, what often began as a personal quest to discover what had happened to one's family member opened up new opportunities for joining together with like 'others' transforming relationships 'into core units for political organisation around human rights, conflict and peace concerns' (Rajagopalan, 2009).

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<sup>67</sup> See the Association of War Affected Women's website: <http://www.awawsl.org/aboutus.html>.

## 5.5 The CA and the Roles of INGOs:

During the CA the atmosphere did change somewhat as spaces opened up through the peace process for civil society to seek to mobilise more widespread support for peace. Civil society peace groups looked to the signing of the CA as a beacon of hope for the realisation of a peace deal. Schemes such as The One Text Initiative and the Consortium for Humanitarian Agencies that sought to link-up the grass-roots in a peace dialogue to enable civil society to have a voice represented at the time a comparatively better lobbying space in which civil society could seek to play roles in the crafting of a sustainable peace (Interview 57, President of an Association of Local NGOs, Batticaloa; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo).

Government agents also afforded civil society some space to vocalise concerns or support for the process publically (Interview 57, President of an Association of Local NGOs, Batticaloa). Non-violent demonstrations and mobilisations became more common particularly in Colombo and Tamil-majority areas often organised by student groups and teachers for human rights<sup>68</sup>. However, although in LTTE-controlled areas it was not explicitly stated, it was generally understood that the LTTE, or groups linked to them, were behind many of the demonstrations (Orjuela 2005, p. 131). This raises questions regarding the authenticity of these demonstrations as true expressions of civil society and from a human security perspective the degree to which various aspects of human security were threatened in order to ensure compliance with the 'peace' demonstrations.

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<sup>68</sup> It should be noted that early mobilisations in Jaffna in 2000 and 2002 did draw large numbers of demonstrators (e.g., approximately 80,000 in 2000 and 50,000 in 2002). However, on the whole the peace movement failed to generate significantly large numbers of supporters, with numbers generally ranging between 500 and 5000, to gain momentum and represent a viable force in keeping the parties at the negotiating table (Orjuela 2008, p. 126 and 135).

The CA, however, has also been accused of representing another instance where civil society was 'left behind' as the emphasis was put on bringing the government and LTTE to the negotiating table without the input of civil society concerning the broader issues and challenges that a viable peace process needed to address (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organization, Colombo). Despite the multitude of civil society activities and projects that were initiated during the CA, civil society was primarily viewed as a variable to be 'strategically plugged-in to help legitimate the peace process', to mobilise support, and raise awareness rather than to directly negotiate, challenge, or raise questions about its terms (Orjuela 2008, p. 173). The CA is also seen to have 'not recognised civil society' (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organization, Colombo), nor other minorities for that matter, as civil society was inadequately represented in a peace process that primarily acknowledged the two principal protagonists to the war.

Grassroots civil society, in particular, reported that they were afraid to speak up, that they 'shouldn't rock [the] boat', and that it was 'better something than nothing' with respect to a peace process being taken forward even if the peace process was not all that satisfactory (Interview 17, Previously member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). With the change in Government in 2005 that brought the Rajapaksa government into power a 'crackdown occurred' in the ability of civil society groups to have a voice at any level, however, as civil society did not know how to work with the new kind of 'rural elite' that the Rajapaksa government represented and the new government did not know how to work with civil society (Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organization, Colombo). Interestingly, this suggests that leadership and personality dynamics as well as structural and systemic insecurities

play a role in shaping the broader dimensions of human (in)security within conflict environments.

The growth of the international and local NGO sectors that corresponded to international efforts in the CA to bring about a negotiated end to the war have been criticised as an attempt by (neo)liberal forces to replace voices in civil society critical of Western (neo)liberal structures. In one sense the desire by civil society peace actors for political solutions to end the war served to legitimise international involvement as the contacts between civil society leaders and actors in the international community facilitated international interest in resolving the conflict in Sri Lanka (Orjuela 2005, pp. 132-133). It has also been argued that there was ‘a direct relation between the growth of social movements challenging the neo-liberal model and the efforts to subvert them by creating alternative forms of social action through the NGOs’ (Uyangoda 2001, p. 188 in Orjuela2005, p. 126). During the war there was a marked increase in the number of INGOs establishing field offices in Sri Lanka resulting in a ‘swarm of expatriate experts who reside and work in the city of Colombo in what is known as the development industry’ (Wickramasinghe 2001, p. 81).

This led to assertions of the Sri Lankan civil society sector being reduced to a ‘few NGOs in [the] areas of peace-building, human rights, democracy, and minority rights’ (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Nira Wickramasinghe (2001) has argued that the ‘decision to privilege NGOs rather than political parties or trade unions ... is a calculated one’ and that the language of ‘economic effectiveness’ propagated by international institutions which arose during the war resulted in an ‘inevitable depoliticising of society’ (p. 94). In effect this ‘depoliticisation’ can be seen as part of a larger (neo)liberal global governance agenda that limits ‘development’ in Sri Lanka to that compatible with (neo)liberal

models and promotes an understanding of civil society that is consistent with ‘Western’ understandings and sympathies (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). This also helped to lay the groundwork for the de-legitimisation of ‘liberal’ forms of civil society in Sri Lanka as fronts for Western interests in the victor’s peace. Wickramasinghe (2001) likens such power relationships to ‘chains’ that ‘mediate between the donor and the ultimate receiver. A grassroots organisation may appeal to a local NGO, which may in turn appeal to its head office in Colombo, which will then apply for support from an international NGO’ (p. 94). From this perspective, the imposition of (neo)liberal models of peace and development onto civil society can be disempowering to Sri Lanka’s civil society actors who have sought to locate avenues and paths for development outside of (neo)liberal models by restricting their freedom from international hegemonic power structures associated with the liberal peace. This reinforces the position adopted in Chapter 2 that threats to agency and empowerment stem not only from those who would threaten peace and security from within, but also externally from those who would intervene in conflict with a ‘we must help them’ attitude.

This is evident by the fact that many civil society groups in the form of local NGOs were ‘used to implement relief and social services, with a top-down logic’ during the war (Orjuela 2005, p. 129). This logic meant that rather than being able to build-up the capacity to work in horizontal collaboration across different sectors to meet the needs of those impacted by the war, groups particularly at the community level were relegated to the role of delivering services conceived of by ‘elites’ both domestically and internationally and, thus, remained largely mono-ethnic in structure and operation. Similarly, it has also been argued that the dependence of many of Sri Lanka’s civil society groups on foreign funding facilitated in the rise of a competitive, ‘anti-peace’ culture between groups that were forced to compete for limited funds in order to



ensure the survival of the organisation (Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

However, the question must also be posed as to what options many civil society groups had at the time as human and physical capacity was devastated by the war. Many groups were also coming under attack by government and nationalist forces, and the realities of Sri Lankan socio-politics meant that civil society often required the support of external partners to help spread information and bring pressure to bear on repressive forces as many felt a support-base did not exist within Sri Lanka (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Nevertheless, the ‘demonization of NGOs as anti-national’ and allegations of the misappropriation of NGO funds and corruption amongst the leaders of many advocacy-oriented civil society actors, particularly those with ties to Western organisations and governments, negatively impacted the ability of actors to build mass public support for peace-related activities during the war (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

Ultimately, according to a Professor Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Colombo, the growth of Western INGOs and donors tied to the liberal peace that sought to ‘aid’ Sri Lankans helped contribute to a nationalist backlash against NGOs that played into the hands of the Sinhalese nationalist agenda that continues in the victor’s peace (Interview 15, Colombo). Sinhalese nationalist groups condemned Norwegian (and associated global civil society) involvement in Sri Lanka’s internal ‘sovereign’ affairs accusing the Norwegians of being biased towards the LTTE and the LTTE of violating the ceasefire (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 140). Such nationalist sentiment proved extremely powerful as often the demonstrations

of the Sinhalese nationalists were larger and more visible than mobilisations in support of the peace process as the Buddhist nationalist clergy drew on voluntary Sinhalese associations in order to stage political protests and bring increased attention to their cause (Orjuela 2005, p. 127, 133). The nationalists, thus, purported that any foreign-related NGO who advocated for the peaceful resolution of the conflict through negotiated settlement represented the interests of neo-colonial imperialists seeking to 'recolonize' Sri Lanka (Goonatilake 2006).

### **5.6 Impacts of the Tsunami on Sri Lankan Civil Society:**

As discussed in Chapter 4 the 2004 tsunami led to a rapid surge in the presence of INGOs and Western-funded donors in Sri Lanka. Initially, after the tsunami ordinary Sri Lankans and local civil society organisations quickly responded with relief and donations, much of which was given over without concern about the victims' religious or ethnic backgrounds (Goonatilake 2006; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). These initial efforts however soon faded, as political and military leaders sought to take over control of relief efforts in their respective areas of control and the increased presence of INGOs alongside the huge influx of money from abroad shifted the dynamics within civil society toward international leadership in the tsunami-affected areas (Orjuela 2005, p. 134). Indeed, reports have cited that in the first five months after the tsunami 80-90% of all foreign aid was channelled through NGOs (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 166). The legacy of the tsunami with respect to civil society is mixed with the President of an Association of Local NGOs in Batticaloa, for example, asserting that on one level the 'tsunami [was] a blessing in disguise' as the influx of international actors brought increased aid and international attention to Sri Lanka (Interview 57, Batticaloa). Others, however, have remained more sceptical of the long term impacts of the presence of large numbers of INGOs and their affiliated local constituencies in Sri Lanka, arguing that this has

served to extend and intensify the tradition of external agencies influencing the directionalities of Sri Lankan (civil) society (Orjuela 2008, p. 105; Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

Aid conditionalities attached to donor aid, for example, has resulted in civil society groups, particularly outside Colombo in the West, North, and East, reporting that they have often conformed to Western standards with respect to setting up NGOs and practices in areas such as reporting and accounting in order to receive funds (Interview 41, members of a culturally-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organization for equality, Jaffna; Interview 34, member of an organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, member of a rural development foundation, Puttalam). Likewise, a member of The Association of the Local NGOs in Batticaloa reported that meetings held in English by international actors charged with coordinating aid delivery were often poorly attended by members of grass-roots organisations who did not speak English and were seen by international donors largely as contractors and implementing organisations, not as experts who could intermediate between international organisations and local civilians (Interview 57, Batticaloa). Some local civil society groups in the East, ultimately, concluded that despite increased potentiality for spaces to be opened by the tsunami for Sri Lankan civil society to be 'engaged' in post-disaster reconstruction in meaningful and empowering ways they were largely side-lined in post-tsunami recovery activities (Interview 57, President of an association of Local NGOs, Batticaloa; Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union and grass-roots civil society activist, Batticaloa; Interview 41, members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa).

Similarly, an aid culture was extended in the aftermath of the tsunami that added to rather than alleviated or ‘emancipated’ those made insecure as aid was thrust upon them instead of in consultation with those suffering to determine their needs (Interview 57, President of an association of Local NGOs, Batticaloa). In the words of one grass-roots Sri Lankan civil society actor working and living in a tsunami-affected area, this simply shifted the nature of inequalities and who was ‘in charge’ of ruling over them from the LTTE and military to the international community (Interview 41, members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This implicates the international community in the reproduction of political human insecurities by (perhaps inadvertently) denying communities the freedom to determine their own needs and influence how development aid is used in ways that communities believe will best meet those needs thereby reinforcing conditions of political and economic dependency.

The mismanagement of aid and conditionalities tied to donor assistance analysed in Chapter 4 significantly impacted the ability of civil society, both international and local, to adequately respond to the needs of those impacted by the tsunami. Likewise, conditionalities placed on (I)NGOs externally by those donating monetary support who wanted to see concrete ‘results’ meant that many groups became inflexible and could not respond to the needs of communities beyond the demands of their funders (Brun and Lund 2010, p. 16). Numerous stories and frustrations were recounted by local civil society groups and citizens during this research concerning aid mismanagement by international donors. Concerning fishermen, this involved, for example, the provision of ‘fleets of boats’ to compensate for their losses in the tsunami but no permanent shelters were built to house these boats and as many fishermen were moved in-land to relief camps sponsored and run by international donors, boats were reported lost or damaged with some being washed away and cracking in the sun with no one there to

monitor them, therefore, resulting in a further loss of livelihoods (Field Notes Trincomalee, July 12-13, 2012; Field Notes Batticaloa, May 13, 2011). Thus, (I)NGOs and Western donors have indirectly helped enable the GOSL to take over lands in the aftermath of the war due to their failure to pursue a long-term plan for post-tsunami resettlement that took account of the needs of those displaced from the beginning to be returned to the areas where they make their livelihood. Local civil society, often reliant on funding from INGOs and donors and largely subject to their mandates, has been left relatively powerless to challenge such actions.

Civil society dynamics in Sri Lanka were inextricably altered by events in the aftermath of the tsunami as INGOs and international donors replaced local forms of organisation as the primary providers of community assistance. This resulted in a 'brain drain' from local organisations to more well-funded and better paying international entities that contributed to reinforcing the historical tendency toward a culture of servitude across Sri Lanka generally where people have come to expect to be acted upon (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Over the longer term this has also impacted the demographic breakdown of the country in terms of age and education as many of the young and talented have left war-torn and tsunami-impacted areas for Colombo or have been swayed by the offering of better paying (I)NGOs and international institutions to take up work in these organisations rather than in more traditional associations in their communities reinforcing the 'brain drain' and raising succession questions and challenges for such groups to stay afloat in contemporary Sri Lanka (Field Notes Colombo, July 7-8, 2012; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based

members union, Batticaloa; Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

### **5.7 Contemporary Spaces for Civil Society within Victor's Peace Sri Lanka:**

Within the victor's peace the Rajapaksa regime's ideology has weakened the ability of 'liberal' forms of civil society to dialogue and interact with government as well as exploited existing tensions within civil society (Interview 74, Justice of the Peace, Socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat of Muslims, Colombo). Moreover, the victory has exacerbated existing ethno-nationalist sentiment through the GOSL's support for Sinhalese nationalism and the political promotion of the nationalist narrative. The government uses this narrative to garner support for its policies that have caused it to drift toward 'democratic-authoritarianism' amongst claims that the country is under attack by 'Western' and subversive domestic forces determined to undermine Sinhalese Buddhism's rightful prominence in Sri Lanka (DeVotta 2010, p. 342; Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). In the words of one Sri Lankan scholar specialising in policy research and public policy, it remains 'deeply unfortunate that nationalism continues to fail to provide a shared language for political communities within Sri Lanka' (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

In much of the country relatively homogenous ethnic groupings speak different languages, practice different religions, and receive different news and media reports concerning the state of the country, post-conflict reconstruction, and the ethnic 'other'. As stated by a Development Economist and Founder of a Development Institute in the North near Point Pedro,

that displaced peoples have tended to (re)settle in areas with ethnically-‘like’ others has tended to compound ethnic polarisation (Interview 11, Colombo). Many of the civil society groups that do function, therefore, still tend to focus on and respond to the needs of their particular communities. Furthermore, relationships of political patronage exist related to colonialism and ethno-nationalist dynamics that have prevented cross-ethnic communication and collaboration with the Founder of the Northern Development Institute near Point Pedro going so far as to assert that non-partisan civil society has been destroyed in Sri Lanka (Interview 11, Colombo). This has led to the question of whether there is a ‘crisis of confidence in civil society’ (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). Although it must also be acknowledged that Sri Lanka is in the early stages of post-war ‘peace’ and that the status of civil society cannot be said to be necessarily reflective of long-term trends, taking into consideration the continuities in Sri Lanka’s civil society sphere from war to ‘peace’ a stronger case can perhaps be presented.

The political victory has further enabled the suppression of ‘oppositional’ civil society including peace and human-rights groups and many actors in previously war-stricken areas of the country. This is due to practices of governmentality exercised by the GOSL that direct citizen and civil society behaviours in particular ways due to the threat of reprisals for ‘oppositional’ activities and are focused specifically on the development of particular areas of the country deemed strategically important in terms of trade, tourism, and economic growth that do not look favourably on ‘oppositional’ voices (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 3, Executive Director

of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). One need only think to the ever-present possibility of 'white van' disappearances and other forms of political violence, including accusations of being anti-Sri Lankan and an LTTE-sympathiser that remain palpable in the minds of many Sri Lankans to imagine the disciplining affects that such threats might have, with minority populations in the North and East as well as Tamil politicians, activists, and 'elite' civil society leaders describing extreme wariness and fear of the security sector (Interview 68, Member of Parliament Tamil National Alliance, Colombo; Interview 64, members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna; Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 39, pro-Tamil Sinhalese activist, Jaffna; Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 1, Formerly Head of South Asia Programming, International Alert, London). Additionally, a 2012 report by Human Rights Watch on Sri Lanka reported that 'Tamils with alleged links to the LTTE were increasingly at risk of arbitrary arrests and torture. In April, nearly 220 Tamil men and women in the Trincomalee area were arrested and held for several days without charge in military detention camps' (Human Rights Watch – Sri Lanka 2012). An important consequence of the military defeat of the LTTE has, thus, been that despite the declaration of 'peace', minority groups outside the purview of the GOSL's particularised version of post-war 'peace through development'<sup>69</sup> continue to be vulnerable to personal and political forms of human insecurity

In Sri Lanka these types of dynamics have for the moment created a situation of 'autocratic stability', where certain civil society voices have more power, influence, and 'the ear of government' and in turn reciprocate by supporting the government in its policies and encouraging their constituents to do the same, but this could come at the expense of long term

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<sup>69</sup> For more on the GOSL's 'peace through development' agenda see: Sarvananthan 2010b and Lund 2010.



(human) security (Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo). Administratively the task of approving and delegating funds for post-war ‘peace-building’ (reconstruction and development) projects takes place through the Presidential Task Force for Resettlement, Development and Security in the Northern Province (PTF), which is run by the Ministry of Defence and is where all humanitarian and reconstruction work in the North is approved<sup>70</sup>.

At present it has been reported that programmes that contain reference to peace, human rights, or psycho-social work are not being approved by Government and the tightening of control and strict monitoring over who has access to programme areas of a ‘sensitive’ nature (such as displacement camps in the North) has meant that those not directly listed on applications and approved for programmes are forbidden from entering these areas, thereby, ‘eating into peoples freedoms and rights’ (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam; Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). According to civil society actors in areas impacted by the war near both Puttalam and Jaffna, the GOSL is able to control access to controversial areas in the post-war period through the PTF with the resultant impact that it becomes increasingly difficult for civil society actors to access vulnerable populations (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women Jaffna; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Those civil society actors that have sought to conduct research and/or implement programmes in these areas concerning issues that are ‘off-limits’ or ‘ill-legal’ have faced public scrutiny from the GOSL in the form of audits, negative press from state-controlled media, and have even received death threats against themselves and their families (Interview 20, Second Secretary British High

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<sup>70</sup> Information on the PTF can be found at: [http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20090514\\_03](http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20090514_03).

Commission, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo)<sup>71</sup>.

In the words of a prominent Sri Lankan scholar, although civil society is and ought to be 'accountable to [the] laws of [the] land,' this does not mean that 'civil society cannot advocate [the] political expressions of peoples' through its work, particularly if these question and/or challenge existing laws and policies that are viewed as unequal or unfair (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). This relates to the role and place of civil society projected by certain actors, and, particularly the GOSL and those both internally and externally close to the government, and whether civil society is framed and promoted as merely a service provider or viewed as a socio-political sphere in its own right. It also becomes an issue concerning the freedom of expression that is considered tolerable or acceptable within a population and the hierarchies surrounding this given political as well as social constraints that remain severely limited in the context of the victor's peace (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

In the victor's peace under President Rajapaksa the relationship with and perception of Sri Lanka's 'liberal' and Colombo (urban-based)-'elite' civil society has shifted with negative repercussions for these actors (Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, GOSL, Colombo). This is because historically, at least at the level of Sri Lankan civil society's 'liberal' and urban-based 'elite', there existed a working relationship of sorts with governments

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<sup>71</sup> A Report released by Amnesty International in 2013 details many such arrests, threats, and acts of violence perpetuated against journalists and members of civil society both during and after the war. The Report can be accessed at: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA37/003/2013/en/338f9b04-097e-4381-8903-1829fd24aabb/asa370032013en.pdf>.

of the past as they were ‘cut from the same cloth’ of Sri Lanka’s Colombo-based, English-speaking, educated and aristocratic elite, and were, thus, more comfortable with one another (Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). At present, however, tensions exist between Sri Lanka’s ‘elite’ urban civil society in Colombo and the Rajapaksa government with urban-‘elite’ civil society asserting that President Rajapaksa and his inner circle represent a ‘new breed’ of Sri Lankan politician characterised by rural, traditionalist elitism (Interview 69, Catholic Priest and member of Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Colombo). This view is further reflected by the regime’s close association to grass-roots Sinhalese Buddhist hardliners who it relies on as a significant part of its voting base (Interview 69, Catholic Priest and member of Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

The liberal peace notion that an active civil society critique is important for democracy further encapsulates this tension as advocacy-oriented civil society is ‘presented as ideologically opposite to nationalism’ and bending to the coloniser’s will (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Thus, a variety of civil society and left-wing political actors in Colombo, the East, and North argue that the spaces in which to engage politically on the part of civil society have been shut down, with anyone engaging in socio-political critique or putting forth an alternative vision of peace to that of the GOSL interpreted as holding specifically ‘Western’ and ‘un-Sri Lankan’ affiliations (Interview 74, Justice of the Peace and Socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 65, Founder of

an Institute of Development near Point Pedro; Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). It is the alternative identity proposed through this vision for civil society and what it does in terms of upholding a more politically active ‘social contract’ between a democratic government and its people, which seeks to hold a government to account that scares the nationalists (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

Interestingly, the government’s stated rationale for its outlook toward civil society centres around claims that civil society is *not* actually accountable to the people as they do not seek public approval for their activities whereas political parties are accountable to the public and the judiciary is accountable to Sri Lanka’s Constitution (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). As many employed within the GOSL do not have exposure to other ideas outside of those promoted by government they are easily swayed toward the viewpoint that civil society critiques without action and is unaccountable to the Sri Lankan people and that it is the GOSL that takes action, which has been particularly effective in relation to the war’s end (Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This has also helped to enable the demonization of Sri Lanka’s civil society liberal elite as ‘Western agents’ and, therefore, as representing a threat to Sri Lanka’s (Buddhist) national identity (Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). That many of Sri Lanka’s civil society groups have retained close ties to Western agencies and institutions either for monetary survival or as means of bringing external pressure to bear on the Sri Lankan government has done little to dispel this viewpoint. Similarly, the legacy of the CA has likewise facilitated in this narrative being propelled forward.

Government motivated crackdowns on civil society notwithstanding, it has been argued that the foundations for where social democratic ideas come from, for example, within civil society, student movements, and trade unions at the moment find themselves weak (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Despite the fact that demonstrations consisting of the working class, youth, students, teachers, and unions have become an almost daily occurrence, indicating discontent amongst civil society, civil society actors have been unable to translate this into more concerted widespread mass mobilisation (Interview 75, Member of the socialist political left in Sri Lanka and writer for the World Socialist Web Site, Colombo)<sup>72</sup>. Government heavy-handedness in responding to protests critical of the GOSL or victor's peace as well as accusations of police brutality and threats of death and violence directed at protest organisers have featured centrally as explanatory variables in describing the challenges faced by protesters that mobilise against the GOSL or its policies related to the victor's peace ('Sri Lanka's Assault on Dissent' 2013, p. 41). For example, the heads of the teachers union responsible for strikes across a number of universities in 2012 in which teachers demanded a salary increase, increased national expenditure for education, and an end to military and political interference with academic freedom reported having received death threats, and, in February 2012 in response to a protest involving an estimated 300,000 fishermen island-wide concerning a fuel price hike, the police were reported as having used excessive force against the demonstrators, including firing live ammunition into the crowds, and killing and

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<sup>72</sup> A report published by International Alert titled 'Sri Lanka's Assault on Dissent' (2013) provides a good overview of the politics and challenges around the 're-emergence of large-scale public protest' for civil society actors that are viewed as protesting against the GOSL or aspects of the victor's peace (pp. 41-44). Amongst the challenges discussed include heavy-handed governmental response, police brutality, and the use of unnecessary and excessive force against demonstrators, in breach of international law enforcement standards. Those large-scale public protests that have been permitted in the post-war period have primarily been those in support of the GOSL and/or victor's peace and against external intervention into Sri Lanka's sovereignty. These have often been organised and led by Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalists and particularly Buddhist Monks who are members of organisation such as the JHU and BBS and is explored in this thesis in greater detail in the section Engaging the GOSL: Mobilising and Advocacy in Support of the Victor's Peace and Government in Chapter 8.

injuring several demonstrators ('Sri Lanka's Assault on Dissent' 2013, p. 41). The high politicisation and polarisation of relations in Sri Lankan society has left relatively little space for inter-ethnic civil society action and collaboration, particularly at the grassroots level. The years of ethnic war helped inoculate ethnic polarisation with little interaction between groups that has contributed to the weakening of the inter-communal fabric of civil society organisations as many remain mono-ethnic in structure and membership.

Likewise, the desire to meet one's own human security needs, when the war made all insecure, has resulted in a diversity of outlooks toward the ways in which the war ended that have tended to diverge along ethnic, religious, gendered, and class lines creating significant tensions and challenges within civil society<sup>73</sup>. Those living primarily outside the North and East, and particularly the Sinhalese, who have been made more secure by the end of war, have tended to support its end (Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). This has led to a variety of positions being taken up concerning how civil society should operate and function in the post-war period, the level and type of critique of government that is appropriate, and the kinds of insecurities that have been made visible in the aftermath of the war.

### **5.8 Addressing Human Insecurity through Post-war Civil Society 'Peace' Work:**

The above reference to 'peace' work appears in quotations to denote the fact that perspectives as to what constitutes peace (and security) remain highly contested within civil society and under the GOSL's 'peace through development' paradigm, both of which are explored in greater depth in Chapters 6 and 7. As will be made clear in these Chapters both 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' politics, power dynamics, and relations of ruling have resulted in

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<sup>73</sup> These are explored in greater detail in Chapter 6.

differential weighting with regards to the prioritisation of some issues over others, including the framing of some actors as ‘good’ civil society whilst others are projected as negative, ‘illegitimate’, and ‘threatening’. Despite restricted spaces and heightened insecurity associated with the victor’s peace and resultant technologies of governmentality, including securitisation, however, civil society has continued to seek to address a number of issue areas and related aspects of human security in the post-war period.

Figure 5.1 outlines the diverse issue areas and activities of Sri Lanka’s civil society actors in the post-war period and the human (in)securities they seek to address. An explanation of this ‘peace’ work follows for each human (in)security indicator<sup>74</sup>. It is important to acknowledge that many of the human (in)securities addressed are interconnected and compounded by one another such that economic insecurity in the form of women’s exclusion from the formal economy, for example, is linked to livelihood challenges and personal and health insecurities due to violence against women. Likewise, economic insecurities relating to the inability of fishermen to earn a livelihood due to displacement and resettlement in-land away from the coast connects to political insecurities including state-sanctioned intimidation and fears of violence for speaking up against such practises as well as political oppression and restrictions of freedoms.

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<sup>74</sup> An explanation of each indicator is provided in Chapter 2 as well as Appendix D.

**Figure 5.1 Breakdown of Civil Society ‘Peace’ Work in Victor’s Peace Sri Lanka by Human Security Indicator**

Human Security Indicator	Civil Society ‘Peace’ Work in Victor’s Peace Sri Lanka
<i>Economic (in)security</i>	Assisting with resettlement challenges such as registering and searching for work, assistance in forming/registering civil society groups, microcredit/finance participation and training, addressing livelihood needs through service delivery and vocational training, encouraging, assisting, or founding cooperative/collective forms of organization, activities aimed at empowering women (and other vulnerable populations), bringing them into the workplace, and addressing women’s exclusion from the formal economy
<i>Food (in)security</i>	Addressing capacity to access food safely, especially women and children, growing and distributing food for personal and commercial consumption, mobilizations around rising costs of living and acquiring materials for food production, supporting/providing training in self-sufficient food production, and lobbying for a public distribution system
<i>Health (in)security</i>	maternal care, sanitation and health education, addressing the health, including psychological, impacts of war, rape, domestic abuse, and other forms of violence, substance abuse treatment, lobbying for better health care, access to better sanitation and clean water in displacement and resettlement areas and in schools, activities/education related to disease control (e.g., dengue), human rights monitoring, and filing legal cases against rape, violence, and domestic abuse
<i>Environmental (in)security</i>	environmental and resource education, management, and protection, assistance to flood victims, land distribution and resettlement with respect to quality of land/soil, mine removal
<i>Personal (in)security</i>	conflict resolution-related activities, endorsement and participation in forms of reconciliation and mediation of inter-personal disputes, reconstruction work around resettlement, livelihoods, assistance to build homes, addressing violence against women and ethnically-motivated violence, rights education and advocacy, protection of vulnerable peoples, monitoring abuses, and legal aid and efforts to bring perpetrators of abuses to justice
<i>Community (in)security</i>	Youth and inter-community exchanges, performance arts and cultural activities, and inter-religious group work (social cohesion activities), efforts to foster inter-group ties by locating and encouraging coming together around common themes of insecurity, conflict resolution mechanisms such as mediation and facilitation between different ethnic groups in communities (e.g., between Tamils and returning Muslims in the North), efforts to bring about ‘non-violent’ societies and/or ‘cultures of peace’, education around democratic attitudes/values, marginalization, and violence against minorities, efforts to protect/maintain integrity of a group’s identity and related in-group socialization activities (e.g. particularly Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists)
<i>Political (in)security</i>	human rights and electoral monitoring, reporting, research, documentation, and public dissemination of information on human rights abuses, government corruption, disappearances, political violence, non-public and public advocacy and mobilizations, education on voting, democracy, and encouraging the construction of an active citizenry, lobbying and testifying to national and international policy-making bodies, land claims and rights issues concerning ownership, titles and deeds, efforts to bring perpetrators of political violence and abuses to justice, lobbying for implementation of, education on, and dialoguing on aspects of reconciliation and reaching a political solution to the conflict



### ***Economic (In)security:***

Efforts to confront economic insecurities in Sri Lanka include livelihood issues, resettlement politics (particularly for fisher-people and in agriculture), women's exclusion from the formal economy, human capacity issues, and the appropriateness of economic programmes for meeting livelihood needs. Targeting economic vulnerability and threats to economic well-being represent important aspects of the work of civil society actors in this regard. Interestingly, however, with respect to the GOSL's 'peace through development' strategy, some civil society groups, such as the Programme Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development in Vavuniya, have alluded to an inherent tension concerning the fact that the GOSL sees development as focusing on infrastructure (roads, bridges), whilst civil society wants to focus on livelihoods (Interview 34, Vavuniya).

For both displaced and local peoples, for example, rural development societies collect information, engage in 'participatory rural appraisals', and produce reports as to how many families are residing in a particular village, the level of displacement and unemployment that exists, and the types of needs that there are in order to seek to shape the direction of development, resettlement, and reconstruction policies (Interview 34, Programme Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Likewise, service delivery organisations and in particular, Gandhian<sup>75</sup> groups organise and administer workshops aimed at 'self-industry', for example, balancing running a home and participating in the workforce, and,

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<sup>75</sup> The term 'Gandhian' groups has often been employed in Sri Lanka to refer to development-oriented civil society groups that have sought to incorporate aspects of Gandhian economics - such as providing productive meaningful work for everyone, 'simplifying' lifestyles, and promoting spiritual development and harmony through a rejection of materialism (Newcombe 1998). Groups such as the Sarvodaya Movement also self-identify with Gandhian traditions noting that the organisation has been inspired by 'the Gandhian ideals of truth, non-violence, self-denial and service, ... the goal of a no-poverty, no-affluence society' in Sri Lanka ('Saroda Products' - Sarvodaya Promotional Materials).

providing vocational training to improve livelihood and economic development (Interview 32, Members of a Gandhian development organization district center, Marawila/Maravila; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organization, Colombo).

Resettling returnees also face several obstacles pertaining to economic insecurity in areas from which they were displaced and/or re-settled. Concerning resettlement politics and economic insecurity, such obstacles include registering as returnees, traveling long distances in search of and to secure employment, and accessing areas in which to earn a livelihood. ‘Grass-roots’ civil society groups, particularly comprised of women returnees themselves, have formed to assist the newly returned to register, settle in new areas, and follow administrative procedures set out by the GOSL. One reason for this is that returnees are often women-headed households where male family members might have died in the war or left in search of work abroad leaving women to coordinate their return and family’s well-being (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women’s organisation for equality, Jaffna).

Further resettlement politics pertain to access to areas in which to earn a livelihood. Fishermen, for instance, experience challenges relating to livelihood due to their inability to access coastal areas that have been allocated for tourist development such as that currently ongoing in Passekuddah Bay (Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Likewise others, especially those in the fishing industry, continue to face economic deprivation related to the continuation of HSZs and lack of access to areas that were once major fisheries (‘Sri Lanka’s most war-affected community’ 2010). Competition with both large Indian trawlers and Sinhalese boats coming up to fish Northern waters remain key challenges for Northern fisher-people (‘Sri

Lanka's most war-affected community' 2010; Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro). Fishery cooperatives, formed in the 1970s, continue to seek through advocacy and spreading of information on the plight of fishermen to raise awareness for fisher-peoples ('Sri Lanka's most war-affected community' 2010). Fishermen themselves have also engaged in mobilisations against access disruptions and rising costs of materials such as oil.

Mass displacement and the loss of many lives to the war has also meant that women have become both primary caregivers *and* breadwinners forcing women to confront barriers they face in entering the public sphere but also offering opportunities to renegotiate the boundaries and subjectivities of women's positions and identities within Sri Lankan society (Hewamanne 2009, p. 158). For many women there exists the reality that they are not expected to go out in public unaccompanied, further intensifying the challenges for women in acquiring employment and employment-related skills and education necessary to obtain jobs (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's organization for equality, Jaffna; Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo). This exclusion from the formal economy proves extremely difficult for women to make a living as many are uneducated and have had no experience in the formal economy (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo).

Similarly, according to the Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum near Batticaloa, traditional cultural roles concerning women's involvement in domestic work, in combination with, class and caste dynamics has meant that many women have been relegated to and 'purposely kept in the kitchen' (Interview 55, Batticaloa). Through education and skills-training in book-keeping, money management, business machinery (e.g., sewing machines), and by providing access to and training in the internet and reading books, and

newspapers civil society groups have sought to facilitate women's access to the formal economy (Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa,; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro). Some women's groups have brought women within communities together to do activities and address mutual need as many are landless, lacking housing, and livelihoods, and, to reinforce the notion that challenges are common 'for [all of] us not just me' (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo). As reported by several displaced women living in an IDP camp near Puttalam that are members of the women's rural development forum, they have engaged in micro-finance endeavours investing in the opening of shops, textile work, agriculture, and areas of fishing such as net construction, using a percentage of the money they receive to invest in and start up other projects in communities (Interview 33, Puttalam).

Questions have been raised, however, regarding the appropriateness of the 'fit' of some economic insecurity programmes with respect to them not necessarily being focused on empowering women or enabling them to earn a good living. For example, one member of a rural women's development foundation explained that '[there is] training in tailoring but [this is] not needed in the village, so how [can anyone] make an income if these activities [are] not required?' (Interview 28, Colombo). Similar comments have also been made regarding the fact that the context in which such economic activities are being encouraged has not been considered such as that imported items are often cheaper than those locally-made resulting in people buying the imports (Interview 28, Member Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo). Thus, skills training in small scale economic production might not actually ease economic insecurity. Such comments reflect many of the same challenges raised by critics of the liberal peace with respect

to the effectiveness and empowerment associated with ‘blue-print’, ‘one-fits-all’ approaches to ‘development’.

Women’s groups have, therefore, sought to engage in activities that focus on assisting women to realise that they have agency and to alter community perceptions of them, aiding women in livelihood pursuits and skills-training at a practical level, but also altering women’s perceptions of themselves, such that they no longer call women ‘widows’ but instead ‘heads-of-households’ (Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women’s Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 54, Former President cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Such positive labelling is intended to alter women’s perceptions of their positions in post-war societies and to lessen the negative stereotypes associated with their status in society, not as a weakness but as a place of potential power for women as heads of households capable of achievement (Interview 55; Executive Director of a Women’s Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 54, Former President cultural-based members union, Batticaloa).

***Food (In)security:***

With respect to food (in)security the availability of food and quality of land on which to grow food for consumption and pursue commercial agricultural endeavours are central issues, including safety and security concerns pertaining to traveling long distances to access food. In areas of displacement and resettlement, for example, both issues simultaneously impact food (in)security (as well as other forms of human insecurity) for thousands of Sri Lankans, and in particular women and children, who are amongst the largest re-settlers to previously war-torn areas. As explained by the District Manager and District Secretary of a Rural Development Foundation in Puttalam, it is often extremely difficult in displacement settlements to earn a livelihood through agricultural work and there is a perception that once land is cleared for IDPs

to resettle that with assistance situations can improve as re-settlers garden, produce food, and farm (Interview 31, Puttalam).

However, upon re-settling in areas from which they were displaced further obstacles remain relating to food insecurity as the lack of infrastructure in these areas means that returnees must often travel long distances to acquire food, clean water, and supplies. According to a Sister of the Catholic Church who has worked closely with displaced peoples seeking to resettle in the North in the aftermath of the war, this raises safety and security concerns for women and children as many food items are available only in Vavuniya or Jaffna meaning that they must travel far to access stores and markets, which can be dangerous due to military presence and the possibility of encountering harassment and violence (Interview 40, Jaffna). Furthermore, as explained by the Sister and the Director of a Centre for Women and Development in Jaffna, when traveling long distances, one can fall victim to vandals as items in settlements can be stolen whilst one is away (Interview 62, Jaffna; Interview 40, Jaffna). In speaking with members of one women's rural development foundation comprised of displaced women near Puttalam, the displaced women explained that if the houses and infrastructure necessary to obtain clean water, food, and adequate resources to earn a livelihood for one's family existed in the North they would consider returning (Interview 33, Puttalam). However, as few can afford to build their own homes under owner-driven housing schemes, or have safe places to live whilst homes are being constructed including access to food and clean water, they believe that returning and resettling remains impossible (Interview 33, Puttalam).

The quality of soil in which to grow food in areas of resettlement, and rising costs of food, also pose challenges that civil society actors have sought to address in their work with returnees. Agricultural activities can be difficult in areas of the North, for instance, as described

by the Founder of an Institute for Development in the North, a dry arid season makes it difficult to grow a variety of foods and agricultural education is needed to help returnees grow appropriate foods (Interview 65, Point Pedro). Thus, organisations, such as Sri Lanka's Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR), work to 'bring about policy changes at macro/national level, while developing people's own strength, awareness and capacity to protect their livelihoods, environment, food security, fighting against poverty and disparities' ('Movement for National Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR) - Sri Lanka' 2012). Assistance and encouraging households to grow their own food including organic seed provision, and, training in sustainable approaches and small-scale agricultural and gardening for personal consumption and/or commercial sale are areas that civil society groups have focused on with respect to addressing food and economic insecurities as there are few opportunities for large scale farming for income generation (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and Member of the National Committee on Women Jaffna; Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa). Government lobbying and policy-focused activities are also pivotal in relation to food security as food is often overlooked due to the prioritisation of other issues such as the interests of the GOSL in demonstrating to the international community its success in resettlement. This has been 'achieved' through an emphasis on moving people out of camps rather than on ensuring adequate resources are available to enable returnees to meet their human security needs (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director for an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 61, Director of a civil society organisation for war-affected elderly citizens, Jaffna).

***Health (In)security:***

Drug and alcohol abuse particularly amongst men, sexual violence and violence generally, including domestic abuse, and sanitary conditions in IDP camps and displacement settlements are factors in health insecurity. Drug and alcohol abuse relates to economic insecurity in the form of unemployment, lack of opportunities to earn a livelihood and the psychological trauma of war and feelings of depression and worthlessness associated with the war's end and victor's peace (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director for an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 61, Director of a civil society organisation for war-affected elderly citizens, Jaffna; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Although civil society actors explain that suicide rates are not necessarily high, they acknowledge that people feel depressed as they 'don't see there could be a life beyond what they are currently experiencing' (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo). Smoking and increased drug and alcohol problems amongst IDPs, and men and youth in particular, have become an increasing problem leading civil society to engage in drug and alcohol addiction programmes in war-affected areas, in combination with, the activities aimed at alleviating economic insecurity outlined above (Interview 32, Members of Gandhian development organization district center, Marawila/Maravila; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

Women's health insecurities have been framed around experiences of sexual violence and domestic abuse. Likewise, sexual health issues more broadly are an area of focus, specifically with respect to youth and young girls. These include attempts to control women's behaviour and to uphold traditional cultural norms, particularly in villages, by patriarchal influences such as gossip, rumours, sexually-related teasing, harassment, rape, and threats of violence (Interview



55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Women also experience intimidation and violence carried out by the military in the North (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Concerning domestic abuse, women have faced violence not only from spouses but also attacks on younger wives by those more senior in polygamous marriages. Many women are socially and politically silenced from reporting sexual violence as no platform exists from which to speak out against what is happening as women can be shunned and ostracised from communities or thrown out of homes for having had sexual violence committed against them (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa). Civil society groups have focused here on counselling work concerning domestic violence, facilitation with respect to conflict resolution in instances of separation or divorce, and health education and support concerning sexually transmitted diseases, abortions, and maternal care (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace and member of the National Committee on Women Jaffna). Lawyers working with human rights and women's groups have also had some success filing cases of abuse and rape in courts (although the military remains generally untouchable) and in reaching convictions, separation, maintenance, and childcare agreements for women (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace and member of the National Committee on Women Jaffna).

Finally, in some long-term displacement settlements significant health insecurities persist. For example, in one displacement settlement near Jaffna where most have been displaced

since the early 1990s, no development programmes other than some immediate aid alleviation in the form of the provision of building materials such as tin for roofs, water pumps to access fresh water, and temporary toilets have ever been provided. However, having not received further aid or updated programming since early displacement much of this assistance is currently in a state of disrepair and dilapidation as rain leaks through holes in roofs, approximately 140-150 families share the remaining 10 temporary toilets that continue to be useable and 15 families are allocated to each water pump, which fails to supply daily water needs (Field Notes IDP Settlement, Jaffna, July 17, 2012). Likewise, in the West near Puttalam and Marawila many impacted in earlier stages of the war continue to live in temporary housing in displacement settlements with no sanitation and children's health issues are raised in schools where mould is rampant and toilets are unusable (Field Notes Marawila May 4, 2011; Field Notes IDP Settlement, Puttalam, May 4, 2011). Left without the ability financially to provide assistance due to the politics of donor aid, civil society can do little more than continue to monitor the situation and bring the plight of the long-term displaced to the attention of international donors and researchers.

***Environmental (In)security:***

Relatively speaking, at the moment in Sri Lanka environmental (in)security has been largely overshadowed by other war-related insecurities taking precedence politically, socially and economically with respect to alleviating continued suffering and addressing the centralisation of governmental power and the constriction of spaces for civil society. This has resulted in environmental considerations largely taking a back seat as an area of central focus of civil society work. Where the environment has been considered it has largely been linked to economic insecurities in the areas of agriculture and fishing (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of

Development, Colombo). The environmental consequences of building power plants and infrastructure development are also issues, though drastically minimised by their economic potentialities. Likewise, many in the North and East that earn a livelihood through fishing or farming are concerned with issues regarding land quality and use due to soil degradation or inability to cultivate land related to mines, and, access to and health of the sea for fishing (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo).

Interestingly, agricultural activities and the health of the land and sea are potential sites of mutual concern for people in the North and South. MONLAR, for example, seeks to build links between farmers in the North and South through its focus on mobilising small farmers, ecologically sustainable farming, non-chemical and pesticide use in farming, and improving self-reliance through agro-ecology ('Small farmers in Sri Lanka' 2012; 'Movement for National Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR) - Sri Lanka' 2012; Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). Such groups as well as Gandhian organisations look to ways to reconnect societies that bring people back in line with nature and the environment (Interview 24, Moderator and National Co-ordinator for a National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling, Kandy).

***Personal (In)security:***

Threats of violence and intimidation against citizens, and women in particular, emotional and psychological insecurities associated with discrimination, and war-related trauma, personal disputes and related conflict-resolution mechanisms, non-violence education, rights work, and efforts to bring perpetrators to justice are aspects of personal (in)security. Political forms of

violence carried out against actors critical of government on a systemic scale are discussed in the subsequent section Political (In)security. With respect to personal (in)security, however, according to a citizen in Jaffna who is also the Director of a civil society organisation aimed at assisting elderly people impacted by the war, people remain extremely fearful of violence committed against them as a result of poverty and unemployment with violence and break-ins to one's home being common (Interview 61). Many homes, for example, do not have windows, doors, or locks and are being rebuilt in remote, war-torn locations. For many there are no men or older boys in the household to help assist in maintaining the security of vulnerable citizens, such as the elderly and women, even in their own homes (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna). Likewise, as alluded to in previous sections a number of civil society actors in various war-affected regions of the country mentioned that it can be dangerous for women to go out alone without a male companion and travelling long distances in order to find work and access food and water has resulted in increased reports of rapes and violence (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organization for equality, Jaffna). Abuses of children and violence in the home between parents, and, parents and children further represent acts of personal-level insecurity (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna).

Civil society groups have specifically focused on addressing such violence through activities aimed at enhancing economic prospects, rights and social education focused on women

and children in particular, and interpersonal conflict resolution and the encouragement of non-violent communication techniques and lifestyle. They have sought to teach positive communication between parents and children and change mind-sets with respect to educating parents and children on the importance of education to earning a livelihood in the future (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 56, Directors of a Village Empowerment Centre, Batticaloa). Similarly, despite the fact that rights-work has been clamped down on by the GOSL, civil society has informally sought to do rights awareness work including communicating information on where to go and how to report violence and rights abuses and providing support for those abused or victimised in society (Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo).

Women (and other returnees) live in fear of returning to, and resettling in, areas from which they were displaced during the war due to the fact that owner-driven models of housing necessitate that they either build or pay for the building of their homes, which can take long periods of time and as indicated above still often do not result in a secure and safe home for them and their families. Women and community-based groups form networks of support to monitor each other's personal security and women's rights groups and lawyers work to assist women in reporting on violence, abuse, and intimidation in communities to bring offenders to justice or at least publicly shame them with women's identity's being kept anonymous and rights groups and lawyers representing a public face (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and

Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 37, Director of a civil society organisation for war-affected elderly people, Jaffna). As explained by the Director of a Centre for Women and Development in Jaffna who works extensively in this area, this includes free legal aid for women who do come forward to report cases, legal education to the public concerning punishments for such crimes, seeking to prosecute those responsible, and documentation work on violence against women (Interview 62, Jaffna). However, serious challenges persist with respect to instances where women who are raped do not want to come forward due to fears of military retaliation, social stigmatisation, and/or future abuse as authorities are often the culprits behind these acts and use them as ‘tools’ of intimidation to try and dissuade women from engaging in certain activities or behaviours that challenge the traditional roles of women in society (Human Rights Watch 2013, p. 7; Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 39, pro-Tamil Sinhalese activist, Jaffna). According to a 2013 Report released by Human Rights Watch entitled, ‘We Will Teach You a Lesson’: Sexual Violence against Tamils by Sri Lankan Security Forces’, ‘since the end of the armed conflict in 2009, the continued large-scale deployment of the armed forces in former LTTE areas of northern Sri Lanka, coupled with increased surveillance of civil society groups, has stymied community responses to rights abuses including sexual violence’ (pp. 7-8). Equally, reports of rapes and other acts of intimidation and violence often go unheeded by local police and military authorities (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 39, pro-Tamil Sinhalese activist, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women’s organisation for equality, Jaffna). According to Human Rights Watch, as of 2013 ‘only a handful

of reported acts of rape committed by members of security forces have been prosecuted. No senior military official has been prosecuted for any serious crime related to the conflict, and crimes of sexual violence have been no exception' (p. 8).

***Community (In)security:***

Concerning community (in)security, the integrity of a group's identity and the upholding of a sense of 'intra-group' belonging are important factors relating to various aspects of social cohesion and in-group socialisation. This includes inter-ethnic exchanges, the performance arts, addressing community-level conflicts through dispute resolution work, and, paradoxically, also the marginalisation of minorities due to mistrust associated with nationalist sentiment that results in tighter in-group socialisation and exclusion of perceived 'others'. On the side of social cohesion, some Sri Lankan religious organisations such as inter-religious organisations have been particularly active in seeking to provide a basis to bridge inter-ethnic divides as religion is fundamentally tied to Sri Lankan life. This has been recognised by non-religious civil society as well as those who have sought to connect with religious clergy members and set up inter-religious committees to encourage inter-religious cooperation on aspects relating to the humanitarian needs of those impacted by the war (Interview 70, Catholic Priest and member of CASA and CARITAS, Colombo; Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). One example of this pertains to the National Peace Council's work with over 700 members of inter-religious groups across 12 districts of the country, including the North and East thereby representing religious clergy of all the main religions, to engage in humanitarian initiatives to meet the needs of war affected women and children in particular (Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-

governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo; National Peace Council of Sri Lanka – Media Release 2012). Two District Inter Religious Councils have been established in their respective areas that include actors in the North and East, comprised of religious and civil society leaders, committed to seeking humanitarian solutions to issues faced by women and children in post war Sri Lanka. Additionally a National Council has been established, along with 3 Provincial Councils, comprising religious and civil society leaders selected from their respective district committees (National Peace Council of Sri Lanka – Media Release 2012).

Such inter-religious committees it is hoped might permeate outward to the larger community of Sri Lankans reducing mistrust and animosity through encouraging religious leaders in their sermons to promote inter-ethnic and inter-religious bridging given the space of prominence that religion holds (Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). According to a member of one inter-religious committee, they joined to instil ‘some hope’ through the ‘building of [a] community of people together in Sri Lanka’ and supports such work ‘through sermons and in communities’ though the ‘process may be long-term and slow moving’ (Interview 70, Catholic Priest and member of CASA and CARITAS, Colombo). Moreover, such forums provide invaluable spaces to discuss and learn from each other’s challenges and problems, to work together in non-controversial areas and provide assistance to victims of the war (Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Likewise, North-South exchanges, especially between youth, can help build trust and inter-communal bonding (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and



CARITAS, Moratuwa, near Colombo)<sup>76</sup>. The holding of ‘non-political’ cultural and village-level events can also encourage inter-group cohesion, helping to build a sense of community that has often been lost in the war or was non-existent to begin with (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Performance-arts based organisations further promote understanding and ‘de-othering’ of the ethnic ‘other’ by bringing artists and youth together for joint performances and through plays, dance, fine arts, and music showcase unique aspects of Sri Lankan culture across different ethnicities and religions (Interview 36, Members of The Centre for Performing Arts, Jaffna Branch).

In addition, conflict resolution training, facilitations and mediations, nonviolence education, and other liberal peace-oriented values associated with democracy have been utilised in attempts to not only shift attitudes but also behaviours encouraging non-violence as a lifestyle choice. Such work, as expressed by the Moderator and National Co-ordinator of a National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling located in Kandy, is based on a belief in the necessity of bringing moral values and spiritual development back in line with one another, as at present, daily life is seen to be largely based on bribery, corruption, and betrayals of trust suggesting in their words that ‘society [itself] is corrupt’ (Interview 24, Kandy). As a means of encouraging greater in-group socialisation around ‘peaceful’ behaviours, training on non-violent action, practicing non-violence in life, and non-violent communication are carried out including resolving small-scale community-based conflicts and tensions related to suffering and livelihood challenges to encourage alternatives to violence for the resolution of conflict (Interview 24, Moderator and National Co-ordinator of a National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling, Kandy).

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<sup>76</sup> For further examples see the website of the National Youth Services Council at <http://www.srilankayouth.lk/> as well as that of the North-South Youth Exchange Program – Gampaha at <http://peace-srilanka.org/tamil/index.php/events-current/306-north-south-youth-exchange-program-gampaha>.

Non-violence has also been employed as a conflict resolution tool through mediation and facilitations for inter-group conflicts (Interview 16, Program Officer for a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). For instance, conflicts have been witnessed to have arisen amongst those displaced and between inter-ethnic groupings in communities where people are returning to areas previously displaced from during the war (Interview 39, pro-Tamil Sinhalese activist, Jaffna). Amongst the efforts by civil society actors have included a focus on introducing conflict resolution mechanisms and on reintegration (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo). Social programmes and inter-group capacity-building also take place where Muslims and Tamils, for example, might be invited to form a community group to take decisions jointly and organise livelihood activities or to solve community-level issues on issues of mutual concern (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna).

The question of 'belonging' and finding one's place in a post-war Sri Lanka, however, remain acute issues particularly amongst the displaced some of whom have been living in displacement 'settlements' for twenty years. Such anxieties have led the displaced to repeatedly question aloud where they belong in post-war Sri Lanka. Many of the displaced have been residing in settlements for decades, children have been born, friendships formed, and marriages made with members of the receiving communities to which the displaced fled. These people ask how can they be expected to return to the areas from which they were displaced when they no longer have any connection or home to return to, but equally how can they continue to survive in displacement with no permanent homes or hope of income to support their families? (Interview

33, Displaced members of a Women's Forum in an IDP camp, near Puttalam). Many peoples who were not previously involved in community-based organisations (CBOs) prior to displacement have become involved in 'self-help' groups, necessitated by displacement, to seek to realise representation for themselves and others in similar situations who have had no societal representation (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women's Forum, Colombo).

On the side of community insecurity, fear and suspicion associated with the legacy of an indoctrinated 'culture of war' in Sri Lanka continues to represent a very real source of human insecurity that has manifested itself in support for GOSL propagated messages surrounding the victor's peace and continued need for militarisation in the North to maintain 'security' as 'mistrust lingers from the decades of bloodshed and isolation' ('Analysis: Sri Lanka's long road to reconciliation' 2012). This mistrust can be seen in the comments of two Sinhalese nationalists interviewed for this study, a moderate Buddhist monk located in Jaffna who asserted that some people were so indoctrinated by the LTTE that these views continue to remain fertile in their minds, and, a Sinhalese nationalist activist residing in Colombo, who pointed to a story carried in nationalist-oriented media that claimed that , recent prison revolts had been inspired by LTTE supporters carrying pictures of Prabhakaran as evidence of the lingering support for Tiger separatism that necessitates government maintaining a strong military presence in the North in light of the legacy of decades of terrorism in Sri Lanka (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo). These fears connect to suspicions that civil society groups also function as 'front-organisations' for separatism and lingering pro-Tiger sympathies (DFAT Report 1478 2013). The result is support for securitising policies in the North that paradoxically may factor into greater discontent amongst Tamils and the possibility that one day minorities may again seek

secession or turn to violence in response to continued socio-political repression. However, both of the Sinhalese nationalist actors mentioned above expressed support for the government and the necessity of maintaining HSZs in response to their perception that Tamil politicians might use the ‘ethnic issue’ to destabilize the post-war situation and that a terrorist threat persists that could rise up again in the future if left unchecked (Interview 60 Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo). Such perceptions of insecurity then get played out through increased societal polarisation, fear, and mistrust in which nationalists, from moderates to hardliners, express their support for government in order to *strengthen* their feelings of personal security. For example, one Colombo-based moderate Sinhalese nationalist supporter articulated their view that ‘there is safety now’ she ‘doesn’t leave home with the fear of not returning due to being bombed’ though the ‘threat is still fresh in the minds of Sri Lankans’ and that Sri Lankans must be wary of anything that could potentially bring new threats (Interview 43, Colombo).

Orjuela (2010a) further asserts there is a thin line between ‘in-group socialisation, which supports enemy images and war propaganda, and fostering a shared identity necessary for suppressed and frustrated groups to mobilise and voice concerns’ (p. 313). This can most prevalently be seen in the anxiety of many Sinhalese nationalists over the maintenance of Sri Lanka’s Sinhalese Buddhist national identity that has historically been motivated by an innate paranoia that the Sinhalese heritage and culture will be lost if not protected (Uyangoda 2007; Devotta 2005). Such paranoia continues to be expressed today in arguments such as that put forward by a Colombo-based moderate Sinhalese nationalist supporter that the ‘Sinhalese have no other country, [their] own writing and language [is] only spoken here [in Sri Lanka] and we have a feeling of really being people of this soil’ (Interview 43, Colombo).

According to a Bishop Emeritus and member of the Diocese in Kurunegala, the Sinhalese, therefore, view themselves very seriously as having a responsibility to preserve the culture of the Sinhalese and religion of Buddhism in Sri Lanka (Interview 52, Kandy). This should not be taken to imply that the Sinhalese are not necessarily okay with others settling in Sri Lanka and establishing a multi-ethnic society so long as the Sinhalese remain predominant as they are ‘people of [the] soil’ (Interview 43, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Indeed, it is not uncommon to see monuments, billboards, and bumper stickers depicting Sri Lanka as both a Sinhalese and Buddhist state and celebrating the heroic victory of Sri Lanka’s armed forces as one travels around the country, further reinforcing this perspective (Interview 52, Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of Kurunegala, Kandy; Field Notes Jaffna, May 9-12 2011 and July 15-17 2012; Field Notes Colombo, July 6, 2012; Field Notes Kandy April 30 2011). Against this backdrop, according to the Executive Director of a Human Rights Group based in Colombo, the Sinhalese nationalist card works well within Sri Lankan society pulling on the heartstrings of Sinhalese Sri Lankans to be put in charge of their own future and facilitating in the rise of rural, chauvinistic attitudes that feed back into Sinhalese nationalism (Interview 44, Colombo).

***Political (In)security:***

Many aspects concerning civil society’s responses to its own political insecurity are explained in depth in Chapter 8 as they relate to civil society exercising agency in response to state (but also nationalist [un]civil society)-imposed insecurities. Here civil society’s activities concerning confronting political (in)security on behalf of others (though also to some extent one another) are highlighted. These include human rights and advocacy work, investigations,

reporting and documentation of disappearances, violence, and human rights abuses, including restrictions of political freedoms and land claims, democracy and electoral education, and work that addresses events taking place in the political sphere and relating to national-level policy instruments. At the level of national policy instruments, civil society responses to the LLRC represent one example as groups have harnessed onto the LLRC's recommendations as a way to open up spaces within Sri Lankan society to at the very least dialogue on reconciliation even if only within the framework delineated by the LLRC (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Through workshops and roundtables organised by groups such as the Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA) and the National Peace Council (NPC) reconciliation provides a platform to bring diverse actors together including members of parliament (MPs), donors and diplomats, NGOs and academics, and of course religious actors of all persuasions (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). These fora also provide opportunities to speak out against atrocities and about challenges facing post-war Sri Lanka without specifically assigning blame per se as often group members represent Tamils, Sinhalese, and Muslims (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo). It is important not to overemphasise the possibilities of such meetings, however, particularly since they are composed primarily of 'elite'-level actors and represent 'coalitions of the willing' rather than 'hard-liners' on all sides who have not been successfully brought into the dialogue. This also raises questions

over the level of involvement of Sri Lanka's smaller minority groups in such processes and whether these fora reflect inclusivity or yet again primarily reinforce the dominance of Sri Lanka's two largest ethnic groupings. However, such activities do represent important inter-ethnic and inter-religious spaces for civil society to come together, contribute knowledge, and build a broader vision of reconciliation, including pressuring the GOSL to live up to its stated commitments and address recommendations put forth by the LLRC.

Public communication and education on rights, the democratic process, and government policies are other avenues in which to address issues of political (in)security by encouraging the development of critical thinking skills, particularly at the grass-roots, and making people more aware of events, activities, and policies of a political, economic, and social nature being propagated across the country. Groups call attention to women's and human rights issues and laws, citizen equality, conflict resolution initiatives in other countries (including South Africa, Philippines, and Northern Ireland) and power sharing initiatives (such as federalism as practiced in Canada and India), although power-sharing was more prevalent prior to the end of the war as such activities must now be undertaken covertly (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 16, Program Officer for a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Reading and study circles aimed at democratic education have been used as tools where civil society groups may not 'talk of democracy directly all the time [but] also focus on democratic values and voter education' as a means of instilling criticality and building an active citizenship (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee). Actors who employ these methods emphasise that they do not

necessarily directly focus on the Rajapaksa regime but on building local awareness and capacity to take informed decisions in responding to the political process (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee).

Likewise, civil society actors have highlighted the importance of voter education as many Sri Lankans have never considered voting strategically, often voting along ‘familial lines’, the way their family has for decades. Therefore, through voter education civil society groups seek to encourage people to vote for politicians they believe in and support the ideas of, and to consider that many often express a desire for ‘an honest politician’ but then complain about the politicians they have elected into power (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee). This alludes to deeper-level asymmetries of power operating in Sri Lankan society related to culture, class, and caste-based disempowerment in which people feel as though they have little opportunity to change their situations. Although many activities related to fostering a democratic culture and active citizenship link to elements associated with the liberal peace and have been subject to accusations of ‘brain washing’ and ‘neo-colonial imperialism’ by nationalists, they do represent efforts to empower marginalised and oppressed voices in society, to vocalise concerns, critically consider events and policies taking place across the country, and to participate in broader discussions about a post-war Sri Lanka in which they would want to reside.

Finally, activities related to advocacy, monitoring, and protection represent important areas of civil society activism targeted at political (in)security. At the moment land claims are one particularly vital issue-area as people seek to return to lands they were expelled from during the war where others may now be residing. Moreover, the government has not taken action to move peoples off lands without proof of ownership placing the onus on those returning to



reclaim lands. As many have lost ownership deeds and property titles due to displacement in the war they cannot return and claim ownership over their property (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women Jaffna). Furthermore, individuals are required to register in Colombo at a land registry office and have to track down ownership permits that were often destroyed or lost in government agencies in the war and where copies may no longer exist (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna). Proving proof of ownership in such circumstances represents a huge challenge for many, not to mention the costs of traveling to and from Colombo, and fears associated with interacting with military and security officers at checkpoints or in government departments (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna).

There have also been accusations of deliberate military and government stalling tactics where someone will call those seeking to return to their lands requesting proof of ownership, individuals will bring the requested documents in to a government office, and a government agent will tell them that they do not have the correct documents and that they must go and locate the correct ones and return back to the office with them, leading people to eventually give up on claims (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna). Complicating resettlement and land claims is the occupation of the military on lands classified as HSZs and the movement of military families to areas in the North previously occupied by those displaced, including the government taking over lands it wishes to develop for tourism and infrastructure projects. Such complexities connect to the wider political implications of civil society's efforts in the area of land claims and

broader questions surrounding restrictions on rights and freedom of movement in victor's peace Sri Lanka. Faced with these challenges civil society actors have brought legal assistance to the people, organising legal aid in displacement settlements and mobile offices where lawyers are transported directly to areas where individuals claiming ownership over lands are residing to discuss claims, take legal action, and assist in locating deeds and registering ownership on behalf of claimants (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 19, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo).

Despite the reduced space for civil society actors to make human rights abuse claims and advocate on behalf of those marginalised for fear of facing political violence themselves, some civil society actors have continued to engage in monitoring, documenting, and reporting activities even if 'covertly' and under the guise of relief work (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam; Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners' Children, Colombo). Still others have sought strategically to be overt and public in their documentation and publication work as a means of countering risks of assassination, arrest, or being disappeared by being as public and visible as possible (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). In reporting and documenting human rights abuses, groups seek to simultaneously bring issues down to the level of the individual/community and deal with them on a case-by-case

basis whilst also raising them up to the level where the extent of atrocities on a collective scale can be realised and projected both nationally and internationally. In addition to published reports, civil society actors have utilised visual documentation by taking photographs of injuries sustained during the final campaigns of the war including limbs lost, shrapnel wounds, burns, skin damage, chemical burns, and injuries related to the shelling of areas where civilians were caught up at the end of war (Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam). Such actors, including a Sister that runs an orphanage near Mankulam and worked providing humanitarian assistance in the North both during and after the war, also photographed individuals after being beaten and tortured as evidence against the official narratives of the victory and activities taking place in the victor's peace (Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam).

Civil society actors further engage in human rights-based work providing free legal representation to anyone needing it and/or investigating cases of disappearances (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). As no official list of those disappeared or suspected of being the subject of a political assassination exists, civil society actors collect and document names and cases, and, conduct advocacy work, both nationally and internationally, to try and make others aware of political violence occurring. Such actors lobby government, often at immense personal risk to themselves, using legal channels to find out information and provide answers to families who have lost loved ones (Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). As one human-rights actor working in Jaffna acknowledged 'technically [one] can [still] go missing, [that is the] scary part' (Interview 37)<sup>77</sup>. Likewise, as many are often too scared to publicly report violence or suspected

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<sup>77</sup> Out of 29 abductions and 3 missing persons officially reported in the media, most have not returned to their homes and families, rendering them 'disappeared' persons ('New wave of abductions and dead bodies in Sri Lanka' 2012).

disappearances due to the belief that the armed forces are often the culprits and that such actions have been government sanctioned, the work of civil society actors in this regard represents a vital avenue for individuals to seek answers with less risk to themselves. Civil society has also travelled directly to the UNHRC and other international bodies to provide information as well as contribute to international reports like that of the UN Panel of Experts (Interview 74, Justice of the Peace and socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 45, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). Seeking to publish in newspapers and in all of Sri Lanka's major languages as well as meeting with diplomats in Colombo to try and exert pressure on the GOSL from the international realm are further forms of activism related to political insecurity (Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo). Thus, the work of advocacy, legal, and human rights groups represents a hugely significant means of applying sustained pressure and a crucial and invaluable counter-balance to biased nationalist reports, government propaganda, and official narratives surrounding the war's end and victor's peace.

## **5.9 Conclusion:**

As has been made clear throughout this Chapter, Sri Lankan civil society is perhaps best conceived of as a multifaceted, complex, competing, and often politically contested sphere or medium of dialogue and action with respect to diverse objectives, interests, and identities. Indeed, as both scholars and civil society actors themselves have asserted, civil society is an ideologically and politically contested concept in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan civil society has variously been depicted as 'pluralistic' (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy), 'amorphous' and 'not having taken root' (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka,

Colombo), a 'front' for 'Western' interests, 'anti-national' and 'anti-Sri Lankan' (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, and President Royal Asiatic Society, Colombo), 're-colonisation' by foreign NGOs (Goonatilake 2006), co-opted and 'coined by certain interest groups' in order to distinguish themselves from the state (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo), and as reflective and constitutive of 'new circles of power' driven by (neo)liberal rationales, rife with internal 'contradictions' (Wickramasinghe 2001).

This reflects the fact that the power dynamics that characterise Sri Lankan society more broadly are also mirrored in its civil society sector. Civil society can, thus, be seen in many ways as a microcosm of Sri Lankan society divided ethnically, religiously, and geographically, as well as between class and caste, elite/urban, grassroots/rural, and moderates and hardliners but importantly also a space for challenging and transforming these dynamics. In Sri Lanka such divisions have been reinforced by the legacies of colonialism, culture of war, and corresponding lack of inter-ethnic contact, state repression, and securitisation that continue to play out in the victor's peace under majoritarian politics, corruption, and sustained militarisation (Orjuela 2010a and 2005; Harris 2005; Interview 77, Senior Advisor Transparency International in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

The failure to address the root causes of the conflict vis-à-vis the government's political strategy that asserts that there actually is no ethnic conflict but that the violence spanning the last three decades was solely a 'terrorist' problem has further fractured civil society along ethno-nationalist lines. This fracturing can be seen between those who condone and indeed encourage the government's stance and those that accuse the government of acquiescing to Sinhalese hardliners in order to retain the hardliner vote (Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-

governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Similarly, the corresponding anti-Western sentiment that has grown up relating to the ‘interference’ of Western countries in Sri Lankan affairs has factored into the redrawing of boundaries between ‘good’, acceptable and ‘bad’, unacceptable civil society in ways that emulate tensions and divisions within the conflict and its resolution (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). In this sense, conceptualising of Sri Lankan civil society as a singular (idealised) and homogenous entity or as an inherently positive force in promoting peace, democracy, and good governance, risks drastically oversimplifying the highly diffused nature of its actors and viewpoints. The next Chapter addresses these tensions, challenges, and contradictions within Sri Lankan civil society through a detailed analysis of asymmetries of power that reveal exclusionary aspects of civil society in relation to the victor’s peace and the exercising of ‘power over’ civil society by other civil society actors themselves.

## Chapter 6: Tensions, Challenges, and Contradictions within Sri Lanka's Contemporary Civil Society Sector

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### 6.1 Introduction:

It is often heard when inquiring into civil society in Sri Lanka that the country might rather be more appropriately said to be characterised by the prevalence of ‘*uncivil society*’ (Orjuela 2010a, 2005; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). As alluded to in Chapter 5, definitional tensions and questions as to what constitutes an ‘authentic’ Sri Lankan civil society are important factors in shaping the boundaries of the sector, making some groups more insecure based on accusations of inauthenticity due to their ‘external’ affiliations with actors in the international community and/or diaspora, whilst others are able to operate relatively unencumbered (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Such accusations have become significant stumbling blocks for many groups in influencing and accessing government, particularly for advocacy and human-rights groups whereas organisations focused on meeting the service delivery objectives mandated by the government’s post-war agenda have been able to operate relatively freely. These post-war realities have been compounded by a number of tensions within, and challenges to, Sri Lankan civil society rooted in caste and class; gender; elite-grass-roots; donor-local; religious; and ethno-nationalist relations and dynamics.

Such asymmetries of power have meant that some civil society actors hold significantly more influence over which issues make it onto the agendas of both the GOSL and international community concerning post-war reconstruction and are thus able to help shape those aspects of

the post-war environment that become politicised and framed as vital to the realisation of peace and security. This Chapter examines these debates, tensions, and challenges in greater detail, contextualising civil society in the socio-political dynamics of Sri Lanka's post-war environment. It unpacks dichotomies and contradictions within the sector that have led to greater human insecurity for some whilst enhanced security for others, including the politicisation of certain issues and the securitisation of select actors. In doing so it identifies multiple and sometimes competing experiences of insecurity occurring simultaneously within Sri Lanka's civil society sector and implicates civil society actors themselves in helping to perpetuate the human insecurity of others in the civil society sphere.

## **6.2 Caste relations and Civil Society:**

In contrast to many of the assertions of Western liberal theories of civil society with respect to the notion that the structure and membership of civil society organisations should be based on associations that are 'free', voluntary and self-organising, many forms of association in Sri Lanka, particularly at the grass-roots are characterised by kinship-based bonds of solidarity. Caste relations, for example, form important grass-roots-based networks of relations at the community level in which those of a similar caste, lacking the ability related to power inequalities to access Visas, passports, insurance, employment, and forms of medical, monetary, and social assistance, support others of their caste to meet the necessities to sustain life (Field Notes Colombo July 5 and 7 2012 and April 23, 2011; Field Notes Batticaloa May 13, 2011; Interview 41, members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). These associations are also responsible for the relaying of information that may impact community members on a host of issues of a political, social, and economic nature across the country. For example, informal conversations between such actors as domestic and market workers, three-wheel drivers, and



parking security guards represent sources of a wealth of information as to the ‘pulse’ of the nation and rumours surrounding events such as strikes, protests, or government action that may be in the works (Field Notes Colombo July 5 and 7, 2012 and April 23, 2011).

Similarly, this type of information is informally passed along ‘up the caste ladder’ by those of a lower caste; for example, by those who serve as domestic workers in the homes of higher caste Sri Lankans and relay information to their employers regarding events or activities that they have heard might occur in the near future. For example, on separate occasions during this research a domestic worker in one of the homes I was visiting reported information to their employer that they had heard through their networks regarding power sector strikes, the possibility of renewed energy sector strikes despite employees winning favourable resolutions, and protests in opposition to the release of the UN Panel of Experts Report (Field Notes Colombo, July 3 and 7, 2012 and April 28, 2011)<sup>78</sup>. These information-sharing networks contain important elements of both informal and formal power relations as, informally, they can act as a means of information dispersal, making others aware of repressive activities such as forced disappearances, areas where violence is reportedly occurring or, conversely, upcoming planned union and worker strikes, nationalist demonstrations or areas of refuge where aid and assistance is available. From the perspective of activating formal power structures, the transfer of information by grass-roots actors to their middle-range and top leadership counterparts (Lederach 1997), some of whom represent Sri Lanka’s intellectual and ‘elite’ civil society base, can bring attention to these issues, encourage more widespread information dispersal campaigns, and/or lobbying of Government and the international community on behalf of impacted groups.

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<sup>78</sup> See also: ‘Sri Lanka power sector employees win demands, end strike’ 2012 and ‘Thousands protest in Sri Lanka against UN report’ 2011.

On the other hand, however, caste relations also need to be considered with respect to how they complicate and create fissures within Sri Lanka's civil society sector. Relationships of political patronage related to colonialism, caste, and class dynamics have been one factor in preventing inter-group communication and collaboration. For instance, the question of rights and differences in the degree to which rights are upheld varies across different sectors with respect to class and caste and are illustrative of how such dynamics function to impede inter-group collaboration even amongst groups of the same ethnicity. During an interview with a leader of a movement for land and agricultural reform, for example, they called attention to the fact that Tamil plantation workers in the Hill Country, who are generally perceived to be of a lower caste than Tamils in the North, face greater difficulties in accessing certain rights (Interview 21, Colombo). The conditions for Hill-Country plantation workers tend to be quite poor and they are often underpaid for their labour in comparison to others in the agricultural sector. As explained by this leader in the agricultural movement, whose organisation aims to improve the livelihoods of poor, rural farmers in Sri Lanka, including addressing the adverse effects of the promotion of 'free market' export-oriented growth, as of 2011 agricultural labour has to be paid LKR600 (Sri Lankan rupees) a day elsewhere but in the plantations workers are paid only LKR300 and they are not free to have their own lands (Interview 21, Colombo). In this sense they argue that plantation workers continue to be 'semi slaves still kept in the same stage 60 years after independence' (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). The politicisation of the trade unions has further hurt plantation workers who remain unrepresented and have no course of action to follow in raising issues as trade union members remain largely 'under the thumb' of Ministers in government (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo).

Similarly, fisher peoples' rights and need to access the sea have been overlooked due to their lower class status and inability to bring attention to their cause. These realities, in addition to the draw of tourism and potential income generated by infrastructure projects such as port expansions and developments on the part of the GOSL, continue to negatively impact fisher peoples' ability to meet their livelihood needs (Field Notes Hambantota, July 21, 2012; Field Notes Passekuddah Bay, July 12, 2012; Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). Indeed according to the leader of a movement for land and agricultural reform, both natural phenomena such as the tsunami and manmade policy decisions in the areas mentioned above have driven many fisher people from coastal areas that it is imperative they access in order to meet their livelihood needs (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). This indicates a tension between the ways in which discourses associated with development are taken up in which displacement and relocation are justified in the name of 'protection' but in actuality serve to further market-led 'development' of lucrative areas of coastline. Furthermore, these caste and class inequalities can be overlooked as not being at the heart of the *ethnic* conflict and, thus, do not appear on the agendas of many elites, including elite civil society actors. However such dynamics help drive insecurity as they ultimately feed back into cycles of poverty, inequality, and violence (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo).

***Disempowerment and the 'culture of servitude':***

An important consequence for Sri Lankan civil society of colonialism, class, and caste relations and the post-war centralisation of state power relates to the relative passivity of civil society groups with respect to ‘empowering’ themselves and articulating their needs, particularly amongst grass-roots actors. Several members of a community group in Batticaloa, for example, when asked what they would like to see in their communities in the future and how that might be realised reported that they had never before been asked what they believed would be best both for themselves and their communities nor to determine their own future (Interview 41, Members of a cultural based members group, Batticaloa).

Likewise, it has been reported that communities feel relatively hopeless to change their situation, that they do not have the ability nor will be given the opportunity to do so on their own (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). The societal indoctrination of traditional cultural norms in Sri Lanka has meant that many Sri Lankans are not expected, nor expect, to speak their mind, nor give their opinion to someone ‘above’ them in society (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). A long-term effect of this legacy has been a paralysis of sorts in being able to collectively determine and act upon a vision for their communities in the aftermath of the war. Thus, in the words of the Executive Director of a Colombo-based civil society organisation focused on capacity-building for good governance and conflict transformation in Sri Lanka and the strengthening of civil society within this process, this has resulted in the ‘inability of civil society to empower itself’ (Interview 3, Colombo).

Grass-roots level members of a culturally-based member’s union in Batticaloa in the East further commented on the nature of the disempowerment that they feel in relation to those in

government in Colombo explaining that ‘people outside of [the] centre [of Colombo] have come to expect things to be done to them rather than to do them or be a part of them, to be involved in them’ (Interview 41, Batticaloa). They stated that in addition to cultural dynamics this relates back to experiences of disempowerment during the war and being caught in the middle of struggles for power over regions in the North and East that were initially under LTTE control, then subsequently the military and to some extent the international community after the tsunami (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). In the victor’s peace power rests squarely with the Rajapaksa government to which those within this union lament that they still have little to no influence over (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This has led many members of the union as well as citizens of the wider Batticaloa community to simply accept their ‘lot in life’, where in a culture that is not used to speaking up and wishes to avoid causing friction has meant that they adapt continually to the difficulties they face rather than seek to confront them (Interview 56, Directors Village Empowerment Centre, Batticaloa; Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). It also raises an important question for consideration for civil society groups in growing a movement, that is, how to address issues of deep-seated social and political apathy in outlying districts.

The loss of human capital further adds to the challenges groups have encountered in overcoming disempowerment. Much human capital has been lost to the war, particularly in those most war-torn regions, as a whole working-aged generation has suffered from the devastation and loss of life associated with the tsunami and war, leaving entire communities without

education, training, or the capacity to meet human needs (Interview 61, Director of a civil society organisation for war-affected elderly citizens, Jaffna; Interview 41, members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Moreover, many children have been orphaned and women widowed by the war, presently particular challenges as discussed in Chapter 5 for women who are now heads of households and must find work in the post-war environment.

Finally, a ‘brain drain’ has also occurred in the North and East as younger generations of Sri Lankans are leaving these areas in large numbers in search of more lucrative, and indeed any form of, employment both in Colombo and abroad (Field Notes Trincomalee, July 12-13, 2012; Field Notes Colombo, July 5-6, 2012; Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union and grass-roots civil society activist, Batticaloa ; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This has further reduced civil society capacity within many communities outside Colombo to realise their own solutions to the challenges they face that could extend long into the future as leaders of the next generation leave in search of a better life. Indeed, there are few research and capacity-building organisations functioning in the North and East that are not the local headquarters of larger INGOs.

This has had significant negative repercussions for the development of an ‘independent’ Sri Lankan civil society as the high operational costs of operating in the East and the North, and continued poor quality of telecommunications, has made it ‘difficult to attract people’ and impinged on the development of transnational advocacy and support networks (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Groups that have sought to operate in these regions, and particularly the North, have done so in the face of constant operational challenges, including rolling power outages, and, physical and psychological barriers, such as harassment,

intimidation, and violence committed by the military, government agents, and sometimes even other members of the community in cases where ethnic or gendered tensions exist (Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development near Point Pedro; Interview 39, pro-Tamil Sinhalese activist, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society group for equality, Jaffna). In the end, the fact that people feel as though they have suffered so long that few can imagine a life beyond that which they are currently experiencing represents a significant challenge, but also potentially an important opening, for civil society actors to focus their efforts. This will undoubtedly influence both the trajectories of civil society as well as post-war Sri Lankan society for the foreseeable future (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

### **6.3 Gendering Civil Society:**

As discussed in Chapter 2, bringing a gendered perspective into Human Security involves a consideration of the ways in which traditional gender roles, biases, and stereotypes create power inequalities in the public and private spheres. In Sri Lanka, women's civil society faces challenges at the social, economic, and political level in shifting perspectives held in the minds of many of the current elite and deeply engrained in the psyche of many Sri Lankans concerning the roles, which particularly non-elite women, can play in helping to determine the trajectories of Sri Lankan society (Interview 55, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). In Sri Lanka the political system has been heavily dominated by men, with women, outside of an elite class representing Sri Lanka's wealthy and politically influential families, largely absent and not visible in policy-making (Interview 55, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This remains essentially true in the victor's peace, as even the

Minister of Women's Affairs is a man, leaving women to question how they can seek to have women's interests recognised when they do not even represent themselves in parliament (Interview 55, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This has resulted in many gender-based insecurities being marginalised not only on the political agenda but also by other civil society actors.

Working to raise the profile of women's voices has, thus, been an uphill battle for many civil society groups as women face daily reminders that they are not recognised as actors with agency in society (Interview 55, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Traditional male-dominated cultural dynamics have meant that women are often identified as a 'problem body' within communities with restrictions placed on their actions and behaviour being justified through discourses of family honour and appropriate roles for women within society (Hewamanne 2009, p. 158; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society group for equality, Jaffna). Women have met with significant resistance to their working in communities and it has been difficult for them to obtain knowledge of the rules and regulations surrounding founding civil society organisations and obtaining funding (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society group for equality, Jaffna). According to one Muslim women's group that sought to establish a civil society organisation in Jaffna to help displaced women returning to the North, at first members of other ethnic and caste communities were reluctant to take them in or assist them (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society group for equality, Jaffna). It was not until the District Secretary and other NGOs began to accept their presence as a civil society actor that things got better for them concerning their treatment by other members of the community



(Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society group for equality, Jaffna).

Personal and economic security issues, including both psychological and physical threats described in Chapter 5, represent further hindrances to women's civil society work. Challenges relate to the fact that there is not enough capacity within many women's groups, and other civil society entities dedicated to aiding women, to meet the level of need that exists across the country (Field Notes IDP Settlement, Puttalam, May 4, 2011). Within this context, women's groups have experienced difficulties not only in establishing themselves as viable civil society organisations and creating safe spaces in which women can access basic services, but also in seeking to grow women's participation in civil society and empower women in society more generally. This is reflective of the deep cultural challenge for women in working in organisations that are dominated by men (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Women's civil society organisations, therefore, represent potential avenues for women's independence and financial security in and of themselves in a societal environment that is heavily male-dominated as men tend to be more open to allowing women to work in women-only or at least women-dominated settings (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo).

Broadly speaking, however, civil society has not escaped these cultural biases as organisations continue to be male-dominated and it is perceived more as a 'convenience' for women to be involved than women being seen as societal leaders representing roughly half of Sri Lanka's population (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Although it must be noted that strong female leaders have and do exist in Sri Lankan politics and civil society, this is not the norm. This also pertains to the wider dynamics of gendered 'eliteness'

where positions of power are controlled by men; they are generally the heads of civil society organisations with leadership tending to be ‘traditional ... relatively well-off, middle-aged or older, and posts are often held for long periods’ (Orjuela 2005, p. 125).

In a similar vein it has been argued that attempts to establish safe, ‘women-only’ environments for women to engage in civil society activities, whilst helping them to take ‘small steps toward becoming leaders’, has produced ‘more segregation and a hierarchy of power and influence’ as such efforts have not sought to address underlying structural inequalities within society (Hewamanne 2009, p. 163). Women often remain silent at forums where men are present or will speak up only in support of the views of their male companions, although women have expressed strong opinions at women-only events as well as in venues where they have been specifically given the floor and encouraged by the men and women present to share their thoughts and ideas (Hewamanne 2009, p. 163; Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). In addition, many women were not involved in civil society organisations prior to the war but displacement has necessitated the formation of ‘self-help’ groups to represent those who have had and continue to have little representation in the victor’s peace (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women’s Forum, Colombo).

One issue that remains less-well addressed pertains to the role of men in endorsing and aiding in both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ objectives. During a visit to one women-led development organisation, for example, it was noted that there were many men present in the office mainly helping with physically-intensive jobs such as moving furniture and supply boxes, who were said to be supportive of and sympathetic to the group’s work. It was less clear, however, how these men fit into the larger strategic goals of the organisation, the roles they played in educating and seeking to change to attitudes of other men (and women) (Interview 55,

Executive Director, Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa,). This represents an aspect of gender-based relations in Sri Lanka that women's groups may be able to exploit more effectively in the future, capitalising on supportive male voices and using them both formally and informally to try and shift other perspectives. Ultimately, limitations and challenges notwithstanding, through women's participation in civil society, many women have realised, a form of empowerment - albeit restricted - through community organising that has enabled them to exercise agency toward contesting established boundaries between public and private in Sri Lankan society.

#### **6.4 'Elite'-'Grass-roots' Civil Society Dynamics:**

The concentration of political power in the capital of Colombo has had the effect of establishing a centre-periphery dichotomy between Sri Lanka's 'elite'/urban and grass-roots/rural civil society. This is due to the fact that the most vocal and overtly influential civil society actors are located in Colombo and, thus, represent the base of Sri Lanka's 'elite' civil society. Many of the in-country headquarters of INGOs and international institutions are also physically located in Colombo and work with their regional offices in Sri Lanka and other 'elite' domestic civil society in carrying out post-war activities and engaging in dialogue on the post-war environment, including trends taking place across the country and strategies to address, counter, or capitalise upon these trends more broadly.

This places Colombo-based civil society at a distinct advantage over other grass-roots groups in acquiring funds and moving their own programmes and agendas forward. For example, Sarvodaya, one of Sri Lanka's largest development-oriented civil society organisations, headquartered just outside Colombo in Moratuwa, acknowledges 27 international resource partners in its 2008-09 Annual Service Report and states that it is active across 15,000 villages in

Sri Lanka ('Sarvodaya - 2008-09 Annual Service Report' 2009). Similarly, it has been asserted that Sri Lanka's intellectual civil society elite get more access to programme funding, and, ultimately, receive more money and have greater say over the direction of programme funding due to their perceived elite status and close working relationship with many international donors (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo).

In fact, amongst the central challenges mentioned by civil society groups operating outside of Colombo include lacking solid contacts at the state-level within government, difficulties accessing international funders and obtaining the ear of international organisations, and challenges pertaining to how to get recognised by international actors when one cannot attend every meeting in Colombo or afford to have a permanent presence there whilst also carrying out activities in the communities in which they work (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 57, President of an Association of the Local NGOs, Batticaloa; Interview 32, Members of a Gandhian development organisation district center, Marawila/Maravila; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager, Puttalam; Interview 30, Member of an Organization for Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam; Interview 24, Moderator and National Co-ordinator National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling, Kandy). For instance, despite the fact that small farmers are in the majority in the agricultural sector, they 'have little influence over policymaking and lack sufficient knowledge of their right to food, land, water and seeds' within the rolling out of the GOSL's post-war 'peace through development' agenda (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). This 'Colomboisation' of civil society power has resulted in the separation of urban/elite and rural/grass-roots civil society and the marginalisation of the activities and priorities of the grass-roots to the periphery

if they do not reflect those of dominant urban/elite civil society actors (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo).

Likewise, as indicated in Chapter 5 groups of inter-religious ‘elites’ that have sought to come together and form inter-religious committees aimed at building social cohesion and dialoguing on important aspects of post-war peace have faced criticism from some other civil society actors. Such committees have been accused of reproducing the very power dynamics that they seek to counteract in others as they become ‘swathed in power’ and seek to put forward the interests of their group by exercising influence through their positions in society (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee). These groups have also been challenged on the grounds that they play on their attractiveness to donors as they ‘conjure up lovely images of togetherness [and] can get money from writing proposals on this’ (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee). Therefore, even in areas of inter-religious organisation, challenges persist with regards to elite dynamics and, consequently, the authenticity and representativeness of the interests such actors represent and voices they claim to speak for.

Legacies of colonialism, which have been presented as part of the explanation for the perpetuation of strong centralised governance dynamics and a significant factor in shaping the evolution of Sri Lankan civil society, have also been a factor in accusations of the ‘Westernised elitism’ of Sri Lanka’s ‘elite’ civil society actors<sup>79</sup>. This can be seen in Sahadevan and Devotta’s (2006) observation that, ‘[t]he vast majority of Sri Lanka’s leading civil society groups operate

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<sup>79</sup> A more in-depth discussion of accusations of ‘Western elitism’ and ‘Westernisation’ against Sri Lankan civil society actors and the negative connotations in which these accusations have been framed is presented in Chapter 7.

out of the capital, Colombo, and one reason they have hitherto appeared ineffective is because their literature and reports have, in the main, been produced mostly in English – thereby cultivating an elitist image that disconnects them from grassroots elements’ (p. 147).

However, it should be noted that some elite/urban civil society actors have taken on roles sitting as Chairpersons for their grass-roots colleagues, who are left out in the cold from the inner socio-political networks of Colombo, in an attempt to bring greater attention to the activities and needs of these groups and to use their influence to attract funding (Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). Moreover, other elites have deliberately chosen not to operate their organisations out of Colombo but rather have located to war-torn areas where violence and migration have led to a decrease in the intellectual capital needed to develop a strong independent civil society base (Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro). Such actors point to the presence of hundreds of NGOs in the form of relief organisations that have provided aid to people but the absence of think-tanks and research-oriented associations aimed at engaging and empowering them (Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro). They also allude to the tradeoffs inherent in re-locating in that their organisational ‘profile’ was more visible in Colombo but they feel that they are reaching more people by being located outside the capital (Interview 24, Moderator and National Co-ordinator National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling, Kandy).

Issues of geographic locality, class, caste, and gender are deeply wrapped up in the politics within civil society and dynamics between ‘elites’ and grass-roots. Leadership of civil society organisations is one area where such divides are clearly visible. As mentioned,

traditionally leaders in all spheres of activity, including civil society, have tended to come from the elite political and wealthy classes of Sri Lankan society, and for the most part they have been men. Elites within civil society tend to be well connected both domestically and internationally, attending conferences overseas to dialogue with international colleagues on Sri Lanka and to encourage one another to address issues currently left off of their agendas; they also consult, strategize, and provide mutual support to their in-country counterparts. However, in the victor's peace this dynamic is beginning to shift as a new 'rural', nationalist elite is emerging in the form of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalists many of whom are Buddhist Monks that operate outside of Colombo and have considerable influence over Sinhalese communities in rural areas outside of the capital. The impacts of this dynamic are further explored below in the section 6.8 Sinhalese Nationalism as (Un)Civil Society.

Conversely, the grass-roots is often composed of women's organisations, displaced peoples, and members of lower caste and class groups, thereby sustaining power inequalities that ensure that the grass-roots is able to exercise less influence within society. Such formal and informal networks undoubtedly mould and shape conceptualisations of civil society in Sri Lanka in particular ways reinforcing the prominence of elite opinions and viewpoints on the current and future trajectories of both civil society and Sri Lanka more broadly. Moreover, those that work within elite levels of civil society have knowledge of ideas and values perpetuated by dominant understandings of peace and conflict resolution that they can draw upon in order to bring in support and assistance for their programmes and partners within Sri Lanka (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

It is also commonplace in Sri Lanka for a civil society organisation to be identified by its leader such that organisations are often referred to by their leader's name rather than actual title. This is reflective of a leadership culture that values profile, status, and 'guru'-like charisma where group members await their leader's decisions, which are often taken in a top-down, centralised setting and reflect the leader's vision for the organisation and Sri Lanka (Orjuela 2008, p. 140). This represents an aspect of continuity for civil society in the victor's peace as even in organisations with a broad membership base stretching across the country, decision-making, agenda setting, and the distribution of donor funds continue to often be uni-directional, determined by top-level leadership and communicated from the top-down to regional and grass-roots offices (Field Notes Marawila, May 4, 2011; Field Notes Colombo, April 21, 2011; Interview 32, Members of a Gandhian development organisation district center Marawila/Maravila). Such broad-based organisations have also been accused of being more focused on developing new regional offices and communities that mirror their development models than on meeting smaller scale 'everyday' needs in communities such as providing chairs at health clinics for pregnant women, toilets for children at schools, and addressing health and sanitation concerns, for instance, mould and damp in classrooms (Field Notes Marawila, May 4, 2011). This is reflective of the disjuncture between the focus of elites - on structural inequalities and corruption at the level of government or their lack of power to bring about change - and those of the grass-roots - who are often more focused on meeting immediate needs and 'everyday' concerns in their communities (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo). It has further led some civil society actors to assert that 'elite civil society generally looks at [the] top-level ... and focuses on attempting to change and alter top-level processes and opinions but [they] could also be more successful



focusing on [the] bottom-up and changing grassroots opinions, views, and relationships’ (Interview 21, Moderator of an Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo).

Legacy is another area where the ‘elite’ nature of one’s identity as ‘leader’ and ‘elder’ can create fissures within, and challenges for, civil society groups. Concerns over leaving a lasting imprint whilst still leader, and ensuring the continued impact and organisational survival of one’s organisation, can result in one retaining their position as leader past when they perhaps can have the most impact, preventing lines of succession from carrying forward. Such acts can be highly detrimental to the organisational health of the civil society entity (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union and grass-roots civil society activist, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Given cultural aspects, including the level of respect awarded to elders within Sri Lankan society, it is extremely difficult for new, energetic young minds to come in, push for change, and take over leadership within an organisation when older ones do not voluntarily leave (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo). Therefore, the admirable notion of respecting and deferring to ‘elder’ voices can impede organisational development if succession planning is not built into the evolutionary vision of the organisation. This can result in a lack of innovation and understanding amongst younger generations as to how to lead, and inhibit the ability to question, disagree, and express their own opinions on events and actions. This puts them at a greater disadvantage in confronting the current centralisation of governmental power and tackling (neo)liberal forces within international aid and state-building regimes (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based

members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

Another key tension in the relationship between the elite and the grass-roots pertains to issues of accountability, power-sharing, and transparency with respect to elite-grass-roots partnering. The difficulty in this case rests on the issue of elites not necessarily ‘knowing whose who’ on-the-ground at the community level that has necessitated that elite groups ‘go through existing contacts’ in seeking to reach out to the grass-roots (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). In other words, elite civil society is often reliant on its partners and local organisational affiliates in regional offices for information and contacts as to who to work with at the grass-roots, rather than having any formalised process in place for determining partners and building relationships with grass-roots actors. During an interview with the Director of one Colombo-based civil society association dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, for example, they indicated that often local partners are chosen because they ‘came into contact’ with the organisation and ‘showed special interest in [their] work’ (Interview 4, Colombo). Similarly, a member of the same organisation charged with building grass-roots partnerships explained that they generally partner with people that they have been working with for a long time and have built up contact with and that they generally invite the groups to collaborate with them though on occasion they also get invited by groups starting up a programme to be involved (Interview 16, Program Officer for a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

The realities of time and capacity constraints do provide an argument for groups to rely on their members with access to, and pre-existing relationships within, communities to help

determine grass-roots partners. However, from an accountability perspective the ethical implications concerning how partners are chosen, and, whether opportunities exist for wider communities to obtain information on proposed projects or connect to elite civil society organisations must be raised. Furthermore, this is indicative of the centre-outward trajectory of civil society's powerbase and the politicisation of certain issues over others where activities and issues are often initiated, decided, and administered from Colombo rather than the communities in which projects take place. This concerns issues of equality of opportunity and capacity for groups to access available funds and programme support due to pre-existing relationships that exist between some elite organisations and their grass-roots partners. It also suggests the potential for some groups at the grass-roots to be overlooked because they lack the ability to access elites. Ultimately, this mirrors top-down structures and practices similar to those that are critiqued within liberal peace-building discourses.

### **6.5 The Politics of Donor Aid:**

At the same time accusations have also been levelled against elite 'liberal' and urban-based civil society that it 'boxes itself in' campaigning and demonstrating outward to the international community rather than to other Sri Lankans, thereby, limiting its ability to act as intermediary between the masses and the state in shaping public opinions (Interview 17, Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). 'Global' geopolitics can, thus, be argued to have a significant impact on the directionalities of civil society and tensions within the sector more generally. As discussed in Chapter 4, under the 'global' regime of (neo)liberalism Sri Lanka has been awarded 'middle income country' status with the resultant outcome of reducing donor aid despite the fact that huge income disparities persist.

Many impacted by both the war and tsunami continue to suffer from displacement and reductions in aid that have made them increasingly vulnerable to human insecurities (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). As one rural development civil society actor explained, it is difficult at the moment for groups to obtain international assistance due to a convergence of three related factors. These are: (1) tensions between the UN and Rajapaksa government; (2) the GOSL's 'negative attitude' toward INGOs and the introduction of measures in order to monitor and control the allocation of funds that has made it more difficult for donors to provide assistance to Sri Lankans causing donors to look elsewhere; and (3) continued ethnic tensions and issues of representation that remain unresolved and impede inter-ethnic collaboration (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Likewise, a focus on investment in the economic sector over humanitarian assistance and aid, led largely by the Chinese, has helped facilitate in the growth of infrastructure development and tourism-related projects that have left many questioning whether they will realise any of the promised benefits of such actions and relegating many issues to the periphery if they do not fall under the umbrella of President Rajapaksa's post-war 'peace through development' strategy (Interview 67, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo)<sup>80</sup>.

Equally damaging for those already made socio-economically vulnerable, as well as civil society organisations that seek to come to their aid, is the fact that there are currently no state support structures and no tradition of state or private sector monetary support for civil society groups (Interview 77, Senior Advisor Transparency International in Sri Lanka, Colombo;

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<sup>80</sup> Chinese investment and influence in Sri Lanka is explored in greater detail in Chapter 4 whilst the impacts of the GOSL's 'peace through development' agenda with respect to power are examined in Chapter 7.

Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). This means that groups are left to compete for funds earmarked for civil society projects that have been approved by government or tow the government's line politically so that government agents may look favourably upon them when awarding project funds administered through the PTF (Interview 34, Project Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Member of an Organization for Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Competition between civil society groups has also arisen based on the fact that there is only so much donor aid to go around and forces compliance and accommodation to both governmental and donor conditionalities (Interview 77, Senior Advisor Transparency International in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Indeed according to a Professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Colombo, macro-economic reforms that saw the opening of markets to freer trade and investment have also witnessed the reallocation of welfare to the private sector as well as funds from public coffers to the private sector, shifting the onus of meeting human security needs onto one's own participation in the private sphere (Interview 15). The lack of sustained post-war governmental support, in addition to the relative absence of a tradition of corporate giving in Sri Lanka, has helped establish relationships of international donor dependence in which grass-roots and local NGOs in particular become almost entirely reliant on donors for survival, limiting the ability of Sri Lankan civil society to establish a sustainable foundation for itself (Interview 77, Senior Advisor Transparency International Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented civil society organisation, Colombo; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 11, Founder

of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Unsurprisingly then, when this donor aid began to evaporate after the war, many civil society groups also began to disappear in the face of reduced funding, downsizing of staff on the part of INGOs with regional offices in Sri Lanka, and restrictive GOSL permits awarded through the PTF for civil society activities (Global Policy Forum 2011; Interview 77, Senior Advisor Transparency International Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 34, Project Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager for a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). For example, a Senior Advisor at Transparency International's (TI) Colombo office reported that obtaining long-term funding for project activities in Sri Lanka is becoming increasingly difficult in the face of reduced 'core' funding from TI's headquarters and foreign donors such as Norway in light of the war's end, and, a trend toward short-term, 'piecemeal' activities in which results can be clearly communicated but at the expense of developing a longer term vision and strategy for the organisation (Interview 77, Colombo).

Perceptions of disempowerment, particularly at the grassroots, have further been perpetuated by donor dependence that has helped to reinforce the expectation amongst local-level actors that they are subjects rather than agents in development and reconstruction. The Executive Director of a grass-roots women's civil society group near Batticaloa, for example, lamented that they feel as though INGOs have often viewed them as local administrative or accounting offices and focus on developing these skills so that grass-roots actors can run offices 'democratically', rather than helping to empower them to take decisions and play central roles in leading and determining the strategic direction of their organisations (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee). This represents the continuation of a war-time trend that 'apart from the funeral assistance societies (which exist in

Sinhalese villages) most organisations have been formed from the initiative of the government or an NGO coming from the outside' (Orjuela 2005, p. 125). Nevertheless partnering with international organisations and governments has provided strategic opportunities for Sri Lankan civil society to network with like-minded and sympathetic actors external to Sri Lanka that they can use to get information to about the socio-political climate in Sri Lanka and seek to lobby for assistance (Interview 73, Country Manager International Alert Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented civil society organisation, Colombo). According to the Director of one advocacy-oriented civil society organisation in Colombo, the mere presence of international NGOs and donors does offer some degree of protection from internal threats indicating the importance of international actors and attention not disappearing from Sri Lanka (Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented civil society organisation, Colombo).

However, the political realities of many of these 'partnerships' must be acknowledged in which civil society actors are often subject to conditionalities placed on aid by INGOs and other donors. Civil society groups have reported that they are expected to adopt the operational protocols attached to Western aid but that these have been subject to change often without prior notice being extended to them, thereby, disrupting flows of aid to local communities (Interview 34, Project Officer Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Similarly, donor conditionalities and administrative burdens can make it difficult for civil society groups to do the work agreed upon, since misunderstandings over requirements run rampant between donor and recipient. Groups feel hampered by the necessity of designing and implementing

projects that reflect donor assignments and objectives, rather than those that strengthen the needs of local constituencies (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

Many organisations report being caught up in what they view as a no-win, ‘catch 22’ situation in which using the PTF the GOSL has required civil society to have confirmed donor funding before approving projects to go forward. At the same time, however, donors require that civil society has PTF approval before any funding will be earmarked for projects due to fears that energies will be put into developing projects only to be barred at the implementation stage by government (Field Notes Marawila, May 4, 2011; Interview 34, Project Officer of an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Similarly, Sri Lankan groups have revealed that potential donors have sometimes approached them saying they are eager and able to undertake a project and that group members have put in the time to develop a project proposal only to hear nothing more from the donor (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Such experiences have left group members feeling used and disappointed by the lack of follow through and the possibility that donors have simply moved on in the time that it has taken for the local group to produce a project proposal due to the emergency-response driven nature of aid (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa).



Within this context civil society actors have asserted that they require greater clarity on expectations and demands, including the amount of work that is required for both the project and reporting back to the donor, and that donors need to be realistic about expectations, taking into account the abilities, capacity, and limitations of those carrying out project work on the ground (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). They assert that aid should be aimed at alleviating and enabling not hampering the development that it is intended to facilitate (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). These factors stress the need to understand the community(ies) and civil society groups that donors are dealing with in order to match up programmes effectively, as well as the importance of clearly articulating expectations at each stage. Civil society actors at the grass-roots assert that donors need to take the time to understand the culture and needs of the communities in which they work and the level of operational capacity that their civil society partners are at if projects are to be more successful (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). They contend that donors cannot push them too fast, nor expect too much, by putting unrealistic expectations onto communities as this can do more harm than good with respect to damaging donor-recipient trust, and creating situations where grass-roots civil society becomes resistant to working with donor partners (Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). They continue that, from their perspective, donor assistance needs to be long-term and committed to assisting, training, and developing organisational capacity to help organisations work through internal and external challenges, and assist in developing a plan for a sustainable future before moving on (Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a

cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This is indicative of the level of frustration that local civil society groups have experienced in their relations with donors at the same time as it is revealing of the expectations that local partners bring to these partnerships.

It must equally be acknowledged, however, that a level of donor fatigue has set in, in part due to concerns that funds are not misappropriated, or that funds will be able to be used and are not being earmarked for a project that may never get off the ground due to government regulation and 'red tape' (Interview 77, Senior Advisor Transparency International Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). In a similar vein to that described above regarding the frustration of aid recipients concerning donor expectations, donors also express frustration at recipients not living up to their end of the bargain. Their grievances include the lack of communication and follow-through from some groups they have committed to working with, the thankless nature of much of their work, and their view that some groups they partner with have become trapped in what they describe as a 'give me give me' mentality in which they do not see the possibility of empowering themselves by taking responsibility for certain activities or comprehend that donors also give immensely of themselves in carrying out aid work (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo). One Australian-Sri Lankan donor interviewed for this study described feelings of weariness over their recent experience in working with a community group to set up a temporary health clinic for the community run by overseas voluntary doctors. This weariness was attributed to the attitude of some community members and their expectation that the donors ought to do all of the logistical and administrative work and absorb all of the costs as the donors

were assumed to be rich and well-funded (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

This is perhaps reflective of past experiences and underlying anger and resentment on the part of communities over perceptions of donors being able to come and go as they choose, thus, escaping the direness of the community's situation in which they are forced to rely on donors for survival (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo). This possibility notwithstanding, it is intriguing to pause and consider that it is the very systemic 'top-down' nature of donor-recipient relief in largely Western aid models that emphasises volunteerism, professionalization, and democratic behavior be transported onto societies with the intention of engaging in a kind of state-building that reflects (neo)liberal values and practices, which has come to be a source of immense frustration for both donor and recipient. In this sense inflated donor expectations and hubris, or worse deliberate ambitions of social-engineering, in combination with recipient expectations, assumptions, and apathy can feed into a cycle of misunderstanding and miscalculation, leading to bitter disappointment and the ultimate rendering of the donor-recipient encounter ineffectual and deeply damaging for all parties involved.

Relatedly there exists the feeling that somehow Sri Lanka has 'lost its chance' and that there is not the opportunity right now to have much influence over the socio-political environment, causing donors to look elsewhere and direct their efforts toward other countries where they perceive that they can have greater impact with more ease (Interview 77, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo; Interview 73, Manager International Alert Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). This is

largely reflective of the politics of aid in which foreign assistance operates where certain issues become politicised in conjunction with the perceived level or urgency of their ‘emergency’.

Within this framework donor assistance is often driven by the latest ‘crisis’ or one that garners the greatest media and public attention. Similar considerations revolve around where programmes can be implemented most readily and with the greatest possibility to demonstrate results and ‘successful’ outcomes to those who hold the purse-strings, including members of the public in donor states, who are charged with the responsibility for giving and allocating future funding to aid organisations and projects. Practices of governmentality, thus, exist ‘above’ the state at the level of global governance and ‘below’ at the level of the populace as international institutions, governments, INGOs, the media, and the donating public are implicated in the exercise of control over the administration of aid.

The ‘crisis culture’ that exists in the ethos of international humanitarian assistance and has been reflected in responses to the conflict and tsunami in Sri Lanka, in which aid flows to the crises made most visible but where long-term need is not sufficiently addressed, has exacerbated challenges for many civil society groups. For example, during the war INGOs working near Puttalam with Muslim Sri Lankans displaced from the warzone in the North funded many local organisations and initiated resettlement programmes. Initially this assistance took the form of funding by well-known INGOs such as OXFAM and UNICEF who provided humanitarian aid to the IDPs. However, by 2003 their rhetoric had shifted to promoting participatory development programmes (Hewamanne 2009, p. 160). In one sense such a shift was positive in light of training group members in forms of socio-economic activity in order to sustain themselves and their organisations by establishing micro-credit organisations, women’s groups, and providing skills training in such areas as rural development, textile work, sewing, and agriculture (Field

Notes IDP Settlement Puttalam, May 4, 2011). In addition, participatory development schemes included efforts to help groups increase their capacity to administer their own associations and take organisational decisions often through the holding of democratic meetings and voting (Field Notes IDP Settlement, Puttalam, May 4, 2011; Interview 33, Displaced members of a Women's Forum in an IDP camp, near Puttalam; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Questions have been raised, however, concerning whether this shift was in part motivated by the need for donors to decrease their financial obligations to the community and pressure to complete projects. Additionally, when these groups left after the war in order to provide assistance to more 'immediate emergencies' in areas where the last stages of the war was fought some of the participatory development projects they had initiated fell by the wayside without sustained assistance in monitoring, training, and follow-up (Field Notes IDP Settlement, Puttalam, May 4, 2011; Interview 33, Displaced members of a Women's Forum in an IDP camp, near Puttalam; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

In the aftermath of the war many donors have left or are in the process of leaving areas impacted in earlier stages of the war (or Sri Lanka altogether) in order to reallocate assistance to areas that were caught up in the last phases of war-related violence where it is considered that there is more 'immediate' need (Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa,; Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 30, Member of an Organization for

Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam). The crisis culture that international aid has come to operate in, whereby aid is emergency-driven, short-term in outlook, and moves from one crisis to the next, can also be seen through the prism of engaging in a game of biopolitical power politics. From this perspective the 'aid game' represents a process of administering life through 'crises' where an aid organisation's own survival often rests upon the emergence of and their ability to draw attention to humanitarian crises. The media is likewise implicated in this (bio)political struggle as it possesses the power to bring the gaze of the world to rest (albeit often briefly) on a particular crises with the resultant impact that those crises that are reported on receive the most aid and attention on the 'global' stage. In effect those suffering and working on-the-ground become the political pawns in such a game where they must play by the rules of the 'foreign aid game' decided in boardrooms and subsequently projected into homes many miles away from where the most discernible outcomes of the 'game' are being played out.

In Sri Lanka one example of how this 'game' has been played is evident in the way that aid in the East and West has been largely phased out and shifted to the North. As members of one community group in the East noted the 'impression is that [the] East has developed enough, now [the] North [is the] focus of emergency' (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). They continued, however, that one need only drive around their communities to see evidence firsthand of the impact of such aid abandonment as half-built housing projects fall into rubble, fiberglass boats crack under the heat of the sun or are washed away due to fishermen being relocated miles in-land under the pretense of 'protection' from future natural disasters, and new makeshift communities have sprung up with no amenities to support them (Field Notes Trincomalee, July 12, 2012; Field Notes Batticaloa, May 13, 2011;

Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa).

Similarly, near Puttalam grass-roots groups draw attention to a number of half-built concrete homes and other plots where shanty houses remain where once permanent housing was promised under a World Bank-funded housing scheme (Field Notes IDP Settlement Puttalam, May 4, 2011). These groups report that approximately 4,500 homes had been earmarked for construction in displacement settlements but after the termination of the war construction ceased and the funds shifted toward resettlement in the North (Field Notes IDP Settlement, Puttalam, May 4, 2011). Whilst local actors assume that the project still remains officially 'open' as they have received no notification otherwise, few expect that the homes will ever be completed (Field Notes IDP Settlement Puttalam, May 4, 2011; Interview 33, Displaced members of a Women's Forum in an IDP camp, near Puttalam; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

It should be noted, however, that even in the North there have been disparities concerning the level of attention that various regions or 'eras' of displaced persons have received with those most recently and visibly displaced receiving the greatest attention. Near Jaffna, for example, where those displaced since the 1990s once received tin for roofs and pumps for water, now only the occasional researcher ventures into the displaced settlements that continue to exist (Field Notes IDP Settlement Jaffna, July 17, 2012). The realities of this continued displacement are not entirely that there are no possibilities for these people to be resettled under one of the housing schemes that have been initiated since the end of the war but, rather, involve the politics of identity, belonging, and 'home'. This is due in part to the burden of owner-driven models of resettlement as well as the continuation of militarily-guarded HSZs in many areas deemed

lucrative for tourist development that prevent many IDPs from returning to the lands which they consider home and were displaced from during the war that signify areas of cultural and livelihood significance (Field Notes IDP Settlement Jaffna, July 17, 2012; Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna). These politics of aid have, ultimately, led to accusations that donors are more accountable to the interests of foreign funders and governments than the communities they seek to aid and, therefore, represent a ‘cog’ in the machines of national and transnational governmentality enabling, rather than confronting, inequality.

### **6.6 The Ethnicisation of Sri Lankan Civil Society:**

The ethnicisation of civil society based on the alleged need propagated by government and Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists to protect Sri Lanka’s ethnic and cultural identity and heritage from foreign intervention and domestic division remains a persistent factor in comprehending civil society and its challenges within the victor’s peace (Interview 1, Former Head of South Asia Programming, International Alert, London). Ethnic allegiances are extremely influential in structuring civil society relations and institutions particularly at the grassroots level, thereby, reflecting the same ethnic cleavages that characterised the conflict. Inter-ethnic tensions are compounded by the continued politicisation of ethnicity with Muslims predominantly working for and with other Muslims, Sinhalese for and with other Sinhalese, and Tamils with and for other Tamils, choosing not to assist one another across ethnic divides for political purposes (Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo; Interview 11, Founder Institute of Development, Colombo). This ethnicisation extends in some instances to groups deliberately seeking to dispel



and undermine the authenticity and legality of other ethnic and religious civil society actors as well as avoiding assisting peoples from different groups. This has led some analysts to argue that minority civil society has failed in Sri Lanka because majority actors are not prepared to accommodate the aspirations of minorities and that there is no point in dialoguing amongst civil society groups at present as the majority will not listen (Interview 18, Secretary General of a North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo).

Although as we have seen some civil society groups do seek to engage in activities that facilitate in the growth of inter-ethnic and inter-religious linkages, cross-ethnic scepticism of the perceived 'other' has meant that these have remained on a small scale primarily consisting of youth exchanges and economic activities. On occasion such mistrust has even meant the halting of the dispersal of aid if the ethnic 'other' has become involved. After flooding in early 2011 in the East left many previously affected by the tsunami and war in need of vital supplies for survival, for example, a story was recounted by a Sri Lankan actively working with the Burgher community in the East that aid was offered by a Tamil civil society group in the North only to be retracted when it was discovered that the military had been asked by some local Burgher community leaders to assist in the delivery of aid to affected areas (Field Notes Colombo, April 23 2011). The provisions were subsequently provided only when all involvement of the military ceased.

Ethnic tensions amongst civil society have also helped lay the groundwork for the intentional and calculated association of some elements of civil society with 'terrorists' and 'anti-national' supporters or pawns of the 'West' based on their ethnic make-up as, or support for, Tamils. This project of ethnicisation has been undertaken by government and in the name of Sinhalese nationalism representing a form of governmentality in which the government draws on

pre-existing fears of the ethnic 'other' to assert that the only way to ensure Sri Lankan safety and protect Sri Lankans from dangers both at home and abroad is to support the government's post-war agenda (Interview 1, Former Head of South Asia Programming, International Alert, London; Interview 2, Lecturer in International Relations, Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS University, London). This is an extension of the construction of an environment characterised by the existence of an ever present threat to Buddhism and the Sinhalese that feeds into and underscores the security discourses of the state under Rajapaksa, justifying the corresponding security apparatus and militarisation. Therefore, rather than deep-level inter-ethnic reconciliation or systemic transformation in perspectives and actions we see continued and intensified retreat into ethnic enclaves and ethnicisation occurring through rhetoric that paints the ethnic 'other' as potentially dangerous and perpetuates negative images of 'other' as responsible for attempts to break up the country and for forcing the government's hand in militarily ending the war (Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo; Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo).

Some Tamils believe that the vast majority of Sinhalese actually understand the Tamil nationalist argument concerning self-determination but choose to dismiss it in order to uphold power hierarchies and the security that they are enjoying in post-war Sri Lanka (Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna). From this perspective they argue that the Sinhalese have been made to feel that Sri Lanka is their country and that it belongs first to them, which the Sinhalese nationalists then use to frame alternative viewpoints as threats to both national and Sinhalese Buddhist cultural identity (Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna; Interview 48, Chief Ministerial Candidate of the Tamil National Alliance

and former Supreme Court Judge, Colombo). With respect to the end of the war, these actors question whether the majority is really comfortable with the deaths of innocent people, suggesting that perhaps they are not but that they have resided themselves to the fact that it had to be done in order to end the war (Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo). In Sri Lanka these types of dynamics have for the moment created a situation of ‘autocratic stability’ within civil society where certain voices have more power, influence, and the ear of government and, in turn, reciprocate by supporting the GOSL. This ‘autocratic stability’ may be short-lived, though, as time passes the next generation may not necessarily agree that what was done was justified, but this depends on the kind of societal memory and historicising that is done in the future within Sri Lankan society pertaining to how events are remembered and the light that the story of the war is cast in (Interview 71, Member of Parliament United National Party, Colombo). It is, therefore, imperative to think about the roles that civil society actors might play, and the power of dominant voices within civil society over those marginalised in crafting this narrative.

Continued ethnic segregation then plays into this, with ethnically-bounded communities enabling the threat narrative to be extended and impeding the integration and effectiveness of the civil society sector with respect to a range of activities including addressing human rights, land and resettlement issues, and (re)building trust. A deeply rooted challenge surrounding this pertains to the thorny issue of how to address inter-ethnic resettlement in communities where some were displaced during the war due in part to their ethnicity. One prominent example concerns the forced ejection of Muslims from the North by the LTTE in the early 1990s, some of whom are seeking to return, now that the war has ended, with mixed reactions from the majority Tamil population that still resides there (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs

of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Powerful religious and ethnic leaders within communities have also played a part in deterring the return of the ethnic and religious ‘other’ in the aftermath of the war. One Muslim political figure, for example, recounted a story they had heard concerning a Christian woman who had been openly criticised by a high profile member of the Catholic Church for selling lands to returning Muslims (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Indeed in Sri Lanka there exists a long history in which ‘the demands of religious and ethnic groups have been provincial, particularistic, and promoted violence – which in turn has marginalised interethnic groups, emboldened ethnocentric groups, and undermined democracy’ (Sahadevan and Devotta 2006, p. 119). Ethnicisation within civil society, however, has not been reserved solely for religious and/or ethnically-centred groups as many national and local NGOs are multi-ethnic in membership and official structure but are still, ultimately, ‘ethnicised’ in practice and policy-orientation. This is symptomatic of tensions within civil society as a whole and the rather fractious nature of civil society across Sri Lanka. As a leader of a research institute in the North explained ‘just because [groups] operate at [the] grass roots or involve different ethnicities does not mean that groups are impartial, [you] find ethnic exclusion and NGOs politicised by dynamics in the country’ (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). This serves to reinforce existing ethnic tensions within civil society preventing the transformation of the societal structures necessary for secure, long-term, and sustainable peace by enabling discrimination and human insecurities to be prolonged in the name of ‘security’ (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Continued ethnic

homogenisation, compounded by the dynamics of a fractured civil society whose membership ‘does not see eye to eye’ with one another, and a lack of will to aid and collaborate with the ethnic ‘other’, thus, serves to underscore tensions and can reignite conflict (Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo).

### **6.7 Roles and Relations between Sri Lanka’s Religious Organisations:**

Religious organisations represent an extremely influential cultural, spiritual, and socio-political space within Sri Lankan society. A lack of economic opportunities and continued high need in the aftermath of the war have also factored into maintaining the centrality of religion in people’s lives (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). In this sense, recognition of the important linkages between religious and spiritual beliefs points to the importance of de-secularising and contextualising understandings of peace-building and (human) security (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Religious groups can play productive roles in conflict resolution as they are uniquely positioned to influence public opinion and establish a strong basis from which to begin to bridge inter-ethnic and inter-religious divides through their sermons and charitable work. Likewise, religious leaders can set an example to the rest of society by participating in inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogues and by supporting, rather than shrinking from, their fellow priests when they seek to challenge structural and governmental inequalities. However, religious organisations can equally represent a form of uncivil society when religious extremism, power, and fear win out over religious toleration and mutual respect, which can result in intensified societal polarisation, discrimination, and even renewed violence.

Ideally, religious organisations as centres of cultural and spiritual guidance, ought to act as an intermediating space between the Tamils and Sinhalese with churches and temples

functioning as ‘impartial bodies’ seeking to provide unbiased but critical views, guidance, and support in the face of injustices in order to further long-term reconstruction and reconciliation (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). It is these principles of justice, equality, and fairness that religions claim to embody, the ‘ethnic dimensions of human organisation’, which suggest the possibility for religious organisations to transcend ethnicity by not simply tolerating ‘other’ but celebrating diversity as an inclusive and strengthening element of civil society (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

In some ways these possibilities can be seen in the statements of religious bodies. For example, the Catholic Bishops at their 2012 Conference of Sri Lanka (CBCSL) released a statement from their Plenary Session that stated their concern ‘about some of the issues that seem to create a sense of loss in human and religious values in our society’ (‘A Fervent Appeal from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Sri Lanka’ 2012). The statement continued that:

After having suffered the bitter ravages of the war for so long, the nation is in search of a peace that lasts. Hence, the CBCSL once again wishes to make a fervent appeal to the government and all concerned to work out a political solution that resolves our difficulties and ensures true peace and justice for all the citizens of Sri Lanka (‘A Fervent Appeal from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Sri Lanka’ 2012).

Whilst the actual impact or weight of such statements is certainly subject to dispute, including that which is not included in them, the statement is indicative of a concern for all Sri Lankans and represents a call to government to address a multitude of on-going concerns that theoretically could apply to any Sri Lankan regardless of ethnicity, religion, or caste.

Nevertheless, as is most often the case in any situation where the politics of power and identity are involved, religious leaders have not operated solely from an inclusive or unbiased standpoint. Members of the Buddhist clergy have often been associated with the endorsement of pro-Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist marches and have taken on roles as ‘ring leaders’ in accusing the UN and other international actors of meddling in Sri Lanka’s sovereign affairs and seeking to

recolonize Sri Lanka through Western intervention (Orjuela 2010a). As discussed in the previous Chapter, clergy members have been at the forefront of public rallies such as those held in Colombo in protest to the UNHRC Resolution tabled in March 2012 ('Sri Lanka protests against proposed UN resolution' 2012; 'UN adopts resolution on Sri Lanka war crimes probe' 2012).

Likewise, criticisms have been levied against 'certain political and religious leaders', often in reference to high-level members of the Catholic Clergy, who 'purportedly [have] ties to Government' and have sought to activate civil society to support a moderate solution within the confines of the current Constitution that is in line with government policy (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). This then limits the ability of other priests to behave separately and not act in concert with government due to the stance adopted by those higher up in their clergy and the pressure leaders exert on others to tow their line (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). Those that do 'make noises' and become vocal in opposition to the GOSL risk being branded traitors or worse face potential violence or being ostracised from their religious community (Senewiratne 2012; Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa, near Colombo; Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). Such threats have been successful in imparting a level of fear sufficient enough to cause many religious actors to adopt a policy of non-confrontation because it is believed that confrontation will only hurt the parishioners within their community further (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa, near Colombo).

Therefore, there also exists a degree of *intra*-religious tension and politics taking place within religious organisations that threatens to negatively influence the types of activities, political positions, and/or discourses that are adopted in Sri Lanka with respect to post-war

peace-building. One priest interviewed during this study, for example, was extremely paranoid and suspicious concerning who within their own clergy might overhear any of the critical remarks they made as they might get back to a government agent or be told to another within their own priesthood believed to be in the ‘pocket’ of the GOSL (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). The priest further explained that ‘[you] need to be careful what you say and who is listening or who might overhear you, any critical remarks might result in violence, carried out against you or your family’ (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). When questioned regarding their thoughts and feelings on the current socio-political climate in post-war Sri Lanka, however, this same individual was unable to disguise their extreme frustration with the situation asserting:

There is no political will to resolve [the] conflict. Why do we have religious leaders if [they are] not able to act on behalf of people. [The GOSL] uses conflict to maintain and recapture power ... [For] May Day the Government is calling people to Colombo to show will of people, that people are with Government. [They are] collecting signatures. [People] have to sign because otherwise [Government] could use violence and [people] fear because Government has such power (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo).

This can be seen as a symptom of the victor’s peace unfolding in Sri Lanka, with the victors holding over the vanquished the possibility of being reported to government and the negative repercussions that perceived ‘anti-Sri Lankan’ and ‘pro-LTTE’ attitudes can bring to one’s (and their family’s) safety and well-being if they are seen as being against government. It has also led to many religious leaders at least overtly supporting government (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa, near Colombo). Both politics of belonging and of self-preservation are, therefore, at play amongst religious groups, with individuals jockeying for positions of power within a post-war Sri Lanka in which a highly centralised government holds



the keys to whether one can operate relatively freely or conversely faces significant stumbling blocks to acting for their cause.

Expressions of respect for other religious and ethnic groups, such as Buddhist monks carrying begging bowls to the President's residence at Temple Trees on the anniversary of the death of Prabhakaran to ask for donations on behalf of those suffering in the North and East do represent a form of inter-religious and inter-ethnic support and toleration (Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). Such acts, however, are more symbolic and superficial than representing any rigorous attempt to engage with or confront systemic-level tensions within Sri Lankan society at the heart of the conflict. This raises important questions that Sri Lanka's civil society actors must undoubtedly grapple with in the future. These include how: (1) to bring dissenting voices together to begin to discuss or at least listen to one another's viewpoints, (2) to convince them that such a dialogue is a worthwhile enterprise, and (3) to determine who needs to be at the table so as to ensure that prominent voices across the spectrum are not only present but so that the process is not sabotaged by those who would seek to undermine it in order to further their own ambitions.

A further challenge concerning the relationship between religious organisations is that different perspectives exist concerning how to move forward in any post-war reconciliation or peace process, particularly in light of the publication of the report of the LLRC. For example, for the Catholic Church greater emphasis and support is put toward advocating for a 'truth and reconciliation'-oriented process in order to come to terms with the past legacies of the war whereas Buddhist Monks advocate respect for those defeated but by moving forward (Interview 70 Catholic Priest and member of CASA and CARITAS, Colombo). For them the past is the past and it should be left there as it does no good to continue to 'look in rear-view mirror', rather one

should ‘look toward the future of the country and how it should look’ (Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). This is reflective of the Buddhist ethos of karma in which one pays for the wrongs they commit in this life or the next so there is no deep intrinsic value in forgiveness because one cannot avoid their karma (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). This ethos is strikingly different than that of Christianity where forgiveness and repentance feature centrally. Indeed the LLRC itself is a case in point of the importance of the challenges pertaining to religious ethos in that it uses the language of regret as opposed to forgiveness in ways that are broadly acceptable to both Buddhists and Christians, although one need also weigh in with Sri Lanka’s other religious and cultural groups, particularly its Hindu and Muslim populations to truly get an accurate gauge as to how successful the LLRC has been with respect to the use of inclusive language as a starting point (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo). Ultimately, the above discussion is symbolic of the crux of challenges confronting Sri Lankan civil society, not solely its faith-based constituency, in seeking to bridge the array of perspectives, belief systems, and values underlying the different views of such actors toward post-war peace and the meaning of reconciliation itself.

### **6.8 Sinhalese Nationalism as (Un)Civil Society:**

Although it is of course true that ethno-nationalist sentiment in Sri Lanka is by no means restricted to the Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists, decades of armed warfare has impinged on the development of civil society in the North and East restricting Tamil nationalism largely to Tamil political parties rather than a Tamil-nationalist civil society. Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism, which has been associated with groups such as the Patriotic National Movement, National

Movement Against Terrorism, the National Bhikku Front, the Bodu Bala Sena (BBS), and political parties such as the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), and the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU), thus, remains the dominant force of ethno-nationalist (un)civil society in the victor's peace. Moreover, Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism appears to be intensifying within present-day victor's peace political rhetoric that has seen a surge in reports of a rising Buddhist nationalist extremism and the emergence of Sinhalese nationalists as a new form of 'elite' Sri Lankan civil society (Aboobacker 2012; Riza 2012; Orjuela 2005). It is important to note that within the conceptual category of Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism there exists a spectrum of orientations ranging from 'moderates', who, whilst maintaining a commitment to and belief in Sri Lanka as a Buddhist country belonging first and foremost to the Sinhalese, do not condone the use of violence against minorities in Sri Lanka and support their right to live peacefully in Sri Lanka, to 'hardliners' or more 'extremist' forms of Sinhalese nationalism, associated with the desire to expel non-Sinhalese and non-Buddhist influences, particularly focused on 'Western' or 'liberal' forms of civil society and minority religious groups, from Sri Lanka and a willingness to use violence to achieve their goals. In this sense, whilst theoretically or normatively speaking more extremist groups such as the BBS, who represent a Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist monastic organisation in Colombo that operates out of a Buddhist Cultural Centre and was formed after several of its members broke away from the JHU claiming it was not militant enough in protecting Buddhism, can be conceived of as civil society, their willingness to use violence in protest rallies and verbal and physical attacks on minority groups and in particular Muslims in Sri Lanka blurs the line between civil and (un)civil society and raises questions as to whether these actors are operating in the victor's peace more as violent insurgents against populations

living within Sri Lanka than actors that represent a force within civil society (Karunasena and Rupasinghe 2013; 'Sri Lanka: A monk leads mob violence' 2013).

Similarly, it is important to note that Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism is by no means solely an 'elitist' phenomenon. David Rampton (2011) asserts that:

What needs to be recognised and which gets left out of this picture is the gradual but incremental hegemonisation of the social field by Sinhala nationalist dynamics so that it is no longer solely elites who share this social imaginary of Sri Lankan space as Sinhala Buddhist or the state vehicle which drives nationalism. Sinhala nationalism is increasingly apparent in diverse apparatuses which invest the social field, but which achieve a discursive unity through processes of hegemonisation (p. 254).

Sinhalese nationalist claims against civil society groups that have advocated for a negotiated end to the conflict both during the war and in the post-war period have centred on a number of claims. These range in extremist viewpoint from: (1) concerns to preserve the 'unity and sovereignty of what they consider to be a holy Buddhist country', (2) the supposed 'Westernisation' attached to the foreign funding of many groups and related accusations of the neo-colonial interference of 'Western' countries in Sri Lanka's sovereign affairs, to (3) the perceived 'threats' to Sinhalese Buddhist identity as a key component of Sri Lanka's identity that represents a 'betrayal of the country', that any political solution or power devolution within the context of the conflict are seen to represent, and (4) closely related accusations that such devolution will serve to appease LTTE-supportive 'terrorists' and 'traitors', ultimately, threatening Sri Lanka's sovereignty, the Buddhist religion, and Sinhalese race due to the ever present threats emanating from Christianity, the 'West', and especially 'Tamil terrorism' both in Sri Lanka and festering within the diaspora (Orjuela 2010, p. 303; Orjuela 2008, p. 145; Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 58, Reverend, Pastoral Centre, Trincomalee; Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo; Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and

Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo).

In the victor's peace the foreign funding of many civil society groups continues to be interpreted by many Sinhalese nationalists as attempts by Western internationals to control and direct Sri Lankan politics in a neo-imperial takeover of Sri Lanka's sovereignty. In part this is believed to be spurred on by lobby groups in the diaspora that are trying to 'destabilise the country' by influencing domestic politics in their host countries, therefore, representing an important political base external to Sri Lanka that comes to impact Sri Lankan affairs at home (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). Indeed, those that sit along the more extremist end of the spectrum of Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism assert that '[Tamil] extremists' in Sri Lanka seek with the support of the diaspora to persuade people to rise up against the government and disrupt the 'peace' and 'stability' currently being enjoyed across Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the war (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna).

The association of many Colombo-based civil society actors and local NGOs with international institutions and INGOs has helped further accusations of the 'Westernisation' of Sri Lanka's civil society. Some have even gone so far as to label this an attempted 'recolonisation' by Western powers of Sri Lanka through foreign-funded NGOs that undermine 'true' civil society and local institutions in Sri Lanka (Goonatilake 2006; Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). These accusations factor into the ambitions of Sinhalese nationalists to root the religious and cultural heritage of Sri Lanka in Sinhalese Buddhism and to frame their actions as being motivated by the just pursuit of restoring Sri Lanka back to its pre-

colonial idealised state (Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo). From this perspective, the Sinhalese are framed as the inheritors of the history of Sri Lanka and guardians of its Buddhist heritage with international involvement in Sri Lanka portrayed as the unwanted ‘interference of outsiders’ (Interview 52, Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of Kurunegala, Kandy) and as ‘sneaky and not homegrown’ (Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo).

In part, this can be framed as a strategy of governmentality on the part of the GOSL, exercised in concert with the more extremist segments of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalists, to control the post-war spaces for civic action in ways that validate and underscore the government’s post-war policies and the victor’s peace through the deliberate association of ‘liberally’-oriented civil society with Western values and the connotation of negative attributes attached to this association. These include that these groups are inauthentic, un-Sri Lankan and/or represent Western interests (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). During the conflict and in the current post-war environment some Sinhalese nationalists have drawn on the notion of identity as a strategy of ‘bottom-up’ governmentality in seeking to influence government and consolidate support for their cause by appealing to fears and anxieties concerning the loss of Sri Lanka’s ‘true’ identity by painting advocacy-oriented civil society and those who support the Tamil cause as ‘threats’ to the peace, security, and very existence of Sri Lanka (Rampton 2011; Orjuela 2010; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). This further represents a way for the Sinhalese nationalists to shore up their power through the de-legitimisation of other forms of civil society, particularly ‘liberally’-oriented elements, in the victor’s peace.

Sinhalese nationalists that have made such accusations conspicuously tend not to refer to human rights, peace, or advocacy-based civil society as a 'legitimate' form of Sri Lankan civil society, pointing instead to professional associations and trade unions, many of which have long become politicised, as well as societies, such as Death Donation Societies at the grass-roots, as being truly 'legitimate' members of Sri Lankan civil society (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). However, such groups may not identify themselves as civil society due to the fact that civil society is negatively associated with the West and NGOs (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). These actors also tend to support the government's post-war agenda that promotes peace through development as the best way to realise long-term peace in Sri Lanka emphasising the need for development over the need for psycho-social healing (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). Indeed, in the post-war period these groups have often taken to the streets to protest against international involvement and those that support it in Sri Lanka (Haviland 2012; Aboobacker 2012; Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo).

Thus, in the words of one Sinhalese nationalist academic who is a strong critic of 'liberal' civil society, 'true' Sri Lankan civil society ought to be understood as interest-based or associational groups that seek to represent and organise to protect their interests rather than being directed at actually challenging or critiquing overarching forms of governmental authority

(Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). In this sense, ‘opposition’ is valued up to a point, but particularly at ‘times of national danger’ it is argued that all groups and peoples should come together in support of Government (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). This raises questions as to how to maintain a sense of governmental accountability to its own people when they ought to come together to support government in its attempts to counter ‘threats’ to national security, particularly when so-called ‘threats’ stem in part from internal inequalities exercised by the dominant ethnic group against minorities.

In a similar vein to the ways in which foreign funding has been drawn on by the nationalists and the GOSL to assert the inauthenticity of some civil society groups, both prior and subsequent to 9/11, more extremist forms of Sinhalese nationalists have used ‘terrorist’ and ‘traitor’ rhetoric to justify the actions of government during and after the war with some such as the BBS even calling for a more aggressive and militant response to minorities residing in Sri Lanka in the victor’s peace (Karunasena and Rupasinghe 2013). Such rhetoric has also been used to seek to prevent alternative notions of civil society spreading and creating a ‘threat’ to their preeminent position of favour with the GOSL (Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). For example, it is common for both moderate and extremist segments of the Sinhalese nationalists to ask how the War on Terror can be justified but not the Sri Lankan government’s military actions against what represents a terrorist threat to Sri Lanka from ‘traitors’ (Interview



49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo; Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo; Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo).

This has served to maintain the integrity of Sinhalese nationalists' vision of a unitary and 'whole' Sri Lankan state in need of 'protection', thereby, seeking to validate the right of the state to protect its borders against 'hostile' actors. The result has been the proliferation of nationalist fervour and the development of 'us' versus 'them' dynamics within which both extremist 'elites' *and* moderates and 'ordinary' Sinhalese citizens support such narratives of the war and the continuing possibility of separatist 'threats' seeking to regain strength in the victor's peace. This can be seen in the narratives constructed to describe the situation during the war that painted the LTTE and Tamil 'terrorists' as wholly responsible for the lion's share of the violence associated with the war as the 'North were harbouring terrorists and wanted to secede' (Riza 2012; Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). Likewise, it was the Tamil Tigers that 'initiated the suicide bombings' and are framed as disproportionately having contributed to insecurity in Sri Lanka as 'the average [Sinhalese] parents would not travel together during the war due to fear of losing both parents. [They] would take two different routes to where they were going in case one was bombed and died [the] children weren't orphaned' (Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo). From this viewpoint the war is seen as having taken place in the North and having been brought to a 'peaceful' South by the LTTE terrorists (Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo).

Finally, the Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists tend to downplay the 'ethnic' component of the war in favour of the terrorism and traitor narratives. In doing so they fail to acknowledge, or

intentionally downgrade, the legitimacy of arguments pertaining to minorities feeling like second-class citizens in Sri Lanka. Instead, they attribute such feelings to ‘terrorists’ and ‘traitors’ bent on ‘whipping up exclusionist sentiment to their own ends’ (Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). Even moderate Sinhalese nationalists assert that one should not ‘confuse [the] politics of [the] country with ethnic issues’ as they believe that ethnicity is overplayed by Tamil politicians in order to garner sympathy and support for their cause (Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). They further fear that Tamil politicians will seek to use the ‘ethnic issue’ to destabilise the country for their own political gains in the North by appealing to Tamils not to support the government (Interview 60 Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna).

For some moderate Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists equality can be realised in Sri Lanka simply by ensuring that the same rights and entitlements apply to all Sri Lankans regardless of ethnicity or religion. From this perspective it is argued that ‘a villager is a villager and has [the] same hardships, economic in particular, regardless of where they are from in the country and their ethnicity or religion’ (Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). It is here that many Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists overlook the capacity of minorities to access and exercise rights in a socio-political system in which they are underrepresented and do not have the same power in shaping the nature of the rights they are entitled to by law. Nationalists lament that they ‘are made to feel apologetic’ for being Sinhalese Buddhist in their own country and that they ‘really just want to know what they’re [the Tamils] on about’ (Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). Therefore, what is really meant by comments that ‘the country should belong to all Sri Lankans’ is that the country belongs first and foremost to the Sinhalese. This is further revealed in comments that the ‘Sinhalese [are] always going to be the majority so

[the Tamils] need to find a way to accept this' (Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). Of course these same individuals are quick to point out that this 'does not mean all people can't settle though as long as [they] don't ask for exclusivity [they] should feel free to practice [their] distinct culture and religion' (Interview 43, Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo). Ultimately, the crux of the challenge associated with the nexus between victor's peace and Sinhalese nationalism in realising long term peace in Sri Lanka lies here in the establishment of a position of non-negotiability that underpins the nationalist belief that they possess the one 'truth' concerning Sri Lanka.

### **6.9 A Distinctly Muslim Sri Lankan Civil Society?:**

The question of Sri Lanka's Muslim population and specifically a Muslim civil society further complicates the picture of the interplay of religious, cultural, and socio-political dynamics within Sri Lanka's civil society sector. Whilst (un)civil society groups focusing on the plight of the Tamils and the interests of the Sinhalese have abounded, many Sri Lankan Muslims feel as though they have been largely left to fend for themselves within Sri Lanka's socio-political climate (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 18, Secretary General of a North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Historically, it is argued Sri Lankan Muslims have had 'liminal status' in Sri Lankan politics and indeed until the 1980s that they did not clearly articulate a specifically 'Muslim vision' for themselves nor necessarily identify as such. Therefore, they had little political clout in Sri Lanka as an identifiable minority group (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Instead, Sri Lanka's Muslims were talked about as the 'good minority' or the

‘manipulated minority’ but not as ‘Muslim’ per se and as they could not really identify as a member of a particular group they were previously indistinct (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Correspondingly then, some Sri Lankan Muslims also argue that it has been difficult to point to clear or identifiable discrimination towards Muslims because of this indistinctiveness, which has further hindered the development of a uniquely Muslim voice in Sri Lankan civil society (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). As one Muslim scholar and activist commented, violence against Muslims during the war could not be recorded as specifically ‘Muslim-oriented’ because they were not seen as a separate group, with the focus instead directed toward the cessation of state-LTTE violence (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Muslims have also indicated that they felt perpetually and unjustifiably left out of negotiations held during the war to bring about a negotiated settlement to the conflict and further that they have been under-represented in post-war policies that frame Sri Lanka as belonging, first and foremost, to the Sinhalese Buddhists (Interview 18, Secretary General of a North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). They assert that ‘nothing has happened’ and nor is it likely to whilst President Rajapaksa remains in power as he is ‘100% for Sinhalese Buddhists’

(Interview 18, Secretary General of a North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). In discussing their perception of their treatment during the war, Muslims further argue that some Tamil organisations and international actors have actively sought to deny the separateness of Muslim aspirations, instead wrapping them up with Tamil issues or underplaying them altogether in order to strengthen their position (Interview 18, Secretary General of a North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Indeed it is argued that by the time donors realised that Muslims needed to be included in the CA peace process and the Norwegians attempted to invest money into bringing Muslims in it was ‘too little too late’ as the peace process was already breaking down (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). The ways in which Muslim representatives feel they were treated during the CA has had a significant impact on the viewpoint of Muslim actors toward the current post-war period. Having previously felt that steps were taken to deliberately exclude their participation in the CA, in the aftermath of the war Muslim actors are anxious to find ways to ensure that Muslim voices and concerns can be heard within post-war Sri Lanka and not lumped together with other minorities (Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). This concern reflects feelings amongst Muslim civil society actors that they have consistently been treated as ‘junior actors’, finding that both internally within Sri Lanka and externally amongst the priorities of foreign governments and INGOs that their interests have fallen by the wayside (Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo).

A related factor impacting the development of a Muslim Sri Lankan civil society voice is the fact that two-thirds of Sri Lanka's Muslims live in the South of the country and are economically better off than their Muslim counterparts in the North and East. This creates an interesting schism, as was conveyed by the Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly who has produced extensive research on Sri Lanka's Muslim population<sup>81</sup>, with respect to the formation of a distinctly 'Muslim' civil society as Southern Muslims to a certain extent rely on Southern Sinhalese to trade and do business with and, thus, have a different set of interests and needs in the post-war environment than Muslims in the North and East (Interview 18). Conversely, many Muslims in the North and East earn a livelihood through fishing or farming and are, therefore, principally concerned with issues regarding land ownership, land-use, and access to the sea (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). This discrepancy has also transferred over to issues of representation as those Muslims elected in the East or from the Eastern province are not seen to represent the needs of Southern Muslims and vice versa (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). This has, ultimately, resulted in a political division between Muslim communities based on geography and socio-economic status and the inability of Muslim political groups to articulate a united Muslim voice and identity for Sri Lankan Muslims (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo).

This inability to articulate a distinct socio-political space for Muslims has significantly impacted Muslim civil society, with some Muslims arguing that Muslim civil society at present is almost non-existent in the sense that Western civil society is conceived of (Interview 14,

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<sup>81</sup> For example, two of the reports produced by the Secretary General, 'Reconciliation between Muslims and Tamils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces' and 'Research Reports on Muslims' Grievances in Sri Lanka' contain detailed demographic and census information as well as data on economic activity, the number and locations of mosques and Muslim schools in Sri Lanka and displaced Muslims, as well as voting patterns, and issues pertaining to social welfare.

Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). This is because although there are some groups working on reconstruction and aid distribution, displacement, and women's issues, these represent only a small minority of Muslims in Sri Lanka and much of the work has been linked back to Muslim political parties (Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). Traditionally Sri Lanka's Muslims have been represented at the political level by the SLMC, the most prominent Muslim political party representing the political arm of Sri Lankan Muslims, which has sought to play a lead role as the articulator of Muslim interests in Sri Lanka.

In the context of the victor's peace, however, as the SLMC is fragmented into many political parties some Muslims have looked instead to other potential avenues, including civil society and quasi political-civil society forums, as possible alternative platforms in which to set forth Muslim interests in a post-war Sri Lanka (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). The revitalisation of the Muslim Peace Secretariat (MPS) in the form of the Secretariat of Muslims is moving ahead with the intention of accessing and representing a broader spectrum of the Muslim population, including civil society in Sri Lanka than its predecessor (Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims,

and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo)<sup>82</sup>. The lack of separate representation for Muslims and joint interest in building up a specifically Sri Lankan Muslim political voice has helped stimulate talks amongst Muslim political and civil society actors to quietly restructure the MPS (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Correspondingly, Muslim political party members in parliament have stated that they feel as though they have little power to raise Muslim issues and often that they must go along with the government's policies in order to avoid any negative repercussions as it is 'very difficult and dangerous' to go against government in the victor's peace (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Minority parties argue that power rests solely with the GOSL executive and that minorities feel that they have no options; 'if they go outside of [the] government line they are treated as though this is a hostile act ... there are attempts to break them up or poach politicians and bring them into [the government] fold' (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). This has resulted in some thinking that a Muslim civil society is needed to help support and further grow the Muslim voice in Sri Lanka that operates outside of official party politics (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for

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<sup>82</sup> For more information on the MPS under its new name 'The Secretariat for Muslims' due to the closure of peace secretariats in Sri Lanka see: <http://secretariatformuslims.org/>.



Muslims, Colombo). However, serious challenges remain in reconstructing the MPS or another similar umbrella organisation such as funding and resource challenges, the capacity to do work, and the related necessity of finding and training up competent staff (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). Indeed Muslim actors have pointed to three interrelated factors that they believe account for the continued absence of any significant recognition on the part of the international community that continues to hinder the promotion of Muslim interests: (1) the strength of the international Tamil lobby, (2) the attention and emphasis that has been placed on accountability for actions undertaken in the last stages of war, and (3) the international stigmatisation of Muslims associated with the post-9/11 socio-political landscape (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Given the perception of the relative absence of Muslim civil society, what has constituted a Muslim civil society in Sri Lanka has primarily been comprised of religious organisations, community outreach, and women's groups (Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). For Muslims in the North and East, from 1990 onwards, the issues of central concern have included their forced removal from their lands, the need for resettlement after the war, and the corresponding provision of permanent housing and property (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). From this a vision of Muslim civil society has evolved as groups, particularly at the grass-roots, have formed in

response to need in conjunction with other rural development societies and around mosques (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Other civil society activities have also included reporting and documentation work on the plight of Sri Lanka's Muslim population, despite relatively little space for undertaking such activities. This has even led to the taking up of human rights and conflict-related projects by groups such as the Law Society Trust as well as prominent scholars who have sought to bring attention to Muslim suffering (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). A report specifically on the 1990 expulsion of Muslims from the North by the LTTE was commissioned by the Citizens Commission project to draw together and integrate the various narratives of those displaced into one story that would historicise the war-time experiences of a minority group often marginalised within the dominant framings of the war (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo)<sup>83</sup>.

However, this work has also unveiled an important layer to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, that of the need to not only seek resettlement in the North for those displaced by the war but to bring attention to the plight of Sri Lanka's Northern Muslims, in particular concerning tensions between Northern Muslims and Tamils (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). There is a sense amongst some Sri Lankan Muslims, many of whom were previously involved in the Muslim Peace Secretariat established during the CA process to strengthen the voice of Muslims within the peace process, of the need to articulate community

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<sup>83</sup> More information on the Citizens' Commission is available from their website at: <http://citizens-commission.org/>.

concerns for specifically Muslims that has facilitated in the emergence of a few more rights-based NGOs and networks including, for example, The Muslim Council of Sri Lanka, which is a network of more than 70 National Muslim organisations spread across the country that possess substantial awareness of community concerns (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). One challenge for Muslims has been that predominantly thus far the majority of civil society-type work has taken place at the regional and community-level, not in Colombo, barring a few exceptions consisting of Sri Lanka's elite Muslims. Hence, Muslim issues have tended to be framed more as 'local' concerns than being central to the underlying issues in conflict (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo)<sup>84</sup>. Likewise although there are many Muslims, particularly academics and those that have been involved in the political sector, which are involved in civil society work and do have ties to the international community that they might seek to leverage, they have not necessarily been focused specifically on Muslim issues until recently (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). Moreover, the emphasis that has been put on development as a 'solution' to peace has left little space or opportunity in which to discuss 'yet another marginalised' actor within Sri

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<sup>84</sup> It should be noted that in many ways this represents the continuation of trends in ethno-national relations in Sri Lanka rather than a break from the past. Muslims report having felt excluded and ignored within major attempts to reach a negotiated end to the conflict during the war. Such feelings were expressed in relation to the CA as research participants stated that they believed they had been largely side-lined in peace talks due to the emphasis placed on bringing Sri Lanka's two dominant parties in the conflict to the table (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo; Interview 7, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo).

Lankan society (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Last but not least, there has also been a ‘radicalisation of [Sri Lanka’s] Muslim community’ in recent years ‘not fundamentally political’, but rather more religious and cultural in orientation that is influencing the nature of the development of a Muslim civil society (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). This has resulted in huge transformations in Muslim parish practices with energy being put into moulding Muslim practices from outside of Sri Lanka that reaches across regions and classes as movements have stepped in to connect Sri Lankan Muslims to a ‘global’ Muslim movement (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). This represents a very powerful force in shaping how Sri Lankan Muslims are beginning to locate themselves in Sri Lanka’s post-war society. Such transformations have become visible in Muslim clothing, for example, with women increasingly wearing hijabs and in the active moulding of a public image for Muslims concerning what constitutes ‘good’ Muslim behaviour and what it means to be a ‘good Muslim’ in Sri Lanka (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). The purpose of such activities on the part of both domestic and external actors is to bring ‘stray Muslims into [the] fold again, those that drink alcohol, do not attend Friday services, or women who do not cover their heads’, thereby representing a re-working of Muslim cultural and societal practices in Sri Lanka (Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member

Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). This could have extremely significant impacts for the kinds and types of Muslim civil society actors and activities that evolve out of such socio-cultural shifts and raises questions as to how these transformations will interact with Sri Lanka's other identity groups, which remains to be seen.

#### **6.10 Conclusion:**

This Chapter has explored aspects of civil society insecurity related to power imbalances, tensions, challenges, and contradictions *within or internal to* Sri Lanka's civil society sector. Such an analysis has highlighted areas of contestation and debates over what constitutes 'authentic' forms of civil society in Sri Lanka as well as power dynamics, politics of identity, and inequalities within civil society that influence how some issues get taken up and politicised as integral to peace and security, whilst others are marginalised or securitised by dominant discourses. As has been revealed throughout this Chapter, key tensions within Sri Lankan civil society pertain to the multiplicity and polarisation of viewpoints concerning ways forward in the post-war period, combined with enduring identity politics that has compounded insecurities experienced by some civil society actors from within the sector and made difficult for those who wish to challenge the outcomes of the victor's peace the possibility of building a movement with a set of cohesive goals and objectives.

One of the key challenges in this regard remains how to come to agreement and find places of commonality with respect to these types of civil society actors moving forward as a sphere of influence in Sri Lanka's contemporary socio-political victor's peace environment. For example, as will be explored further in Chapter 8, debates within Sri Lankan civil society concerning how to respond to the centralisation of power under the Rajapaksa regime have often followed divergent trajectories with little overarching cohesiveness or support for one another's

viewpoints. Some, such as the Executive Director of a Gandhian-oriented Colombo-based service-learning organisation and members of a rural development foundation near Puttalam in the West have argued that it is time to lay low and wait for a more stable and secure environment for civil society advocacy (Interview 31, Puttalam; Interview 8, Colombo), whilst others including an outspoken Bishop within the Catholic Church and Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to strengthening the contributions of civil society to the public policy debate, believe that there is no time to wait given the socio-political realities of victor's peace Sri Lanka and that things may become worse if nothing is done and groups 'lie low' accommodating government rather than challenging it (Interview 29, Colombo; Interview 10, Colombo). This is not to argue that cohesiveness ought to imply an absence of diversity, but rather that when diversity becomes both polarising and paralyzing it can jeopardise peace and lead to greater human insecurity. Whilst this Chapter has focused on human insecurities *internal* to Sri Lankan civil society, Chapter 7 examines dynamics *external* to civil society through an analysis of post-war relations between the GOSL and civil society, including 'top-down' power centralisation, relations of ruling, and practices of governmentality and securitisation exercised over civil society that reinforce dominant discourses and dynamics within the victor's peace.

## Chapter 7 – ‘Securitising’ Sri Lankan Civil Society: Power and the Politics of Victor’s Peace Sri Lanka

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*‘The undemocratic and unethical ways of acquiring the sovereign power of the people to govern the country on their behalf also damaged the honourable culture of the Sri Lankan society’ (Narapalasingam 2011)*

### 7.1 Introduction:

This Chapter explores the politics of peace-building and human (in)security in victor’s peace Sri Lanka through an analysis of power dynamics and relations of ruling operating on and through Sri Lankan civil society exercised by the GOSL, including its supporters, the Sri Lankan military, nationalist media, and civil society. It examines structural dimensions of Human Security that specifically deconstruct how knowledge, discourses, and ‘truths’ get constituted and policies sustained through asymmetries of power, including securitisation and practices of governmentality. According to one religious civil society actor describing the socio-political situation in Sri Lanka, there are ‘abnormalities’ that permeate within Sri Lankan culture that have become ‘normalised’ by decades of conflict. These ‘abnormalities’ continue to persist in the victor’s peace with civil society unable to speak out or vocalise opposition to them without facing discrimination and rights violations that prevent people from ‘living a secure life’ in the post-war period (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy).

The Chapter draws out the implications of these ‘abnormalities’ on the complex webs of power that construct the spaces that enable or prevent civil society voices speaking out about political, economic, and/or social change, thereby, explicitly framing peace and security as politicised, subjective, and contested concepts. As we have seen with the defeat of the LTTE, vast changes have been realised in terms of modalities, or regimes, of governmental power<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Regimes of power as it is used here encompass (1) governmental power including the GOSL, GAs, local ‘elites’ and religious actors (largely Buddhist nationalist monks), and the Sri Lankan military; (2) international governance

within Sri Lanka, with the GOSL consolidating and centralising power, whilst other social and political constructs and relationships through which power is mediated, such as gendered, class, and caste dynamics, have remained constant. This relates, for example, to the roles of District Secretaries or Government Agents (GAs) – Sri Lankan civil servants appointed by the GOSL to govern a certain district of the country – that operate largely as arbitrators and dispensers of GOSL policy. GA's are charged with administering and ensuring compliance with the government's rules and regulations and, therefore, lack any real power in terms of independent governing. Such multi-level governance networks are driven by vertical, 'top-down' power that flows from the GOSL to GAs and from GAs to citizens, where power is then sub-divided further horizontally by class, caste, ethnicity, religion, and wealth, thus, constructing new vertical axes of power.

Orjuela (2010b) asserts that these factors, *and* their associated figures of authority (including religious leaders, policy-makers, and academics) shape generally accepted understandings of 'right' and 'wrong' in Sri Lanka, including the behaviours and conversations that are deemed acceptable and, therefore, 'normal' and those considered 'deviant,' and are regulated through prevailing values and dominant discourses (p. 12). Disciplinary power functions in this way, where Sri Lankans are placed under a system of surveillance that becomes pervasive enough to move them to internalise the disciplining structures such that they, ultimately, oversee their own conduct through self-discipline (often motivated by fear of reprisals) and monitoring of the conduct of others for 'suspicious' or 'abnormal' behaviour (Wilson 2009, p. 34). In order to comprehend the nature of Sri Lankan post-war politics it is, therefore, important to be aware of processes of both continuity and change in relation to power

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power comprised of foreign governments, diplomats and embassies, international institutions, and forms of 'global' civil society; as well as (3) power relations and 'tensions' within Sri Lankan (civil) society itself.



dynamics that are internal and external to the Sri Lankan political system, including the influence of wider geopolitical forces on Sri Lanka.

Drawing on Human Security, this Chapter focuses on exploring the post-war political landscape within Sri Lanka through an exploration of the implications and intentions behind the GOSL's 'top-down' post-war policies and discourses in relation to their impacts on Sri Lankan civil society and the production of conditions of governmentality and securitisation. The Chapter undertakes a 'top-down' analysis of the dynamic interplay of governmental power in Sri Lankan society, exploring the exercise of sovereign power and the centralisation of politics undertaken by the GOSL. This includes consideration of the ways in which Sri Lankan civil society has been securitised within the GOSL's militarily imposed post-war reconstruction that involves the employment of 'disciplinary' and 'ideological' power, and the selling of the government's 'peace through development' agenda. This has, ultimately, seen the militarisation of development through linkages to the security and development nexus. The Chapter further examines the GOSL's fight against 'terrorist' and 'separatist' threats to its national integrity that portray some elements of civil society as 'anti-national' agents of Western interventionism, including how these narratives in turn have shaped the post-war environment for Sri Lankan civil society. Finally, the Chapter presents an analysis of the ways in which governmental power has been consolidated through state-sponsored media and the introduction of a range of regulatory censorship focused at social media and information technologies.

## **7.2 Sovereign Power and Centralisation in Post-War Sri Lanka:**

As the sole 'victor' in the aftermath of the war with single governing authority over the country, the GOSL has been able to adopt strategies of governance that have had the effect of intensifying and consolidating cliental and patrimonial relations and centralising power even

more tightly in the hands of government. Furthermore, widespread scepticism about the GOSL's willingness to devolve power in light of what has been characterised as 'the highly authoritarian, centralised and militarised way in which the Rajapaksa regime governs' has further pointed in the direction of increased centralisation, particularly with respect to power being vested in the hands of the President, his family, and the military ('Sri Lanka: Post-War Progress Report' 2011). According to one Sri Lankan who previously worked for the Red Cross during the war, 'in my country the problems are with the politicians' who have now consolidated power such that the ability to govern rests in hands of 'a few family members holding key positions' (Interview 27, Formerly member and driver for the Red Cross, Kandy). Consequently, centralisation has been extended as a principal technique of governmentality in which power resides with a limited number of central actors in the executive, and the President has consolidated his power by drawing on the historical legacy, 'normalised' in the psyche of Sri Lankans, of the controlling authority being the dominant source of decisions affecting the nation.

Importantly, centralisation has not been undertaken in a manner that aims at overtly suppressing the majority of Sri Lankans, but rather is strategically targeted at achieving these ends in subversive ways that normalise behaviours and actions in the psyche and 'everyday' practices of Sri Lankans. This, according to an outspoken Bishop within the Catholic Church, then becomes the 'way it is', accepted because 'people feel there are no other options and experience a sense of failure [as this] has gone on so long in Sri Lanka' (Interview 29). At multiple levels the Constitution has been used for this very purpose to accommodate the rise of governmental power through legal channels and using 'democratic' conventions, representing a form of 'democratic authoritarianism' (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). As previously discussed, President Rajapaksa has taken steps to

consolidate power through legislative amendments such as the September 2010 passing of Amendment 18 that eliminates term limits for the President, whilst expanding presidential powers over elections, the police, judiciary, and human rights commissions ('Lively discussion on 18th Amendment and Beyond' 2011; 'Sri Lanka's Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution Represents an Assault on Constitutional Democracy' 2010). The GOSL has justified the Amendment based on the argument that it 'will enhance the people's franchise, by the specific provision of removing the ceiling on the number of terms an elected President could hold office, and giving the people a wider choice in the election of a President' ('Parliament approves 18th Amendment with overwhelming majority' 2010).

However, Amendment 18 has constricted spaces for civil society by limiting the ability of these actors to insert themselves into political dialogue and approach political appointees on issues of concern (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This is because the power to appoint persons to public office has been vested in the hands of the President including such positions as the Human Rights Commission; Permanent Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption; and the Chief Justice and Judges of the Supreme Court, which represent key avenues for civil society to leverage in vocalising critique and bringing concerns to regarding governmental policies and actions<sup>86</sup>. That the centralisation of legislative power has somewhat paradoxically been achieved 'democratically', highlights the possibilities for democratic governance structures to become 'tools' of governmental manipulation in cases where power is centralised in the hands of the governmental elite.

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<sup>86</sup> For a complete list of political appointments that the President has control over under Amendment 18 see: 'The 18th Amendment To Sri Lanka's Constitution' 2010.

In addition, the GOSL has employed the use of more subtle tactics in seeking to consolidate its power legislatively. These strategies have arisen in relation to the renewal of interest in Amendment 13<sup>87</sup> of the Sri Lankan Constitution as an outcome of the debate triggered by the publication of the Final Report of the LLRC<sup>88</sup> with respect to future constitutional reforms pertaining to devolution and democratisation (Welikala 2012). In theory constitutional reform can be used as a conflict resolution tool directed at power devolution and power-sharing.

It can also be manipulated as a means of concentrating power in the centre and further exacerbating inequalities and tensions (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). On the one hand it has been suggested that the full implementation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment can be viewed 'as an important confidence-building measure' showing that the GOSL is willing to address some minority issues (Welikala 2012). A piece published in Groundviews on 12 February 2012 explains:

If undertaken with a sense of purpose and goodwill, it [Amendment 13] can demonstrate that the government is serious about addressing minority grievances, help consolidate an inclusive process towards agreeing further reforms, foster a culture of compromise and accommodation, encourage Sri Lanka's friends abroad that there is hope for reconciliation and peace on a more durable constitutional footing, and provide at least some answers to its critics (Welikala 2012).

On the other hand, some Tamil civil society actors have asserted more 'sinister' motivations behind the GOSL's publicly stated willingness to hold Northern Provincial Council Elections in 2012. They claim that whilst the GOSL can publicly appear to be devolving powers to the provinces, at the same time it can effectively control and suppress calls for self-determination and devolution beyond the ways that Amendment 13 is currently being

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<sup>87</sup> The 13th Amendment to the Constitution was introduced by the United National Party (UNP) regime in 1987. The 13th Amendment established provincial councils as an attempted political measure aimed at ethnic conflict resolution and power devolution.

<sup>88</sup> For more information on the Final Report and activities of the LLRC see: 'Final report of Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) tabled in Parliament' 2011.

implemented ('A Public Memo to Members of Parliament representing the Tamil National Alliance from the Tamil Civil Society' 2011). They continue that a second intention on the part of the GOSL is to propagate the image to the international community that the Tamils have accepted the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment as a solution to the ethnic dimensions of the conflict but that in reality 'incremental devolution' is not a workable option for resolution of the conflict within the present status quo practices of policy-making ('A Public Memo to Members of Parliament representing the Tamil National Alliance from the Tamil Civil Society' 2011). A statement by Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa further adds fuel to the speculation over the GOSL's true commitment to devolution. On 8 August 2011 Secretary Rajapaksa was reported stating: 'The existing constitution is more than enough for us to live together. I don't think there is any issue on this more than that. ... I mean now the LTTE is gone, I don't think there is any requirement. I mean what can you do more than this? ... Devolution wise I think we have done enough, I don't think there is a necessity to go beyond that' ('Gotabaya hits out' 2011).

This suggests that there is a danger in the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment acting more as a clever disguise for power consolidation than any genuine commitment to power devolution, and again, in the words of the Secretary General of North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, a 'mandate that was intended to be for minorities [will be] used to benefit the majority instead' (Interview 18). It also paves the way for minority Sri Lankans to be made more insecure through the application of constitutional amendments that further facilitates in the creation of political insecurities through legal means and the technologies of government that have the end result of reducing the political freedoms and ability to govern themselves through the failure to substantially devolve powers to Sri Lanka's minorities. This has helped enable the continuation of President Rajapaksa's rule, symbolising the 'hybridity of democracy and authoritarianism' alluded to above (Interview 15

Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). It further represents a potential avenue for the co-option of one of the cornerstones of liberal peace theory regarding the establishment of democratic governance structures and mechanisms.

Significantly, President Rajapaksa's coming to power has also had considerable influence on the nature of political party power relations in Sri Lanka. This is because the President comes from a regional political family located in the Southern Province that does not belong to the aristocratic nobility that, for example, the Bandaranaike family has represented in Sri Lanka. After becoming President and leader of the SLFP, President Rajapaksa took immediate steps to establish his authority by detaching himself and his party from the influence of the Bandaranaike family that consequently represented the shifting of Sri Lanka's political powerbase from the urban, Westernised elite to the rural, traditionalist elite (Interview 17 Previous member of the Berghof Foundation in Sri Lanka, Colombo). According to Jayadeva Uyangoda (2010) this has been particularly vital in terms of the President's ability to consolidate power, both as leader of the SLFP and the President of Sri Lanka, as he has sought to establish the foundation for his own family to emerge as the newest, and at present most powerful, political family in Sri Lanka (p. 57).

Indeed the President has drawn parallels between his own achievements and those of the famous Kandyan Kings of Sri Lanka's past as a means of connecting to traditionalist and nationalist powerbases in Sri Lanka<sup>89</sup>. Likewise, having rid the country of LTTE 'terror', the President's 'victory' has enhanced his popularity and power domestically (Orjuela 2010b, pp. 9-10). From a securitisation perspective, President Rajapaksa is thus projecting an image of his rule

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<sup>89</sup> See for examples of the 'victorious' imagery of past Kandyan Kings over the European colonisers: Kaplan 2009; Akmeemana 2006; Hussainmiya 2001. See also the story of King Duthugemunu (161-137BC), who united the Sinhalese for the first time after defeating the Tamil king Elara: <http://www.lankalibrary.com/geo/kings/dutugemunu.htm>.

that embeds him in a socio-cultural identity that conjures images of ‘victory’, restoring ‘honour’ and ‘glory’ to (largely Sinhalese) Sri Lankans, and holding out against foreign and domestic ‘invaders’. This helps facilitate the kinds of positive responses the President desires to his policies from the Buddhist nationalists and those in the Buddhist heartland, with whom he seeks to align himself politically. This has also helped lay the groundwork for the prevalence of ‘Western invasion’ and ‘anti-nationalist’ rhetoric against voices critical of government throughout the country (Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo; Interview 6, Prior Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). Furthermore, as few at the grassroots level and in rural areas speak English, it becomes easier to sell and buy into state and state-sponsored media rhetoric as ‘people are not necessarily well-informed, particularly in [the] South where access [to] state based and controlled media is all they have’ (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). Such acts can thus be seen as breaking with the Westernised elite, and perpetuating ‘anti-Sri Lankan’ rhetoric throughout the country directed at anyone who speaks up in opposition to the GOSL’s policies, and functioning as a symbolic act in legitimating securitisation rather than solely linguistic.

This exercise of sovereign power reflects dynamics of centralisation and the constricting of the kinds of associational spaces that exist for civic action within Sri Lankan society. The centralisation of state services and consequently power within the central tenets of government that began with the development of the welfare state and continued with political ‘liberalisation’

in the 1970s have continued to be intensified through the GOSL's post-war reconstruction and development doctrines ('Northern Spring' [Uthuru Wasanthaya] and 'Eastern Revival' [Negenahira Navodaya]), and the PTF, which remains the granting body responsible for approving civil society to undertake projects. Through the establishment of the PTF the GOSL has further been able to restrict who carries out 'peace-building' activities, funnelling approval for civil society work and foreign donor support through Government Ministers and the PTF in order to control, and additionally, claim credit for moving post-war 'peace-building' forward (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee on Women Jaffna; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Since June 2010, the NGO Secretariat has also been run by the Ministry of Defence and it is the NGO Secretariat that approves plans for development projects (Bateman 2011). Although the PTF is generally considered the more influential body, both it and the NGO Secretariat ensure that implementing development projects in the North is made difficult through strict regulatory requirements and constraints regarding the types of projects that receive approval (Bateman 2011). In order to speed up the process one needs to have a 'politician in [their] pocket' that they may have given extra (monetary) incentive to so that their project might be approved (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo).

The process of PTF approval has obvious ramifications in terms of the types of projects that receive approval as well as when and whether funds reach intended recipients. For example, it was reported by members of a Rural Development Foundation that in one case the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) donated money for educational awareness activities to be undertaken by the GOSL but the government did not carry out the



activities. Instead the GOSL demanded that the activities be carried out by the Rural Development Foundation prior to giving over the money to the organisation to carry out the activities raising questions as to whether the funds will ever be transferred (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). The PTF, therefore, enables governmental power to be exercised over civil society by removing autonomy and decision-making freedoms and authority from civil society and placing them in the hands of government. The constant threat of ‘punishment’, such as banning organisations or not approving programmatic activities, and effectively shutting down many groups, has had a ‘disciplining’ effect on civil society behaviours with groups saying that at the moment there is a ‘total lack of space’ for social justice and psycho-social work and, therefore, that they are largely not pursuing such activities (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 34, Project Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

The GOSL has also appointed government representatives in the form of GAs in districts where in theory civil society groups can go to be briefed on how to make applications for project approval and funding. However, as one member of the Sri Lankan public service explained, this process is made difficult because there are so many more citizens and community organisations than district offices have the capacity to engage with (Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Colombo). Furthermore, although they do provide a window into accessing government and learning about GOSL policies, many citizens are unaware of how the process of making an application works, and even how to do so when many cannot read or write

in Sinhalese (Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Colombo). Since only development and service delivery applications are accepted, control over the kinds of civil society work and, importantly, which types of groups are receiving assistance and information as to how to apply remains essentially centralised, controlled, and monitored by the GOSL (Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Colombo). In essence this has resulted in ‘government institutions [becoming] pawns in the hands of politicians’ (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo).

Historically, and in part a legacy dating back to colonialism, many community-based organisations have looked to the ruling party in government to facilitate in the creation of an enabling environment in which civil society can function. The recognition of the presence of ‘patron-client’ relations in Sri Lanka’s political process and the application of these to state-society relations is vital to an understanding of how power operates in Sri Lanka and its influence on the formation and functioning of civil society (Uyangoda 2010, p. 61). Early on, the welfare system was supported by a surplus generated in the plantation economy that enabled the state to provide support for all citizens in areas such as health, education, food, social infrastructure, and employment (Uyangoda 2010). This paved the way for the development of a vertical power relationship in the area of social-welfare between state and society in which the state was seen as the ‘supreme agency of social welfare and benevolence,’ where power flowed from the state to society rather than being mediated within a state-society relationship that could see civil society organisations as key interlockers playing intermediating and administrative roles (Uyangoda 2010, p. 61).

In the post-war environment this vertical ‘patron-client’ relationship has been extended further with respect to networks of patronage that have primarily benefitted the ‘victors’ of the

war, most especially those supportive of the GOSL, with negative repercussions for the development and vibrancy of many aspects of civil society. The GOSL has taken steps to accelerate its developmental path toward ‘peace’ with the GOSL aspiring to 8% growth in GDP (that it delivered on in 2010 and 2011) and under its economic policy the *Mahinda Chintana* (‘Mahinda’s Thoughts’) advocating greater state control of airports and utilities, even using government controlled funds and companies to take majority control of leading private banks (US Department of State 2012 Investment Climate Statement - Sri Lanka 2012). The GOSL has, however, continued to seek private foreign direct investment for infrastructure development projects including awarding preferential tax breaks in areas deemed strategically important such as in tourism and large scale investment projects that it views as the ‘engines of development’ in Sri Lanka, (Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo)<sup>90</sup>. However, according to a US Department of State 2012 Investment Climate Statement on Sri Lanka, ‘international MNCs [Multi-national Corporations] and SMEs [small to medium enterprises] feel the government is blatantly biased towards local companies. Some investors are concerned, that Sri Lanka is becoming a highly nationalistic environment where the government is prone to blame foreigners for its economic and social ills’, indicating the continuation of patron-client relations that benefit the ‘victors’, the GOSL and its supporters, in Sri Lanka’s victor’s peace (US Department of State - 2012 Investment Climate Statement - Sri Lanka 2012). This has further been reflected in observations that ‘to get anything done [you] need someone in government [that] you can call upon’ (Interview 27, Formerly a member and driver for the Red Cross, Kandy; also reflected in Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil

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<sup>90</sup> For example, apartments above the third floor of condominium buildings, land for the development of large housing schemes, hospitals and hotels with a minimum investment of US \$10 million, exporting companies with a minimum investment of US \$1 million, and large infrastructure projects with a minimum investment of US \$50 million are exempted from a 100% tax on land transfers to foreigners (US Department of State - 2012 Investment Climate Statement - Sri Lanka 2012).

activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo) and that ‘you need [a] letter from [an] MP [Member of Parliament] to do anything’ (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo). It is believed that politicians no longer care about their ‘good name’ or reputation, being more preoccupied with figuring out ‘how to take things and do things for themselves, not the country’, despite the fact that they justify their actions through claims that they are acting in the national interest (Interview 27, Formerly a member and driver for the Red Cross, Kandy). Those with connections to politicians and local private-sector and political elites are perceived to get more and to have received more and better aid both in the aftermath of the tsunami and war (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Similarly, comments made that ‘MPs go to [the] funerals of people of political interest and significance to get votes, even if they do not know them’ are indicative of the heavily partisan nature of such interactions compounding other issues such as ethnicity and caste (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This has led some Sri Lankans to conclude that ‘from birth to death Sri Lankan life is politicised’ (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

At the same time, in Sri Lanka there exists little history of local financing for civil society through corporate funding or private sector assistance. This is attributable in the first instance to ‘patron-client’ relations, in the second to the legacies of colonialism, and in the third to decades of the ethnic strife that has left civil society polarised and divided (Orjuela 2010a; Goodhand 2010; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). The absence of avenues to seek philanthropic support at the domestic level weakens civil society on

the development side and increases reliance on NGOS and donors (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). The ‘aid culture’ that emerged in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami is an example of this dynamic as it added to an already insecure situation, rather than alleviating it, by undermining grass-roots civil society’s control over aid distribution in favour of international and national-level actors (including at the time the LTTE).

In response to the UN Panel of Experts Report released in April 2011, the GOSL has framed the international community as engaging in a form of neo-colonial imperialism and as representing a ‘threat’ to Sri Lankan stability, ultimately, accusing the Report of being ‘fundamentally flawed’ and ‘patently biased’ that ‘will feed into the political agendas of those who wish to destabilise the country’ (‘Minister of External Affairs Briefs Diplomatic Community on Darusman Report’ 2011; Haviland 2011b). For its part, the International Crisis Group accused the GOSL in September 2011 of not having taken

credible steps to ensure accountability for the grave allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity identified in the April 2011 report of the Secretary General’s Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka. ... Instead, its post-war agenda has been to further centralise power, expand the role of the military, undermine local civilian authorities, and politicise the institutions that should uphold the rule of law and combat impunity (‘Sri Lanka: Post-War Progress Report.’ 2011).

This echoes comments from Sri Lankans themselves that the GOSL continues to ‘burn bridges with [the] West’ by delaying decentralisation and widening presidential powers (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

Continued reliance on donor funding at the local-level mediated through state-level institutions such as the PTF de-legitimatises the political attributes of civil society, culminating instead in support for civil society as a ‘technical’ and ‘administrative’ intermediary between state and society and only those actors whose work is in line with the GOSL’s post-war vision for development (Uyangoda 2010, p. 69). As civil society has come to be viewed by government

as an intermediating ‘technical-administrative’ sphere, the GOSL is not interested in civil society mobilisation or empowerment activities as it does not believe these are necessary (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

Similarly groups have commented on both the bureaucratic and biased nature of the funding process. Those projects which tend to receive PTF approval most readily and expediently are those that are ‘emergency-focused, other types of activities maybe can be undertaken later, but [the] focus [is] on [emergency] development – returning displaced to homes, rebuilding, infrastructure’ (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Once PTF approval has been given, civil society actors have been required to obtain further approval in the form of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) clearance<sup>91</sup> and Divisional Secretariat (DS) recommendation before project activities can commence (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Adding to this is the fact that there are no standard timelines for decisions to be made regarding project approval and receipt of MOD clearance and DS recommendation; ‘sometimes [it is] one month, sometimes two, sometimes longer’ (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Finally, once all the required approvals have been granted, civil society groups can do their work but it is not necessarily easy for them to go about doing so as the requirements of showing approvals at checkpoints, numerous roadblocks, and frequent stoppage by military personnel for searches of vehicles makes it extremely time consuming to access certain project areas, most notably in the North. As one rural development worker put it, the GOSL ‘takes great care to keep [people] out, [it] does not

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<sup>91</sup> It should be noted that the GOSL has lifted the requirement for foreign nationals to obtain MOD clearance, with the exception of foreign media crews, before travelling to the northern districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya (See: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/asia-oceania/sri-lanka>).

want foreigners or critics accessing controversial areas and reporting on conditions' (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

This viewpoint is strengthened by assertions that the GOSL has implemented programmes that require people to 'jump through multiple hoops', meeting extremely specific criteria in order to be awarded allocated funds and that, even when monies have been earmarked for civil society activities, particularly with respect to land and resettlement, they are often not made readily available and people have immense difficulties in finding out how to access them (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). As a religious actor explained, aid that is purportedly to help enable Tamils and Muslims to resettle in the areas from which they were displaced in actuality has been deliberately underfinanced so that the GOSL can appear to be providing the means for civil society activities, but those displaced cannot actually return, enabling the GOSL to pursue plans for tourism and infrastructure development instead in the North and East (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo).

Recent figures indicate that there are an estimated 40,000 war widows in the North particularly hard hit by unemployment and requiring specifically targeted programming, and that less than 17,000 of the over 100,000 homes required for those displaced and in need of permanent shelter are under construction ('Sri Lanka: Legacy of War' 2012). According to one human rights activist in Jaffna, those in the North have been 'banished and bashed' by the GOSL who are the 'raiders' of Jaffna, and 'they [the GOSL] will leave no concession or benefits for Jaffna, that they have no concern for and will leave nothing for those returning and living in Jaffna' (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality. Jaffna).

At its most sinister, this government project has been described as a ‘programme of ethnic cleansing from Sri Lankan soil’ with the GOSL stating publicly that the displaced can return, and encouraging them to do so, but what they would actually prefer is that those displaced from the North and East leave the country (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). Some have asserted that the development-focused agenda of the GOSL and the encouragement of the Sinhalese to move and (re)settle in areas previously cut-off by the war is being undertaken as a way to ‘Sinhalise’ regions in the North and East (Interview 64, members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna; Interview 47 Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). For example, according to the Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, the ‘Sinhalisation of [the] Eastern province’ has been depicted in part as occurring during the fishing season as Sinhalese fishermen set up fishing camps in the East, eventually making permanent shelters there, and so it is believed that the GOSL ‘will not facilitate in the resettlement of a Tamil area and that the whole area will eventually become Sinhalese’ (Interview 18, Colombo).

Others more sympathetic to the GOSL have adopted a stance closer to Government rhetoric stating that they believe that a ‘market-driven peace’ will help subside ethnic tensions as groups come into greater contact with one another due to the movement of peoples outward from Colombo and from the South to the North and East (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). This begs the question as to what development means and how power



works on and through peace, security, and development shaping them in ways that may not have initially been conceived. Are the development strategies of the GOSL adequate, ultimately, to bring economic, emotional, psychological, and/or physical security for those at the grass-roots? Who benefits most from this ‘development’? In this sense the ‘blue-print’ application of the liberal peace and the encouragement of the adoption and implementation of certain types of liberal democratic practices cannot necessarily be expected to be exportable onto situations of structural majority-minority ethnic division (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo).

### **7.3 Linking ‘Tamil Terrorism’ and the ‘Global War on Terror’ in ‘ends’ justifying ‘means’:**

In Sri Lanka the end of the war has been constructed so as to convey the image to Sri Lankans that the ends (defeating the dangerous terrorist threat) justified the means (the military offensive) by which the war was ended. The GOSL has been particularly active in seeking to frame its last military offensive in this regard as a ‘humanitarian operation’ and the security forces as upholding human rights. Indeed President Rajapaksa in his ‘victory speech’ delivered to Parliament on 19 May 2009 stated:

our Motherland has been completely freed from the clutches of separatist terrorism ... we did not attempt to respond to the terrorists in their own language. When the terrorists were calling for war, we responded with a humanitarian operation. Our troops went to this operation carrying a gun in one hand, the Human Rights Charter in the other, hostages on their shoulders, and the love of their children in their hearts. Our security forces were able to defeat the most ruthless terrorists in the world due to their strict discipline, commitment, and creative use of military strategy (‘President’s speech to Parliament on the defeat of LTTE’ 2009).

As one human rights actor noted in order to make the ‘freedom from terrorism’ narrative work at the level of the populace the GOSL needed to frame the military’s actions as ‘heroic’ and the LTTE as an inhuman ‘evil force’ (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). This can further be seen in the President’s comments concerning the military’s ‘humanitarian’ conduct in its battle against the LTTE that: ‘It is truly a miracle to go to a battlefield where civilians have been

turned into human bombs, and carry on the battle without shedding the blood of civilians. There was no school of war in the world that could face up to the savage military strategies used by the terrorists of the LTTE' ('President's speech to Parliament on the defeat of LTTE' 2009).

Such statements also represent a continuation of the GOSL's 'war for peace' strategy promoting military action as the only reasonable option remaining for the government to pursue in order to end the war (Manoharan 2008; 'Deadly bus bombing hits Colombo' 2008). In the post-war period the GOSL has continued to follow this line of argument asserting that ends (Sri Lanka's national security) justify means (continued militarisation and intelligence activities). For example, in 2012 Defence Secretary Rajapaksa argued that '[d]espite the military defeat of the LTTE and the elimination of its top leadership two-and-a-half years ago, remnants of the group's global establishment are still active. ... Action is being taken to guard against that potential threat becoming a real one. ... One of the primary ways to guard against the re-emergence of terrorism is to strengthen our intelligence network' (Mushtaq 2012). These statements help to justify the GOSL's continued post-war security measures through the perpetuation of the 'threat' narrative and the necessity of maintaining a large military presence in order to 'protect' Sri Lankans.

State-controlled media has also played a central role in helping to propagate the 'ends justifying means' thesis and the image of the victorious President over a dangerous terrorist enemy reinforcing linkages between President Rajapaksa's victory and that of the Kandyan Kings. For example, in September 2011 the Sunday Observer ran a story in which it claimed that:

President Mahinda Rajapaksa had the singular honour of being the only Head of State who had proved beyond a shadow of doubt that terrorism could be eradicated to make the world a safer place to live in. This feat was indeed a rare, milestone achievement for President Rajapaksa and Sri Lanka which even the so-called big countries are still striving hard to emulate. While most countries in the West and some in South Asia are still making a desperate attempt to eradicate terrorism, Sri Lanka stands out as a shining example,

having crushed the world's most ruthless terrorist outfit within three years ('Sri Lanka has fulfilled its obligations' 2011).

Whilst the invocation of terrorism as justification for the GOSL's actions *vis á vis* the LTTE must be acknowledged in connection to the 'global war on terror', it should also be looked upon as a means of reframing the conflict as a threat to national *and* 'global' security and seeking to deny the validity of Tamil claims of self-determination through the manipulation of lexicon in order to achieve desired ends. During the war, for example, former Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar asserted that the war was one against terror in this statement that '[t]his is not a people's problem at all. It is not a civil war' ('How the US "war on terror" supported Rajapaksa' 2011)<sup>92</sup>. At the UN in 2005 he further declared that '[t]here can be no questions that terror in all its manifestation must be fought relentlessly and globally' ('How the US "war on terror" supported Rajapaksa' 2011). The Rajapaksa Government has used this reframing in the post-war period to connect the problems relating to the ethnic war to the result of terrorism in ways that mirror the claims of the 'global security' paradigm and continues to deny any ethnic aspect to the war, posing it instead as 'solely a "terrorist" problem' (Uyangoda 2012). Indeed, the GOSL continues to insist that the war did not constitute a civil war but rather a struggle against terrorism aimed solely at defeating the LTTE despite the fact that many accused the GOSL of operating under the principle that every Tamil was a terrorist until they could prove otherwise ('How the US "war on terror" supported Rajapaksa' 2011). The deliberate association of LTTE with the 'global war on terror' has been rewoven into the GOSL's discourse as a means of justifying not only its military offensive, but as a continued and constant threat that the GOSL can 'pull out' and use in an effort to shape public opinion against civil society voices critical of government.

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<sup>92</sup> For further discussion on the taking up and linking of the discourses associated with the 'global war on terror' to the Sri Lankan war see: Montlake 2009.

This works by constricting spaces for civil society, for example, framing their actions as those of ‘separatists’, ‘traitors’, or ‘terrorist sympathisers’ as well as through physical acts such as arrests, police questioning, and even violence<sup>93</sup>. The GOSL continues to consolidate power by perpetuating this image of the threatening ethnic ‘other’, thus, extending ethnic cleavages in which ‘critical’ or ‘oppositional’ voices have been framed as ‘anti-nationalist’ and supportive of separatism, and/or as representative of the ‘neo-imperial’ interference of liberal internationalism (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). These techniques have been drawn upon in the post-war environment in order to maintain and construct particularised views of (in)security that flow from nationalist discourses and the policies enacted by the state to the ‘everyday’ discourses and practices of the nationalist grass-roots. This enables civil society actors to be framed as responsible for Sri Lanka’s economic, social, and security ‘problems’. External Affairs Minister, Prof. G.L. Peiris, has warned that ‘even though the LTTE was defeated militarily, paving the way for a peaceful society, both local and foreign groups linked to the LTTE are trying to destroy the country’s economy and organise opposition to Sri Lanka, and it is the duty and responsibility of the professionals of our society to impart information about these threats in order to defeat them’ (Narapalasingam 2011). Likewise, Defence Secretary Rajapaksa has been accused on numerous occasions of equating criticism of the GOSL or military with treason (‘Sri Lanka – Freedom of the Press’ 2012; Montlake 2009). These statements have a dual disciplining effect of (1) discouraging would-be critics of government for fear of reprisals, and, (2) encouraging, as one’s responsibility to the security of Sri Lanka, to report on suspicious activity, thereby self-perpetuating and legitimising the ‘fear’

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<sup>93</sup> In an Amnesty International Report researchers highlight their knowledge of at least three cases between 2009 and 2012 where individuals suspected of assisting international researchers have been detained for extended periods by the authorities with one victim being tortured (‘Sri Lanka’s Assault on Dissent’ 2013).

narrative. With the North continuing to be painted as ‘LTTE sympathisers it makes it hard for the South to feel any sympathy’ for their plight (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna).

The GOSL’s use of conventional military means of upholding security throughout the country, including security checkpoints, the maintenance of HSZs and a large military, as well as investigations of ‘suspicious’ actors, have been subject to a variety of accusations by civil society. Individuals within civil society such as the Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, a Professor of Political Science and Public Policy in Sri Lanka, the Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, and the Executive Director of an organisation committed to the creation of a culture of peace in Sri Lanka have each asserted that this deployment has been undertaken as a means of exerting a symbolic form of securitisation that projects the image of an inherent ‘threat’ existing in post-war society and carried out more as a means of monitoring the actions of civil society actors than in protecting civilians from an imminent ‘threat’ (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo; Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). These actions represent a means of ‘normalising’ repressive measures that might be undertaken against civil society and dissuading opposition by regulating what constitutes acceptable civil society behaviours and, conversely, that which represents a ‘threat’ to the national integrity of

the Sri Lankan state. Therefore, as one Reverend of the (Anglican) Church of Ceylon in Kandy explained, ‘people experience daily abnormalities and power abuses’ (Interview 25, Kandy).

Indeed, Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa has ‘made it clear that anyone who challenges the military will be dealt with as “terrorists”, even now’ (‘Sri Lanka: Post-War Progress Report’ 2011). Disciplinary techniques of power, thus, produce ‘knowledge’ about individuals, categorising and separating them into groupings that then construct specific populations and spaces, comprising those that are included and those that are excluded from the boundaries of societal ‘normalcy’ (Wilson 2009, p. 36). This can be seen in double-edged statements of government such as: ‘[s]imilar to the right of all citizens to the freedom of expression, it is also their duty and responsibility to respect the dignity of the motherland in enjoying that freedom’ (‘Change attitudes for true freedom & progress’ 2011). Therefore, in the same breath the GOSL affirms the ‘freedom of expression’ of all citizens it shapes the extent of such ‘freedoms’ through the insinuation that these ‘freedoms’ do not include ‘disrespecting’ the ‘motherland’, or in other words, vocalising critique against the government and its policies.

The securitisation of civil society has taken the form of *deliberate* and *intentional* acts of power enacted against a variety of civil society actors by the GOSL as a means of maintaining control and directing civil society in particular ways, regulating what counts as acceptable civic behaviour by making certain other behaviours illegal (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2010; Lipschutz 2004). However, one must also take account of the *unintentional* outcomes of policies, such as those that are a consequence of the ‘War on Terror’ and resultant ‘global security’ agenda that calls attention to the potential for non-state actors to play roles in carrying out and enabling acts that threaten both ‘national’ and ‘global’ security that has also seen civil society wrapped up within these discourses. This suggests that securitising acts may have ‘spill-over’

effects that enable other securitising acts to be enacted outside of, or external to, the originating actor-audience relation (Stritzel 2007, p. 363).

This can also be seen in the ways that Sri Lanka's Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has been used to securitise civil society. Combined with the Emergency Regulations (ERs), the PTA has provided the GOSL with two separate (although largely similar) legal frameworks with which to justify arrests, detentions, and other punitive actions carried out against civilians in the name of security. The PTA allows the government to arrest civilians for a broad range of offences<sup>94</sup> and makes confessions to police admissible as evidence, permits detention without charge for up to eighteen months, and perhaps most importantly awards government officials immunity for acts done in good faith and pursuant to any direction or order under the PTA ('Sri Lanka: Post-War Progress Report' 2011; Bateman 2011). The continued use of the PTA in the post-war period has led to accusations that the apparatuses of state have become 'triumphalist' and that such immunities awarded to government, including military, enables the use of 'shock and awe' tactics to reign in and 'harass' civil society of a 'liberal nature' that are constructed as a threat to the GOSL (Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo).

Interestingly, on 25 August 2011 President Rajapaksa announced that the government would not renew the ERs stating that the country can now 'function democratically under the ordinary law' in the post-war period (Bateman 2011). In reality, however, far from reverting to 'ordinary law', the government has extended several of the most controversial powers under the ERs by issuing parallel regulations under the PTA on 30 August 2011. These include the continued militarisation of HSZs and the detention (without charge or access to legal counsel) of

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<sup>94</sup> These include causing 'mischief' to public property, causing 'religious, racial or communal disharmony or feelings of ill-will', and interfering with 'any board or other fixture' in a public place (See Bateman 2011).

thousands of LTTE suspects, including the approximately 3,000 who remain detained for ‘rehabilitation’, nearly all of whom have been held beyond the two-year maximum stipulated by the ERs (Bateman 2011). What is particularly noteworthy about what the GOSL has achieved here is that it represents at first glance a positive step toward the ‘normalisation’ of ‘everyday’ societal relations in Sri Lanka and the return of ‘ordinary’ law. However, that the ERs have been couched within amendments to the PTA suggests that very little has actually changed ‘on-the-ground’ and that the termination of the ERs has been carried out more as a means of outwardly appearing to be taking steps toward de-securitisation than any real change to the highly securitised environment of present-day Sri Lanka.

Moreover, public events, community gatherings, and protest activities in the North continue to require an official from the GOSL and/or someone from the military at the event to monitor ‘security’ and organisers have described both plain-clothes and uniformed military officers as having been in attendance at events, including their photographing and recording of activities (DFAT Report 1478 2013; Interview 68, Member of Parliament Tamil National Alliance, Colombo; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). According to one human rights expert operating out of Jaffna, the official story on the part of the GOSL has been that this is for the ‘protection’ and ‘security’ of those holding events but many believe that it is more about enabling the GOSL to monitor civilians and to ‘keep them in line’ through fear and ensure that those attending are not secretly holding an anti-government meeting and/or planning to incite violence (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). Likewise Tamil activists and members of Tamil political parties suspected by security forces of being ‘LTTE sympathisers’ described having had their phones and email accounts tapped and being followed by individuals they believed to be members of the military (DFAT Report 1478 2013; Interview 64, Members



of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna). Furthermore in the East a former member of the security forces that was stationed in the East during the war reported that soldiers are operating 'undercover' at food stalls and local eateries (often referred to as 'hotels') in order to monitor citizens for any signs of dissent and 'separatist' and 'terrorist' sympathies (Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

The strategic use of fear to influence public opinion in Sri Lanka has significant political implications as those civil society actors that have championed human and minority rights and state reforms are those that have also faced the most serious allegations by government. In the immediate aftermath of the war a number of civil society groups were summoned before a Parliamentary Select Committee and questioned about their activities, based on assertions that they had either collaborated with or supported the LTTE and/or were acting in a manner that represented a threat to national security (Uyangoda 2010, p.69). Such allegations represent a part of a larger process of 'de-democratisation' of the political process (Uyangoda 2010, p. 70). They also correspond to the fundamental operation of power under the PTA (and PTF for that matter), which at its core is a disciplinary act that demarcates permitted (legal) and forbidden (illegal) civil society activities and the boundaries between 'normal'/'abnormal' behaviour and whether an actor is perceived as 'threat'/'non-threat' (Hornqvist 2010).

Ultimately, the GOSL's policies with respect to allocating funds and granting permission for civil society projects have been undertaken as a means of 'classifying' the civil society sector between those groups that are willing to abide by the GOSL's rules and regulations (and are, thus, 'non-threatening') and those that adopt an overtly critical stance toward Government (and are, thus, 'threatening' and 'potential terrorists'), thereby, fanning the flames of social and ethnic

divisiveness. Intensified levels of political repression exercised by the GOSL toward civil society in the post-conflict environment function as important frames of ‘securitisation’, disciplining populations against engaging in or supporting ‘critical’ civil society due to ‘punishments’ that may stem from being branded a ‘traitor’. Fear of being caught up with the label of separatist, separatist supporter, or worse Tiger supporter, therefore, remain a powerful tool of the GOSL against ‘critical’ civil society and is used for the discrediting of these actors.

#### **7.4 Selling the ‘peace through development’ narrative: Militarisation and the Security-Development Nexus:**

The selling of the peace through development discourse in the aftermath of the war rests on the assertion that the way to peace in Sri Lanka is by means of predominantly market-led development. This has both served the purpose of enabling the GOSL to claim credit for and promote the achievement of ‘tangible results’, such as in housing and sanitation, and to de-value the importance of human rights, critical, and alternative voices to those propagated by the GOSL – all undertaken for political reasons (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). For example, linkages made between peace and market-led development can be seen in President Rajapaksa’s comments during his second swearing in ceremony that:

You will feel the change in cities outside Colombo and in the villages where there is a new light of progress in place of the former darkness and ruin around. When five ports are being developed the villages around them will inevitably be transformed into developed economic zones. These rural areas that were ignored from the days of imperial rule are being developed and the nation’s doors open for new employment, industry, business opportunity and massive development (‘United in peace, let’s build a great nation’ 2010).

Some amongst civil society have labelled this the deliberate ‘over-prioritisation’ of economic development in order to prevent human-rights discourses from ‘percolating’ throughout the country (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). In essence, the GOSL sees robust economic growth as *the* way to address (or at least placate) the long-standing political, social, and

economic grievances in Sri Lanka, and by following the East Asian model of development, seeks to mirror previous ‘success stories’, attracting foreign investment particularly from China (Bateman 2011).

Sri Lanka’s nationalist media has also been active in helping to propagate the asserted benefits of the economic growth-led peace through development strategy. On 25 September 2011 the Sunday Observer published a piece linking economic growth to peace through a ‘peace dividend’ that read:

With the dividends of peace contributing in no small measure to boost the national economy, the country could look forward to better economic growth. Although many political opponents and the Opposition criticised the Government's economic policies, it were the sound principles envisioned in the Mahinda Chinthana which helped Sri Lanka to record such encouraging economic growth (‘Sri Lanka has fulfilled its obligations’ 2011).

Historically development, particularly rural, grass-roots development has been linked to taking up the cause of the ‘landless peasantry’ by national elites as a means of achieving greater legitimacy, however, only so far as this commitment pertained to the ethnic Sinhalese and Buddhism (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011, p. 106). In a similar vein, the current peace through development narrative seeks to capitalise on the gains from victory by realising development for the majority population and GOSL supporters, therefore, restoring a sense of everyday life for them such that physical violence features as less of a daily reality. The potential effectiveness of the peace through development agenda in terms of GOSL political gains can, thus, be seen in that many Sinhalese did not experience the war and violence directly but through high costs in terms of living and poverty, problems that now are being resolved for them under the GOSL’s current post-war strategy (Orjuela 2010b).

Similarly, the militarisation of the peace through development agenda can be seen in the assertion that: ‘When it comes to reconstruction in post-war Sri Lanka, the military, rather than, say, technocrats, has its hands in practically everything, from infrastructure to tourism and even

to Colombo's "urban renewal" programs' (Bateman 2011). This calls attention to potential negative implications of linkages made between development and security, often referred to as the 'security-development nexus' (Tschirgi, Lund and Mancini 2010), in which an emphasis on the increased integration of security and development policies can be used to validate increasingly repressive hard security measures in the name of development, and to frame certain segments of a population as responsible for underdevelopment and, thus, insecurity. Moreover, as in Sri Lanka it can be drawn upon in order to emphasise a market-driven (usually at the expense of other factors) 'peace' that embraces the UN mantra that 'there will be no development without security and no security without development' ('In Larger Freedom – Annex' 2005, p. 2), and translates it to suit the government's own purposes. Such a linkage can be seen in the GOSL's appointment of the PTF in the North tasked with coordinating 'activities of the security agencies of the Government in support of resettlement, rehabilitation and development' ('Resettlement, development and security in the northern province' 2009). This represents the depreciation of civil society capacity, as civil society actors cannot take charge of and are not framed as contributing significantly to the reconstruction agenda other than through service delivery activities that are framed as contributing to development, and thus also, security and peace. It further connects to the use of development in order to further the GOSL's particularised vision for a post-war Sri Lanka rather than de-centring development and empowering local populations to direct development and reconstruction in ways that best suit their needs as they determine them.

There are also deeply-rooted political and ethnic dimensions to development that expose the underlying politicised nature of the 'peace through development' narrative in the victor's peace. Dominant powers (and those resisting various technologies of power) draw on their own

sense of knowledge, truth, discourse, and history as well as those that they are seeking to influence in constructing strategy and actions as well as formulating policies (Karskens 2009). This can result in discourses of ‘state racism’, which produces information that is associated with ‘statistically’ or ‘factually-grounded’ security, defence, and demographic ‘knowledge,’ where an internal population such as the Tamils come to be seen as the social ‘problem’ or at the very least responsible for it (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). In Sri Lanka this has been the case due to the construction of segments of the Tamil population in the post-war period as a threat to physical security, through ‘terrorism’ and ‘separatism’, and the resultant militarisation of ‘development’ in the North. It is argued that the military in the North ‘plays an all encompassing role in civilian life and wields an overwhelming power in deciding the direction of the political, social and economic lives of the citizens’ (Jayasuriya 2012)<sup>95</sup>.

This represents the securitisation of *peace through development* by way of its *militarisation* in the post-war North where development has become a source of control over the conduct of populations and of exerting the state’s power over whom it is decided represents a ‘threat’ to that development (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011). This has been undertaken by the GOSL’s Northern Task Force with development and reconstruction being embarked on under military supervision under the auspices that such supervision will provide the security necessary to enable reconstruction to take place and protect development gains from the alleged residual threat of separatists and terrorist sympathisers (‘Resettlement, development and security in the northern providence’ 2009). This securitising behaviour can be seen in the permanent security measures that have been implemented in the post-war period that include the installation of

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<sup>95</sup> Evidence of continued militarisation in Sri Lanka generally can be seen in the fact that the GOSL spends US\$2.1 billion (over 3.5% of GDP) to maintain its large peacetime military. This figure is a higher percentage of GDP than that spent by either China or India (‘As Manik Farm Is Shut Down’ 2012).

military bases, outposts, and checkpoints in the North, particularly along the A9 road that runs from Vavuniya to Jaffna purportedly in order to maintain security so that development can take place. In actuality, however, this enables the state through the military to monitor the activities of civil society and other Tamil citizens in the North and uphold the image of a persistent 'threat' to security existing in the North that in turn justifies the continued presence of the military. It also extends suspicion toward minority Tamils and particularly those residing in the North on the part of the Sinhalese population, which feeds back into the perception amongst the Sinhalese of the necessity of supporting sustained militarisation in the victor's peace. (Bateman 2011; Field Notes Jaffna Province, May 9-11, 2011; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna; Interview 34, Project Officer for a Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya).

Likewise checkpoints established at strategic points, such as around detention and IDP camps, including Manik Farm, which prior to its closure in 2012 was one of the largest displacement camps in the world, further represent the GOSL's seeking to control and constrict the freedom of movement of peoples deemed potential security risks as well as limit and monitor who accesses (or is seeking to) such areas (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011; Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 34, Project Officer for a Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 30, Member of an Organization for Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam)<sup>96</sup>. According to one religious

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<sup>96</sup> For coverage on Manik Farm including accusations that for several months its inhabitants were locked inside and not permitted to leave whilst the government screened them for possible links to the LTTE and that 110 families have been unable to return to areas from which they were displaced due to military occupation see: BBC News Asia (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19703826>); Colombo Telegraph (<http://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/as-manik-farm-is-shut-down-sri-lanka-should-apologize-to-its-tamil-citizens-interned-in-the-camp/>); The Hindu (<http://www.thehindu.com/news/sri-lanka-shuts-manik-farm-idp-camp/article3935374.ece>).

civil society actor, Sinhalese nationalists justify these actions in name of providing security to enable the safe development of the North when in actuality this represents an ‘attitude and process of [the] removal of Tamil culture’ (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). The GOSL has, therefore, taken steps to consolidate its control over the movement of persons as well as goods and supplies. Many see overtly political motivations behind this. For example, 15-day transport permits have been granted and then stopped suddenly and Tamil traders have not been able to continue with the transport of goods both in and out of the North unless they pay a bribe or have political connections (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women’s civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna).

These networks have been cited as examples of political clientelism, perpetuating political corruption rather than enabling development (Uyangoda 2010, p. 62). Furthermore, according to a member of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, those civil society actors who ‘curry favour’ with or have personal connections to government are perceived to receive greater amounts in the dispersal of funds and receive a disproportionate number of contracts in which to carry out their work (Interview 18, Secretary General of a North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Goodhand (2010), for example, has argued that ‘given the clientelistic nature of politics in Sri Lanka, building and investing in long-standing relationships appears to be crucial. NGOs that continued programmes in the east broadly in accordance with their mandates were able to do so largely because of an extensive and dense network of institutional and personal relationships that spanned the governmental and societal arenas’ (p. 362). Likewise, according to the Director of a non-profit Institute of Development, that the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development, and, the Industry Development Board have been brought under centralised

GOSL control is evidence of the ways in which political and patronage networks help to determine who receives support and is awarded reconstruction, infrastructure, and development contracts (Interview 11)<sup>97</sup>. This view of civil society that sees civil society in Sri Lanka as a ‘sub-contractor’ in development is not a new trend. Indeed it dates back to the 1970s when civil society began to be engaged by international donors in service delivery activities and accelerated particularly in the era after the 2004 tsunami with Sri Lankan civil society increasingly becoming ‘subcontractors for international NGOS’ (Orjuela 2010, p. 316). However, in the post-war period Sri Lankan civil society is increasingly being pushed into the role of development sub-contractor of victor’s peace policies and the GOSL, which enables the GOSL to convey the ‘appropriate’ activities of civil society organisations, and particularly NGOs, which ought to be in the area of a-political ‘service-delivery’ activities, and, to adopt an approach that draws on clientelistic networks of patronage as a means of seeking to mould the types of activities that civil society then performs (Interview 34, Project Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo Interview 5, Sister in the Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo).

The GOSL’s militarisation of development has also sent the message to Sri Lankan civil society, INGOs, and multilateral institutions that if they want to work in the North they need to abide by the GOSL’s rules (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011, p. 118). Psychologically, such techniques of governmentality perpetuate the notion of a fear of being watched and/or facing the consequences for acting in contravention to GOSL policy, enhancing the control of state apparatuses over its populations by shaping the behaviours they choose in particular ways. This

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<sup>97</sup> See also Athukorala and Jayasuriya 2012.



has resulted in a degree of paranoia having set in amongst some civil society actors who convey an acute interest in maintaining anonymity and secrecy in their dealings with foreign (non)governmental actors, representatives of the media, and/or researchers, and, a deep suspicion and anxiety of their comments being overheard and/or attributed to them (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). They explain that Sri Lankans and especially ‘oppositional’ civil society need to be careful of what they say, to whom, and who is listening as any critical remarks can result in acts of violence being carried out against you or your family (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy).

Similarly, property can be seized, contracts and grants withdrawn, and government-ordered audits and investigations carried out against you ‘if you get a reputation for being a problem,’ constricting the ability of civil society at all levels to speak out (Interview 25 Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy)<sup>98</sup>. The threat of possible economic boycotting on the part of the GOSL toward businesses and other actors that provide support and/or expertise to ‘oppositional’ or ‘controversial’ civil society has also led many to conclude that civil society is too controversial to risk entering into partnership with (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This has had the effect of widening the divide between those businesses and civil society actors who are able to function and are supported by government and those that are ostracised by GOSL regulations and policies (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation

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<sup>98</sup> For other examples pertaining to debates concerning the rationale of the GOSL for more closely monitoring the activities of NGOs and concerns over the nature of certain civil society organisations activities and funding sources, particularly concerning pro-Tamil and ‘peace support groups’ such as the National Peace Council, the Centre for Policy Alternatives, Tamil Rehabilitation Organization, Sri Lanka Press Institute, Peace Secretariat for Muslims see: <http://rajivawijesinha.wordpress.com/2011/04/12/the-latest-concerns-about-ngo-activity/> ; and [http://www.island.lk/index.php?page\\_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code\\_title=21160](http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=21160).

dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Ultimately, such acts result in the greater insecurity of peoples as structural and cultural forms of violence become pervasive (Galtung and Jacobsen 2000).

The military's involvement in the 'development' of the North also represents the assertion of a symbolic power on the part of the GOSL, representing its 'total victory' in the war but also the erasure of the legitimacy of the history and struggle of the Tamil 'other'. This is indicative of using development subversively with the military being closely involved in and running numerous economic activities, tourist attractions, and resorts in the North, whilst claiming that their continued presence is to help enable 'safe' resettlement and/or commercial development. It also enables the GOSL to extend its 'total victory' by emphasising the extent of its power over Tamils and dissuading them from challenging the GOSL. Such rationalities of governmentality render pro-Tamil and/or pro-separatist struggles futile through the building of victory monuments, the destruction LTTE memorials, and the erasure of counter-narratives to the war and Tamil claims to the North (Interview 65, Founder of an Institute of Development, Point Pedro). According to one Northern-based human rights activist in Jaffna this represents a purposive attempt to 'erase and recreate history' such that a new generation will not know what happened and there will be no trace of existence of the conflict, only an attempted terrorist insurrection (Interview 37, Jaffna).

This exercising of symbolic power can further be seen through the holding of official nation-wide victory celebrations and the (unofficial) barring of Tamil mourning and remembering their dead (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). It can also be seen in the physical (and symbolic!) destruction of LTTE shrines and the building of

war memorials, 'victory' monuments, and military settlements in place of them (Bateman 2011; Field Notes Jaffna Province, July 16-18, 2012; Field Notes Jaffna Province, May 9-11, 2011). In the immediate aftermath of the war in May and June 2009, for example, there were celebrations held around the country as Sri Lankan flags were hoisted on public and private buildings and banners and billboards celebrating the President were erected throughout the country. In contrast, however, many in Tamil communities, though relieved the war had ended, were left unable to mourn loved ones lost in the war (Orjuela 2010b, pp. 9-10). Successive victory celebrations have continued to be held each year on the anniversary of the end of the war with the month of May even being declared as 'war hero's commemoration month' in May 2012 (Ruki 2012). Tamils have likewise continued to seek to commemorate the end of the war as a time of mourning for family members killed and/or disappeared and to bemoan the lack of space 'permitted' by the military forces to engage in such activities (Ruki 2012; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Challenges have been particularly acute in the politicised regions of the North and East where civil society activists and persons believed to be LTTE sympathizers are believed to have been targeted and perceived 'political' meetings have been forbidden by Government and/or garner suspicion, reportedly even on occasion activities such as simply the coming together of families (United States Department of State 2011, p. 4; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna).

The perceived rationale behind this lack of 'permission' was explained by one human-rights expert and member of Sri Lanka's oldest human-rights organisations as twofold. First, GOSL paranoia of the Tamil 'other' and, second, the desire of the GOSL to write the 'story of its

victory over terrorism’ as one of protecting the security of the nation and enabling ‘peace dividends’ to be realised (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). Civil society actors have spoken about the anxiety they feel in organising and participating in mourning events as well as tensions surrounding their interactions with military personnel. For example, on occasion civil society actors have been told that they can hold a remembrance event the week after the GOSL’s official celebrations but that they cannot mourn publicly, yet organisers have reported that they are still subject to questioning and harassment from military personnel regarding the nature and motivation for such activities (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women’s civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Moreover, a member of a prominent human rights group operating in Jaffna has reported that members of their organisation have had to exercise leverage through their political contacts in order to help get organisers of community events out of trouble with the military for planning events after they were caught by the military and interrogated (Interview 37, Jaffna). Similarly another human rights actor in Sri Lanka described to Amnesty International how ‘families of those missing [and disappeared during the war] have been intimidated and ridiculed. ... Commemorations and campaigns for those who have disappeared have been banned, disrupted and restricted. Organisers and participants have been threatened and harassed’ (‘Sri Lanka’s Assault on Dissent’ 2013, p. 35). According to a 2011 United States Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2011 in Sri Lanka, some disappearances and abductions appear to have been politically motivated such as the 9 December 2011 disappearance in Jaffna of Lalith Kumar Weeraraj, active in raising human rights issues faced by the Tamils who had been threatened, assaulted, and detained by security forces previously (United States Department of State 2011, pp. 4-5). According to the human rights expert in

Jaffna, these intimidation tactics signify a means of regulating social organising in order to maintain control over Tamils that is also indicative of promoting one narrative of the war whilst actively seeking to erase another by banning commemoration activities and deterring organisers and campaigners from creating and participating in such events, leaving no room for alternative stories to be told (Interview 37, Jaffna).

Against the backdrop of the increasingly permanent military presence in the North there are also gendered dynamics at play where predominantly male Sinhalese soldiers control nearly all aspects of the daily life of Tamil-speaking residents, a disproportionate number of whom are women. Some civil society actors estimate that as many as 40,000 military officers are currently active in the North and report that many local community members are subject to intimidation tactics, ‘random’ search and seizures, and have been brought in by military for questioning (Narapalasingam 2011; Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women’s civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). This is the irony of linking *militarisation* and *peace through development* in that (as previously discussed in Chapter 5) many women have been made more insecure whilst out in the public pursuing work. Women worry not only about balancing their traditional domestic duties with earning an income to support their families in an environment where there are few jobs open for women *but* doing so in a highly militarised, male-dominated environment. Much of the militarisation has in this sense been ‘informal’, with intimidation tactics and harassment of women taking place, including reports of violence, sexual harassment, and rape not being uncommon (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace, and member of the National Committee

on Women, Jaffna; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna).

Ultimately, those critical of the GOSL's peace through development paradigm, argue that the GOSL's assertion of realising a *peace dividend* through an (market-driven) *economic dividend* alone cannot 'substitute for genuine political reform' and that peace as equated with a development-(hard) security linkage serves to exacerbate tensions rather than diffuse them (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011, p. 104). Whilst the government claims its development activities are promoting reconciliation, it is in fact increasing ethnic polarisation, mistrust, and insecurity (Narapalasingam 2011; Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). This approach, then, fundamentally underestimates the political nature of peace and development, or conversely, purposively downplays it as means of 'selling' the peace through development narrative to the Sri Lankan population. It also connects to the GOSL's justification of the means by which the war was ended and that through this defeat the enabling of prosperity and development for those Sri Lankans as '[a]ll development processes carried out in the North and East, are a closure of the highways to terrorism' ('United in peace, let's build a great nation' 2010).

Through this framing the GOSL can paint critical voices within civil society as 'un-Sri Lankan' and against post-war development. However, this can also be viewed as indicative of a measure of the potential impact of civil society actors to bring attention to the shortcomings of the peace through development narrative. As one civil society actor commented 'when [you are] called [an] enemy by [this] government [it] means [you are] doing something right. Rights and

advocacy issues make an impact so this is why the GOSL is going after them' (Interview 19, Previous Deputy Secretary to the Treasury and Director General of External Resources Department, Ministry of Finance and Planning, GOSL, Colombo).

### **7.5 Painting Civil Society as 'Anti-national' Agents of Western Interventionism:**

The 'securitisation' of civil society has had the effect of not only eroding civil liberties across the country and demonising certain civil society actors as guilty of spreading separatist fervour and as potential terrorists, but also facilitated in the growth of a climate of fear and suspicion toward civil society actors as 'anti-Sri Lankan' agents of the West. Western powers and (I)NGOs have been singled out as key agents of a 'conspiracy' to weaken the Sri Lankan state and bring it under an international intervention by means of a liberal peace process (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo; Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). The emphasis on an exclusively military solution to the conflict and the proclamation of the victorious Sri Lankan state having defeated terrorism therefore has its ideological roots in the GOSL's and Sinhalese nationalist quest to establish and protect a strong, unitary, and centralised Sri Lankan state.

The close associations that some civil society actors have cultivated with Western governments and external donors has had further negative repercussions for the political legitimacy of civil society activism as Sinhalese nationalist media and (un)civil society groups have accused these actors of working for 'anti-national' agendas framing them as 'fronts for Western Government and agencies' (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy,

University of Colombo). For example, in 2012 several Cabinet Ministers described protests in Sri Lanka against a fuel price increase as an “NGO funded conspiracy” which was supported by the West’ (‘Protest against “Western conspiracy”’ 2012). Likewise, it is in this context that devolution and power-sharing have been framed as ‘alien’ ideas, rooted in Westernisation that has fed into an attitude that sees the West, and by association those civil society groups with Western ties, through the lens of a ‘who are they to tell us’ mentality (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo). As previously taken up in Chapters 5 and 6, the continuing realities of Western donor-supported civil society in Sri Lanka feeds into the GOSL propagated image of these segments of civil society being complicit with international actors and donor interests, and thus unrepresentative of the needs of the populations they claim to represent. It further separates ‘liberal’ civil society actors with close contacts to the West from more ‘authentic’ forms of civil society (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo).

This is compounded by accusations of the illegitimacy of the West to critique Sri Lanka due to ‘double standards’ in the West’s international conduct. Many Sri Lankans speak out against war crimes and violence committed in the final stages of the war but are critical of what they see as the double standards of the West, who despite tacitly supporting the GOSL’s ‘war on terrorism’, have called for investigations into potential human rights abuses in the aftermath of the war, whilst adopting a hard-line stance through their own Wars on Terror (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012, pp. 94-95). The Executive Director of a 15,000 member strong Gandhian development organisation in Sri Lanka explained that Sri Lankans ask: ‘How can [the] US



disregard human rights and international human rights laws and then turn around and point fingers at countries such as Sri Lanka' (Interview 8, Moratuwa). Whilst this is not meant to imply that human rights should not be upheld throughout the international community, it is a call to revisit how human rights issues globally are taken up and dealt with, and to address power inequalities that permeate throughout the international system in which those most powerful in the West are believed to set out the rules of the system and choose whether or not to abide by them themselves (Field Notes Colombo, April 18, 2011; Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Moratuwa near Colombo).

In this context Sri Lanka is painted as the 'international scapegoat' for the liberal West as it is pointed out that similar or worse allegations have been made against Western powers that have engaged in conflicts in Libya, Iraq, and Afghanistan but who have not been held up to the same international standards concerning their conduct (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo; Field Notes Colombo, April 18, 2011). Likewise, the Moderator of a large Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform described that some perceive a bias toward the West on the part of 'elite' Sri Lankan civil society actors that are 'liberally'-oriented who it is believed seek to garner external support for their accusations against the GOSL and further their separatist ambitions (Interview 21, Colombo). This viewpoint is of course actively reinforced (and indeed in many ways propagated in the first place) by the GOSL and its supporters through accusations that the US holds 'double standards' toward non-Western and developing nations in an attempt to bring them under the thumb of the West and indeed that the Sri Lankan diaspora

and ‘liberally’-oriented, ‘elite’ civil society are involved in encouraging these actions (Sirilal 2010; Aneez 2010; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

According to the same Executive Director of the 15,000 member-wide Gandhian development organisation, it is widely believed that mainstream, state-controlled media’s role in this has largely been to ‘promote nationalism’ (Interview 8, Moratuwa near Colombo) and, as further explained by the Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, through ‘concerted propaganda campaigns’ paint ‘critical’ civil society as both anti-national and as working in the service of ‘Western’ governments (Interview 10, Colombo). This reflects deeply seated feelings amongst some communities in Sri Lanka that NGOs get prosperous at the expense of the grass-roots (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Accusations have included that those groups with Western affiliations are not ‘real civil society’ that they are involved in a system of ‘brainwashing’ and are ‘phoney’ (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). As we have seen previously these sentiments are echoed in the views of nationalist actors that assert that the West should leave Sri Lanka to solve its own problems and that the presence of INGOs in particular ‘crowd[s] out Sri Lankan civil society’ (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). They assert that Western actors can be useful but purely in providing monetary assistance toward ‘tangible’ technical issues such as digging trenches for the installation of drainage ditches or sewage pipes but should not become involved in the internal

socio-political workings of another sovereign nation (Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). This links to ethical questions and debates regarding the responsibility to protect the human security of vulnerable populations, particularly when some actors seek out this protection and assistance from international sources.

Moreover, such framing has served to cast a net around human rights and advocacy civil society in particular as operating counter to the state (and, thus, Sri Lankans) and alienating such groups from the ‘everyday local’ of the majority Sinhalese. This strategy has, therefore, succeeded in dislocating ‘critical’ civil society from many aspects of Sri Lankan society and failed to lay the groundwork for the establishment of a climate conducive to the construction of a comprehensive post-war peace process, ‘reducing’ such civil society actors to a narrow view of the sector associated with only NGOs (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). It has further successfully diverted attention away from other complexities associated with the war and *post-war* reconciliation, including questions pertaining to multilateralism, power dynamics, widening gaps between the rich and poor, caste and class relations, and gender and human rights issues.

The association of many Colombo-based ‘elite’ civil society groups and their exposure to Western ideas, international institutions, and INGOs has led to accusations of the ‘Westernisation’ of Sri Lanka’s ‘elite’ civil society in particular. In part, this can be seen as a strategy of governmentality on the part of the GOSL and their supporters to exercise power over aspects of Sri Lankan society with influential international ties through the deliberate association at home of ‘elite’ Sri Lankan civil society with Western values and actors and the connotation of negative attributes of this association. This includes that these groups are inauthentic, un-Sri

Lankan and/or in the service of Western interests and governments (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo).

The GOSL relies on the construction of an 'enemy', in this case the image of an 'anti-national' segment of 'liberal' civil society working in the interests of 'Western' powers and the Tamil Diaspora. In the words of a March 2011 piece produced by Transcurrents: 'Now the mood of triumphalism that prevailed in the months after the May 2009 military victory in the war against the LTTE has diminished, the present leadership is looking for an effective substitute that is politically useful. New threats to Sri Lanka are perceived from the dismayed Tamil Diaspora and others critical of the government' (Narapalasingam 2011). Indeed as one Human Rights actor in the North asserted, the 'harder they [Tamil Diaspora] wave flags for LTTE [the] harder [the] Government will clamp down on Sri Lanka and Tamils' (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). The question of nationalism and one's placement in relation to it is, thus, always a consideration for Sri Lankan civil society.

#### **7.6 Consolidating Governmental Power through State-sponsored Media and Social Media Censorship:**

*'There's a saying that Sri Lanka has plenty of media freedom. Journalists are free to write whatever they wish, and everyone else is free to kill them' (Fleeson 2011)*

Sri Lanka's mainstream media has played a central role in further enabling the Rajapaksa government to consolidate its power within Sri Lanka, sustaining ethno-political ideologies and agendas, and raising separatist and anti-nationalist fervour against civil society when it suits the

GOSL's agenda. This has contributed to the intractable nature of the ethnic conflict even in the aftermath of the war. Traditionally, the mainstream press, Sinhalese and Tamil alike, has primarily been ethno-nationalist in orientation. The privately owned Sinhalese and English press is more focused toward the Sinhalese nationalist agenda whilst the privately owned Tamil press is Tamil nationalist. Depending on the news sources which one consults in the country the same events can have radically different political angles, influencing the outlook of their respective readership on events and issues occurring across the country in dramatically varying ways. State-owned media also functions within a Sinhalese nationalist spectrum veering from moderate to extreme in its nationalist orientation depending on the ethno-nationalist slant of the government in power (Uyangoda 2010, p. 54). For example, in March 2012, government-affiliated media featured repeated threats against members of Sri Lankan civil society who were attending the UNHRC meetings in Geneva ('Sri Lanka's Assault on Dissent' 2013). In the post-war period the GOSL's policies have propagated a strongly Sinhalese nationalist flavour within the media and maintained a heavy emphasis on managing commentary about government policy and military operations that emphasises both in a positive light and paints their activities as necessary for the continued security of the nation.

The 'victor's peace' has also extended to the government's policies toward independent reporting and critique by the media, civil society, and social movements. State responses have ranged from limiting and shaping access to the Internet, to selective repression of, and overt intervention in, online communication flows. For example, in 2012 Media Ministry Secretary W.B. Ganegala warned that the government was monitoring almost all websites in the country and would take action in the future if those websites did not adhere to the country's laws concerning media 'ethics' ('Enemies of the Internet Report 2012' 2012). Similarly, Reporters

Without Borders 2012 ‘Enemies of the Internet’ Report lists Sri Lanka amongst the 14 countries ‘under surveillance’ for restricting online freedoms (‘Enemies of the Internet Report 2012’ 2012). In July 2012 Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa famously threatened former editor of the Sunday Leader, Frederica Jansz when she called him to follow up on a story. According to the transcripts of two telephone calls recorded by Jansz, Secretary Rajapaksa exclaimed: ‘if you write any bloody word about this I will sue your f.....g newspaper. Yes! I am threatening you! Write every single word I have told you if you want – you write a bloody f.....g word and we will see ... Yes I threatened you. Your type of journalists are pigs’ (Jansz 2012).

The GOSL has further been accused of engaging in numerous surveillance tactics and censorship, including having a hand in orchestrating disappearances, physical and psychological abuse, and political violence against dissenters (Interview 75, Member of the socialist political left in Sri Lanka and writer for the World Socialist Web Site, Colombo; Interview 74 Justice of the Peace and socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna; Interview 63, Tamil Lawyer and member of the President’s Counsel, Jaffna; Interview 50 Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). Civil society actors recall situations of their phones being tapped and email accounts hacked as well as ‘undercover’ security officers posing at rallies as journalists or as workers in a restaurant in order to gather intelligence by taking photographs of an event or overhearing a conversation about the planned activities of civil society and other political actors (Interview 74 Justice of the Peace and socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka. Colombo; Interview 64 Members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna; Interview 46, Australian donor,

member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo). A prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church explained that this has driven some civil society actors ‘underground’ to carry on activities discreetly outside the purview of the GOSL, including the adoption of social media as a means of seeking to maintain a degree of anonymity and secrecy (Interview 29, Colombo).

The issue of media freedom in Sri Lanka has, therefore, been highly problematic. Both before the end of the war and in its aftermath journalists have faced threats to their personal security for ignoring constraints on reporting imposed by the GOSL, experiencing direct threats, abductions, and even death for publishing critical reports on either the military or government (Uyangoda 2010, p. 53-54; Interview 20, Second Secretary of the British High Commission to Sri Lanka, Colombo). This has led to journalists leaving Sri Lanka and going overseas; nearly two dozen journalists have left the country since 2006 in the face of death threats (Uyangoda 2010, p. 53-54; Interview 20, Second Secretary of the British High Commission to Sri Lanka, Colombo). These threats and extrajudicial killings of journalists and social activists represent the alarming securitisation of information in Sri Lanka. From October 2011 to February 2012, for example, there has been a noticeable rise in the number of ‘disappearances’ and abductions, particularly in and around Colombo aimed at those actors critical of the Rajapaksa regime. Out of 29 abductions and 3 missing persons reported in the media, most have not returned to their homes and families, rendering them ‘disappeared’ persons (‘New wave of abductions and dead bodies in Sri Lanka’ 2012). Disappearances and assassinations have continued to be linked to oppositional media figures such as the disappearance of Prageeth Eknaligoda a political journalist and cartoonist missing since 24 January 2010 and the assassination of Lasantha Wickrematunge on 8 January 2009, a high-profile anti-government journalist, politician, and

human rights activist. Acts of intimidation and violence have also been directed at members of Sri Lanka's social media movement specifically as in January 2011 the offices of Lanka-e-news were set on fire ('Enemies of the Internet' 2012).

With respect to the use of social media this has involved the extensive monitoring, regulation, and censorship of the online activities of social movements and citizens' media considered unfavourable to the GOSL. For instance, a press release issued by the Director General of the Department of Government Information on 5 November 2011 requires that all 'websites carrying any content relating to Sri Lanka or the people of Sri Lanka... uploaded from Sri Lanka or elsewhere' be formally registered and accredited by the government ('Web censorship in Sri Lanka' 2011; 'Govt Press Release' 2011). The Ministry justified this action on the grounds that some sites had carried messages that represented insults to political leaders as government officials have been implicated in a number of corruption scandals ('Enemies of the Internet' 2012; Haviland 2011a). Such acts raise significant questions about freedom of information and freedom of speech in victor's peace Sri Lanka. Media Ministry Secretary W.B. Ganegala declared that: 'We decided to bring this in order to introduce the ethics for internet media, as we saw an increase of unethical types of internet media which even damaged the country's image, individuals' image' (Jayasekera 2011). The implication in this statement insinuates that media that is critical of the GOSL is 'unethical' and anti-Sri Lankan, thus, representing a threat to Sri Lanka. Since the beginning of 2012 approximately 70 online news sites have begun the registration process with only 27 being authorised by the Ministry, whilst those that have sought to avoid registering have cited risks to reporters and contributors due to the sensitive nature of information that would be divulged to government ('Enemies of the Internet' 2012). In the days immediately following the GOSL's announcement, the GOSL



blocked access to 5 major independent news sites: [www.lankaenews.com](http://www.lankaenews.com), [srilankamirror.com](http://srilankamirror.com), [srilankaguardian.com](http://srilankaguardian.com), [paparacigossip9.com](http://paparacigossip9.com) and [www.lankawaynews.com](http://www.lankawaynews.com) ('Enemies of the Internet' 2012; Jayasekera 2011). Furthermore, the citizens media site Groundviews was also temporarily suspended in June 2011 along with Transparency International's website ('Enemies of the Internet' 2012; Jayasekera 2011).

Similarly, in March 2012 the latest directive in a string of government efforts to censor news and information was issued in which the Defence Ministry hand-delivered letters to targeted online media and civil society groups ordering them to seek approval from government before sending any mobile news (SMS) alerts pertaining to military or police activity. The order is expected to affect more than a dozen news services and an estimated 18 million mobile subscribers, representing up to approximately half of Sri Lanka's domestic population (although this does account for overseas subscribers) (Thiruvengadam 2012). Several of Sri Lanka's online media sites reported that they had been informed that these measures were most likely taken after SMS news updates on the recent killing of two soldiers in Jaffna, by another soldier, were carried by a number of news agencies (Thiruvengadam 2012; 'New censorship of SMS news in Sri Lanka' 2012).

Sri Lanka's mainstream (nationalist) media has, therefore, played a central role in enabling the Rajapaksa government to consolidate its power as well as in sustaining ethno-political ideologies and raising separatist fervour against social advocacy when it suits the GOSL's agenda. This has been aided by the fact that many are generally unaware of how post-war activities, such as resettlement in the North, are actually occurring. A kind of 'social ignorance' has been produced across the country as many describe that their communities only have access to state-controlled media and/or must rely on word of mouth for information as they

do not have the capacity to use social media utilised by citizens media groups (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa).

As Uyangoda (2010) comments: '[the] Media was briefed by the defence establishment to refrain from reporting on the war in a manner that "helped the enemy" or "affected the morale of the soldiers". The objective of the military establishment was to prevent the media from reporting events and consequences of the war in a manner that might compromise the security interests of the state' (p. 53). Such practices have continued in the post-war period with mainstream media remaining largely supportive of the military and GOSL's actions in the North and continuing to extend assertions that such acts constitute the securing of the state and its people from those that represent a threat to Sri Lanka. Ultimately, the ways in which state power has been consolidated through state-sponsored media via physical acts of securitisation (e.g., threats and extrajudicial killings of 'independent' journalists) and the securitisation of information (e.g., regulations on citizens and social media technologies) represent an alarming state of militarised control over knowledge and information in Sri Lanka.

## **7.7 Conclusion:**

This Chapter has investigated the politics of peace-building and human (in)security in post-war Sri Lanka drawing on Human Security to investigate asymmetries of power including technologies of governmentality and the securitising of Sri Lankan civil society in the post-war environment. The focus throughout this Chapter has been on developing deeper understandings of how the GOSL exercises power over civil society through 'top-down' structures and processes that deliberately securitise civil society as 'threats' to the peace and national security of Sri Lanka. As we have seen, both changes and continuity in Sri Lanka's policies and practices have enabled this securitisation.

These actions have constrained the strategic instruments available to civil society actors and enabled the GOSL to implement a range of surveillance and censorship tactics, reflected most recently under the guise of the ‘ethics of internet media’ and the November directive requiring that all websites and SMS messages be formally registered and accredited by the government. Similarly, the framing of the peace through development narrative within a development-security nexus has led to the militarisation of development and permitted the construction of boundaries that separate segments of Sri Lanka’s population and civil society into those elements considered ‘good’ or ‘positive’ and those that are considered ‘bad’, ‘negative’, and/or ‘dangerous’. These practices of governmentality have factored into civil society coming to be seen as an intermediating ‘technical-administrative’ sphere rather than potentially also a socio-political actor.

The securitisation of civil society actors in Sri Lanka has facilitated the growth of a climate of fear and suspicion toward such actors and their causes, helping to reinforce existing societal cleavages and prejudices. These disciplinary power dynamics produce an environment in which it is perceived that no one can be trusted, anyone might turn you in to government forces, or conversely, support separatism and speak for Western neo-imperialist ambitions. The GOSL has, thus, sought to suppress civil society actors by diversifying its responses to them - through physical threats and actions, political regulation and censorship, and by ‘normalising’ behaviours in the Sri Lankan psyche through daily political rhetoric. In this sense more direct, physical forms of social advocacy and mobilisation are deterred before they can even get off the ground due to a lethal tonic of mistrust, fear, and the ‘normalisation’ of repressive actions in the name of ‘security’.

In essence then, securitisation has a biopolitical element, that is, the securing of bodies not solely through language but symbolic and physical acts. It also possesses a communicative component, which has had the effect of ‘normalising’ both the behaviour of the securitising actor (the GOSL and military) as well as the responses of the audience (Sri Lankans, predominantly Sinhalese) and referent objects of securitisation (civil society groups). Through the perpetuation of fear tactics and shifts toward the greater militarisation of ‘peace’ in Sri Lanka a system has been established in which groups critical of the GOSL’s policies have little space or opportunity to speak out about events and activities taking place in their communities or have a say in constructing the kind of socio-political landscape they envisage for post-war Sri Lanka. This has facilitated in what the Former Head of South Asia Programming for International Alert in London has termed the increased ‘informality’ of more ‘liberal’ forms of civil society with respect to acts of resistance, explored in the forthcoming chapter, as well as the growth of a climate of suspicion toward civil society diminishing its operational spaces and raising questions surrounding the roles and strategic practices of civil society and its relation to the victor’s peace (Interview 1). Instead, individuals and groups must fit within pre-conceived ‘boxes’ in order to be ‘awarded’ a normalised position within society and avoid experiencing ‘securitising’ mechanisms first hand.

The next Chapter utilises Human Security to explore strategic practices in exercising agency aimed at lessening the conditions in which the oppressive power structures explored in this Chapter rule over socio-political life in Sri Lanka. It investigates the nature of the strategic practices adopted by Sri Lankan civil society in responding to manifestations of victor’s peace and explores the ways in which different civil society actors navigate and maneuver within the victor’s peace, including sites of engagement and resistance.

## Chapter 8 – Strategic Practices in Exercising Agency: Sites of Civil Society Resistance and Engagement<sup>99</sup>

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### 8.1 Introduction:

This Chapter enquires into the character and nature of the strategic practices adopted by Sri Lankan civil society in responding to manifestations of the liberal peace but most predominantly ‘victor’s peace’ in the current post-war period. It seeks to uncover the operation of oppressive power structures within Sri Lankan society through the efforts of civil society to renegotiate and translate these structures *vis-à-vis* their interactions with, and resistances to, them. This represents the agency-side of Human Security in developing deeper understandings of the ‘manoeuvring’ of actors within dynamics of (in)security as a means of resisting and strategically engaging with ‘economies of power’ within victor’s peace Sri Lanka (Hynek and Chandler 2011; Shani 2011). The explicit engagement with the agency-side of the ‘structure-agency’ binary is indicative of a focus on the ways that civil society actors both engage with and resist ‘economies of power’ inherent in the victor’s peace as potential vehicles for realising greater (em)power(ment) and the consequences of the uneven distribution of power on the ability of different civil society actors to act (Newman 2010, p.93).

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<sup>99</sup> Both the concepts of resistance and engagement are introduced with respect to theoretical discussions in the section Exercising Agency: Resistances and Engagement in Chapter 3. As discussed in Chapter 3, within the scope of this study I define resistance in relation to the ‘intent’ or ‘consciousness’ of an act in that the individual or group carrying out the act must be aware and intending to partake in an ‘act against something’ in order to classify this behaviour as a form of resistance. Recognizing civil society as an intentionally actualized sphere of activity organised and carried out with specific intents implies consideration of the politically conscious, intentional, and active resistance of civil society as demonstrated through both large-scale activism, mobilisations, and politically contentious activities, and, ‘everyday’ actions in their daily lives as members of civil society against subordination. With respect to engagement, this thesis asserts that engagement is associated with activities such as (re)building trust, social capital and social cohesion, and, engaging with various articulations of peace and development to support them and work to enhance their effectiveness. However, in engaging with diverse articulations of peace and development that may contain exclusionary or unequal elements within societies emerging from violent conflict it must also be acknowledged that engagement-related activities may not necessarily foster greater inclusion or human security.

The Chapter is organised into several sections each of which explores a different aspect of the ways in which civil society seeks to exercise agency in Sri Lanka's victor's peace. The first provides an overview of current challenges and trends inherent in civil society approaches to peace-building as it seeks to navigate and manoeuvre within the politics of the victor's peace and complexities of post-war transition. It then proceeds in the second section to provide an in-depth analysis of the ways in which civil society has sought to exercise agency through resistances, including both 'everyday' forms of resistances and techniques of protest and persuasion. In the third section the analysis turns to strategies and rationales for civil society engagement with the victor's and liberal peace as well as a discussion of the ways in which civil society is seeking to alter the polarising social fabric of Sri Lanka by engaging community and engaging the perceived ethnic 'other'. Ultimately, this Chapter argues that it is perhaps here at the sites of strategic civil society resistances and engagement that sees civil society exercising agency in a variety of diverse ways where a more realistic and authentic form of peace and security 'from below' can be conceptualised.

## **8.2 Navigating and Manoeuvring within the Victor's Peace:**

The increased militarisation of post-war 'peace-building' and securitisation of Sri Lanka's civil society, particularly with respect to human rights and advocacy-oriented groups, has meant that civil society has often had to tread carefully and work quietly in the victor's peace. Civil society groups have responded in a variety of ways to such threats with some choosing to engage with the victor's peace rather than face potential consequences and condemnation from the GOSL for showing support for and engaging in activities. Others, however, have subtly resisted through processes of 'false compliance' in which groups outwardly frame their work within the scope of GOSL post-war priorities, whilst working 'under

the radar' to undertake peace and psycho-social work at the grass-roots. Still others have chosen an 'overt' path of challenging the GOSL publicly through reporting, documentation, and advocacy work. A further strategy in attempting to grapple with the challenges of altering perceptions of the dangerous 'other' deeply engrained within Sri Lankan society, perpetuated actively by the GOSL as means of justifying its 'securitising' policies, has been to attempt to increase 'people to people interactions' by engaging communities through such activities as integrated community development programmes and facilitating exchanges between the North and South, often involving Tamil and Sinhalese youth (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo).

As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, the years of conflict, legacies of colonialism, caste system, and continued centralisation of governmental power have compounded challenges for civil society in exercising agency in the forms of both resistances and engagement, contributing to feelings of relative disempowerment. A consequence of these 'compliance'-inducing factors has been to further inoculate a sense of 'do as you're told' attitude. This is intended, on the one hand, to prevent the 'rise of [the] rabble' and, on the other, is an *unintended* consequence of the imposition of 'expert' peace-builders and humanitarian actors into a 'crisis' situation perceived to require 'expert'-level emergency response (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). Foreign aid donors and INGOs have helped to reinforce the expectation amongst grass-roots actors that they are recipients of aid, or objects to be acted upon, rather than agents in post-war development and reconstruction. The challenge of acting rather than being acted upon and engaging with the victor's peace on their own terms, not by being 'emancipated' but by 'empowering' themselves, therefore, remains a central focus for Sri Lankan civil society in the future, particularly at the grass-roots.

The importance of civil society's strategic practices has been reinforced by the viewpoint of some 'elite' civil society actors that Sri Lankan civil society cannot wait for GOSL change, but that civil society actors must seek out 'how to create alternatives' to get communities organised and engage in dialogue toward sensitising people to the issues (Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented organisation dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo). Many of these actors have sought to establish their own formal CBOs<sup>100</sup> or partner with local NGOs in order to take back some control over the articulation of needs through a range of activities such as research and reporting, lobbying for international funds, and helping those they serve to undertake micro-credit and socio-economic programmes such as in agriculture, handicrafts, and working as seamstresses. Through these activities they seek to bring attention to the lack of permanent housing, over-crowding, and resource needs necessary to sustain and build a 'secure' life in these areas.

According to the Executive Director of an organisation based on Gandhian principles, this includes a focus on altering '[the] reality of local perceptions ... of those enjoying [the] stability provided [by Government]' (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo). Some of the challenges in altering these 'local perceptions' relate to differences concerning how individuals and communities have perceived and experienced peace and (in)security in the post-war period due to both existing structural divides and inequalities as well as the impacts and influence of GOSL policies. This is reflected in a Gandhian development organisation's Executive Director's assertion that many Sinhalese

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<sup>100</sup> The use of both formal and informal CBOs is used throughout this Chapter as a means of differentiating between those CBOs that have registered as, or are partnered with registered, NGOs and those that remain unofficial and more loosely connected in their organizational affiliations and the kinds of work they engage in.



‘can currently [be] said to be enjoying peace ... they see Government doing a lot and see media coverage of reconstruction whereas Tamils generally hold the opposite viewpoint’ (Interview 8). It also pertains to the impression in the view of one member of a prominent human rights organisation stationed in Jaffna that the lives of some Sri Lankans are ‘worth more than others’ and that the communities that are considered most ‘disposable’ have suffered the greatest as a result of the conflict and continue to suffer disproportionately from post-war militarisation and securitisation (Interview 37, Jaffna). They provocatively asked, ‘if instead of [the] Vanni, if the violence at the end of the war had occurred in Kandy would it still be okay’ (Interview 37, Jaffna).

The question of who has the access and ability to influence government thinking, thus, becomes an important factor and potential hindrance for civil society in effectively exercising agency, making the matter of identifying strategies of resistance and engagement all the more vital. A strategic goal for some in this endeavour is to establish a ‘focus on common challenges that are everywhere’ to recognise those issues that are common to all Sri Lankans and direct future action toward ‘finding solution[s] together’ (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo). Taking into account continued tensions in the relationship between the GOSL and Sri Lankan civil society within a highly suspicious socio-political environment, one might expect to find a severely diminished Sri Lankan civil society sector. Whilst it is true that the development of an independent civil society has been impinged upon by these realities, the potential ‘vibrancy’ of the civil society sphere, alluded to previously by scholars is reflected in the creative ways in which civil society groups have responded to these challenges, navigating and negotiating the complexities of victor’s peace through both strategies of resistance and those of engagement. The next section explores these various

manifestations of agency through acts of resistance including ‘everyday’ forms of resistance and nonviolent protest and persuasion.

### **8.3 Strategies of Resistance: ‘Everyday’ Resistances:**

Within highly securitised societies like Sri Lanka practices of resistance represent ‘counter-actions,’ the opportunities in which civil society is able to capitalise on and exploit in order to carve out spaces within society to act in its various guises against subordination and the imposition of the victor’s peace, including the strategic adoption of, but also resistances to, aspects of the liberal peace. In Sri Lanka, GOSL regulations pertaining to the types of civil society activities that are permitted in the post-war period, via restrictions on foreign funding for civil society owing to the channelling of all funds through the PTF for example, has seen human rights and peace work particularly at the grass-roots driven largely underground. These activities are now often carried out within ‘everyday’ spaces through day-to-day interactions and community work and quietly ‘tagged on’ to existing programmes (Interview 40 Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 34, Project Officer of an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 30, Member of an Organization for Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam; Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo). Without a focus on ‘everyday’ resistances and activities in Sri Lanka one would surely overlook these important practices as they are not listed under ‘official’ project objectives or activities, and at the grass-roots are publicly alluded to only rarely.

Therefore, according to a Reverend in the Diocese of Kandy active in working with a number of communities and NGOs in and around Kandy, many everyday forms of resistances in Sri Lanka occur ‘under the radar’ with civil society operating discreetly and ‘silently’, working

behind the scenes in order to avoid unwanted GOSL attention both in areas such as Kandy, generally more supportive of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism and especially in the war-torn areas of the North and East (Interview 25, Kandy). This is very often the case in the North, and especially amongst Tamil actors interested in continuing the pursuit of a political solution to the conflict through power devolution, as in carrying out this research on certain occasions research participants and myself would arrive separately to meetings and convene in private settings such as a member's or sympathiser's homes rather than in public (Interview 64, Meeting with members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna; Interview 63, Tamil Lawyer and member of the President's Counsel, Jaffna; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). Such everyday activities as convening meetings in private represent a means of resisting the regulations set in place by the GOSL that necessitate groups in the North obtain permission to hold meetings and have military personnel present to monitor the 'security' situation (Interview 64, Meeting with members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna; Interview 63, Tamil Lawyer and member of the President's Counsel, Jaffna).

Groups continue to be concerned with maintaining a low profile that will not raise suspicion as to their activities as many are already under government-sanctioned military surveillance (Interview 64, Meeting with members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna). This has become acutely important in the context of continued white van disappearances, interrogations, and monitoring of civil society actors in the post-war period. It also again raises questions as to the degree of freedom and political security these groups operate within so-called post-war peace-building that assumes that actions are being undertaken to institutionalise peace, and thus, the nature of the victor's 'peace' itself that is being 'consolidated' must also be interrogated with respect to the operation of sovereign power and technologies of

governmentality (Call 2008, p. 5; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo).

This operational discretion further extends to the manner in which Sri Lankan civil society meets and engages with other civil society actors, journalists, lawyers, and researchers. This is particularly a consideration when meeting with those civil society actors that might incite the interest of the GOSL, resulting in the greater instrumentalisation of security measures including border controls or GOSL-approved audits and investigations that seek to criminalise or shift the behaviours and activities of groups which are critical of the GOSL or operate outside its purview. A stated strategy of some groups as a counter to such subordination has been to try to steer clear of military and government in going about daily activities and in disseminating information on the current socio-political climate in Sri Lanka, including ‘not flaunting who [they] are meeting or collaborating with’ (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). In practice, as we have seen, this involves holding meetings in private, ‘out of the way’ locales, in homes, coffee shops, or even ‘high-end’ hotels where the presence of foreigners is more likely to go unnoticed, and where civil society actors are less likely to be overheard and can speak more openly and critically about events taking place across the country (Field Notes Jaffna, July 17, 2012; Field Notes Jaffna, May 12 2011; Field Notes Colombo, May 2, 2011; Interview 64, Meeting with members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna; Interview 63, Tamil Lawyer and member of the President’s Counsel, Jaffna; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna).

Another ‘covert’, ‘under-the-radar’ strategy of resistance pertains to avoiding or side-stepping the challenges associated with GOSL bureaucracy surrounding obtaining permission for projects and activities, including in the form of the PTF. This is evident in the remarks of some

civil society groups that they do not seek official INGO funding or support from international institutions because these funds have to go through the PTF. They argue that not only do rights and psycho-social projects not receive PTF approval but that the total allocated amount of funds for approved projects often ‘mysteriously’ do not reach the intended recipients (Interview 34, Project Officer for an Organization for Habitat and Resources Development, Vavuniya; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). Furthermore, civil society groups assert that the PTF’s approval and monitoring process has slowed down and hindered the receipt of aid to the point that donor frustration and fatigue has set in with some international donors now believing that their funds might be better allocated elsewhere in the world where they can have greater impact with more ease (Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam; Interview 30, Member of an Organization for Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam; Interview 15 Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

As a strategy of getting around such impediments civil society actors have suggested that, for example, a free medical clinic might be able to covertly include some counselling or psycho-social work under the guise of service delivery (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). Moreover, groups at the grass-roots have adopted the practice of informally asking for charitable donations and support for projects that require assistance or expertise (Field Notes Marawila, May 4, 2011; Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo). According to this

practice funds are transferred privately between bank accounts or through money orders in small quantities to civil society recipients. They then use funds to carry out activities that are either not permitted or underfunded by the GOSL (and international community) including peace and psycho-social work but also activities that are more tangible in nature such as buying computers or clothing, building toilets, or paying school fees for those they assist (Field Notes Marawila, May 4, 2011; Interview 66, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 32, Meeting with members of a Gandhian development organisation district center, Marawila/Maravila). The rationale behind this strategy relates in part to the depths of perceived corruption within Sri Lankan society in which both financial support and approval for projects are linked to governmental practices of nepotism within the GOSL that sees financial support and the results of project tender processes awarded to individuals supportive of the GOSL and activities that mirror its post-war development priorities (Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). This also relates to intra-organisational politics between 'elite'-grass-roots in organisations which dictate from the centre outward the nature of activities that local NGOs and the grass-roots can officially engage in (Field Notes Marawila, May 4, 2011; Interview 32, Meeting with members of a Gandhian development organisation district center, Maravila/Marawila).

The strategy of seeking to side-step official funding channels can prove difficult from a liberal peace perspective, however, concerning accountability and the ability to 'show results' to one's own donors and supporters. This is particularly the case for donors such as (I)NGOs, charities, and/or religious organisations that are often heavily reliant on private or member generosity in order to fund programmes as well as international organisations that hold strict

reporting stipulations of their own. In this sense a ‘global governmentality’ is produced in which mechanisms of governmentality are ‘externalised’ from the ‘top-down’ in that regulations and administrative requirements in donor countries, such as those that exist in order to claim charitable tax breaks for example, act as inhibitors, constraining domestic and grass-roots civil society activities in receiving countries. Often, tax breaks can only be received if there is evidence and a paper trail of these transactions, in addition to the fact that fund recipients must also be formally registered NGO-type organisations rather than informal grass-roots groups.

Moreover, it can be difficult for the grass-roots to obtain funds without any formal accountability measures in place as donors often require (and desire) evidence of how their donations are being used (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women’s civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). That being said, there are ways to potentially circumvent some of these challenges informally such as by building relationships through the sending of pictures and/or maintaining correspondence concerning where and what funds have been put toward. The act of seeking to bypass the regulatory burdens and ‘accountability’ procedures of the PTF and liberal peace be seen as forms of resistance against the governmental ‘mechanics’ and ‘economies of power’ institutionalised by victor’s and liberal peace and the inefficiencies and inequalities that they produce.

***False Compliance:***

Another ‘everyday’ strategy of resistance for many Sri Lankans, both within and outside of formal civil society organisations, has been to ‘get on with the business of building a life without necessarily opposing [the] Government’ (Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). Simply put, ‘getting on with life’ and eschewing the entreaties, incentives, *and* potential

repercussions of shunning the victor's peace often necessitates creating alternative practical and discursive spaces in which it might not appear that civil society groups are in fact excluding or resisting these frameworks (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 87). This reading of civil society actions against the current socio-political climate in Sri Lanka could easily be misinterpreted as a strategy of relative 'compliance' on the part of some civil society groups but can more accurately be labelled an exercise in 'false compliance' (Scott 1990). This is because investigations by government and attacks both in the media and privately have led some civil society groups to work discreetly on activities that could be considered contentious or seen as running counter to GOSL post-war policies (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Furthermore, due to the perceived dangers of being directly or indirectly associated with 'rogue' or 'oppositional' civil society, some actors have chosen to be much more discreet and publicly 'tow the Government line', revising or altering the nature of their work rather than directly engage the GOSL in confrontation (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo).

Some groups have purposefully elaborated the 'development dimension' of their activities as a way of also covertly moving rights awareness and education work forward given the current political climate (Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo). Still others use conflict resolution platforms in communities such as mediation or facilitation of small-scale disputes to dialogue on deeper-level issues relating to the ethnic conflict such as 'peace', 'social justice', 'equality', and 'active citizenship' (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 16, Program Officer for a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). The dynamic of civil society activism in Sri Lanka has, thus, in many ways become



one of a constant (re)negotiation of spaces and strategies for civil action within the victor's peace. This has resulted in the taking up of certain activities that are perceived as 'non-confrontational', including those associated with development and service-delivery such as sanitation (e.g. building and supplying toilets, access to clean water) and infrastructure (e.g. road works and housing) improvements, whilst 'discreetly' transmitting other types of 'off-limits' civil society messages and activities through this development work (Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam; Interview 30, Member of an Organization for Habitation and Resource Development, Puttalam). This includes educating on rights, informing on what is happening around the country, and finding ways for individuals and communities to link together into networks aimed at leveraging collective voices toward realising action from the GOSL and international community (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee; Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam).

Civil society groups point to the importance of maintaining the appearance of adhering to GOSL policy in order to undertake mobilisation and capacity-building activities as 'officially [groups] can't do mobilisation work, [therefore, they] must do [it] discreetly' (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). This is in line with the securitising focus of the GOSL's post-war policies in which mobilisation activities are framed as 'not necessary, [instead] emergency focused [activities are] priority, other types of

activities maybe can be undertaken later, but focus [is] on development – returning displaced to homes, rebuilding, infrastructure’ (Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam). The interaction of civil society with the victor’s peace is vitally important, however. This is because even if it is undertaken ‘discreetly’ this translation of the GOSL’s ‘peace through development’ agenda to one that encapsulates some degree of rights and social-justice education inevitably produces a form of structural resistance, which contains the potential for human insecurities and power relations to be altered even if official governmental processes are not changed or distorted through the ways that community life itself is transformed (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 74).

Contextualising strategies of ‘false compliance’ within the context of cultural norms and colonial legacies in Sri Lanka further reveals insights into how this tactic functions as a form of civil society resistance. During a meeting with one grass-roots organisation in the East, for example, it was explained that many in the community have the expectation that ‘someone [will] come in and just do what they think is best’, and then after they have left ‘the community will respond after within [the] community’ (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This is evidence of the internal legacies and cultural practices of ‘servitude’ associated with centuries of colonial administration and engrained still in practices associated with the caste system, which the GOSL often exploits for its own purposes (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna).

As previously discussed, the recent experience of the imposition of ‘forms’ of the liberal peace, ranging from the CA to the influence of INGOs and international institutions during the humanitarian response to the tsunami have reinforced these practices and expectations, in the words of one member of a cultural-based union in Batticaloa has simply shifting the nature of

‘who is in charge’ (Interview 41, Batticaloa). At the same time, however, the quiet (re)negotiation within communities in response to the imposition of these discourses in the face of repressive and ‘top-down’ practices represents a form of resistance through ‘false compliance’ by not actually giving in to the ‘constraining’ and ‘regulating’ pressures of both the GOSL’s practices of governmentality and the liberal peace.

***‘Impartiality’ as Resistance:***

Some actors, such as those with religious affiliations or ‘mothers’ and ‘wives’ of missing servicemen have sought to use their stature within Sri Lankan society and perceived ‘impartiality’ to resist GOSL limitations on post-war peace-building activities. They have done so by seeking to assist those made insecure by the war and post-war victor’s peace such as detainees, ex-combatants, women, and children, engaging discreetly and empathetically in peace, human-rights, and socio-economic development work across the lines of conflict without discrimination based on ethno-religious identity (Interview 66, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 26 Founder and Chair of an Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action, Kandy; Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo)<sup>101</sup>. With respect to the role of religious figures in these activities, civil society groups explain that ‘there are small informal activities going on with likeminded others and amongst religious leaders’ (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy) as ‘church groups have a little room to operate under [the] radar’ (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). As previously discussed this is due to the central role that religion plays within Sri Lankan society and the respect that is accorded to religious actors. One’s religious identity, thus, provides through the power of respect the ability

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<sup>101</sup> See also the website of the Association of War Affected Women: <http://www.awawsl.org/>.

to communicate messages that ordinary citizens cannot due to fears of repercussions in response to their perceived ‘biases’ (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy).

This has also been the case for civil society groups composed of war-affected women who have been able to use their identity as women and mothers to focus activities in a variety of areas, not solely development (Interview 62, Director of a Centre for Women and Development, Justice of Peace and member of the National Committee on Women, Jaffna; Interview 26, Founder and Chair of an Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action, Kandy). For example, the Association of War Affected Women is ‘intended to bring together women of Sri Lanka, who are affected by war across conflict lines ... to support each other’s effort, ... to help these women to integrate into the society from their isolated situation, by addressing their social, psychological and economical problems’<sup>102</sup>. Similarly, in the absence of psycho-social and therapeutic programming in the post-war era, some members of the church have engaged in women’s and widow’s rehabilitation through story-telling and creating support networks, carrying out work in areas most impacted by the war such as in Jaffna (Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo). These workers point to a historical pattern of the prioritisation of development and aid over therapeutic work, explaining that they also undertook similar activities after the tsunami to help those suffering come to terms with loss as they perceive that not a lot was done that focused on personal and community aspects of human (in)security such as trauma counselling (Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo).

Furthermore, religious actors are able to obtain access to areas including detainment camps that other segments of civil society and, in particular the INGO community and

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<sup>102</sup> See the website of the Association of War Affected Women: <http://www.awawsl.org/>.

representatives of international organisations, find difficult to access. Using their identity and respect received from commanders and soldiers due to their religious position and/or symbolic image as ‘Mother’, ‘Sister’, or ‘Father’ these actors have undertaken a variety of activities in displacement settlements and detention camps (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). This includes: addressing food (in)security (bringing food to detainees), health (in)security (monitoring general health, arranging to have pregnant detainees moved and/or released), and political (in)security (taking photographic evidence of atrocities committed against detainees and children and relaying this information including on conditions and treatment of detainees to other actors) (Interview 40, Sister Catholic Church and Philanthropist, Mankulam; Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church and member of the Association of Friends of Prisoners’ Children, Colombo).

Ultimately, given that everyday resistance implies acts that are contextualised within socio-cultural milieu and often exist at the grass-roots, indigenous, or rural, they can be overlooked or difficult to detect in externally-led evaluations of post-war environments or conversely risk being romanticised as a site that lacks capacity or worse one of ‘incivility’ (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 187; Richmond 2010, p. 669). Nevertheless, the agency of ‘everyday’ resistances should not be overlooked as citizens within repressive societies can seek to alter political landscapes through ‘covert’ acts such as side-stepping mechanisms of governmentality and using false compliance or their impartiality to resist regulations implemented by the GOSL (Crow and Grant 2009, p. 36).

### ***Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion:***

Nonviolent protest and persuasion techniques are indicative of the roles that Sri Lankan civil society groups aim to play in speaking up against, mobilising support for, and bringing attention to, activities that securitise and normalise inequality within Sri Lankan society. On the

one hand, the implied ‘threat’ that permeates through the everyday life of Sri Lankans, due to both continued ‘disappearances’ of individuals with ties to socio-political activism and the curbing of civil and political freedoms through the PTA under the guise of fighting terrorism and combating political violence, has had the effect of paralyzing civil society as a mobilising force for public protest in Sri Lankan politics (‘New wave of abductions and dead bodies in Sri Lanka’ 2012; Bateman 2011). The prevalence of such ‘threats’ as constraining mechanisms seeking to shape self-regulated behaviours has, however, resulted in forms of protest and persuasion amongst civil society actors. For example, there has been a return to small-scale non-violent protests and attempts to exercise the right to freedom of assembly. Unfortunately, due to the significant personal dangers associated with such action, there has been a severe curtailing of demonstrations that were once a larger factor in Sri Lankan social advocacy (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Relatively speaking Sri Lanka does not have the same history as some other nations with respect to large-scale peace demonstrations, generally drawing in more sporadic participation of around a thousand or so participants in any one demonstration rather than anything systemic. Nevertheless, demonstrations and rallies have played roles in the past in raising awareness and pressing for peace, with some past mobilisations such as those organised by the NGO Consortium in Jaffna during the war, for example, attracting an estimated 50,000-80,000 participants in peace marches (Orjuela 2008, p. 135).

In the aftermath of the war some Sri Lankans continue seek to organise non-violent memorials and events, particularly those in the North, and to mourn publicly at religious sites of worship (Ruki 2012). However, the freedom of peaceful assembly has been severely curtailed, with violence, intimidation, and arrests occurring against protesters, including protests that have

had members of Sri Lanka's political parties present (Interview 74, Justice of the Peace and socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Police have sought to obtain court orders to prevent and limit non-violent rallies, permission has been refused to organise marches, and many organisers, participants, and other actors that are deemed to be oppositional or critical of the GOSL become the targets of state surveillance and intelligence services (Ruki 2013; Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna; Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo). Despite threats of violence and attacks by police, non-violent protest action continues to take place led by student groups, trade unions, activists, human rights groups, families of the disappeared, lawyers, and members of political parties amongst others representing resistance to the normalisation of inequality and abuses of personal and political security (Ruki 2013; Interview 75, Socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka and writer for the World Socialist Web Site, Colombo; Interview 74, Justice of the Peace and socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Such activism also signifies a positive perspective on the potentiality of non-violent protests and sustained activism to lessen governmental oppression due to the attention drawn to the cause and treatment of those engaging in these acts by bringing representatives from national and international media to cover the event as a strategy of protection and dissuasion targeted at the GOSL and security forces (Interview 74, Justice of the Peace and socialist member of the political left in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Indeed there is an opportunity and 'role for civil society in dissemination but [it] could be dangerous and need[s] to be covert' (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). A recent example of this pertains to the process of acquiring information and evidence for the UN's Panel of Experts

Report in 2011. Groups that partook in the channelling of information to the UN have stated that they had to be extremely cautious about getting information to the Panel investigators as openly supporting the Panel was extremely difficult, not to mention dangerous (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). As we have seen nationalist accusations of a dependent relationship between 'elite' Sri Lankan civil society, assumed to be in the pocket of the liberal 'West' have been propagated by the GOSL as a means of rejecting the notion of an independent civil society and asserting that the international community is overly dependent on 'biased' information from 'anti-Sri Lankan' civil society actors (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 6). This has led to concerns that investigations, audits, and accusations of criminality of civil society's activities and conduct may start up again in the aftermath of the Report's 2011 publication (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 4 Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). In essence, according to many of the groups that have elected to publicly 'self-censor', the values and objectives inherent in their work have not changed but the nature of how they go about achieving those has shifted in response to 'on-the-ground' realities of victor's peace Sri Lanka (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Persuasion techniques pertain to the publication and dissemination of information and 'eyewitness' accounts of protest activities discussed above as well as to issues of informing and building up advocacy and 'active citizens' through the encouragement of independent 'free'



thinking, with particular focus on targeting ‘next generation’ youth (Interview 59, Executive Director of a development and rights education organization, Trincomalee). Indeed education on voting, democracy, social justice, and human rights discussed in Chapter 5, whilst rooted in liberal peace ideology, values, and institutions represents an important means of deepening knowledge and encouraging Sri Lankans to question, critique, and think critically about the state of society and politics, including who best represents these aspirations at the political level. For what good is the right to vote and the holding of elections without people understanding the purpose, utility, and rights (or potential for the exercising of these rights) underlying such institutions? In such circumstances democracy and rights become merely ‘hollow’, empty signifiers with no contextualised meaning in the societies they claim to represent. After all, it ought to be held in mind that democratic institutions exist in a cultural context in Sri Lanka where deference to figures of authority figures centrally and, especially at the grass-roots, people report that they cannot recall having ever been asked for their views or opinions, even on issues relating to their own lives and well-being (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa). This is deeply constitutive and reflective of the culture of servitude engrained in the psyche of many Sri Lankans where such ‘critical-thinking’ forms of persuasion might be cultivated and developed as tools for political and social transformation over the long term.

It must also be acknowledged that there is a fine line between educating toward ‘critical thinking’ and ‘active citizenship’ and asserting the proper moral code by which peoples ought to live. One of the challenges in this regard occurs when teachings on morality and democratic behaviours, for instance, assert a proper moral code and attitudes that count as ‘good’ that people are forced to conform to in order to receive assistance or training rather than being based and embedded within their cultural standpoints and beliefs (Interview 24, Moderator and National

Co-ordinator for a National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling, Kandy). A key issue, then, is the extent to which these types of persuasion-based activities can actually fall into the very trap that they are seeking to escape from by assigning a specific moral code to be followed rather than engaging people in dialogue on ethics, morals, values, and attitudes as these reinforce the top-down imposition of ‘rules of conduct’ that are ‘acceptable’ that mirror technologies of governmentality imposed by the GOSL and the liberal peace.

***Research and Reporting:***

On the other side of the spectrum, some civil society groups have adopted the opposite strategy to that of ‘flying under the radar’ and actively seek to be as ‘public as possible’ both domestically and internationally in bringing attention to issues impacting the (in)security of Sri Lankans in the post-war era (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). For the most part, due to the current impediments of engaging in public demonstrations and protests against the GOSL, this has taken the form of reporting through both academic and journalistic research and publishing materials openly critical of the GOSL on such issues as centralisation of power, militarisation, continued displacement, resettlement and land disputes, disappearances, human rights, food (in)security, livelihood, and women and children’s issues (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 11, Founder of an Institute of Development, Colombo; Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). It also involves seeking

to influence the media's coverage of GOSL activities focusing on media that has 'public access' and can translate and transfer information on events and policies taking place across the country.

This includes bringing attention to civil society's views on particular issues, such as openly inviting 'supportive media' to report on civil society's activities (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo)<sup>103</sup>. In part the stated rationale for such actions involves the view that the GOSL, its representatives, and the military might 'think twice' about carrying out certain policies and actions if there is a significant level of domestic and international public attention being brought to bear on a particular issue (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo). 'Risk assessments' and maintaining lines of communication have, thus, become important elements of the strategic practices of Sri Lankan civil society with respect to research and reporting.

Data collection for reporting, as well as activities themselves often take place at the grass-roots in communities most impacted by the war and made most insecure by post-war policies. In the words of one legally-focused human rights group, programme leaders will 'keep in touch with projects and proposals' and on the 'advocacy side come up with [an] issue [they have been] told about, work on [it] with lawyers and ... take [it] up with local authorities' (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna). This represents a dual strategy of engaging in advocacy and increasing the number of people who become aware of such events and activities by publishing statistical information and reporting on, for example, the number of displaced peoples still residing in settlements and camps, translating this work into multiple languages to

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<sup>103</sup> For an example see 'A Public Memo to Members of Parliament representing the Tamil National Alliance from the Tamil Civil Society' 2011 that outlines the views of many Tamil civil society actors regarding talks with the GOSL, on arriving at a political solution to the conflict and war's end, and the Northern Provincial Council elections.

increase readership (Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Additionally, as legal organisations are not subject to the same GOSL regulations as NGOs in having to obtain permission from the PTF they are particularly well placed to engage in research, reporting, and advocacy work, using the loophole caused by their organisational status as a legal *trust* to focus activities more overtly on human rights and social justice (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna).

Bearing in mind the discussion in Chapter 5 on civil society's activities in the realm of political (in)security, two prominent members of the Muslim community, one a member of North-East Muslim Peace Assembly and the other Senior Lecturer at a Sri Lankan university and member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat, assert that reporting and documentation are essential in bringing attention to issues, particularly in the North and East, where it is difficult to access information and there is far less space and tolerance in which to engage in reporting, information gathering, and documentation work (Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo). The importance of recording experiences in these settings lies in the fact that it brings them into 'existence' as recorded testimonial and evidence that can 'bear witness' to events unfolding and people's experiences. These can also potentially be drawn on in the future when spaces are opened up within society to engage in dialogue on ways to move forward and assist those currently made insecure by post-war policies. The telling of stories and presenting physical evidence of injuries sustained by civilians during and after the war are a vital means of countering political repression and challenging official narratives of the war and war's end

propagated by government. In undertaking this research, for example, several comments made by research participants as diverse as members of a cultural union in Batticaloa, a leader of a Muslim women's-led civil society organisation for equality in Jaffna, a member of the women's forum in an IDP settlement near Puttalam, and a university professor in response to the question: 'What are the most important things that you would like me to take away from this conversation about the post-war situation in Sri Lanka?' were the importance of 'witness bearing', of recording and reporting on the experiences and situations of either themselves or other civil society actors in the post-war period which they feel are forgotten, purposively overlooked, and unheard (Interview 41, Members of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna; Interview 33, Displaced members of a Women's Forum, IDP settlement, Puttalam; Interview 14, Department of Sociology, Senior Lecturer at University of Colombo and member Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, Colombo).

Research and reporting also signifies a means of holding to account, even if not directly, perpetrators. As many are aware of whom perpetrators are and who is responsible for orchestrating such activities, this represents a means of not letting perpetrators off the hook by calling attention to their actions and seeking to publicly to get the GOSL to acknowledge that wrong doing has occurred in the war and victor's peace even if no formal charges are brought (Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo). It is in the refusal to allow the 'normalisation' of 'abnormalities' in society that research and reporting draws its power (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy). As will be seen in the subsequent section on engaging the liberal peace, through leverage politics, research, documentation work, and reporting national and international actors

can seek to inform decisions and dialogue in Sri Lanka and international milieu, such as the UNHRC for example, and put pressure on the GOSL and international actors to respond to the post-war situation in victor's peace Sri Lanka. However, the question of how to alter deep suspicions and mistrust held by Sri Lankans of the 'ethnic' other, particularly on the part of Sinhalese nationalists, and motivate people on a mass scale to speak out about injustices given the current environment in Sri Lanka remains a central challenge for civil society (Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo).

***The potentiality of Social Media:***

Social and citizens' media also play important roles in reporting on the GOSL and associated post-war events. Groundviews, for instance, was referred to by a well-regarded Reverend of the Diocese in Kandy as one of the only 'critical' citizens' media outlets left in Sri Lanka (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). Particularly relevant is the role of the Internet and new forms of social media that enable protest and persuasion tactics to be potentially successful in reaching larger audiences both within and outside of Sri Lanka. This has been realised through the compression of time and space in getting information out that facilitates a form of ideological freedom, despite attempts by the GOSL to censure such platforms, for citizens to spread information and obtain access to it, relatively free from government control (Karatzogianni and Robinson 2009, p. 154)<sup>104</sup>. Equally citizens' media organisations can utilise social media to leverage their messages and enable citizens to become social activists and reporters (re)posting, sharing information, and reporting on events in citizens'

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<sup>104</sup> It should be noted that concerns have already begun to be raised regarding the impacts that proposed internet legislation (Stop Internet Piracy Act [SOPA] and the Protect IP Act [PIPA]) could have in enabling governments to censor existing content on websites and key social media platforms in repressive societies such as Sri Lanka (Hattotuwa 2012).

media for a that itself represents ‘everyday’ forms of resistance to activities and information that securitise and normalise inequality within Sri Lankan society. *Kottu.org*, for example, a blog aggregator in Sri Lanka, is one mechanism of persuasion listing 1,081 Sri Lankan blogs currently featured as of March 2012 (*Kottu.org*). Some of these such as one titled ‘Global Tamil Forum On UN Resolution On Sri Lanka’ and another called ‘Amid Sri Lankan Denial, Threats Rise For Journalists’ are overtly political in nature (*Kottu.org*). There are also several alternative news sites such as Groundviews, Transcurrents, and Lanka-e-news, which despite recent censorship continue to function.

Where funding has not been readily available or is blocked by GOSL channels, social media tools are able to offer social activists low-cost avenues for information generation, sharing of opinions, viewpoints, and experiences, and for active citizen participation (Firuzeh 2010). Another key mechanism has been to diversify tactics and the kinds of social media instruments utilised such as Facebook, Twitter, email, websites, and blogs in getting information out to a variety of ‘publics’ both within and outside Sri Lanka. For example, Groundviews was the first media initiative in Sri Lanka to create a Facebook page with other groups such as Sri Lanka Guardian, Lanka-e-news, and TamilNet having followed suit.

Likewise, Nigel V. Nugawela, Co-Editor of Groundviews, has emphasised that through engagement with citizens’ media, voices and opinions that would otherwise not be heard can be recorded whilst simultaneously encouraging and strengthening local and community participation (Firuzeh 2010). Within highly securitised societies like Sri Lanka these represent the spaces where ‘alternative’ forms of life can exist or come into being that represent potential spaces of the excluded, in which civil society is able to carve out space to act in its various guises against the imposition of GOSL regulations. An important opportunity is created here for grass-

roots and community-level actors to take a lead in gathering and presenting information, both written and visually through pictures and video recording, that they believe should be published to citizens' media sites. The first photos of the devastation caused by flooding in IDP camps in August 2009, for instance, were taken by mobile phones and updates via Twitter were sent to and carried by Groundviews (Firuzeh 2010).

Here again social media technologies play roles as citizens' media organisations are able to encourage and bring in a wide range of authors and perspectives on issues and events taking place across the country simply by posting content online. For instance, as of 2010 Groundviews claimed to have over 200 authors, in excess of 1,200 original articles and more than 16,200 comments on articles from a wide range of contributors in Sri Lanka and abroad including academics, human rights and media activists, journalists, politicians, diplomats, senior civil servants, students, and other Sri Lankan citizens (Firuzeh 2010). Collectively this represents in excess of 'one and a half million words of critique, dissent, and alternative viewpoints, from the height of war to enduring challenges facing Sri Lanka after its end' (Firuzeh 2010). In the following section methods of engagement by civil society with the narratives of both the liberal peace and those of the GOSL, as well as attempts to engage community, thus altering perceptions of the ethnic 'other', are explored.

#### **8.4 Acts of Engagement:**

Those open to exercising agency through acts of engagement in Sri Lanka continue to see value, despite the current socio-political environment, in seeking to deepen the GOSL's post-war development agenda to comprise a framework for peace that in addition to development might include a focus on human security, rule of law, social justice, and human rights, yet is contextualised to fit Sri Lankans. This is not to argue that these actors necessarily 'buy into' the



liberal peace or GOSL's peace through development agenda but rather that they view engagement with both the GOSL and liberal peace, as opposed to resistances, as the more fruitful course of action toward realising objectives. On the other side of the spectrum, however, acts of engagement with the GOSL also represent the efforts of Sinhalese nationalists to support and promote the narratives associated with the victor's peace and to protest against the involvement of liberal 'imperialists' in Sri Lanka.

### ***Engaging the GOSL:***

Strategies of engaging the GOSL have generally fallen into three principal categories: (1) abiding by the GOSL's post-war policies through economic development, (2) liaising on non-contentious aspects of post-war reconstruction, and (3) mobilising and advocacy in support of the victor's peace, and appealing to the GOSL to shape its policies in particular ways that reinforce Sinhalese-Buddhist pre-eminence, on the part of the Sinhalese nationalists and particularly its more extremist segments in the form of the JHU and especially the BBS. Whilst none of the strategies involves professing 'all-out' support for the GOSL's official peace through development programmes *per se*, they are representative of a general willingness to work with the GOSL rather than against it.

### ***Peace-building through Development:***

The first strategy of engaging the GOSL pertains to the activities of large-scale 'Gandhian'-type groups as well as development CBOs who according to the Executive Director of one such group 'have not attempted, and do not expect, to be too much involved in Government debates' (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo). Whilst these actors may not be entirely approving of the GOSL's progress in improving the living conditions and livelihoods of Sri Lankans, these actors have, in the view of

the Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, generally not experienced many difficulties in carrying out activities in the post-war period (Interview 4, Colombo). This is because their activities are not aimed at opposing the GOSL through advocacy or protest, instead opting to be ‘philosophically neutral’ by undertaking and promoting rural development schemes that focus on skills training and capacity building with the goal of ‘reawakening’ communities toward self-sufficiency (Interview 24, Moderator and National Co-ordinator of a National Center for Promoting Non-Violent Conflict Resolution and Conflict Handling, Kandy; Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo).

In some ways their approach can, thus, be seen as one of engagement as they share a view with the GOSL that there are ‘livelihoods to get on with’ that should be the focus of post-war policies (Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Colombo) and are committed to achieving ‘national unity’ and ‘national development’ through these activities (Sarvodaya Approach to the New Century Deshodaya National Assembly, March 2010). This view is conducive to the GOSL’s ‘peace through development’ paradigm that sees the government embracing elements of (neo)liberal economic policy at the same time as it seeks to distance itself from ‘interventionist’ elements of the liberal peace (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011). It can also be seen as a strategic decision in order to be ‘permitted’ to continue programme work. Indeed, these actors do vocalise criticism of the GOSL for aggressively working to create an ideology that paints more activist-oriented civil society as ‘anti-nationalist’ and as ‘traitors’ (Interview 8, Executive Director of a Gandhian development organisation, Colombo). Nevertheless, their ‘neutrality’ does (unintentionally) serve to ‘prop-up’ the GOSL’s governmental strategy of being seen to be willing to work with ‘good’ civil society toward the

achievement of ‘peace through development’ (Interview 22, Chief Government Whip of Parliament, GOSL, Colombo).

This enables the GOSL to emphasise which civil society actors are ‘good’ and to claim that these actors have emerged and are thriving in the post-war period and are playing roles in participating in economic development programmes in areas such as agriculture and livestock, micro-credit banking systems, and bringing clean water to local villages (Interview 22, Chief Government Whip of Parliament, GOSL, Colombo). Similarly, rural development schemes that produce handicrafts, woodworks, and other small industry products are ‘sold’ as a means of enhancing livelihood and preserving Sri Lankan culture, particularly for rural women (Interview 22, Chief Government Whip of Parliament, GOSL, Colombo). From the government’s point of view these civil society actors can continue to operate and train local communities in aspects of post-war development and are expected to play increasingly larger roles in helping to get projects up and running by applying directly to local governments for credit for GOSL development schemes (Interview 22, Chief Government Whip of Parliament, GOSL, Colombo). The Sarvodaya Movement<sup>105</sup> and Sanasa Development Bank<sup>106</sup> are two organisations that have specifically been singled out by the GOSL as examples of ‘good’ civil society, working with the GOSL on aspects of its post-war paradigm (Interview 22, Chief Government Whip of Parliament, GOSL, Colombo).

Such forms of civil society engagement with government also reflect the view held by some members of the GOSL bureaucracy that ‘all different roles [are] needed’ in the post-war environment in order to facilitate the implementation of the GOSL’s post-war development agenda and that civil society should not just be ‘blathering on’ with criticism but actively seeking

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<sup>105</sup> See the website of Sarvodaya: <http://www.sarvodaya.org/>.

<sup>106</sup> See the website for Sanasa Development Bank: <http://www.sdb.lk/>.

to do more tangible things to make life better in communities (Interview 13, Advisor to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Colombo). Ultimately, this raises issues for consideration concerning the ways in which the civil society strategy of engaging with the GOSL can play roles in enabling civil society actors to be constructed as ‘good’ and ‘bad’ based on the extent to which they ‘tow’ the governmental line. Correspondingly, it also brings to light challenges surrounding the extent to which the engagement of ‘Gandhian’ and development groups with the GOSL enables Government to continue to propagate underdevelopment as the central factor in the war, whilst denying other ‘root’ factors in the conflict.

*Interfacing at (non-)contentious aspects of post-war reconstruction:*

Some civil society groups have responded to the above by adopting a ‘middle-of-the-road’ strategy of engaging Government, including key Ministers, through reports and seminars with members of the GOSL and other stakeholders focused on a variety of ‘non-contentious’ topics such as ‘non-devolutionary aspects’ of post-war peace-building including reconciliation in accordance with the LLRC. One tactic has been to frame issues in such a way that enables them to be acceptable to the GOSL but that still offers the possibility to address important human security needs within the Sri Lankan peace process that get at the ‘roots’ of conflict (Interview 6, Prior Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka). For instance, rather than overtly seeking to tackle the ‘ethnic’ issue, topics such as citizenship and language might be put forward that can still enable the issues of rights and entitlements to be raised through this framing (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo; Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). This

pertains to the LLRC and the spaces it has opened to discuss reconciliation, though only in relation to its framing within the LLRC. It is, thus, possible to approach and/or lobby the GOSL regarding how the LLRC can be implemented and on recommendations that are included in the LLRC itself without going against Government (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo). Reconciliation can be put on the agenda in strategic ways with civil society connecting issues they would like to see addressed to recommendations in the LLRC and/or or linking their own activities to the LLRC so that it can appear as though they are coming down from Government itself (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo). However, engaging with the GOSL using the LLRC as a vehicle raises questions about the effectiveness of such a strategy in terms of realising deep-level reconciliation and particularly any legal culpability and structural level change as it is more likely to feed into small and incremental implementations within the LLRC (Interview 70, Catholic Priest and member of CASA and CARITAS, Colombo). The challenge inherent in this practice is to locate and construct issues so that they can be perceived as ‘non-contentious’, whilst still enabling all sides to meet some of their constituent’s needs in the post-war environment.

Civil society groups have further prepared reports for the Presidential Secretariat and Government Agents (District Secretaries) on the situation in their districts and have sought to have an audience with the GOSL (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). One example of this pertains to a February 2010 meeting between a Jaffna-based Muslim grass-roots women’s organisation for equality and members of the Presidential Secretariat that, as articulated by one of the leaders of the Muslim organisation, represented the first time since the war ended that

Jaffna Muslim civil society had asked to have a meeting with the GOSL to discuss their experiences in resettling and rebuilding their lives (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). The intentions behind such activities are, ultimately, to enable dialogue that is inclusive of a multitude of stakeholders and does go some way in facilitating the establishment of an enabling space for dialogue (Interview 6, Prior Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Challenges related to this strategy persist, though, concerning not only the inclusion of Sri Lanka's diverse religious and ethnic communities, but rather the 'authenticity' of the viewpoints shared in such seminars and meetings based on the degree of 'trust' between participants. This is particularly the case for those sitting on opposite ends of the political spectrum regarding how genuine they believe other actors are being toward the process and their willingness to actually engage in dialogue on moving forward in post-war Sri Lanka. As the Director of one Colombo-based advocacy-oriented organisation explained, the value of such interactions on even a surface level must be weighed in conjunction with what you want to and can achieve through a strategy of adopting a 'surface level or slightly modified type of approach to addressing the issues. ... some will still be critical of this ... the other side [civil society] could be silenced, misperceptions could creep back in' (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo).

Another civil society group that attempts to develop a model of historically sensitive theoretical and empirical research on ethnicity reported that at one of their seminars some grassroots attendees from the North were willing to vocalise considerably critical views concerning

the GOSL's handling of security issues but were adamant about not wanting any official documentation, report, or record of their participation and comments that might attribute any of the views they professed back to them fearing Government reprisals (Interview 6, Prior Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo). A third organisation that prides itself on being 'independent', 'non-partisan', and inclusive of 'all the main ethnic and religious communities' in Sri Lanka described the experience of one of their efforts to broach questions surrounding post-war reconstruction from a more moderate direction as to some extent 'back-firing' (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This is because, although the pro-nationalist groups in attendance were pleased with the moderate approach adopted, the Tamil and human-rights groups reported feeling that the process was 'back-tracking' in terms of representing minority views and addressing substantive issues necessary for buy-in from all parties concerned (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Similarly others have questioned the genuine intent of the GOSL in seeking out and/or agreeing to consult with civil society. For example, on one occasion civil society groups were sent invitations to consult with the Minister of Plantation Industries and Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka on Human Rights on Sri Lanka's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) ahead of the official UPR process in November 2012 (Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented organisation dedicated to strengthening civil society's participation in the public sector, Colombo)<sup>107</sup>. However, civil

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<sup>107</sup> For more on the UPR process see information on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx>.

society actors raised concerns that the Ministerial representatives did not report to civil society on the status of their findings and that their consultation represented more of a ‘tick box activity’ to demonstrate that they had ‘consulted’ with civil society than any genuine attempt to engage with these actors (Interview 50, Members of Roundtable Meeting Christian Alliance for Social Action (CASA), organised by CARITAS Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 45, Executive Director of an advocacy-oriented organisation dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo).

It also holds that if those in opposition to one another are so married to their positions neither is likely to move then questions must be posed regarding the possibility of achieving the well-intentioned goals of these forums and the degree to which they can truly capture the views and voices of particularly those made most vulnerable. For those that advocate these strategies of GOSL engagement, an important factor is that they are ‘quietly meeting [and] expressing overtures, [though they must be] careful not to push things too far’ (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Furthermore, steps might be taken to directly ‘link-up’ moderate initial overtures to a more coherent, long-term strategy that brings in ‘substantive issues’ more centrally as the process moves forward and participants have greater opportunity to become acquainted, interact with, and hear one another.

*Mobilising and Advocacy in Support of the Victor’s Peace and Government:*

Concerning the third aspect of engagement with the GOSL, many Sinhalese nationalists argue that people ought to have faith in government and give it time to engage in post-war activities due to the proximity of the end of the war and that they should accept that some information may need to be kept secret by Government in order to achieve greater security and



stability although groups like the BBS clashed with the some Ministers and Opposition MPs concerning its extremist stance and willingness to use violence (Bandara 2013; ‘Bodu Bala Sena is an extremist group’ 2013; Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo; Interview 9, Member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, President of the Royal Asiatic Society, and strong supporter of Sinhalese nationalism, Colombo). The more moderate pro-GOSL Sinhalese nationalists assert that the government is doing its best to improve the country creating ‘new’ job opportunities to ‘invest’ in the North that will benefit all Sri Lankans through participation in the anticipated tourism and infrastructure sectors (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna). However, they do so without further specificity as to how exactly these ‘opportunities’ will enable all Sri Lankans to enjoy greater economic wealth when many in the North are not permanently resettled and struggling to engage in any economic activity that might permit them to obtain the materials necessary to rebuild their homes. Moreover, many in the North and East argue that contrary to claims of economic opportunities, Southerners and specifically Sinhalese are being brought up to work in the more lucrative jobs in the hospitality sector raising suspicion as to the real benefits that locals will realise from tourism (Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People’s Front, Jaffna; Interview 54, Former President of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 53, Project Officer for a development organization and member of a cultural-based members union, Batticaloa; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, members of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat for Muslims, and Chairman Rural Development Foundation, Colombo; Interview 46, Australian donor, member of a cultural-based members union in Batticaloa, and member of a cultural-based members union in Trincomalee, Colombo).

Those who subscribe to the victor's peace narrative do not see the South as being implicated negatively in the war because the government and military were responding to the terrorist threat engulfing the island from the North. The civilian deaths that occurred in the North are, therefore, a tragic but understandable consequence of terrorism having originated there and is somehow less sad or unfortunate than the loss of those civilians in the South that are perceived as innocent victims (Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo). In the minds of many Sinhalese then, the war can be stripped back to a Northern uprising that needed to be stopped due to the necessity of defeating terrorism that in many ways absolves the South (and GOSL) from any wrong doing as extraordinary means can be justified in order to end terrorism (Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo; Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna). 'Freedom' and 'peace' it is argued are 'dividends' that are only beginning now to be realised with the ending of the war (Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo).

This belief that the war was brought to the South because it represented the seat of governmental power is a vital component in the Buddhist nationalists' justification and legitimacy of the victor's peace. This is because it absolves the Rajapaksa government from actually being implicated in any negative way as a protagonist to the conflict, reframing the government, instead, as having brought peace to Sri Lanka by doing what so many others have been unable to do; defeat terrorism (Interview 76, moderate Sinhalese nationalist, Colombo). Furthermore it provides a rationale for the continuation of HSZs in the North for although the LTTE has been destroyed the ideas it expounded still exist as Northerners were indoctrinated by the LTTE and, therefore, the government must take precautionary measures to protect the

security of Sri Lankans (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 49, Sinhalese nationalist activist, Colombo).

Finally, in response to the UNHRC inquiry into potential human rights violations perpetrated by both sides at the end of the war GOSL supporters, and particularly strong supporters of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism, have been accused of seeking to ‘whip up’ anti-Western sentiment by encouraging, and in some cases helping to organise, ‘Sinhala nationalist protests at home, creating an atmosphere of an island under siege’ (‘Sri Lanka against itself’ 2012). This has physically manifested itself in public protest rallies often led by members of the Sinhalese nationalists and specifically often Buddhist Monks, such as the anti-interventionist campaigns that rose up in response to calls to investigate alleged war crimes at the UNHRC in February 2012. Posters were plastered around the immigration counters at Sri Lanka’s Bandaranaike International Airport that read ‘We are strongly against the hypocritical foreign intervention against the Sri Lankan Government’ and ‘USA Please do not support terrorism’ (‘KONY 2012 and Sri Lanka’s Killing Fields’ 2012). Similarly, nationalist groups have called on Sri Lankans to boycott American goods like Coca Cola and Pepsi in a bid to ‘avenge America’ for supporting the UNHRC Resolution (‘Lankan war crimes’ 2012). In addition, Sinhalese nationalists and particularly Buddhist Monks that are members of organisations like the JHU and BBS have been active in holding public rallies and marching in Colombo to protest against the Resolution (Haviland 2012). Such actions are indicative of the broader context in which not only Sinhalese nationalists’ mobilisations and advocacy but the majority of large-scale public protests in support of the victor’s peace have taken place.

***Engaging the Liberal Peace:***

Sri Lankan civil society actors that have engaged with the liberal peace have sought to do so both (1) as a tactic of organisational survival and (2) as strategic act, translating their efforts into the language of the liberal peace to reach out to, and garner the support of, liberal peace-builders.

*Engaging the Liberal Peace as Strategy of Organisational Survival:*

Civil society groups that engage the liberal peace as strategy of survival in Sri Lanka often do so in response to the exercising of technologies of governmentality associated with the liberal peace in which groups must be structured in specific ways, for instance as a registered NGO, in order to be 'awarded' a normalised position within Western preconceptions of civil society and, thus, receive funding and support from Western institutions. In Sri Lanka, many civil society groups have, therefore, chosen to formally register as NGOs and abide by the 'rules of the game' with respect to liberal peace conceptions of civil society in order that projects might receive international support toward meeting needs within their communities (Interview 35 Secretary/Chairperson for a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna; Interview 33, Members of a Displaced Women's Forum, IDP settlement, Puttalam; Interview 31, Secretary and District Manager of a Rural Development Foundation, Puttalam,; Interview 5, Sister Catholic Church, member of Association of Friends of Prisoners' Children, Colombo). Likewise, as elaborated on in Chapter 6, despite the fact that donor conditionalities can pose administrative challenges for civil society, many organisations design and implement projects in ways that reflect donor-driven objectives and expectations in order to continue to operate in victor's peace Sri Lanka. This has often meant focusing on infrastructure-type projects over political or psycho-social work that reflects international donor acquiescence to regulations

surrounding the PTF (Interview 73, Country Manager, International Alert in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

Exploring the experiences of one grass-roots-based women-led civil society organisation working for equality located in Jaffna helps to lay bare how this liberal peace governmentality functions in practice. Group members report that when they first returned to Jaffna in the winter of 2010 and sought to approach NGOs and donors operating in the area for support in assisting IDPs returning and resettling in Jaffna they were informed that in order to even be considered eligible for assistance they must first become registered as a formal NGO (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). As women, registering for formal NGO status represented a difficult task as at first they were not allowed to work in the community and it took several months for them to obtain knowledge of the rules and regulations surrounding registering as an NGO (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Moreover, initially they had no office, money, or salaries, and with no homes to return to some group members were forced to live and work in overcrowded and cramped conditions, operating out of a small tent and in a single room alongside five or six other families (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Still others took refuge in an abandoned school whilst attempting to complete the GOSL registration process to become a recognised NGO (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna).

In June 2010 the group was finally awarded NGO-status and 'things got [a little] better' as once they were recognised by the District Secretary and INGOs, others in the community also began to accept them, providing them with the security to carry out their work relatively free

from fear of reprisals from others in the community that frowned upon women working in the formal economy (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). The organisation was also able to obtain six months of funding from a Sri Lankan grant-making organisation to help cover salary and administrative costs as well as to aid others in the community – 'to put them up, [and] help them learn regulations around resettlement' (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). At the 'global' level, however, challenges remain as efforts to obtain financial support from INGOs, international organisations, and diplomatic missions have been replete with prerequisites pertaining to 'good governance' such as auditing, accountability, and transparency mechanisms that are assumed non-existent, despite the fact that the group has tried to explain that they do in fact have an auditing system in place (Interview 35, Secretary/Chairperson of a Muslim women's civil society organisation for equality, Jaffna). Thus, whilst engaging the liberal peace and adopting its 'operational' protocols does enable organisational survival it has not necessarily led to a process of mutual engagement.

*The 'Boomerang Effect', Strategically Espousing the Liberal Peace:*

In Sri Lanka there exists a long tradition of civil society actors utilising leverage politics through the 'boomerang effect' (Keck and Sikkink 1998) to raise concerns about human rights abuses and convey information regarding the political situation on-the-ground in Sri Lanka to Western governments, liberal peace-builders and INGOs, international funding bodies, the diaspora, and international media (Orjuela 2008, p. 169; Wickramasinghe 2001, p. 37). In the post-war period, faced with the realities of being constrained domestically by GOSL regulations and the possibilities of facing accusations of criminality and anti-nationalist labelling for opposing the GOSL, civil society groups have continued to reach out to their international

networks<sup>108</sup>. ‘Elite’, urban or ‘liberal’ civil society entities that can afford to do so have travelled to the diaspora, for instance, to report on events occurring in Sri Lanka, construct networks of support, and influence the nature of diaspora advocacy in host countries in ways that are reflective of the needs of those civil society actors in Sri Lanka (Interview 80, National Spokesperson for the Canadian Tamil Congress, Member of Tamil Diaspora, Toronto; Interview 79, Associate Professor at University of Toronto, Leader within the Diaspora Tamil community, Toronto). Similarly, civil society actors have sought to meet with diplomats both in and outside of Colombo to lobby and exert pressure on international actors to respond to human insecurities occurring within Sri Lanka (Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women’s Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa; Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo).

In addition to strategies of resistance pertaining to protest and persuasion explored above, civil society actors have also pointed to the depth and detail of the information contained in the UN’s Panel of Experts Report as evidence of the importance of collaboration with supporters of the liberal peace. This is because with the help of Sri Lankan civil society the investigators were able to collect and present more information than any group would have been able to report on its own (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). Similarly, foreign governments have sought to undertake a process of reciprocal leveraging by seeking to engage with Sri Lankan civil society actors in strategic ways. This has been explained by the fact that international actors are not willing to counter the GOSL’s policies head-on at present and have instead attempted to

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<sup>108</sup> It should be noted, however, that due to the GOSL’s current counterinsurgency and stabilisation programmes, as well as its desire to ‘play off the differing interests and approaches of Western and regional actors such as China and India’ against one another, that the scope for Western actors to ‘exert leverage is severely circumscribed’ (Goodhand 2010, pp. 345-344).

get messages of support out to citizens and to promote their aims through existing civil society relationships (Interview 20, Second Secretary British High Commission in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

The notions of mutual trust and confidentiality take on particular resonance here in establishing information-sharing networks between Sri Lankan civil society and ‘global’ civil society, international institutions, and journalists. Groups, particularly those most visible to the GOSL, such as Colombo-based ‘elite’ civil society, have vocally expressed support for, and financially merged funds to assist one another’s endeavours faced with similar challenges to conducting work (Interview 72, Acting Executive Director of an International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Interview 44, Executive Director of a Human Rights Organisation, Colombo; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo; Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). In part, this represents a strategy of self-preservation, in linking to sympathetic groups around the globe for support in an environment that is not conducive to activism (Interview 10, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo).

Likewise, the presence of internationals and sustained reporting on the treatment of Sri Lankan civil society plays an important role keeping in these within the public eye and under a microscope, which provides protection to those advocating for change on the ground (Senewiratne 2012; Interview 47, Previous Director of International Affairs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, member of the Muslim Peace Secretariat/Secretariat of Muslims, and Chairman of a Rural Development Foundation, Colombo). Information-sharing networks have



functioned as strategies of mutual or co-empowerment enabling civil society groups to continue to carry out humanitarian and rights-based work in a tightly-centralised and controlled environment. The importance of maintaining a level of ‘secrecy’ on the part of international supporters in keeping their sources of information ‘on-the-ground’ secret in a complex socio-political setting cannot be overemphasised as various aspects of one’s (and their family’s) human security can be threatened through ‘leaks’ pertaining to the sources of information (Interview 68, Member of Parliament Tamil National Alliance, Colombo; Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna; Interview 29, prominent Bishop and pro-Tamil activist in the Catholic Church, Colombo). Sri Lankan civil society groups have also pursued a strategy of taking up the language of the liberal peace in areas such as ‘good governance’ and ‘human rights’ applying and adapting these to the political situation in Sri Lanka. Particularly amongst Sri Lanka’s ‘elite’ and Western-educated civil society, this has been effective in garnering the support of international institutions and foreign governments, constructing a ‘liberalised’-Sri Lankan image of civil society.

This vision sees Sri Lankan civil society as politically active in seeking to define itself as upholding a ‘social contract’ between a democratic government and its people and holding the government to account (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). For example, this has been applied by civil society groups seeking constitutional changes in the form of power devolution as well as by those groups concentrating on detailed legal and statutory issues (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo; Interview 3, Executive Director of an institution dedicated to strengthening civil society’s participation in the public sector, Colombo). However, this approach also leaves itself open to ‘anti-national’ attacks and rhetoric of a ‘Westernised’ civil society by nationalists who paint these actions as veiled ‘Western’

intervention that is ‘ideologically opposite to [Sri Lankan] nationalism’ (Interview 15, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Furthermore, it can result in the assumed homogeneity or worse forced assimilation of civil society into the liberal peace rather than acknowledging the diversity of Sri Lanka’s civil society despite the challenges that such diversity brings about.

Leverage-based relationships do represent an area where ‘global’ civil society and international governmental actors have, and can continue, to play potentially productive roles in helping to re-balance power relations within Sri Lanka by bringing external pressure to bear on the GOSL. Within this, social media technologies have played interesting and important roles in communicating information and applying pressure to the GOSL to take action in investigating human rights abuses and easing restrictions on civil society and journalists. For instance, the UK’s Channel 4 award winning documentary, *Sri Lanka’s Killing Fields* released in June 2011 and its follow-up, *Sri Lanka’s Killing Fields: War Crimes Unpunished* released in March 2012, have been seen by millions of people through its varied distribution online through the documentary’s official web streaming, public screenings, and broadcasts in the UK, Australia, India and elsewhere<sup>109</sup>. Interestingly *Sri Lanka’s Killing Fields* can be viewed as an outright appeal to a younger demographic, through its existence and promotion in the form of digital media, targeting youth who are believed to have more energy and be keen to engage and promote awareness through mass means of (re)production (‘KONY 2012 and Sri Lanka’s Killing Fields’ 2011).

Such activities have been referred to both as ‘pressure tactics’ and ‘supporting roles’ for the international community as it exerts pressure on the GOSL at the same time as it can ‘put

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<sup>109</sup> The programmes and information on the investigations can be found on Channel 4’s website at: <http://srilanka.channel4.com/>.

domestic civil society and ordinary Sri Lankans in control’ of their future (Interview 25, Rev. Diocese of Kandy, Kandy). One civil society actor involved in land and agricultural reform expressed their view that ‘people are against such killings and [the] way [the] war ended, people [are] generally aware of large scale bombings, but [there] has to be [a] way of giving voice in [the] country ... at present though [this] may not be feasible without international pressure and attention’ (Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). However, the extent to which this ‘outside support’ can, ultimately, prove to have a positive effective depends in large part on the extent to which international actors are genuinely willing to play a ‘supportive’ role in Sri Lanka and to put leadership in the hands of Sri Lankan civil society.

### ***Engaging Community, Engaging ‘Other’:***

As we have seen in previous Chapters, the use of identity in the Sri Lankan conflict through the ‘othering’ of distinct identity groups has functioned as a powerful tool in Sri Lankan politics in perpetuating both the image of a ‘dangerous other’ and in polarising society along ethnic, religious, and regional lines configuring the social fabric such that fear is used as a means of control by dominant groups against ‘others’ across the country. These practices and discourses of nationhood have perpetuated notions of insecurity on all sides of the conflict and have restricted the spaces for the development of alternative or counter discourses, identities, and practices (Thompson 2007, p. 299). A distinct rationale, therefore, behind the strategic practice of civil society actors seeking to engage community and the perceived ‘other’ has, according to the Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, been to facilitate the rise of a counter or alternative socio-political narrative for Sri Lankan life toward the acknowledgement of the experiences of

perceived ‘others’ (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

One central challenge in engaging community, however, is that people are not necessarily well-informed, particularly in the South where access to information has been limited to state-based messages and state-controlled media (Interview 21, Moderator of a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). The ‘fight’ for civil society groups seeking to engage the ‘other’ is, thus, very much not a struggle solely against the GOSL, but also with the mind-sets of many Sri Lankans and, specifically, the Sinhalese. According to one human rights actor, ‘the majority has been told ... that war might still be going on if [the] government had not taken [the] actions it did [to end the war through its military campaign] (Interview 37, Human Rights Worker, Jaffna).

This has led some civil society groups to adopt strategies aimed at educating Sri Lankans on the wartime experiences of the ‘other’ and the specific ‘targeting’ of both Sinhalese and to some extent Tamil (and Muslim) youth in their programme work. Such strategies are explained by the fact that it is believed that ‘the Sinhalese will be most resistant to political changes that could result in devolution and [the] sharing of power between ethnic majorities and ethnic minorities’ so they must be targeted first (Interview 4, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). Similarly with respect to youth, concerns over the potential trajectories of Sri Lanka’s future are alluded to in that it is believed that ‘development and healing [needs to start] with the youth and children generations ... get them to know one another and understand one another ... a place where change can take place’ (Interview 38, Director of a civil society organisation for war-affected elderly people, Jaffna). It is also noted that there are ‘some hopeful signs for [the] future, through

youth exchanges for younger generations to build relations with those of other ethnicities’ (Interview 23, Executive Director of an organisation dedicated to international educational exchange and identifying educational needs in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This is based on the belief that it is possible to ‘create change within communities by communities’ (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women’s Forum, Colombo). The potential power in such efforts of engagement is evident in the account of one member of a rural development women’s network who stated that ‘in the beginning [we were] separate groups, and tried to remain separate ... now [we are] more mixed together [and] have built new relationships with different cultures and know one another through this mixing’ (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women’s Forum, Colombo). She continued that ‘Muslims and IDPs thought all belonged to [the] LTTE and that Tamils all supported them and Tamils perceived that Muslims had done them wrong – now they are seeing that their perceptions were not correct – [this] has led to greater understanding that all have suffered and lost’ (Interview 28, Member of a Rural Development Women’s Forum, Colombo).

Engaging community through inter-cultural and inter-ethnic exchanges are, therefore, another strategy of engagement to ‘build direct relations [between] ordinary people [in the] South and ordinary people [in the] North’ (Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). These exchanges are intended to help facilitate understanding, increase inter-cultural interactions, and enable different types of sharing to occur through the power of direct and indirect forms of experiential learning (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo; Interview 52, Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of Kurunegala, Kandy; Interview 21, Moderator for a Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Colombo). The role of language as a potential point of strategic

divisiveness emerges here as many do not speak the same language, which in some ways has permitted the kinds of inter-cultural and inter-ethnic ‘othering’ to occur at such a deep level within Sri Lankan society (Interview 38, Director of a civil society organisation for war-affected elderly people, Jaffna). Part of the answer to this challenge may lie in indirect forms of inter-cultural exchange such as arts and performance-based education. According to a member of a performing arts centre that promotes cultural theatre and dance performances, its goal is to seek ‘to build understanding and cross cultural awareness of other cultural practices in Sri Lanka to learn about one another’, thus, indirectly promoting a sense of inter-communal exchange and non-linguistically based inter-ethnic communication (Interview 36, Members of The Centre for Performing Arts, Jaffna Branch).

However, whilst such exchange activities can be highly effective on a personal, one-to-one level in de-escalating mistrust and animosity between ‘ethnic’-others as well as in creating friendships and increased interactions that can change attitudes and reduce prejudices held toward the ‘other’, such social cohesion activities tend to be limited to small-scale interactions. Ambiguities remain concerning persistent, systemic inequalities experienced through day-to-day asymmetries of power and the ability of social-cohesiveness campaigns to scale-up and translate personal interactions to more sustained mobilisation and support for structural-level socio-political change. The focus has predominantly been on undertaking contained, short-term, and isolated activities intended to build bridges rather than transform societal structures (Orjuela 2010a, p. 315). In addition, the notion of ‘acceptance’ of ‘other’ advocated through the liberal peace has been criticised for failing to take stock of the depth of ethnic tensions in Sri Lanka as well as neglecting that ‘multi-ethnic’ mixing between North and South is viewed by many Tamils with fear and suspicion relating to ‘Sinhalisation’ of the North under the guise of inter-

mixing (Interview 2, Lecturer in International Relations, Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS University, London).

Similarly, other civil society groups believe that inter-cultural and inter-ethnic interactions can be undertaken more effectively by searching for ‘common ground’ on issues where peoples regardless of ethnicity are treated similarly. In an interview conducted for this study in response to the question:

*Q: How could the different ethnic actors that comprise Sri Lankan civil society come together to find a common voice in post-war Sri Lanka?*

One research participant replied:

*A: ‘War affects, resettlement, women and children issues [are] points of commonality.[This] could lead to [a] deeper more political voice ... that could speak up in greater numbers in public and exercise voice’* (Interview 16, Program Officer for a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo).

This statement points not only to the possibility for areas of ‘commonality’ to enable greater inter-ethnic dialogue, but the potential for a ‘deeper’ sense of a political voice to emerge for civil society and citizens in Sri Lanka through these types of activities. Moreover, it also suggests a degree of safety and security for civil society in coming together in mutual support of one another. The Report ‘*Voices from the East: A Citizens Report*’ published by the Maya Institute also recognises the potentiality in this strategy. This is seen through its stated focus on promoting civic engagement to create a series of policy dialogues at the district level and greater citizen awareness on issues of development, democracy, and peace that is intended to open discussion on how investing in community partnerships can contribute to a ‘national vision of a thriving Sri Lanka’ (Maya Institute 2010, p. 3).

Additionally, through membership in inter-religious committees, priests and monks have reported that they have taken on a ‘responsibility’ to talk about the importance of increased inter-cultural and inter-ethnic interactions in moving forward in post-war Sri Lanka (Interview 60, Buddhist Monk and Advisor to Tamil Buddhist Society, Jaffna; Interview 42, Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation dedicated to fostering a culture of peace in Sri Lanka, Colombo). This includes encouraging greater respect for the ‘ethnic’ other in society and learning to ‘speak and act from the heart’ (Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). One Buddhist Monk explained that they are learning Tamil in order to better understand Tamil needs and that they want to work with Tamils more as equals in order to engage directly with communities at the grass-roots level (Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). They continued that it is not traditionally the role of Monks to be political or put personal views across but in the aftermath of the war they are devoting half of their sermons toward talking about the need for a multiplicity of interactions in post-war Sri Lanka (Interview 12, Buddhist Monks from a prominent Temple in Colombo). However, challenges persist in ‘unravelling’ the intentionality behind this form of engagement. This is because as politicised actors civil society can also function as an extension of governmentality consisting of ‘technologies of citizenship’, that is, programmes, strategies, or tactics aimed at getting citizens politically motivated and actively participating in specific forms of governance (Wilson 2009, p. 30). In the case of the engagement of Monks with the Tamil community, questions must be posed due to the close association of members of the Buddhist clergy with the Rajapaksa government. This includes whether this engagement has been undertaken as a means of ‘governing’ participants, subtly seeking to shape or ‘convert’ their views toward a post-war Sri Lanka that the Monks subscribe to as well as to garner support for a vision of post-war



reconstruction consistent with the GOSL's. Thus, rather than 'liberating' participants and recipients of civil society engagement as is often asserted in the literature, civil society organisations exhibit their own forms of governmentality and can, thereby, reproduce the objects of their focus as subjects once again (Wilson 2009, p. 30).

Finally, some associations such as those that seek to bring together parents of missing servicemen or war-affected peoples already have a history of success in building these types of inter-ethnic relationships that could be drawn on in the victor's peace. During the war these groups sought to involve parents and spouses, through their own identities as mothers and wives, on both sides of the conflict in uncovering the 'truth' about the disappearance and loss of loved ones (Interview 26, Founder and Chair of an Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action, Kandy). Prominent members were also involved in peace negotiations building lines of communication and acting as 'go-betweens' through the transfer of information and passing messages between the warring parties (Interview 26, Founder and Chair of an Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action, Kandy). In not choosing a 'side' despite ethnic and religious affiliation, group members were able to access areas off-limits to other groups and have not been subject to the same kinds of discrimination as actors that have overtly spoken out against one side, particularly the GOSL. Ultimately, by working across ethnicity civil society groups have demonstrated the potential to effectively engage community and engage 'the other' in seeking to disrupt the polarising legacies of the Sri Lankan conflict and renegotiate dominant narratives within Sri Lanka's post-war landscape.

## **8.5 Conclusion:**

Looking to the future questions persist as to the possibilities for the *strategic practices* adopted by Sri Lankan civil society to lead to *strategic action* amongst civil society as a *sphere of influence*. In turn, how might Sri Lankan civil society insert itself more markedly in seeking to resist and engage with aspects of the peace-building paradigms of the victor's peace in post-war Sri Lanka. As was conveyed in many of the conversations that took place across Sri Lanka in undertaking this research, acts of resistance and engagement do offer possibilities to alter the relationships and linkages between the 'actors' and 'objects' of peace-building as well as to reformulate oppressive power dynamics and practices of governmentality.

By seeking to explicitly engage with the 'agency' side of the Human Security 'structure-agency' binary through a focus on 'everyday' realities and politics in post-war Sri Lanka, this Chapter has revealed the 'day-to-day' ways that civil society has manoeuvred and navigated as a means of exercising agency against 'economies of power' operating in post-war Sri Lanka (Hynek and Chandler 2011; Newman 2010). As this Chapter has asserted through deeper understandings of the operation of power structures within Sri Lankan society and the efforts of civil society to renegotiate and translate these structures, opportunities might be found in which to push for change, to address those excluded and neglected by current political and structural relations of ruling. In particular, it is important to consider how and in what ways these might be, and are being, transformed through civil society into spaces for inclusion and action, and conversely, how civil society actors themselves serve to perpetuate inequalities and boundaries of exclusion.

The question of symbolic representation pertaining to the past *and* the future is vital in reflecting not only on a peaceful means forward in reimagining a post-conflict (as opposed to post-war) Sri Lanka but also on the potential to reignite tensions and conflict. Civil society must

strive to address the workings of ‘global’-‘local’, elite-grass-roots, ethnic, caste and gender-based patronage networks and mechanisms of governmentality, to realise a political settlement that emphasises not only return but rehabilitation, not only development but peace and human security, reconciliation inclusive of accountability, the past as well as the future. The next Chapter is directed toward addressing and interrogating these issues in greater depth drawing together the findings from the preceding Chapters and applying the Human Security lens to set out the implications of this study for the relationship of civil society and peace-building in victor’s peace Sri Lanka. It also examines the findings in relation to broader disciplinary objectives of deepening understandings of civil society and the politics surrounding peace-building in other instances of victor’s peace and post-war/conflict settings more broadly.

## Chapter 9 – Exploring Human (In)Security: Reflections on Civil Society and Peace-building in a Victor’s Peace

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*‘This peace we are looking for grows from below, we can’t look above to government to realise [peace], [there is] too much involved in partisan politics’ – (Interview 69, Catholic Priest, member of CASA and CARITAS, Moratuwa near Colombo)*

### 9.1 Introduction:

As this thesis stated at its outset, despite widespread interest in the relationship between civil society and peace-building, the proliferation of civil society ‘peace’ groups, and seemingly undisputed inclusion of civil society in peace-building theory and practice, surprisingly few studies have sought to explore the politics underlying this civil society-peace-building nexus. Likewise, there is an absence of critical investigations into the civil society concept and its motivations, activities, and experiences within the paradigmatic landscape of peace-building. Interestingly, the above quotation from a Catholic priest in Sri Lanka is illustrative in this regard as at first glance it appears to reflect the deeply-rooted assumption that peace, at least in part, is linked to and ‘grows from below’ in civil society. However, it can also be read as revealing of the contested politics and dichotomies associated with the ‘technologies’ of different peace frameworks underlying the concept of ‘peace’ and peace-building in victor’s peace Sri Lanka.

Additionally, it demonstrates the influence of altruistic assumptions concerning civil society’s roles and functions associated with the liberal peace operating within and on aspects of Sri Lanka’s civil society. At the same time, though, it alludes to the constricting of political spaces in Sri Lankan society for political dialogue and critique as well as a lack of perceived possibilities for ‘top-down’-‘bottom-up’ interaction within an intermediating sphere, which civil society could provide. Therefore, until a critical mass can be reached from within Sri Lanka in which Sri Lankans themselves seek systemic change, the socio-political climate in Sri Lanka is unlikely to be altered. This includes the belief held, not only by the Sinhalese nationalists, that

contra the positive associations with humanitarian interventionism connected to the liberal peace that ‘peace’ in Sri Lanka must predominantly be ‘home-grown’, that is, led and developed from within Sri Lanka. This reflects the tenuous, ‘frictional’ nature of the relationship of many Sri Lankan civil society actors with the liberal peace despite adopting and translating some of its values and aspirations.

Utilising Human Security as analytical approach, this thesis has sought to problematize and deepen knowledge of the nexus between civil society and peace-building in victor’s peace Sri Lanka and ‘unpack’ the multifaceted motivations, perceptions, and intensions surrounding victor’s peace as an outcome to Sri Lanka’s civil war and its corresponding impacts on both civil society and the relationship of civil society to peace-building. Consequently, this study simultaneously contributes to knowledge of the operation of victor’s peace in Sri Lanka and the character and state of Sri Lankan civil society. At the same time, at a broader disciplinary level, the thesis expands scholarship, first, on civil society as intermediating sphere of uncoerced association and what this means for comprehending civil society as politicised actor, and, second, the nexus between civil society-peace-building and how this relationship feeds into the politics of peace-building in instances of victor’s peace, and the nature of victor’s peace itself as an outcome of civil conflict.

This Chapter draws out and examines the findings of the study in relation to the research objectives introduced in Chapter 1. The Chapter sets out the implications of the findings from the preceding Chapters, with particular attention to placing the thesis in proper perspective with reference to potential future inquiry into Sri Lanka and possibilities for comparative analyses to ‘test’ and refine the conclusions across broader contexts.

## **9.2 Civil Society in Victor’s Peace Sri Lanka:**

This section explores both positive prospects for civil society within victor's peace Sri Lanka as well as challenges concerning the realities of centralisation of power, securitisation, and internal tensions and contradictions within the sector itself. Using Human Security this study has investigated the abilities of actors to participate in decisions that impact peace and security within their lives based on notions of what this means in both the 'everyday', in homes and communities, and at 'higher' levels of analysis to have access to opportunities and resources to exercise agency and to transform structural asymmetries of power and exert control over their own lives. It involved politicising and deepening knowledge of the underlying dynamics driving how civil society manoeuvres and navigates within the socio-political spaces (or lack thereof) created by the victor's peace as well as complicating our understandings of civil society, contextualising strategies underlying the actions undertaken in attempting to bring about greater security for themselves and their communities. This also enabled insights into what peace and security look like at multiple levels of analysis and how not only strategies of (dis)engagement and resistance are linked to their realisation, but also perceptions and a desire for belonging, concerns for individual and/or community identity, and how personal and community security factor into this.

As discussed in Chapter 2, in using Human Security as analytical approach it is important to study how populations are deliberately secured within power relations, including who is portrayed as a 'threat' to peace and (human) security and how the necessities of life are (mis)managed. The findings of this study suggest that both the centralisation of power by the GOSL *and* the actions and outlook of the international community and diaspora are important in coming to understand how populations are 'mismanaged' and made insecure in Sri Lanka. The strategies of victor's peace governance employed by the GOSL, including the centralisation of

governmental power through practices associated with governmentality and securitisation examined in Chapter 7, are re-visited in the Section *Examining the Nature of Victor's Peace in Sri Lanka* below.

Concerning the ways that the international community and diaspora can be implicated in the 'mismanagement' and constricting of spaces for civil society in Sri Lanka, this research has highlighted conditionalities on aid, abiding by the PTF, and/or reporting and seeking to put pressure on the GOSL through the UN Panel of Experts or UNHRC. However, these findings are not meant to imply that there are necessarily other options or that such actions are inherently negative, simply that they have dual implications for Sri Lankan civil society. Equally, the nature of international actions with respect to Sri Lanka has been argued to exacerbate tensions and paranoia over 'separatist' ambitions in Sri Lanka. A degree of resistance and criticism from multiple actors, not solely nationalists, has been put forward that concentrates on aspects of the liberal peace and perceived 'double standards' of the West in conducting their own Wars on Terror though most believe it is better to have a relationship with the West than not at all.

Regarding the diaspora, the findings of this study suggest that protest actions, mobilisations, and lobbying of governments in host states can harden and intensify centralisation and securitisation back home by projecting the image of undercurrents of separatist fervour potentially flourishing both in the diaspora and Sri Lanka. Diaspora activism can bring international pressure from the UN, its institutions, and host governments to bear on the GOSL but also risks reinforcing securitisation and 'clamping down' on civil society in Sri Lanka. This suggests that diaspora activism, like that of the international community, represents a 'double-edged' sword with respect to civil society and victor's peace Sri Lanka.

Moreover, pertaining to ‘threats’ to peace and security, this thesis asserts that depending on which group one asks multiple actors are seen to represent security threats presenting a more complex, but also comprehensive, picture of human insecurity on the ground. For the GOSL and nationalists, the West, critical civil society, and opposition political parties such as the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) represent ‘threats’ to be contained. Conversely for elite, urban and ‘liberally’-oriented civil society, it is very much the GOSL and the ‘new’ rural, traditionalist elites represented by Sinhalese nationalists, and particularly Buddhist organisations, that primarily represent threats to the human security of those actors that do not conform to the victor’s vision of peace in Sri Lanka. Finally, for grass-roots civil society the GOSL and nationalists represent threats. However, intriguingly, (although to a lesser extent) challenges also stem from elite civil society and international conditionalities and aspects of the liberal peace, such as reintegration through the promotion of multiculturalism that remains a threatening and scary prospect for many.

Not surprisingly a host of views exist within civil society relating to how a sustained peace can be realised. On the part of more moderate Sinhalese nationalists, for example, there exists the belief that Sri Lankans must be treated ‘equally’ in the sense that laws, rights, and entitlements should apply to all Sri Lankans in the same way with no special considerations given to one’s ethnicity. On the other side of the spectrum there are more ‘liberally’-oriented civil society actors that argue that equality necessitates recognition that minority populations perceive that they are second-class citizens within the public (as well as private) sphere. According to this viewpoint, ‘true equality’ must recognise the power imbalances inherent in social and political structures that dominate and dictate majority-minority relations on the island and that rights applied generally can actually be detrimental to minorities when their ability to



access them is limited by militarisation or political dynamics that favour majorities. Proponents on this side of the equation differ, however, with respect to whether the implementation of legal, constitutional, and policy changes that accommodate for these inequalities ought to include power devolution to the point of separation and self-determination or whether points of leverage no longer rest with the potential ‘stick’ of separatism in the socio-political environment characterised by the victor’s peace.

Still others focus on notions of belonging and identity in assertions as to how peace and security can be realised. It is here where perspectives tend to harden into ethnic polarisation that reflects many of the dynamics underlying the conflict. For example, as discussed in Chapter 5, as ‘people of this soil’ (Interview 43, moderate Sinhalese nationalist supporter, Colombo), the Sinhalese feel an innate responsibility to preserve the culture and religion of Sinhalese-Buddhists in Sri Lanka. This is hugely influential in motivating nationalist behaviour and is rooted in the perceived fear of many nationalists that devolution could lead to separatism and the annexation of sacred sites visited by the Buddha in Sri Lanka. It suggests that simply presenting all nationalists as seeking only to suppress Tamils (and other minorities) in order to continue to curry favour with the GOSL and retain a position of power in which they have influence over the trajectories of Sri Lankan politics is an oversimplification.

Such conclusions challenge the actions of those actors seeking power devolution and the implementation of a federalist system in Sri Lanka, however, as in order to bring the nationalists on board it may well be necessary to allay fears associated with the possible break-up of the Sri Lankan state, something which many Tamil nationalists are unwilling to do. However, in not doing so, the Tamils further propagate the cycle of insecurity through which past fears associated with ‘separatism’ continue to be brought into the present. Such perceptions of insecurity then get

played out through increased societal polarisation, fear, and mistrust in which moderate Sinhalese nationalists express their support for government in order to strengthen their own feelings of personal and community security and more extremist elements, such as the BBS, do so in order to shore up their power and further promote their vision of victor's peace in Sri Lanka. Likewise many Tamils see the movement and migration of Sinhalese up to the North as a real and frightening source of insecurity through the 'Sinhalisation' of the North. This, ultimately, complicates assertions of the liberal peace concerning the promotion of multiculturalism as a means of realising a 'non-violent' and 'peaceful' society in Sri Lanka and reinforces solely a 'negative' peace often reinforced through the tactics of fear and suspicion of the ethnic 'other' within the victor's peace.

Furthermore, certain civil society actors enquire about citizenship rights more broadly, through their calls to address highly unequal structures of politics, economics, and social relations 'across the board' on a whole host of issues including 'language, access to resources, caste, class, religious freedoms, gender and ethnicity' (Interview 78, Political Commentator and Journalist, Colombo). This relates to questions asked by these actors concerning engaging the 'other' and taking seriously challenges and critiques to one's own views and activism. They ask: 'can we refine [our] arguments in response to their critique' in a constructive spirit as part of this process? (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo).

Equally, such actors argue for the importance of not downgrading specific feelings of second-class citizenship and systemic inequality for the sake of stability as these are considered imperative to a long-term political solution. One example of this pertains to how a body of human rights is to be adhered to and respected. On the one hand a broad-based human rights framework appeals to more Sri Lankans and can garner widespread support. On the other,

however, it risks glossing over minority claims of second class citizenship and that rights can be detrimental to minorities when their ability to access them is limited by militarisation or socio-political dynamics that are seen to favour majorities. Therefore, the existence of formal rights is not enough, it is also the capacity to access and exercise rights, which are imperative if rights are to be meaningful in practice and not just on paper.

The nationalists have tended to downplay both ethnic minority and second-class citizenship components of the conflict in favour of the terrorism and traitor narratives. In doing so, they fail to acknowledge the legitimacy of arguments pertaining to second-class citizenship in Sri Lanka. Moreover they overlook the incapacity of minorities to access and exercise rights in a socio-political system in which they are underrepresented and do not have the same power in shaping the nature of the rights they are entitled to by law.

Throughout this thesis it has further been asserted that civil society ought to be conceptualised as neither inherently ‘good’ nor ‘bad’, but rather as a multifaceted, complex, competing, and often politically contested space, with all of the interests, identities, and politicisation of issues and intentions that this entails. This emphasis has not only strengthened the argument of the fallibility of civil society as altruistic or inherently the ‘good society’, but gives weight to the importance of ‘problematizing’ our definitions of what constitutes civil society. The operation of associations of ‘traditional’ allegiance such as caste, class, and/or religious community in Sri Lanka, for instance, raise interesting questions pertaining to how we conceive of civil society as these are generally viewed unfavourably in the literature (Banerjee 2009, p. 153; Parekh 2004, p. 21). However, as demonstrated in the case of Sri Lanka, to some extent these do represent communicative and associational spaces that facilitate bonds of solidarity and support. Likewise, these associations have been shown to have obvious negative

aspects that weaken prospects for inter-communal social cohesion and lessening aspects of personal and community insecurity.

In addition, as this thesis has demonstrated there are a number of external, but also internal, hindrances for civil society in victor's peace Sri Lanka. To reiterate the words of one Sri Lankan scholar it remains 'deeply unfortunate that nationalism continues to fail to provide a shared language for political communities within Sri Lanka' (Interview 51, Professor Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo). Issues of nationalism and ethnic identity continue to be at forefront of tensions within civil society and Sri Lankan society more broadly suggesting conflict is still very much an on-going reality in the lives of many Sri Lankans and a major hurdle to the realisation of peace. Furthermore, notions of identity and belonging are complicated by the end of the war and further disjuncture associated with resettlement, including the new directionalities that migration has taken with the movement of peoples, in particular the Sinhalese, from the South to the North facilitating in establishing a climate of fear concerning the 'Sinhalese' of the North.

Similarly, as discussed in Chapter 5, many of the most educated and economically well-off Sri Lankans fled earlier war zones either to Colombo or abroad. This migration, in combination with the pull of urban life and opportunities in Colombo for youth, has created a 'brain drain' in rural areas and places where violence associated with the war predominantly played out. 'Everyday' hindrances also present challenges for civil society in war-torn areas, such as rolling power outages and difficulties obtaining internet connections that need to be overcome in order to encourage the greater movement of civil society and professionals, not affiliated with the GOSL's 'peace through development' initiative, to these areas. Much human capital has been lost to the war, however, as a working-aged generation has suffered from war

devastation and loss of life, leaving entire communities without education, training, or the capacity to meet human needs. This reinforces the tradition of the centre-outward trajectory of civil society's powerbase and the politicisation of certain issues over others where activities and issues are often initiated, decided, and administered from Colombo rather than the community/ies in which they take place. This study has found that such dynamics result in a lack of innovation and succession planning within civil society as a whole putting it at a greater disadvantage in confronting the current centralisation of GOSL power.

The thesis has additionally found that deep-level asymmetries of power operating in Sri Lankan society related to cultural, gender, and class/caste-based dynamics negatively impede civil society, particularly at the grass-roots. The culture of servitude operating on Sri Lankan society creates a sense of disempowerment and is a significant hurdle for civil society in building up an active citizenship and exercising agency. As concluded in previous studies on Sri Lanka, this relates back to peoples' experiences of disempowerment during the war years, and, identity and cultural factors that has led many to simply accept their 'lot in life'. This continues to be extended and perpetuated in the victor's peace through the greater centralisation of state power, sustained militarisation in the North, and the securitisation of 'liberal' and politically-minded civil society that frames such actors as 'threats' to the victor's peace and seeks to dissuade civil society from seeking to engage in the political sphere relegating civil society largely to the role of development sub-contractor in a manner not unlike that which INGOs saw fit to allocate to 'local' Sri Lankan civil society in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami that saw a huge influx of international assistance and INGO presence in Sri Lanka. The issue of acting rather than being acted upon and engaging with the victor's peace on their own terms, not by being 'emancipated' but by 'empowering' themselves, therefore, remains a central challenge for Sri Lankan civil

society in ‘scaling up’ in the future. Concerning the nature of gendered challenges for civil society, in seeking to grow women’s participation in civil society and empower women’s participation at the grass-roots, one finding of this study pertains to the role of men in endorsing and aiding in the realisation of both ‘top-level’ and ‘grass-roots’ objectives of women’s groups. This represents an aspect of gender-based relations in Sri Lanka that women’s groups may be able to exploit more effectively in the future, capitalising on supportive male voices and using them both formally and informally to try and shift other perspectives. Furthermore, as a consequence of the war and the loss of many male lives, women are increasingly finding themselves in positions as the ‘head of households’ and entering into economic activities as a means of providing for their families. This dynamic has also extended to civil society as well as there has been a growth in women’s civil society groups in the victor’s peace, particularly at the grass-roots level, in response to post-war realities and women finding themselves in positions of power within the family and community.

Moreover, the lack of post-war governmental support for and deliberate targeting of ‘liberal’ civil society, in addition to, the relative absence of a tradition of corporate giving in Sri Lanka, has helped establish and reinforce relationships of donor dependence in which grass-roots and local NGOs in particular remain reliant on donors for survival. This has limited the ability of Sri Lankan civil society to establish a sustainable foundation for itself. It also feeds into a larger critique of civil society as being co-opted by the West, but often the reality has been that civil society has had little choice but to accept donor support in order to ensure organisational survival. The absence of avenues to seek philanthropic support at the domestic level weakens civil society on the development side and increases reliance on NGOs and donors feeding back into a cycle that enables accusations of ‘anti-Sri Lankanness’ propagated by the GOSL and

nationalists. This strategy has succeeded in dislocating critical civil society from many aspects of Sri Lankan society and reducing civil society largely to the image of comprising a few (I)NGOs in Sri Lanka.

Relatedly, continued donor dependence calls attention to the short-term, 'emergency'-driven nature of aid programmes that facilitates an enabling environment in Sri Lanka for 'anti-Western' sentiment to be exacerbated and, thus, critiques of civil society who do have a relationship with the West. Additionally, the nature of aid has created competition rather than collaboration between civil society groups based on the fact that there is only so much donor aid to go around, which forces compliance and accommodation to both donor *and* the GOSL conditionalities. Therefore, a challenge generally concerning the nature of international peace-building and humanitarian responses reinforced in this study are the 'politics of donor aid' and the ways that donor aid impedes and hinders local populations as it also assists them.

Interestingly another finding pertains to the, perhaps obvious, conclusion that as relationships are not static over time the nexus between civil society and government and for that matter civil society and peace-building will change and evolve though not always in positive ways. For example, whereas at one time the Sinhalese nationalists occupied the 'counter-state' political space in Sri Lanka, in the victor's peace, the nationalists are seen to be acting in concert with the state, giving over support to Rajapaksa, thus, underscoring the GOSL's power base in exchange for the government adopting policies and practices that are largely sympathetic to the nationalists' aims. Their relationship, therefore, represents a rather tenuous form of reciprocity that continues to flourish so long as it continues to satisfy the interests of both parties.

Although the evolution of this relationship has created considerable strain for many other civil society actors it does suggest the possibility of new or transformed 'imaginaries' in the

future that could see the relationship between civil society and the GOSL altered. This could come about by a change in government or opportunities for building a more cohesive civil society base, potentially by capitalising on and exploiting increased societal discontent that could arise if the costs of living continue to rise or the GOSL is unable to pay back its debts on foreign commercial loans. Furthermore, the GOSL, despite its political and symbolic overtures toward China, is still reliant on foreign direct investment from the West in order to proceed in its post-war development plans. This reality raises questions as to what role diaspora actors might be able to play in leveraging influence through media outreach and public information campaigns in host countries and in turn what impact this application of pressure might have on the foreign policies adopted by those governments toward Sri Lanka.

Another finding of this thesis, which underscores the conclusions reached in other works on Sri Lankan civil society and civil society in non-Western contexts, is the extremely influential cultural, spiritual, and socio-political space that religious organisations hold in society and the linkages between religion and identity – both personal and the nation's. This reinforces criticisms that have been put forward in civil society and peace-building literature more broadly concerning the secular nature of ideas and practices that underlie liberal peace interventions. In this sense recognition of the important linkages between religious and spiritual beliefs and civil society points to the importance of de-secularising and contextualising understandings of peace-building and (human) security. Although as we have seen it does not always do so, religion has the potential to transcend ethnicity by not simply tolerating 'other' but celebrating diversity as an inclusive and strengthening element of Sri Lankan society.

With respect to the role of religious figures in Sri Lanka, inter-religious groups are active particularly around the question of reconciliation and have used their identity to communicate



messages that ordinary citizens cannot. As discussed, this has involved using one's identity as 'Father' or 'Sister' to obtain access to areas including detainment camps that other segments of civil society and, in particular, the INGO community and representatives of international organisations have found difficult to access. Of course this potential must not lead to a blanket acknowledgement of the positive aspects of the involvement of religious groups in peace-building. Members of the Buddhist clergy, and to a lesser extent other religions, have often been associated with the endorsement of pro-Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist marches and have taken on roles as 'ring leaders' in accusing the UN and other international actors of meddling in Sri Lanka's sovereign affairs. Nevertheless, it is indisputable the roles and influence of religious actors in Sri Lanka and the highly de-secularised nature of civil society, even outside of specifically religious groups.

One of the central findings of this study with respect to the 'inner-workings' of Sri Lankan civil society as sector or sphere of activity within the victor's peace is the extent to which some civil society actors in the form of the Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists function as an impediment to 'liberally'-oriented civil society and actively play roles in propagating repression and securitisation of these organisations. Thus, it is not only that civil society is a contested and complex sphere with respect to diverse actors, but that particularly the more extremist factions of the Sinhalese nationalists operate in ways that purposefully contradict 'liberal' forms of civil society and seek to cause insecurity, including instigating violence and even death against them. In Sri Lanka Sinhalese nationalists have drawn on the notion of identity as a strategy of 'bottom-up' governmentality in seeking to consolidate support for their cause by appealing to anxieties concerning the loss of Sri Lanka's 'true' identity, thereby, framing advocacy-oriented civil society as 'threatening' to the peace, security, and very existence of Sri Lanka that must be

dispelled. Civil society can, therefore, be seen in many ways as a microcosm of Sri Lankan society divided ethnically, religiously, and geographically, as well as between class/caste, elite/urban-grassroots/rural, and moderates and hardliners, but importantly also as a space for challenging and transforming these dynamics. To reiterate, in line with a growing body of literature on civil society, to conceptualise Sri Lankan civil society as a singular (idealised) and homogenous entity or as an inherently positive force in promoting peace, democracy, and good governance, risks drastically oversimplifying the highly diffused nature of its actors and viewpoints.

In not being constrained or held ‘in check’ by a negotiated settlement or power-sharing arrangement, this thesis calls attention to the fact that instances of victor’s peace can quickly transition into highly repressive environments with actors that do not comply with the victor’s vision of ‘peace’ labelled as ‘threats’. In this environment it is unlikely that civil society, despite innovative and creative ways of exercising agency, including resistances, can significantly alter the trajectories of the victor’s peace. Thus, this study questions overly romanticised notions of the potentiality of ‘local’ and ‘grass-roots’ resistances to shift structural and systemic-level inequalities and asymmetries of power at least independently. In highly repressive environments it can be difficult for civil society to build a critical mass of actors without outside assistance, no matter how imperfect. As discussed in Chapter 8, given the central ways that civil society has sought to exercise agency against oppressive power structures in Sri Lanka, at the moment ‘agency’ may be more about manoeuvring for survival and prospects for the future than collective efforts aimed at altering and confronting structures and economies of power ruling over civil society.

Acts of resistance are important, however, with respect to symbolic representation and what is undertaken as a means of remaking the past *and* writing the future if not in the present victor's peace. This points to the inherent importance of recording, reporting, and 'bearing witness' to events that should not be overlooked, as documentation work acts as a collective record(s) that can be drawn on at any stage in the future, including subsequent human rights tribunals, trials, or commissions, making such information an important and permanent testimonial and historical account. At the same time, despite the rather superficial nature of youth exchanges, this finding suggests that youth may well be a strong place to focus future civil society attention. As time passes the next generation may not necessarily agree that what was done in the war was justified, but in part this depends on the kind of societal memory and historicising that is done now pertaining to how events and narratives are constructed, especially in light of the 'official' story of the war propagated by the Rajapaksa government. It is, therefore, imperative to think about the roles that civil society actors might play in crafting this narrative and highlights youth as a potential segment of the population to focus on in shifting perspectives and presenting alternative counter-narratives, which could be critical over the long-term.

Collectively, the discussion above raises important questions that Sri Lanka's civil society must undoubtedly grapple with in the future. These include: (1) how to bring dissenting voices together to begin to discuss or at least listen to one another's viewpoints, (2) to convince others that such a dialogue is a worthwhile enterprise, and (3) to determine who needs to be at the table so as to ensure that prominent voices across the spectrum are not only present but so that the process is not sabotaged by those who would seek to undermine it in order to further their own ambitions. At the time of writing in the context of the victor's peace in Sri Lanka this has involved a focus on youth and the 'next generation' as possible points of entry seen through

youth exchanges, and, the work of religious moderates in the form of inter-religious committees. Similarly, issues of common struggle and challenge for Sri Lankans such as the health of the land and sea for economic activities have been put forward as possible issue-areas that might be utilised in order to bring Sri Lankans from different ethnic and religious groups together to work toward a common goal that might begin to create greater understanding and feelings of commonality that can be extended and translated toward addressing deeper-level socio-political issues at the heart of the continuing conflict in the victor's peace.

Ultimately, the general absence of both physical and psychological spaces within the current socio-political contours of Sri Lankan society in which for civil society to dialogue openly has continued to intensify tensions and extended the divide between different elements of civil society rather than enabling it to direct its energies outward at Government and the international community. In many ways this has served the GOSL's purpose of maintaining internal strife, division, and a sense of the fragility of potentiality among perceived 'oppositional' civil society groups. This represents the continued use of ethnic 'identity' as something that both the GOSL and more extremist Sinhalese nationalists can pull out and use to create a threat narrative against 'liberal' and Tamil civil society and political actors in order to further their own agendas within the victor's peace. This has effectively prevented the establishment of a cohesive voice for civil society as a whole, as those voices that can 'shout the loudest' garner the greatest attention.

### **9.3 Examining the Nature of Victor's Peace in Sri Lanka:**

In considering the nature of the victor's peace it is worth highlighting that the Sri Lankan context does not meet criteria set out in the literature concerning variables that must come together in order for revolutions and social movements to succeed in delegitimising and even

overthrowing governments. This includes that: elites and the military must be alienated from the state and no longer willing to defend it, a broad cross-section of the population spanning ethnic, class, and religious diversity must be willing to mobilise, and the international community must either refuse to step in to prop up the government or must be willing to take steps to constrain it from using maximum force against its population (Goldstone 2011, p. 8-9). Although many civil society actors would say that their aims do not include the overthrow of government the above is important to bear in mind concerning the characteristics of the victor's peace in Sri Lanka that it alludes to. These include: the ability of government to retain tight control over social advocacy by preventing broad-based popular mobilisation through a combination of coercive tactics against would-be mobilisers and maintaining popular support by appealing to nationalist sentiment, and, enriching elites and/or catering to certain ethnic or religious segments of the population, whilst exacerbating existing societal cleavages (Goldstone 2011; Goodhand 2010; Uyangoda 2010).

Through employment of the concepts of power - governmentality and securitisation - this study has found very much in agreement with the above characteristics of the victor's peace and using these concepts has sought to elaborate on the nature of strategies employed by the GOSL to reinforce and strengthen the victor's peace with the corresponding impacts to Sri Lankan civil society. As the thesis has revealed, in the victor's peace those who are framed as possible 'threats' to this peace are constructed through *communicative* and *symbolic* acts that draw on disciplinary technologies of power to produce 'knowledge' about Sri Lankans that frame certain actors as 'threats' to the peace and security of Sri Lanka. These technologies categorise and separate individuals and groups that are considered 'good' or 'positive' and, thus, 'included' and those that are 'dangerous' or 'negative' and are, therefore, 'excluded' from the boundaries of

societal 'normalcy'. In Sri Lanka this has reinforced and exacerbated practices of state racism based on social exclusion and expulsion that function along the lines of biopower as it produces information about 'bodies' that is associated with statistical, 'factually'-grounded 'knowledge' where an internal population such as the Tamils comes to be seen as *the* cause of social 'problems' in Sri Lanka.

Several central technologies of governmentality have been delineated in this study that have been pivotal to the GOSL exercising power over Sri Lankans and in particular 'securitising' those it views as a 'threat' to the consolidation of its victory. These can be termed: 'democratic authoritarianism', 'peace through development' and the accompanying 'militarisation of development', and the continued use of 'terrorism' discourses. These power dynamics have established an environment in which it is asserted that no one can be trusted, anyone might turn you in, represent a separatist, or speak for Western 'neo-imperialist' ambitions. Importantly, centralisation has, therefore, not been undertaken in a manner that aims at overtly suppressing the majority of Sri Lankans, but rather has strategically focused on achieving these ends in subversive ways that normalise behaviours and actions in the psyche and 'everyday' practices of Sri Lankans. This includes, for example, constitutional changes and legislation such as Amendments 13 and 18, the establishment of the LLRC, and the official 'removal' of the Emergency Regulations (ERs) that the GOSL has used to accommodate its rise and centralise power through legal channels, using 'democratic' conventions under the guise of expanding freedoms. The concentration of power in the executive has, thus, not been achieved through the overthrow of democracy but by using the democratic process itself. This suggests that there is an inherent danger in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, LLRC, and 'removal' of the ERs that may at first glance represent the 'normalisation' of 'everyday' social and political relations, but as this

study has argued, function as disguises for power consolidation not a genuine commitment to a political solution to the conflict and greater human security in Sri Lanka.

Similarly, the GOSL's 'peace through development' market-led growth strategy, has served the purpose of enabling the GOSL to claim credit for and promote the achievement of 'tangible results', such as in housing and sanitation, and de-value the importance of human rights, critical, and alternative voices to those propagated by the GOSL. As has been argued, the development-focused agenda of the GOSL and the encouragement of people to (re)settle in areas previously cut-off by the war is seen as a way to 'Sinhalise' regions in the North and East, representing the 'Sinhalisation of provinces' (Interview 64, Members of the Tamil National People's Front, Jaffna; Interview 18, Secretary General of the North-East Muslim Peace Assembly, Colombo). Therefore reintegration, generally recognised as a positive and necessary component of the liberal peace, is used by the GOSL in unexpected and unintended ways to those envisioned by crafters of the liberal peace. Moreover, this links to the use of development and reconstruction in order to further the GOSL's particularised vision for a post-war Sri Lanka. Thus, the marginalised are kept dependent as a central tactic of the victor's peace. The result is the consolidation of victor's peace as individuals and communities who are 'kept down' are less likely to rise up against the GOSL, particularly when they remain dependent on it (Interview 55, Executive Director of a Women's Empowerment and Development Forum, Batticaloa).

Likewise, militarisation of the North and the GOSL's use of the armed forces in 'development' have represented further means of upholding security throughout the country, which has been subject to accusations that this deployment has been undertaken more in the name of monitoring the actions of actors critical of the GOSL than in protecting civilians from an imminent 'threat' to the national integrity of the Sri Lankan state. Militarisation, under the guise

of providing ‘security’ and ‘safety’ to enable development, instead becomes a source of control over the conduct of populations and exerting of the state’s power and authority over whom it has decided represents a ‘threat’ to that development (Rainford and Satkunanathan 2011). This raises concerns as to what development means in the context of victor’s peace Sri Lanka and how power works on and through peace, security, and development discourses shaping them in ways that were not initially conceived.

Thus, this study strengthens and underscores accusations of the ‘blue-print’ application of the liberal peace and the encouragement of the adoption and implementation of certain practices, in this case concerning development, as these cannot necessarily be expected to be exportable onto situations of structural majority-minority division associated with the conflict and victor’s peace. The GOSL’s assertion of realising a *peace dividend* through an (market-driven) *economic dividend* signifies the further exploitation of a key assertion associated with the liberal peace and its promotion of a supposed ‘peace dividend’ through development programmes. This leads to the necessary questioning of the uncritically accepted positive attributes of market-driven development that is a cornerstone of the liberal peace when the ways in which power is mediated through development further exacerbates existing inequalities and shapes who ‘develops’ and in what ways is taken into account.

As we saw in Chapter’s 4 and 7 the GOSL has drawn on the War on Terror and discourses of terrorism in the post-war period to link any internal challenges relating to the ethnic war to being the result of terrorism in ways that have involved the taking up of the ‘global security’ paradigm when it suits its purposes. This association has been used as a means of justifying the military offensive at the end of the war, as a continued ‘threat’ that the GOSL can ‘pull out’ and use to shape public perceptions and actions concerning reporting on ‘suspicious’



behaviours, and to present itself as a ‘victor’ that has been more successful than most in defeating terrorism. This represents the reduction of the entire conflict to a war against terrorism, thereby undermining the legitimacy of factors motivating the ethnic conflict such as structural inequality, representation, and feelings of being a second-class citizen in one’s own country.

The constant threat of ‘punishment’, the banning of organisations, or not approving programmatic activities effectively shutting down many civil society groups has had a ‘disciplining’ effect on civil society with actors saying at the moment that there is no room for social justice or psycho-social work and, therefore, that they are largely not pursuing such activities. Herein lies the dichotomy in calling the victor’s peace a ‘peace’ at all due to the means and ends by which the GOSL realises power and its vision of victor’s peace that reflects only the victor. The GOSL has, further, sought to suppress social media by diversifying its responses - through physical threats and actions, political regulation and censorship, and by ‘normalising’ behaviours in the Sri Lankan psyche using daily political rhetoric. The result of which, as we have seen, has been the constriction of spaces in which to articulate and seek alternatives within the political process for civil society to function.

Moreover, the disciplinary mechanisms inherent in the victor’s peace have resulted in some civil society groups engaging only in activities that fit within the scope of the GOSL’s ‘peace through development’ agenda. These disciplinary mechanisms function through messages of the asserted ‘duty’ of Sri Lankans to report any ‘suspicious’ behaviours that include activities that are critical of the GOSL’s policies and/or seek alternative routes for peace, security, and development. This has been particularly effective in shaping and influencing the conduct of nationalists and state-sponsored media. Furthermore the ‘West’ is geopolitically constrained to

an extent in the pressure it places on the GOSL by it not wanting to see Sri Lanka develop closer relations with China and other ‘illiberal’ regimes.

Ultimately, as the case of Sri Lanka demonstrates policies of exclusion associated with the victor’s peace threaten to derail ‘peace’ and the potential return to armed violence. Thus, the victor’s peace in Sri Lanka has produced a situation of significantly reduced political space in which for civil society to function, articulate alternatives, or engage in critical dialogue of the political process fostered under the victor’s peace, under accusations that particularly ‘liberal’-oriented civil society represent a threat to victor’s peace. In a recent study Charles Call (2012) found that political exclusion, defined as the ‘perceived or actual deprivation of an expected opportunity for former warring parties, or the social groups associated with them, to participate in state administration, through either appointed posts or elective office’, over economic and social factors played a ‘decisive role in most cases of civil war recurrence’ (p. 4). The irony in the case of Sri Lanka, therefore, is that the very centralisation of power, militarisation, and securitisation intended to have a ‘disciplining’ impact in bringing groups in line with the GOSL’s policies could over the longer term have the unintended effect of re-instigating renewed violence as over time those actors that are constrained and limited within the victor’s peace find ways to build networks with one another and possibly members of the international community and diaspora, beginning to organise politically in opposition to the governmental regime under President Rajapaksa and the victor’s peace.

#### **9.4 Using Human Security as Conceptual Framework:**

As developed in this study, Human Security describes a state of human (in)security by delineating types of insecurities and the activities of actors intended to lessen them. It also examines causal factors and dynamics behind these insecurities through the use of discourses

associated with structural, disciplining, and coercive effects of power, but also ways that actors can exercise agency to counter, contest, resist, and transform such processes. In this sense, it is argued that the Human Security lens can be considered to function in ways that are similar to the adoption of a gendered perspective to research wherein the specific needs, realities, and power-based ‘gendered’ dimensions of relationships between men and women (including stereotypes and biases associated with labelling something masculine and feminine) are explored as a means of focusing the research agenda by bringing particular issues and dynamics into focus. In other words, such an approach is akin to putting on ‘metaphorical spectacles to view the world so that you start seeing things through a special filter and with a special light’ (Clift 2011). In the case of Human Security these ‘spectacles’ call our attention to not only the broad-based nature of a set of insecurities operating *on* and *through* individuals and communities but also the nature of power dynamics underlying these insecurities that can both constrain and empower actors.

Although the hybrid peace-building framework was dismissed in this study due to the possibility of obscuring and overlooking non-hybrid or pre-existing hybrid aspects of ‘peace-building’ such as those propagated by the Sinhalese nationalists and associated with the legacies of colonialism, it must be recognised that many aspects of the strategies employed by civil society contain elements of hybridity that have been adapted and translated as strategies of navigation and manoeuvrability. Human Security as analytical framework provided a window into which to explore ‘hybrid’ and ‘non-hybrid’ aspects of victor’s peace Sri Lanka. Indeed through the in-depth examination of the dynamics of victor’s peace, there appeared to be a complex interplay at work between aspects of the liberal peace, global security, and victor’s peace paradigms. These revealed themselves through the politics surrounding ‘external’ conceptions of peace and security often framed in Western discourses, and, the corresponding

‘internal’ impacts of the ways these were taken up and reworked within the victor’s peace in ways that (re)produced diverse forms of human (in)security. These can be described as a unique form of ‘frictional’ (Tsing 2005) encounter, that is, the ‘unexpected and unstable aspects of global interaction’ (Tsing 2005, p. 3). Power within the frictional exchange has a biopolitical element, the securing of bodies both through communicative discourses and physical acts such as those delineated in the previous section that represented the translation of ‘global’ discourses to fit the needs of the GOSL. In this environment more direct forms of social advocacy and mobilisation were often thwarted before they could even get off the ground due to the lethal tonic of mistrust, fear, violence, and the ‘normalisation’ of repressive actions in the name of victor’s peace.

As an analytical approach Human Security represented a broad framework of potential insecurities that were then populated, and scope of analysis defined, by context and through the different insecurities that civil society expressed experiencing, including how they defined (in)security. Such an approach gives specific meaning to the concept of human security through the voices and views of those experiencing (in)security first-hand. This also allowed for emphasis to be placed on the interconnectedness of these variables so that the analysis became about ‘something more than simply the reiteration of a “laundry list” of variables through deeper inquiry into the causes and effects of human (in)securities and their relationship to one another’ (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). Indeed a key finding in this study relates to the interconnectedness of the insecurities expressed, suggesting a multilateral approach is necessary in confronting human insecurity. It is important to re-emphasise that many of the human (in)securities addressed throughout the study were compounded by one another; there are multiple insecurities just as there are multiple actors, activities, and rationalities operating on and

through them. This includes institutional arrangements and purposive actions largely orchestrated by the GOSL, with nationalist support, as well as those unintended and occurring simply as a result of the war such as environmental factors and issues pertaining to land and soil quality for agriculture.

A further finding of the research concerning Human Security, was that the research participants did not seem to encounter any degree of difficulty in articulating their views as to what made them feel insecure and in delineating between possible human insecurities such that ‘anything and everything’ was in no way conceptualised as a human insecurity by research participants. In fact, research participants were easily able to articulate their views without direction from myself as researcher and presented specific examples to contextualise and demonstrate their perspectives that have been drawn on and played central roles as evidence throughout this research in informing the research findings. Research participants focused on central, key issues that impacted their insecurity that were similar across many of the interviews and represent the central themes running throughout the study.

Indeed, research participants were able to articulate their responses through the Human Security framework and responded overwhelmingly well to it in the sense of not requiring further clarity as to what I meant in asking about (in)security, demonstrating an ability to articulate what they needed to feel secure, as well as what changes would assist or detract from this security, in ways that were concrete and less ‘fuzzy’ and ‘ambiguous’ than many times when research participants talked about peace. Although no firm conclusions can be reached from this specific finding, it does raise interesting insights that warrant future inquiry as to the utility of Human Security and the ease (or difficulty) with which people can conceptualise, define, and explain what ‘peace’ and ‘security’ mean to them. The findings also suggest that critiques put

forward in the literature on human security, when based in an analytical approach such as the one adopted here that foregrounds the experiences and perceptions of those in conflict, are perhaps unfounded.

In many ways the research findings and experience in using Human Security as conceptual lens confirms the utility envisioned in drawing on and further developing such an approach. The utility of Human Security in this study rested in its functioning as an ‘analytical tool’, which explicitly focused on understandings of human security that were not imposed from above, but rooted in the viewpoints and concerns of the research participants, including uncovering how these perspectives differed from one another, were contradicted, and contested (Jolly and Ray 2007, p. 461). One of the asserted strengths of this research pertaining to Human Security, therefore, is the finding that human security in the context of this study did not, contrary to critique, appear to seek to securitise ‘any critical and widespread challenge to the physical integrity of the individual as a security threat’ nor did it solely recognise ‘security providers’ as responders to security challenges (Newman 2010, p. 81). Instead by employing a simultaneously ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ power and agency-based perspective, Human Security examined the conditions under which issues and actors become securitised and the implications of this to human (in)security, putting their experiences and perspectives front and centre in the analysis. Thus, in undertaking this research, I did not set tight limits in advance as to what I would ‘count’ as a form of human insecurity but neither did the approach lend itself to ‘any critical challenge’ being considered as the responses of research participants were framed in a particular context, that of their experiences, perceptions, and viewpoints in relation to the victor’s peace, and structured or categorised by drawing on the UNDP’s typology of human security ‘indicators’ as means of framing the research findings. In using this framework research

participants were free to indicate and define what made them feel insecure, letting the focus emerge from the experiences and views of civil society, and, analysis of how power functions within and between agents and structures in the victor's peace.. Human Security as conceptual approach implied an examination of the ways that power worked across Sri Lanka and at multiple levels of society. This included at the grass-roots, local, national, and global/international levels, and, vitally also within civil society, problematizing assertions of a homogenous or inherently 'good' society and, thus, significantly 'de-romanticising' civil society.

By highlighting gendered aspects of security the thesis demonstrated that state-centric notions of security can contravene human security and disempower particular populations such as women and marginalised groups, including how cultural norms, values, and traditions can constrain and impede insecurity for women and other minorities. This study suggests that in a victor's peace the state may not simply be complicit in insecurity but may in fact be responsible for orchestrating and carrying out such acts. With respect to those most marginalised, this includes consideration of work that has traditionally been confined to the informal or domestic sector; cultural norms, values, and traditions; the 'feminisation' of poverty; (in)direct forms of violence against local populations; and reflection on how local and marginalised actors have mobilised against oppression as central areas of analysis for Human Security (Gbowee 2009, p. 50; Luckham 2009, p. 4; Gibson and Reardon 2007, p. 59). To conclude, it may well be that, in due course, Human Security finds its utility, not as an agenda that validates external intervention based on a 'responsibility' to intervene on behalf of those made insecure, but rather as a framework for exploring and seeking to develop deeper understandings of (in)security. This includes the nature of insecurity operating at the level of the 'individual'/'community' that is

‘security from below’ as well as actions aimed at influencing ‘top-level’ systemic paradigms and structures.

### **9.5 Conclusion: Limitations and Future Possibilities arising from the Thesis:**

As stated in the Introductory Chapter, the case study approach adopted throughout the thesis represents an *instrumental* case study in which exploratory research is undertaken in order to provide insights into a particular issue or phenomenon, and because it illustrates a specific characteristic or problem (McNabb 2004, p. 358). In this case, the particular phenomenon represents an interest in exploring the nexus between civil society and peace-building, and, the specific characteristic is this relationship within a victor’s peace. As such, this thesis is best seen as providing a detailed exploratory study that refines questions and hypotheses, and, raises areas for future study, rather than offering definitive conclusions concerning the civil society-peace-building nexus inherent in all instances of victor’s peace. This is indicative of all methodological choices that reflect a trade-off between the depths of insights versus generalizability beyond the case.

Nevertheless, the findings from this thesis do highlight several possibilities for future inquiry, comparative analysis, and ‘testing’ of hypotheses and theories. This includes comparative analysis of the central arguments made in this study that the victor’s peace in Sri Lanka has produced a situation of significantly reduced political space in which particular forms of civil society are seen to represent a ‘threat’ to the victor’s peace and thus are deliberately constrained with respect to their activities, ability to articulate alternatives, and engage in critical dialogue of the political process established by the victor’s peace. Such comparative analyses with other cases of victor’s peace could help to strengthen the critique put forward in this study of the romanticized notions of the potentiality of civil society resistances to shift structural



inequalities and power asymmetries in instances of victor's peace. This thesis specifically sets itself up for future inquiry and comparative analysis in a variety of areas that present interesting avenues for subsequent work that can be grouped around:

- 1) applications of the case study and its findings to further aspects of victor's peace Sri Lanka;
- 2) other instances of victor's peace;
- 3) further cases of civil society peace-building;
- 4) studies that continue to problematize and deepen conceptualisations of civil society; and,
- 5) additional explorations, 'testing', application, and refinement of the Human Security framework and comparison with other affiliated methodologies.

With respect to Sri Lanka, future inquiry could focus specifically on the nature of the victor's peace and unpacking in greater depth any one of the central 'technologies' of governmentality or characteristics of the victor's peace highlighted throughout this study. Subsequent areas of research relating to the victor's peace might also incorporate focusing in on a different group of actors other than civil society (such as the military, police, or politicians), specific concentration on the political or economic functions and/or impacts of the victor's peace, evaluations of its effectiveness, the role of the diaspora in relation to the victor's peace, evolving geopolitical dynamics concerning the rise of the 'East' and the role of China, India, and other BRIC countries in Sri Lanka, and, in-depth case studies of the specific functions and/or actors of Sri Lankan civil society. As discussed, the findings of this study require further comparative analysis but in and of themselves do represent possible outcomes of a victor's peace that ought to be reflected on and taken into consideration in one's approach at the scholarly level and in guiding policy developments and decisions toward other instances of victor's peace.

The focus of this thesis has primarily been on the internal dynamics of the victor's peace in Sri Lanka; however, future inquiry may involve applying the Human Security lens to investigate roles, impacts, and influence of the international community or China, for example, in lessening and/or adding to human (in)security in Sri Lanka. This could be highly insightful with respect to contributing another dimension of knowledge concerning the impacts and functioning of the liberal peace, the responses of the international community to humanitarian crises, and the influence of 'illiberal' actors in post-war contexts. Regarding examining the impacts and effects of human security as policy agenda, potential avenues for research include exploration of the *nexus* between *civil society and human security*. However, equally it presents intriguing possibilities for further consideration, problematizing and contextualising civil society, and, the relationship between civil society and peace-building through further analyses of civil society and Human Security as analytical framework.

Additionally, the Sri Lankan conflict is unfortunately not the exception in the South and South-East Asia regions, as insurgency and counter-insurgency have historically figured prominently in Asian politics in the form of civil wars, coup d'états, regional rebellions, insurgencies, and revolutions in Pakistan, China, India, Indonesia, Burma/Myanmar, the Philippines, and Taiwan to name a few examples (Uyangoda 2007, p. 57). Comparative analysis of events playing out in Sri Lanka in relation to larger regional dynamics might include geopolitical considerations and regional power struggles pertaining to rising powers such as China and India, the status of civil society in individual countries and across the region, the nature of insecurities experienced, and how this complicates the picture of both peace and insecurity for each case and across the region. Another facet of research could explore the ways

in which Sri Lanka is playing roles and symbolising the kind of peace that can be achieved by other regimes to deal with their own 'terrorism'.

Comparison of the findings pertaining to the phenomena of victor's peace as an outcome of civil conflict, and the nexus between civil-society and peace-building that this study has explored each highlight relevant areas for future inquiry and comparative analysis concerning other instances or cases of victor's peace. This is because cases of civil war that have not ended in peace agreements and instead represent victor's peace 'constitute an important and growing component of civil wars today' (Call 2012, p. 2). These include, in addition to Sri Lanka (2009), Haiti (2004), Afghanistan (2001), and Kosovo and East Timor (1999) (Call 2012, p. 2). Of these, Kosovo, in particular, stands out as a case in which other research has been carried out that seeks to understand human security and specifically employs human security-defined investigations aimed at bringing in perspectives and experiences as forms of critical inquiry, reflection, and analysis (Kostovicova, Martin, and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2012; Kostovicova 2008). In these instances the approach to human security/Human Security adopted could be compared to that in this thesis and used to further develop and refine comprehensive research frameworks and approaches using human security/Human Security.

Likewise, this collection of cases of victor's peace would lend themselves to interesting comparative work regarding the nature of the victor's peace across the cases. This includes the influence of international interventions (if relevant), and, the differing degrees of influence of the international community in shaping and determining the trajectories of the war's end and nature of the victor's peace that developed. Such a body of victor's peace cases also presents a wealth of potentiality for comparative study concerning the kinds of insecurities and responses to them that arise in terms of exercising agency on the part of civil society and measuring and/or

assessing the effectiveness of civil society actors across the cases, including what implications this holds for civil society in victor's peace.

Another aspect of future study relating to research approaches and agendas concerns connecting and comparing this study's findings to other research frameworks that have sought to undertake experientially-based empirical work. Though not specifically defined as a 'research agenda' as such, the works in mind here are broadly concerned with developing empirically-based insights into the lived, everyday practices and experiences of social actors, including civil society, in peace-building, (in)security, development, and a variety of social mobilisations and initiatives, which could present fascinating areas for future study (Kaldor and Selchow 2012; Kostovicova, Martin, and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2012; Kostovicova and Glasius 2011; van Leeuwen 2009; Pouligny 2005). This includes further investigations as to how actors navigate and manoeuvre within the complexities and disjunctures of political, social, and economic institutions and phenomena, their everyday experiences and daily interactions with these institutions, and responses to and ways of exercising agency in relation to them.

In conclusion, to return to Sri Lanka and the quote introduced at the beginning of this Chapter, in many ways such reflections express the beliefs communicated by Sri Lankan civil society actors throughout this study that the road to long-term, equitable peace must come from 'below', from the voices of 'everyday' Sri Lankan actors within Sri Lanka. However, as we have seen this aspiration for a Sri Lankan peace 'from below' should not be assumed to reflect, or be an appeal to, liberal peace-building paradigms that assume that a 'shared vision' exists amongst local populations that can be capitalised upon in order to incorporate (rather than empower) the 'local' into liberal peace-building. Rather as this study has made clear, and as many civil society

actors in Sri Lanka themselves acknowledge, there are inherent difficulties associated with growing a peace from below, particularly given the current context of the victor's peace. Nevertheless, in appealing to this vision civil society actors assert their belief that an enduring peace in Sri Lanka must come to terms with the experiences and perceptions of (in)security of *all* Sri Lankans and in the words of a Bishop Emeritus of the (Anglican) Church of Ceylon, 'must speak a language' that *all* Sri Lankans 'will understand', which strives to meet their everyday realities and needs (Interview 52, Bishop Emeritus, Diocese of Kurunegala, Kandy). This stands in stark contrast to the victor's peace implemented by the GOSL and explored throughout this study that conceals rather than uncovers the complexities and realities of peace, (in)security, and conflict and its impacts on the daily lives of those living in post-war Sri Lanka. These realities have had detrimental implications for the possibilities of bridging 'divides' within the civil society sphere. Contemplations like the one which introduced this Chapter, though, do represent a beacon of hope for constructing new 'imaginaries' that enable non-like-minded groups of different ethnicities, castes, genders, and religions to come together to interrogate, dialogue and, ultimately, form a vision for a *non-victor's* peace post-conflict Sri Lanka.

## APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODS

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### *The Adapted 'Restorative Enquiry' Process:*

Principally, with civil society actors, interview questions sought to emphasise the experiences and perceptions of research participants in the victor's peace through an emphasis on narratives, and, civil society actors' unique perspectives, experiences, and viewpoints. Working from the understanding that the research participants I would be meeting with would likely be sharing sensitive, emotionally-charged, potentially traumatic and dangerous views and experiences (with respect to their or their family/communities personal security), I determined that I required a way to engage with participants that put them at the centre of the research process, shaping the research content with respect to sharing and emphasizing what was most important for them and the depth of their views and experiences that they were willing to share. Interviews began with a set of broad-based questions that reflected the parameters of the research agenda and were framed within the restorative enquiry process set out below. The responses of research participants to the initial broad-based questions, the event(s) or issue(s) the participant(s) emphasized as critical, important, or having an effect on them and their work in their narrative, were deemed to be central to their perspectives and experiences concerning the victor's peace. These central perceptions and experiences, or key moments in the narrative, were then focused on by narrowing the scope of the questions in terms of specificity, adapting questions in the restorative enquiry process, thus, encouraging the participants to share not only why they mentioned these aspects of their experience/perceptions but why the events or issues are of such significance to them (using thoughts, feelings, and affected questions from the restorative enquiry model below). After each of the central experiences/perceptions (key moments) emphasized by the research participant in their narratives were explored in more specificity and depth, the restorative enquiry process shifted from an exploration of what has happened or is happening to a focus on future 'needs', which are 'the mandatory, fundamental, and motivating objectives that inform a person's position' (Chicanot and Sloan 2003). In this case, future needs focused on the civil society actor or organization in relation to peace-building and their experiences and views within victor's peace Sri Lanka (needs and ways forward questions in the restorative enquiry model).

The adapted restorative enquiry I used in this research is founded in Restorative Approaches. 'Restorative approaches' is an umbrella term for the wider use of the restorative language, restorative enquiry, restorative meetings and restorative justice. Whilst restorative justice involves repairing harm caused through offending, restorative approaches works to build and repair relationships in other conflict situations including schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces and international conflict (Wallis and Fast 2013, p. 5). In a restorative justice context the restorative enquiry process represents the initial contact and support a practitioner offers to a victim or offender regarding the harm or affect they experienced after a crime (Wallis and Fast 2013, p. 5). The restorative enquiry is a narrative-based approach framed around a set of five open questions that encourages participants to open up about their potentially sensitive or traumatic experiences, opinions, and viewpoints. These questions are:

*What happened?*

*What were you thinking/How were you feeling?*

*Who has been affected? How have they been affected?  
What do you need to feel better about this?  
What needs to happen to put things right/make things better?* (Hopkins 2009).<sup>110</sup>

Although I deviated from the main goal of restorative approaches, bringing conflicting people together to have a conversation about what they need to move forward, and adapted the process and questions to reflect the scope of the research agenda, thereby removing any implied ‘therapeutic’ elements of the restorative enquiry process as it is used in restorative justice, I stayed true to the spirit of restorative practice in relation to the restorative attitude, skills, and process (Wallis and Fast 2013; Chicanot and Sloan 2003).

The adapted restorative enquiry is similar in methodology to narrative-based interviewing. Sandra Jovchelovitch and Martin Bauer (2007) explain in reference to narratives that,

Communities, social groups and subcultures tell stories with words and meanings that are specific to their experience and way of life. The lexicon of a social group constitutes its perspective on the world, and it is assumed that narrations preserve particular perspectives in a more genuine form. Narrations are rich in indexical statements, (a) because they refer to personal experience, and (b) because they tend to be detailed with a focus on events and actions. The structure of a narration is similar to the structure of orientation for action: a context is given; the events are sequential and end at a particular point; the narration includes a kind of evaluation of the outcome.

Cues for issues and areas of particular importance were realized through dialogue with the research participants themselves picking up on events, language, experiences, and feelings they mentioned and emphasized, and then proceeding to inquire more deeply into these moments and the meanings attached to them. Interview questions in the adapted restorative enquiry approach were refined through this process as research participants opened up new areas and new topics of exploration and inquiry not previously thought of (Burnham, Lutz, Grant and Layton-Henry 2008, p. 240). Such refinements helped to reveal the ways in which research participants perceived and represented their experiences and the importance or value they placed on certain aspects of the war’s end and victor’s peace through their emphases in the (re)telling of stories, events, and histories. Moreover, in acknowledging the challenges posed for the researcher in deciphering meaning and importance in settings where a ‘wide range of ambiguous words and phrases’ might be used by participants, the stress placed on areas and issues that the research participant emphasizes in their narratives as well as on enquiring into thoughts, feelings, and affects behind events, experiences, and issues can help overcome these difficulties and ambiguities behind deciphering meaning (Barriball and While 1994, p. 331).

### ***Semi-Structured Interviews:***

‘Elite’ interviewing ‘can be used whenever it is appropriate to treat a respondent as an expert about the topic in hand’ (Burnham, Lutz, Grant and Layton-Henry 2008, p. 231). Interestingly, as opposed to the adapted restorative process where the model of questioning begins broadly and becomes more specific based on research participants responses and the

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<sup>110</sup> Appendix B provides examples of the types of adapted questions that were asked to research participants at each stage in the restorative enquiry process. In addition, segments of participant’s actual responses to specific questions are included in order to illustrate the restorative enquiry process and type of responses elicited.

directions that they take the process, semi-structured ‘elite’ interviews begin with more specific questions and expand outward. This outward expansion occurs as ‘elites’ reflect on the question and its linkages to the broader context of the research and/or bring up new ideas or avenues for investigation during the interview (e.g., in the scope of this study, problematizing assumptions about civil society in post-war contexts and peace-building, and the politics of the victor’s peace process in relation to civil society).

As in the case of the adapted restorative enquiry process, semi-structured interviews are ‘well suited to the exploration of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives’ and ‘provides the opportunity to evaluate the validity of the respondent’s answers by observing non-verbal indicators, which is particularly useful when discussing sensitive issues’ (Barriball and While 1994, p. 329). A research interview guide or ‘schedule’ was developed that was used to ensure that the same general questions and areas of inquiry were collected from each research participant but that still allowed for some freedom and adaptability in the questions asked to obtain information from the research participants (Patton 1980). An interview schedule ought to be both ‘exploratory in order to elicit abstract concepts such as perceptions and sufficiently standardized to facilitate comparability between respondents during analysis’ (Barriball and While 1994, p. 333). Likewise, the opportunities to change the words and ask slightly different questions without altering the overarching meaning of questions or the parameters of the research inquiry provided by the semi-structured research interview ‘guide’ is another strength in the approach. In this method of interview, ‘validity and reliability depend, not upon the repeated use of the same words in each question, but upon conveying equivalence of meaning. It is this equivalence of meaning which helps to standardize the semi-structured interview and facilitate comparability’ (Barriball and While 1994, p. 330).

As alluded to in the section above on restorative enquiry, the use of a research guide provides the ability to ‘probe’ research participants to clarify interesting, unique, or relevant issues through follow-up questions and, therefore, helps tackle challenges for the researcher in deciphering and interpreting accurately meaning from the research participant’s responses (Barriball and While 1994, p. 331). The interview guide approach to semi-structured interviewing is, ultimately, highly useful in research that is explorative and seeks to understand how research participants perceive and interpret their experiences and those of the communities that they work as well as of segments of the Sri Lankan population more broadly as it ‘allows for in-depth probing while permitting the interviewer to keep the interview within the parameters traced out by the aim of the study’ (Wenden 1982, p. 39). Finally, questions in the research guide were also subjected to an internal testing where questions were assessed and discussed with a colleague in Sri Lanka in which ‘ambiguities, leading questions and general criticisms are discussed and corrected’ and questions refined (Barriball and While 1994, p. 333).

### ***Field notes and Document-Analysis:***

Finally, field notes and journaling as to my own observations and experiences during fieldwork also acted as a further supplement to the interviews. These included my recollection of informal conversations with Sri Lankans in ‘everyday’ contexts such as on the street, at restaurants and food stalls, in cars and three-wheelers, and in homes and hotels. Similarly, web and print-based newspaper articles and reports produced by international institutions, INGOs,



think tanks, and research centres, were utilized as a means of triangulating the research data with respect to validating the consistency and adding ‘weight’ in terms of further documented evidence from a variety of forms to the findings. Government documents including speeches and websites were also analysed, representing a form of document analysis, in which data was analysed for the motivation, intent, and purpose of documents and discourse within a particular context with particular attention to patterns of speech and the types of terminology used to describe and frame the victor’s peace, the security environment in post-war Sri Lanka, post-war ‘peace’ and ‘development’, international actors, and civil society in particularized ways that are sustained through conditions of governmentality and securitization.

Whilst falling short of undertaking a full-scale discourse analysis, the study does undertake ‘an approach to the analysis of language that looks at patterns of language across texts as well as the social and cultural contexts in which the texts occur’ (Paltridge 2006, p. 1). Likewise, it ‘examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships between participants as well as the effects the use of language has upon social identities and relations’ (Paltridge, 2006, p. 2). It, thus, considers the social and political identity, including in relation to power dynamics, of various forms of civil society in Sri Lanka, problematizing assumptions made surrounding the nexus between civil society and peace-building, as well as the effects of language, discourse, and context on the relations between civil society and the Sri Lankan government, ‘Western’ powers, international institutions and civil society, and Sri Lankan society more broadly. Furthermore, in line with securitization theory, an area that this thesis is particularly interested in concerning the securitization of civil society actors, an analysis of government data is undertaken with consideration as to ‘who securitizes, on what issues (threats), for whom (referent object), why, with what results, and not least, under what conditions’ (Buzan et al 1998, p. 32).

### ***Coding the Data:***

Data was coded after the transcription of interviews by labelling the data based on experience types, strategies, feelings, activities, and perspectives that were expressed and discussed during the interviews. A similar process was also undertaken in order to code and organize my field notes and the news articles, reports, and government documentation, speeches, and websites consulted for the study. The material was coded by labelling the data not only according to issue-areas in the existing sources of literature on civil society and peace-building in Sri Lanka, but also from ‘new’ topics, issue-areas, and insights that produced new labels. The labels were then grouped together according to similar themes that emerged and cross-compared to reveal similarities and differences across (1) other civil society groups, (2) within similar types of civil society groups, and (3) ethnicity, religion, gender, geography, and ‘elite’/‘grass-roots’ status in order to formulate a picture of the experiences, meanings, understanding, strategies, and relationships of civil society to one another and to aspects of the victor’s peace environment<sup>111</sup>. Finally, a ‘conceptual schema’ was created that linked together the data in order to address the research question and areas of enquiry. This involved organizing the themes in different ways

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<sup>111</sup> In sorting the labels or codes into themes questions were considered by me as researcher such as: Does everything in each pile relate to the labels? Can some piles be combined? Can some piles be deleted because they appear to not relate to the research question, or have very few pieces of data in them?

into an overarching narrative as well as considering which themes represented ‘major’ and which ‘minor’ components of the overarching schema (adapted from Foss and Waters 2003).

## APPENDIX B: RESTORATIVE ENQUIRY PROCESS AND SAMPLE ADAPTED RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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### 5 Questions of the Restorative Enquiry:

1. What happened?

(Tell me about the current post-war situation in Sri Lanka; Tell me about a typical week for you in your organization)

2. What were you thinking/How were you feeling?

(What does it mean to you to speak about civil society in Sri Lanka today?; How do you feel about the current situation in Sri Lanka?; How did you feel when X happened?)

3. Who has been affected? How have they been affected?

(How have you and/or your work been affected by the end of the war and the current situation? How has your organization been affected by X? How do you think women [for example] have been affected by X?)

4. What do you need to feel better about this?

(What do you/civil society need in order to do your/its work; to go about your daily activities?)

5. What needs to happen to put things right/make things better?

(What needs to happen for a post-war peace process to be successful [based on what success means to research participant]? How could things be better in the future in Sri Lanka?)

### **‘Snapshot’ of participants’ actual responses to the Adapted Restorative Enquiry Process**

#### ***What Happened?:***

Responses to the initial question elicit narratives or ‘stories’ about a participant’s experience or beliefs around the broad question posed. The narrative and the context in which the narrative is conveyed or expressed in terms of emotionality, body language, tone, etc. as a whole is important at this stage in ‘interpreting’ the narrative. Whilst it is important for the researcher to remain present with the participant using active listening skills and minimal encouragers, this step shapes the focus for the rest of the interview.

*Active listening* is a tool or technique of communication that necessitates that the listener create an atmosphere where people feel listened to sensitively, and do not feel criticised, judged, or threatened. People who have been listened to in this way ‘become more emotionally mature, more open to experiences; become less defensive, more democratic; and less authoritarian’ (Sutton and Stewart 2002).

*Minimal encouragers* are short verbal cues such as ‘Mm hmm’, ‘mmmm’, and ‘then what?’, ‘what happened next?’, ‘and then?’, as well as echoing (repeating one or two key words right after the client said these words. Echoing encourages further explanation of that moment or a continuation of the story) (Wallis and Fast 2013).

***Thoughts & Feelings:***

Q: How do you feel about reactions to the UN Panel Report?

*A: Reactions and public opinion are based on emotion not rationality. [There are] ties to American reaction to Bin Laden’s death, immense celebration ... [there is a] similar mentality here with respect to nationalist sentiment and defeat of terrorism by Mahinda, but what about health care, development, suffering, poverty?*

***Who has been affected?:***

Q: How have community actors been affected by the Government’s stance toward conflict resolution and international actions such as the UN Panel Report?

*A: There is no political will to resolve [the] conflict. [The Government] use conflict to maintain and recapture power ... [For] May Day the Government is calling people to Colombo to show will of people, that people are with Government. [They are] collecting signatures. [People] have to sign because otherwise [Government] could use violence and fear because Government has such power.*

***What do you need to feel better?:***

Q: What do women need as heads of households in returning to areas from which they were displaced?

*A: [There are] lots of women’s issues...fences are required for farming, but how to get fencing [it is] pointless to do home gardening or give poultry or animals like cows to them when other animals or people pillage and take them.*

***Future focus:***

Q: How could the different ethnic actors that comprise Sri Lankan civil society come together to find a common voice in post-war Sri Lanka?

*A: War affects, resettlement, women and children issues [are] points of commonality. Could lead to deeper more political voice ... that could speak up in greater numbers in public and exercise voice.*

Q: What is needed in these displaced communities in order to move forward with resettlement and reconstruction?

*A: [Between the] Centre and District [there is] little coordination. [This] created conflicts because [there is] no coordinated approach. Short term projects don't solve all issues. What is needed is long term plan, houses first [and] consideration of special needs of women, elders, number of children...*

## APPENDIX C: RESEARCH GUIDE OF SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR 'ELITE' SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

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### *Research Guide Questions:*

#### *Questions for Civil Society Actors:*

- 1) What does civil society mean in the Sri Lankan context? (describe types, tensions, challenges, interactions, what peace means to different actors/groups, rural-urban, grass-roots and elite actors etc.)
- 2) In what ways do different civil society actors differ from one another (e.g., roles, influence, geography, elite, ethnicity, role of religion etc.)
- 3) Tell me about the nature of the activities of civil society during the peace talks of 2002 and in the post-war period today.
- 4) How would you characterize present day Sri Lanka?
- 5) How does Group X decide on activities, policies, etc. to adopt and/or support (if a funder)
- 6) How have the experiences of civil society actors differed in the post-war period? OR Can you tell me about the nature of your (your org) experiences in the post-war period. (challenges/barriers, nature of, creative ways of acting etc.)
- 7) How do these differ from previous peace talks, specifically 2002-06?
- 8) What is the nature of the relationships between different civil society actors today?
- 9) Who are the most/least influential civil society actors, why, factors involved?
- 10) Who and what influences and impacts civil society?
- 11) Which groups and/or actors in civil society are not involved or are not included in the current post-war political process in Sri Lanka but need to be (Why, in what ways do they need to be)?
- 12) What is the relationship between your group and the GOSL? Tell me about this in greater detail, how do you view the GOSL's procedures such as the PTF for granting approval for post-war reconstruction projects?
- 13) What do you believe the relationship between government and civil society should be in Sri Lanka?
- 14) Why do you believe that the GOSL is not granting permission for overtly peace and human-rights or justice oriented projects? (DEPENDING ON WHO SPEAKING TO: views and opinion on constitutional, legal, and political acts of the GOSL since the war's end: LLRC, Amendments 13 and 18, responses to UN Panel and UNHRC Resolution calling on Sri Lanka to investigate potential war crimes carried out at end of war?)
- 15) What do you see as the influence of international organizations (UN, WB etc.), INGOs, and foreign governments in Sri Lanka and specifically on Sri Lankan civil society?
- 16) What do you believe the relationship between foreign governments and the GOSL should be in Sri Lanka?
- 17) Can you tell me about the roles of nationalist groups in Sri Lanka and those in the diaspora, (who are these actors, how do they seek to influence political climate in Sri

- Lanka, level of effectiveness of different groups, impacts to other civil society from them)?
- 18) How does civil society (or your group) exercise agency, go about trying to carry out activities given the constraints and challenges that you have alluded to above?
  - 19) What roles do a civil society group's external/internal funders, partners, or relationships with other civil society groups play in influencing the ability of that group to carry out activities etc. (In what ways has your own work and life been impacted by who you work with, the activities your group does and who you receive support from?)
  - 20) Does leadership matter? (who is in charge, their identity, image, etc.)
  - 21) Is there a possibility for and value in an exchange between civil society groups, between GOSL and its representatives and civil society?
  - 22) What would this look like, how do you envision this?
  - 23) Who else in the field do you believe it is necessary to speak with in carrying out my research (can you assist in helping me to in touch with them etc.)? Who sits on opposite side of the fence from you so to speak in terms of viewpoints on post-war Sri Lanka and the roles of civil society that you would recommend I speak with in order to develop a full picture of the post-war political landscape?
  - 24) What else do you believe I need to know or that you would most like me to say in my research about the current socio-political climate/present-day Sri Lanka and the experiences of civil society actors in peace-building today?

*Diaspora Specific:*

- 1) What is the nature of civil society in the INSERT COUNTRY diaspora?
- 2) What is the relationship of civil society groups in Sri Lanka to those in the diaspora?
- 3) What are the goals of the diaspora/your organization?
- 4) How does the diaspora view the current socio-political climate in Sri Lanka?
- 5) What are the activities of diaspora actors?
- 6) What have been their/your experiences in the post-war period in seeking to influence events and policies taking place in Sri Lanka?
- 7) What is their/your vision for a post-war Sri Lanka, how do they see that a socially just peace could be realized, what needs to happen for this to be realized?
- 8) What steps are they/you taking to try and bring about this reality?
- 9) How do groups in the diaspora exercise agency and leverage agency in order to influence events and policies in Sri Lanka?
- 10) What is the nature of their/your relationship to the government X country in which they/you currently reside?
- 11) What do you see as the influence of international organizations (UN, WB etc.), INGOs, and foreign governments in Sri Lanka and specifically toward civil society?
- 12) What are the biggest barriers/challenges in carrying out activities in the diaspora?
- 13) What is the nature of the relationships between Tamil and Sinhalese in the diaspora? Are there opportunities here to explore how inter-ethnic and religious relationships might be developed and extended in Sri Lanka?
- 14) Atmosphere and mood in diaspora toward returning to Sri Lanka? (are there many who want to return, why/why not?, politics of etc.)

15) What else do you believe I need to know or that you would most like me to say in my research about the current socio-political climate/present-day Sri Lanka and the experience of diaspora actors today?

*Questions for Specifically Nationalist/Pro-Sinhalese Buddhist Actors:*

- 1) How has life changed for you since the end of the war?
- 2) How do you see that things have changed in Sri Lanka more broadly?
- 3) How would you characterize present day Sri Lanka?
- 4) Tell me about the nature of the GOSL's post war activities.
- 5) What does long term, sustainable peace mean in the Sri Lankan context? (mean to you?)
- 6) Tell me about how you understand the term civil society.
- 7) Is it useful to speak of an uncivil society in Sri Lanka, how would you characterize such organizations?
- 8) In what ways do different civil society actors differ from one another (e.g., roles, influence, geography, elite, ethnicity, role of religion etc.)
- 9) What is the role of religion and religious groups in post-war reconstruction in Sri Lanka?
- 10) 10) What do you see as the roles that civil society groups *ought* to play in the socio-political process in post-war Sri Lanka?
- 11) Tell me about what you believe the relationship between government and civil society ought to be in Sri Lanka.
- 12) What do you see as being the benefits for both the GOSL and civil society groups from such a relationship?
- 13) Recently there have been a number of marches and other activities such as poster campaigns in and around Colombo in protest to the UN Panel Report in April 2011 and in response to the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNHRC and the adoption of the US-backed resolution urging Sri Lanka to probe allegations of summary executions, kidnappings and other abuses. How do you respond to these marches? (support them, explain rationale behind them)
- 14) What are your views on the UN Report and/or UNHRC Resolution?
- 15) Please speak to your views on the influence of Western actors such as the UN, foreign governments or INGOs on the political environment in Sri Lanka (undermining sovereignty, a place for the West, get specific on types of roles, a 're-colonization', pick up other queues for further follow up questions from answers)
- 16) Do you see there being any roles and value in having a plurality of different civil society actors, including those critical or oppositional to government, actively functioning in Sri Lanka? What about human-rights or advocacy oriented groups?
- 17) Are there currently any spaces in which dialogue or meetings could take place between groups such as yours and other civil society groups critical of the GOSL? (on what issues, where, how)
- 18) Some have commented on what they view as the militarization of development and reconstruction in the North, how do you respond to these comments? (security, nature or continuation of threats, does it create tensions, hinder peace and reconstruction)
- 19) Can you tell me about the nature of terrorism in Sri Lanka and whether a terrorist threat persists today? Tell me about this...



*Questions for Government Representatives of GOSL:*

- 1) Tell me about the government's perspectives and priorities in the current post-war situation in Sri Lanka.
- 2) How do you believe that long term peace can be realized in Sri Lanka?
- 3) Are there any tensions or challenges behind this perspective, potential spoilers or those who might be resistant to these viewpoints?
- 4) How does the GOSL see that it can mediate or resolve these tensions?
- 5) Does the GOSL feel that it needs to resolve these tensions, why or why not
- 6) How does the government respond to calls for power devolution and/or a multicultural, multilingual or federalist state?
- 7) Outline for me the GOSL's central strategies and policies that it is adopting as a means of realizing its priorities?
- 8) How does the GOSL go about implementing these policies?
- 9) What is the role of CS in SL?
- 10) What are the GOSL's views on civil society in Sri Lanka?
- 11) Who does the GOSL work with civil society, why?
- 12) How does the GOSL work with civil society, how come?
- 13) In your view, are there groups or actors that represent a hindrance or threat to the GOSL or Sri Lankans within civil society, why is this?
- 14) How does the GOSL seek to deal with such actors?
- 15) What types of actions or political statements on the part of either civil society or international actors (UN, a foreign government, or INGO) makes it more difficult for the GOSL to work with civil society actors? (why is this the case, can you give me some examples)
- 16) How does the GOSL decide which groups to work with within CS?
- 17) In implementing post-war reconstruction activities and strategies – what is the selection process for civil society partners, what about international NGOs?
- 18) What does the GOSL see as the level and kind of involvement of foreign governments and international organizations like the UN in Sri Lanka? Can you tell me more about this...
- 19) How does the GOSL explain its response to the UNHRC calls for investigations into potential war crimes committed by both sides at the end of the war? (What about the UN Panel Report, UNHRC Resolution?)
- 20) Tell me about the GOSL's decision not to hold provincial elections to date in the North for the Provincial Council.
- 21) Tell me about the nature of the military activities in the North (some estimates put military forces numbers as high as 40,000 in the North, can you explain to me about the GOSL's perceived necessity for the number of troops, the objectives, the degree and kinds of threats that the GOSL sees the military facing in the North today)
- 22) Does a terrorist threat still exist in the North or elsewhere in the country or in the diaspora? Tell me about this ...
- 23) Is there a place for advocacy oriented civil society actors in Sri Lanka? Tell me about this ...

24) Do you see anything productive or of value in different civil society actors and government coming together in a forum to discuss a post-war political process in Sri Lanka? (Tell me about your views on this... IF YES TO Q: What might this forum look like, how could it happen and get buy-in from all sides, what would the GOSL be willing to discuss, what could be on the table at such a meeting?)

*Questions for High Commissions:*

- 1) How would you characterize present day Sri Lanka?
- 2) Tell me about the activities and programs of your government in Sri Lanka today (funding of civil society, development projects, business and infrastructure activities, etc.)
- 3) Has the nature of these changed from the previous peace process in 2002-06, during the war, to the present day? (nature of increased/decreased opportunities, difficulties, ask to explain them and nuances based on answers)
- 4) Tell me about the process for choosing groups to provide funding to in Sri Lanka.
- 5) How does funding for X programs get released or distributed?
- 6) What is the relationship of your government with civil society organizations in Sri Lanka? (Do you work directly with any civil society groups, who, how have you determined who you will work with?)
- 7) What is the relationship of your government with the GOSL? (your government's stance toward the UN Panel, UNHRC Resolution, GOSL's reactions to these, economic and development interests)
- 8) Tell me about how your government interacts with Sri Lankan groups in your country.
- 9) Tell me about the position of your government toward the GOSL
- 10) Some have commented on what they view as the militarization of development and reconstruction in the North, how do you respond to these comments and what is the view of your government?
- 11) What is your government's response to accusations of on-going human rights abuses, disappearances in Sri Lanka?

## APPENDIX D: ATTRIBUTES OF HUMAN SECURITY & SAMPLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY HUMAN SECURITY WORK

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Each of the Human Security indicators adapted from the UNDP's 1994 Human Development Report is elaborated in greater detail below including the nature of the activities and practices that civil society might adopt in responding to human (in)security.

**(1) *Economic (in)security*** – occurs where income is insufficient to meet basic human needs. In order to meet these needs productive or remunerative forms of work and/or publicly-financed safety nets must exist. In many countries where social safety nets are non-existent those most marginalized within society are hardest hit by shocks to local and global economies. With respect to women, patriarchal economic structures limit women's capacities to provide for their or their family's economic security (Gibson and Reardon 2007, p. 59). Women's exclusion from the formal economy can result in enhanced economic insecurity relating to their (often forced) participation in the informal economy and/or taking up of dangerous jobs such as prostitution and/or drug trafficking. Among the civil society activities associated with economic security are: work in and support of community shelters, food banks, microcredit or finance participation, addressing livelihood needs through service delivery or forms of vocational training, encouraging or assisting in founding cooperative and collective forms of organization, activities aimed at empowering women (and other vulnerable populations and minorities) and changing women's status in society.

**(2) *Food (in)security*** – is caused by both physical and economic non-availability of the food required for adequate nourishment and to sustain life. Food security requires that people have the means and capacity to access food safely, without fear of violence, going hungry and/or competition for nourishment. Challenges associated with food (in)security include the 'poor distribution of food and a lack of purchasing power' including difficulties relating to the rising costs of food and related to conflict, displacement, or environmental disaster (Human Development Report 1994, p. 27). Activities that civil society may be involved in that supports food security are growing and distributing food, operating/founding community food banks, supporting and/or providing training in self-sufficient food production, support for local producers, and/or lobbying for a public distribution system.

**(3) *Health insecurity*** – arises from inadequate or non-existent health services and/or the inability to access health services, such as medical care and health education. In many developing countries infectious and parasitic diseases and the spread of HIV-AIDS are the source of millions of deaths annually and drug and alcohol abuse may also negatively impact health security. Also included in this area are the health impacts of other human insecurities, such as economic and personal insecurity resulting from the sale of women for sex, rape, and/or domestic abuse commonly associated with war and political upheaval (Moussa 2008, p. 93). Other practices such as early and forced marriages result in young women facing early sexual activity and exposure to risks and complications arising out of early pregnancies (Abdullah, Ibrahim and King 2010, p. 42). Maternal care, sanitation and health education, the health impacts of rape, domestic abuse, and other forms of violence, lobbying for better health care, access to better sanitation and clean water, and human rights monitoring activities may be undertaken by civil society actors.

**(4) Environmental insecurity** – is a transnational phenomenon, particularly impacting developing countries that are already vulnerable to droughts or flooding and local ecosystems already under stress. Water scarcity, population growth, land distribution and resource scarcity are at risk of increasingly becoming factors in instigating conflict and exacerbating politically volatile situations (Homer-Dixon 1999). Linkages between the environment and others forms of human insecurity, such as air pollution and its influence on health (in)security or environmental degradation and economic (in)security, should be considered as the environment has, until fairly recently, rarely been labeled directly as a peace and security threat within peace-building. Better environmental and resource education/management, advocacy and mobilizing against resource exploitation and/or environmental degradation, as well as increased provision of other securities can be carried out by civil society to enhance environmental security.

**(5) Personal insecurity** – stems from violence or the threat of violence to individuals ranging in scope from domestic abuse and crime to genocide and includes forms of emotional insecurity such as shame, fear, racism and prejudice against individuals that can lead to violence. Women are particularly vulnerable to threats to personal security. The gendered personal (in)security aspect of Human Security ‘focuses on forms of violence exerted over women, such as human trafficking, bonded labour and girls’ child domestic labour’ (Moussa 2008, p. 89). Conflict resolution-related activities, endorsement and participation in forms of reconciliation, reconstruction, and rights education, protection of vulnerable peoples, and monitoring abuses are included amongst civil society’s activities.

**(6) Community insecurity** – is affected by inter-group conflicts and threats to family and/or community/group integration, cohesiveness and/or survival. At its core is the right of free association and the capacity to ‘belong’, including ties of group membership such ethnicity, race, and kinship. It also includes the ability to maintain one’s cultural identity and religious practices without experiencing, or causing, physical and/or emotional harm and insecurity. One important activity that civil society can engage in related to community security relates to the numerous ways that inter-group ties can be fostered and strengthened through social cohesion activities. Work that seeks to bring different groups together around other themes of common insecurity is also included as are conflict resolution mechanisms and efforts to bring about ‘non-violent’ communities and societies and/or ‘cultures of peace’ through in-group socialization around democratic attitudes and conflict resolution. Finally, socialization work aimed at strengthening in-group identity, usually of those threatened, vulnerable, or marginalized in asymmetric conflicts, must also be taken into account, but paradoxically also how such activities might be viewed as threatening to other social/cultural/ethnic groups and how socialization can actually exacerbate existing cleavages, negative stereotypes of ‘other’, and polarization.

**(7) Political insecurity** – refers to political forms of insecurity at the societal level and can arise from coups, dictatorships, intimidation and violence at the hands of government or its representatives, human rights abuses, political oppression, prevention of freedoms, voting manipulation, (fear of) violence, and hard lines taken against activists, dissidents, intellectuals or those critical of government (Jones 2009). Political (in)security is concerned with whether peoples live in a society where they are able to enjoy a range of political freedoms including human rights. Forms of political (in)security can stem from the actions of a state or its leaders against their population, from those who seek to seize power from government, as well as from

members of the international community who may (arguably inadvertently) reinforce inequality through conditions of political, economic, and/or social dependency associated, for example, with humanitarian interventions and assistance. Examples of civil society roles include protection activities for those vulnerable, human rights and electoral monitoring, non-public and public advocacy and mobilizations, intermediation and facilitation, investigations, reporting, research, documentation, and public dissemination of information, and lobbying national and international policy-making bodies. The politicization of civil society activity is highlighted as a means of countering political insecurity.

Taking the above typology of human (in)security into account for each indicator below examples of the types of activities, practices, and/or strategies that civil society actors might adopt that could assist in strengthening (or constraining) human security in peace-building work are presented as a means of visually organizing the material discussed above in the Table: *Human Security and Civil Society Peace Work* below.

**Table: *Human Security and Civil Society Peace Work***

<b>Human Security Indicator</b>	<b>Examples of Civil Society Peace Work</b>
<i>Economic (in)security</i>	work in and support of community shelters, food banks, microcredit or finance participation, addressing livelihood needs through service delivery or forms of vocational training, encouraging or assisting in founding cooperative and collective forms of organization, activities aimed at empowering women (and other vulnerable populations) and changing their status in society
<i>Food (in)security</i>	growing and distributing food, operating/founding community food banks, supporting and/or providing training in self-sufficient food production, support for local producers, and/or lobbying for a public distribution system
<i>Health (in)security</i>	maternal care, sanitation and health education, addressing the health, including psychological, impacts of rape, domestic abuse, and other forms of violence, substance abuse treatment, lobbying for health care, access to better sanitation and clean water, and human rights monitoring activities
<i>Environmental (in)security</i>	environmental and resource education, management, and protection, disaster management and response, advocacy and mobilizing against resource exploitation and/or environmental degradation
<i>Personal (in)security</i>	conflict resolution-related activities, endorsement and participation in forms of reconciliation, reconstruction, rights education and advocacy, protection of vulnerable peoples, and monitoring abuses
<i>Community (in)security</i>	seeking to uphold the right of free association, in-group socialization, social cohesion, the numerous ways that inter-group ties can be fostered by coming together around themes of common insecurity, conflict resolution mechanisms, efforts to bring about ‘non-violent’ societies and/or ‘cultures of peace’ through in-group socialization, education around democratic attitudes

<i>Political (in)security</i>	human rights and electoral monitoring, protection of vulnerable civilians and communities, non-public and public advocacy and mobilizations, intermediation and facilitation, investigations, reporting, research, documentation, and public dissemination of information, and lobbying national and international policy-making bodies
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## APPENDIX E: SRI LANKA - A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION:

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The approximately 65,000 square kilometre<sup>112</sup> island nation of Sri Lanka was settled through successive waves of migration from India beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, BC when Indo-Aryans from northern India established Sinhalese Buddhist kingdoms in the central parts of the island (Nubin 2002). Tamil Hindus from southern India began to settle in significant numbers in northeastern coastal areas of Sri Lanka setting up kingdoms in the Jaffna peninsula after the 13<sup>th</sup> century, AD (de Silva 2005). Sri Lanka's twenty-one and a half million people are ethnically diverse with Sri Lanka's dominant ethnic groups composed of 73.8% Sinhalese, 7.2% Sri Lankan Moors, 4.6% Indian Tamil, and 3.9% Sri Lankan Tamil ('The CIA World Factbook – Sri Lanka Country Profile' 2010).<sup>113</sup> Buddhism is the dominant religion (69.1%) and Sinhala the official and most widely used language (74%) on the island, followed by Tamil (18%), Muslim (7.6%), Hindu (7.1%) and Christianity (6.2%) with English being commonly used in government and spoken competently by about 10% of the population ('The CIA World Factbook – Sri Lanka Country Profile' 2010).

Sri Lanka's historical past features the influence of colonial conquest and competing global and national actors who have sought to maximize their strategic position in the country for political and economic gain. From the 16<sup>th</sup> century onward Sri Lanka was colonized first by the Portuguese, then the Dutch and finally the British before gaining independence peacefully from Britain in 1948 after almost 450 years of colonial rule. Sri Lanka's colonial history, in combination with its close proximity to India, has helped produce a multi-ethnic and multi-religious population as well as laid the foundation for the post-colonial civil conflict between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils (Uyangoda 2007). The economy under colonialism was predominantly plantation-based and geographically centered in the area close to the current national capital of Colombo. It consisted of the production of tea, rubber, coconut, sugar, and rice. Currently manufacturing accounts for approximately 80% of Sri Lanka's exports in areas such as garments, textiles, gems, and agricultural products, with tourism representing another important source of income for the country (Thompson 2007; Nubin 2002). The United States (US) is Sri Lanka's largest single-country export market representing 40% of exports and 60% of garment exports, therefore, making the US both politically and economically significant to Sri Lanka although this is beginning to shift as in recent years Sri Lanka has begun to look to other Eastern powers, most prominently China, as possible economic investors and partners of growing importance to President Rajapaksa's vision for a post-war Sri Lanka (Hoglund and Orjuela 2012; LePoer 2002, p. 6). The worldwide economic downturn in 2006, the 2004 Tsunami, successive droughts, and related hydroelectric energy shortages have all impacted the economic and political stability of the island (Nubin 2002). Costs and damage to infrastructure from the ethnic conflict have compounded these challenges further, including impacts to livelihoods, human security, tourism, humanitarian aid and relief, the linking of the conflict to the war on terror, and the intensified pressures from displaced peoples who have been relocated both on the island and abroad in the Sri Lankan Diaspora (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 98).

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<sup>112</sup> This information was accessed through 'The CIA World Factbook – Sri Lanka Country Profile.' (2010).

<sup>113</sup> Based on 2001 census provisional data.

The structure of political life has also featured in the Sri Lankan conflict. The post-independent Sri Lankan government historically paid little attention to minorities refusing to recognize the conflict as a valid political issue warranting a political response and, consequently, dominant accounts of the country's history often do not give more than a cursory reference to the presence of minority groups with nation building focusing foremost on constructing the image of the Sinhala nation (Haniffa 2009, p. 87). The Tamil separatist movement has posed a political challenge to the state's centralization of power, however, for more than half a century, initially through arguments for state reform and the transformation of the Sri Lankan state into a federated structure before the situation became increasingly violent and appeals for federalism turned into calls for secession (Uyangoda 2007, p. 19). Sri Lankan politics consist of both (1) political parties, such as the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), the United National Party (UNP), or the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), and (2) alliances, which include the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) or the main opposition United National Front (UNF) that are fronts for several political parties and represent the parties in parliament. Sri Lanka essentially has a two-party system, in that historically there have been two dominant political parties; over the last few decades these have been the UNP and the SLFP. The general rule, however, has become coalition politics with different alliances joining together to create majority governments.

Initially Sri Lanka's political system resembled that of the British parliamentary system, however, in 1978 the government under J.R. Jayewardene embarked on a program of economic and political restructuring, which saw liberalization and free-market reforms as well as the institutionalization of a strong and centralized executive presidential system resembling that of France. The popularly elected President is, thus, head of the state and executive power is exercised by the government with the President having the power to dissolve the 225-member parliament and call for new elections as well as to appoint the Prime Minister and Cabinet (LePoer 2002, p. 4). The influence of the Buddhist nationalist monks also cannot be overlooked within the spectrum of Sri Lankan politics as this stakeholder group has been a significant factor in political life. In recent years the monks have grown increasingly important with respect to their impact on ethno-nationalist tensions in the country, most significantly after April 2004 when the monks formed their own political party, the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU or National Sri Lanka Heritage). The Sinhalese nationalist ideology of the JHU has resulted in it maintaining a hard-line stance toward the conflict favoring the elimination of the LTTE by drawing on the discourse of a 'separatist terrorist' threat to advocate for the LTTE's, and other 'separatist' groups, military defeat (Uyangoda 2007, p. 44). Other JHU political platforms have included human rights accusations against the US and claims that the US has attempted to set up a 'puppet' regime in Sri Lanka with opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe as head of government (Nizam 2009). The political lens through which Sri Lankans view the conflict has, thus, been influenced by the dichotomies created through the context of the civil war and, consequently, the extreme poles of the political spectrum have tended to dominate over more moderate views throughout Sri Lanka's post-independence history (Devotta 2005). Ultimately, the conflict has reframed the contours of politics into a competition over (state) power, national identity, and cultural superiority with diminished space for meeting the human security needs of those marginalized by political competition and conflict and leaving little room for more moderate voices to seek out a political middle ground within the current peace process.



## APPENDIX F: PAST PEACE INITIATIVES IN SRI LANKA

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In August 1985 an initial attempt at reaching a negotiated settlement to the conflict was made during talks held in Thimpu. At Thimpu the Tamil representatives outlined a four-point framework that came to be known as the ‘Thimpu Principles’, which outlined the Sri Lankan Tamil’s right to self-determination and asserted territorial autonomy for the Tamils (Uyangoda 2007, p. 14). The government’s delegation, however, refused to accept the principles refusing to engage in a redistribution of state power beyond district-based decentralization (Uyangoda 2007, p. 14).

In both the 1985 and 1987 peace talks India played a key mediating role, however, this was largely carried out without any serious commitment from the parties in conflict to come to the table to negotiate an agreement in good faith (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 96). In July 1987 then Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi signed an agreement whereby India would provide assistance in implementing a peace accord between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. The Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987 that emerged envisaged a merger of the northern and eastern provinces into a Tamil-speaking area with the purpose of devolving power by way of greater regional autonomy and the implementation of provincial councils. As a component of the agreement India agreed to send an Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka to aid in the implementation of the deal, which numbered in excess of 75,000 by mid-1988 (LePoer 2002, p. 4). Thus, whilst there has never been a United Nations (UN) peace-keeping mission in Sri Lanka, the presence of the IPKF does reflect the potential dynamics that can arise from a regionally-led peace support missions such as those of the African Union in Africa. Within weeks of the arrival of the IPKF in Sri Lanka the LTTE declared its intent to continue its armed struggle and refused to disarm. The IPKF soon found itself engaged in a bloody struggle against the LTTE. Further complicating matters, the JVP emerged as a form of resistance to the Accord due to what it saw as the potential danger of any devolution of power by the state to the LTTE and the loss of Sri Lankan sovereignty owing to the political intervention of India.

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) developed into an armed insurgency against the government and mobilized resistance to the devolution initiative claiming that India through the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord was seeking to politically involve itself in Sri Lanka’s sovereign affairs through the territorial annexation of Sri Lanka on behalf of the Tamils. The JVP mobilization eventually influenced the government to adopt a policy of de-internationalization of the conflict and any possible settlement (Uyangoda 2007, p. 21). For its part, the LTTE refused to accept the provincial councils proposed by the Accord, claiming they were inadequate with respect to devolving power and authority, despite the fact that the other Tamil groups accepted the settlement (Uyangoda 2007, p. 33). Furthermore, like the JVP, the LTTE saw the Accord as an externally imposed settlement. These two factors eventually led to President Ranasinghe Premadasa holding negotiations with the LTTE between May 1989 and June 1990 on the common issue of a mutual desire to see the Indian peace-keepers leave Sri Lanka (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 97; Uyangoda 2007, p. 33). There was, thus, a loose, strategic consensus between the government and the LTTE to lessen the role of outsiders, and specifically India, in the affairs of the island, though once India had withdrawn its peace-keepers

in March 1990 little consensus remained on which to continue a political engagement and war resumed in mid-1990.

Following the 'botched' Indian intervention as 'peace-maker', in the 1995 peace process no third-party state was involved. Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga announced a peace initiative calling for constitutional changes that would devolve considerable autonomy to the regions as well as redraw provincial boundaries to address Tamil demands for a single territorial unit in the north and east provinces. A Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed in January 1995 and, desiring a neutral presence to monitor the Agreement, the International Committee of the Red Cross was approached to act as monitor although it subsequently refused citing that it did not possess the necessary military expertise to ensure that a ceasefire was upheld (Uyangoda 2007, p. 33). In 1995 the Kumaratunga government held four rounds of talks with the LTTE under the Cessation Agreement only to be broken off by a series of LTTE attacks on government forces when substantial progress in the 'restoration of normal civilian life' in the north and east could not be reached (Shanmugaratnam and Stokke 2008, p. 96). Furthermore, the LTTE asserted that the government had deployed foreign delegates to areas under LTTE control without consultation and that to ensure neutrality in the de-escalation process the government ought not to act unilaterally (Balasingham 2004, pp. 256-260). War, ultimately, resumed under President Kumaratunga's subsequent 'war for peace' strategy after the breakdown of peace talks in April 1995, which combined intense military assaults with appeals to the Tamil people that the government was willing to implement an 'autonomy package' with or without the LTTE's involvement. However, the government's expectation that the Tamil people would abandon the LTTE in favour of such a package, as well as the assumption that a militarily weakened LTTE would come back to the negotiation table, proved incorrect on both fronts as the peace process collapsed and conflict again resumed (Uyangoda 2007, p. 23).

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