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Conflict, War and Peace in Sri Lanka – Politics by other means?

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Abstract:

For decades, Sri Lanka has been a laboratory for research and scholarship on ethnic conflict, liberal peacebuilding and civil war. Methodologically, this pre-war academic work laments the risks of applying simplified "episode based approaches" and narrow theoretical frameworks leading to adventurous interventions with meager appreciation of the complexities of state-society relations. Although this has contributed significantly to a better understanding of the conflict, most of the resultant explanations have, in the aftermath of the official (or rather military) ending of the civil war in May 2009, become largely questionable.

This paper relies upon materials collected during fieldwork during the first quarter of 2009 and 2011. In it, I explore the relevant state-in-society dynamics that have contributed to the co-existence of negative and positive peace, limited war and total war and to assess the capacities for violent conflict reproduction during the period from 1994 to 2009. In this period, using a Clausewitzian (1780-1831) problematique, I disentangle the political shifts, repositioning of public opinions and various policy measures implemented to address conflict, war and peace, and to explicate possible trajectories of state transformation and state building. This paper shows that in Sri Lanka, war, peace and violent conflict are in essence a "continuation of domestic politics by other means" and "triumph of the hegemony of the right" at local and global levels. Specifically, post-civil war Sri Lanka harbors an enormous potential for violent social conflict reproduction that will influence the future state building process and trajectories of state transformation. This paper suggests that these processes will be ignited by a domestic politics dominated by long standing factionalism within the ruling class that uses conflict, war and peace as instruments to sustain their hegemony, for obscuring their lack of political legitimacy and their fear of responding to the country's deep democratic deficit.

Key words: Civil war, Peace, Politics, State building, State-in-Society, Sri Lanka

1. Introduction:

In world history, a vast body of literature is being dedicated to understand various aspects of war, peace and conflict (Ramsbotham et al, 2009). Over time, this trio has had different aspects emphasized and different conceptualizations pursued (Ibid).

Wars, in contemporary literature, can be divided broadly into inter-state and intra-state (Ramsbotham et al 2009:119-120, Collier et al. 2003, Sambanis 2004 and Fearson and Laitin 2003); intra-state wars, also known as civil wars, have occupied centre stage of global discourses since the fall of Soviet Union in 1989. These categories offer a state-centric explanation of war, in which state-in-society dynamics expressed in the form of war, conflict and peace have received less attention. They inspire the dominant trends espoused in mainstream literature, especially since the dawn of the liberal state, including a number of local and global debates trying to identify the links between conflict, war, peace and state building and vice versa (Tilly 1975, 1985, 1990, Herbst 1990, Sorensen 2001, Theis 2005, Nieman 2007, Taylor 2008 and Helling 2010). This means that such debates have largely contributed to establishing and reestablishing the hegemony of the liberal-capitalist state, in which the dynamics of state-in-society relations at micro, meso and macro levels have received inadequate attention.

The literature on peace, meanwhile, has identified a number of variations of peace (Galtung 1969, 1996 and Lederach 1997, 1999). These variations have undoubtedly raised important questions of theory and praxis. They have also contributed to expanding one's understanding of different aspects of peace and have provided inspiration to explore associated phenomena, including peace agreements (Bell 1999, 2006, Hartzel 1999, Stedman et al. 2002, Wallesteen 1997), peace processes (Darby and Mc.Ginty 2000, Darby 2001), spoilers in peace (Stedman 1997), positive peace (Galtung 1996), negative peace (Galtung1996), (neo)liberal peace (McGinty 2008, Richmond 2006) and justpeace (Lederach 1999). Such topics have begun to flood both research

agendas and policy directives at both local and global levels[1]. When compared to the scourge of war and the damage caused by violent social conflicts in the 21st century, the positive results that these new trends have generated are marginal.

Research on violent conflict, during the last three decades, has paid an enormous amount of attention to the *conflict* in Sri Lanka. In the majority of these studies, this conflict has been labeled as an inter-ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils (for a critique of this thesis, see Bandarage 2009, Hennayake 1993, Abeyratne 2004). The relatively early 'business of academic labeling' categorized and re-categorized the conflict mainly within this binary inter-ethnic framework (works of Federick Bath on ethnicity, cited in Tambiah 1989), steadily shrinking the space for other relevant analytical categories to emerge or survival of the alternative discourses. This has had a lasting destructive impact on the scholarly and societal understanding of the situation, yet, were effectively promoted and used by the country's ruling class dominated by the Sinhalese faction for establishing their hegemony and to reproduce the conditions enabling them to stay in power. By working within the ethnically based frameworks, scholarship has become increasingly narrow. Further, this narrowing down of the terrain of investigation has effectively distracted researchers from the larger structures and processes that produce and reproduce violent social conflicts. However, this paper argues, application of narrow frameworks especially by the local scholars are not accidental but are (sub) conscious discursive practices aimed at promoting a particular global or a local political project they subscribed to.

Therefore, although there is enough evidence, especially in literature written before the early 1990s (Tambiah 1989, Jayawardena 1984, 1985, Jupp 1978), to suggest the importance of incorporating politics[2] into any rigorous analysis of Sri Lanka, the contribution of this early literature based on rigorous social science is being systematically marginalized. This trend increasingly treats conflict, war and peace as "politics as usual", high jacking the dominant domestic political discourse in Sri Lanka, categorizing progress by the ruling class as an "ethnic conflict". A similar marginalization of state-in-society dynamics has been occurring in the international political landscape since the early 1990s in the analysis of war, peace and conflict. Within this trio, the phenomenon of ethnic conflict has become the main focus, influencing local understanding and conceptualizations. This has made Sri Lanka a rich test case, since the triple phenomena of war, peace and conflict have been studied both extensively and yet within narrow conceptual frameworks, time frames that hide its potential to generate either domestically relevant or universally applicable lessons.

In light of the above gaps and following Foucaudian footsteps in the 'analysis of discourse' (Chomsky and Foucault 2006: xiv), it is important to reject the 'politics as usual' attitude toward conflict, war and peace in Sri Lanka, and to interrupt and re-problematize it. This paper argues, the triplet of conflict, war and peace in Sri Lanka was used to fashion the moral and political domain of the Sinhalese hegemonic state driven by the dominant Sinhalese faction of the ruling class who lack political legitimacy and fearful of responding to the country's deep democratic deficit. Further this paper also argues conflict, war and peace in Sri Lanka was also used by various forces to establish the hegemony of the right at local and global levels. Doing so uses the case of Sri Lanka to contribute to general theory building around conflict, war and peace, drawing attention to politics, the political context and wider state-in-society dynamics over a period of time. This requires a systematic analysis of state-in-society dynamics and multiple struggles faced by the ruling class from the centre, the periphery and the society at large, where war, peace and conflict are being reproduced at different scales, at various levels and during specific periods. The best periods in which to investigate these are from 1994-1999 ("peace by peaceful means" under President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (PA), 1999-2002 (the co-existence of political peace and limited war under President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (PA), 2002-2003

(from limited war to neo-liberal peace under Ranil Wickramasinghe (UNF) and 2006-2009 (war against terrorism, war for peace and total war under Mahinda Rajapakse (UPFA).

The main materials for this chapter were gathered during the fieldwork during the first quarter in 2009 that entailed a series of semi-structured interviews conducted with political party leaders, academics, journalists, state bureaucrats and members of civil society and field work carried out in January-February 2011. Additional empirical materials were sought through participatory and direct observations made from 2005-2011 in Colombo, Jaffna, Galle, Trincomalee, Ampara, Kandy and Anuradhapura districts. This research applies combination of social constructivism and interpretive approach.

2. Politics of shifting discourses on conflict, war and peace

For the average Sri Lankan, the conceptualization and re-conceptualization of conflict, war and peace in Sri Lanka does not seem to matter to the extent that it matters to the various factions in the ruling class. Therefore, this has mainly become the task of the Sinhala faction of the ruling class and its various political alliances that are the primary beneficiaries of it. As a result, there is a tendency of using of the above trio by country's ruling class in politics and to shift the discourses of the above trio essentially into a narrow political arena associated with securing political legitimacy, hegemony, political power and state power.

Such politically constructed notions can prevail as long as the political forces in the centre are able to harmonize the struggles of the centre with various struggles of the communities living in the periphery. The discourses and debates around them are being shifted and re-shifted over time by the ruling class characterized by deep factional conflicts. They are readily offered for the consumption of the wider society in national political debates. Thus under different governments lead by different political parties and political coalitions, the issues of conflict, war and peace can be expressed differently and sometimes quite contradictorily, yet still represent a ruling class position. For instance, in the 1980s, the conflict and war in Sri Lanka was defined strictly in the name of iron law of ethnicity (Bandarage 2009:5). In the 1990s, the war in Sri Lanka was defined on the basis of resource scarcity as espoused by the global discourse of greed and grievances (Rajasingham-Senanayake 2003: 108). Lastly in the 2000s the conflict, war and peace were defined using the global discourse on terrorism. These periodic shifts in the discourses coincide with both local electoral cycles and the dominant processes of global political discourse making. They impact on the nature of societal engagement with this trio of war, peace and conflict and the effects of this can be traced though political and electoral decision making in local communities. In other words, the direct impact of societal engagement is often reflected in electoral outcomes. This trend has been clearly observable since the early 1990s. Thus the impact of such shifts among the public, influenced by local-global political winds of change, is to divert attention from deeper issues embedded in state-in-society relations. Rather than treating conflict, war and peace as structure-process-agency issues, by conveniently brushing aside the complex nature of multiple conflicts embedded in politics and state-in-society relations, they are being often offered as technical and *a*political events.

This has also produced a strange logic of co-existence of capacity for war and peace. In this context, those who once voted for pro-peace discourse and pro-peace policy under a particular government do not hesitate to vote in favor of pro-war discourse or a pro-war policy with the same or a different government, within one electoral cycle or during a number of electoral cycles. This suggests that the discourses on conflict, war and peace are very much contingent on the ways in which politics is operated under dynamic circumstances faced by the factionalized ruling class, who consistently manipulate the above trio for their advantage and nature of struggles the

society experiences. Especially the inconsistencies demonstrated on national policies on these issues are directly linked to the nature of struggles that each political leader, political party, coalition or a regime in office faces at personal, inter and intra-party and regime level. Meanwhile, around war, peace and conflict the majority in the society do not seem to influence the national political discourse, with their engagement mostly limited to periodical voting in elections. However, the drastic shifts occurring in public opinion and electoral decision making are not entirely due to the ready consumption of the popular manufactured discourses, importantly, these shifts are also connected with the multiple struggles faced by these communities for their day-to-day social and economic survival and an expression of struggles for upward social and economic mobility.

In the electoral political domain, society favors or disfavors a discourse or policy measure in relation to conflict, war and peace largely to express the deeper struggles concerning their everyday life and future upward social mobility. In a deteriorating situation, its goal is to secure economic dividends associated with war, peace and conflict, social welfare and redistributive justice. These goals can be strategically framed by the ruling class to be associated with either war dividends or peace dividends. In Sri Lanka this seems to have happened, as evidenced by the increasing correlation between deteriorating economic performance (Kelegama 2000:1480), the aggressive dismantling of the social welfare state since the early 1990s (Dunham: 3) and the drastic swings in majority opinion between pro-peace and pro-war policies. As observed such swings have deeper meanings and indications on the depth of the democracy deficit[3], but are often misinterpreted by the ruling class as mandates for their policies.

The following sections of this chapter elaborate numerous occurrences of positioning and repositioning of political discourses and public opinions during the period from 1993 to 2009. This period provides excellent opportunities to view the politics behind state-in-society dynamics and the evolution of discourse on conflict, war and peace.

2. Kumaratunga and the agenda of peace by peaceful means

The 1993 presidential election marked an important change in Sri Lanka's post-1977 political history. The SLFP led coalition government (PA-People alliance) headed by Chandrika Bandaranaike-Kumaratunga was able to defeat 17 consecutive years of UNP domination of state power. In its election manifesto, the PA presented an attractive economic agenda (Venugopal 2008:3). This agenda received wide support from the local entrepreneurial class and from the rural poor as well. It promised the rural poor a number of subsidies important for the survival of rural agricultural communities (Samarasinghe 1994: 1022).

Overall, and making an impression on both the urban and rural population, the election manifesto pledged to improve good governance (Samarasinghe 1994: 1034). According to many political observers, governance became an important consideration after Bonaparte's regime of Premadasa (UNP, 1989-1993), during which the country experienced thousands of deaths of its youth, disappearances, open breaches of law and order. Kumaratunga's election manifesto also promised to end the war and bring peace. A number of prominent people (Jayasuriya 2005:40) view this peace agenda as the most important point in her election manifesto. However, peace was only one among many other promises. This paper warns against interpreting Kumaratunga's election victory solely as a mandate for peace related to the so-called ethnic conflict.

In this period, for different societal forces, "peace" had a number of different meanings. Thus, during the elections (and in reference only to ethnic and armed conflict with the LTTE) 'peace'

was presented as an end state scenario. It was also presented as the means to reach a number of other social-economic and political goals, including economic growth (Kelegama 2000:1480)[4].

Using multiple definitions of peace, Kumaratunga's election campaign was able to aggregate support from all the communities that suffered from forms of violence. For instance, it could derive political benefit from violence during Premadasa's regime including both state-led direct violence, violence committed by the JVPs (Hoole 2001: 246-255, Chandraprema 1991) and the increasing brutality of structural violence, whether related to the economic situation (see Eddleston et al. 1998 on suicides in Sri Lanka to see links between structural and direct violence, Jayasuriya 2005:26) or to the status of governance (Samarasinghe 1994), and in fact from the overall culture of violence. These links led a number of social, political and economic forces in the country to commit their vote and support for Kumaratunga in the elections.

Kumaratunga emerged as a symbol of political unification, bringing together socialists and liberal-capitalist and bridging the political ideological gap. Although her election campaign carried a socialist, lenient overtone, upon assuming office she was compelled by both domestic and international economic and political realities to follow the same path as the UNP: a liberal economic agenda (Dunham and Jayasuriya 2001: 9-10). For example, Kumaratunga continued the previously established controversial process of privatization of national assets. Her early disregard of the promises made during the elections was a clear sign of problems related to the issue of capital accumulation. To deflect criticisms against privatization, her government redefined the terminology of privatization, calling it *"privatization with human face",* or *"peoplization"* (Knight-John and Athukorala 2005:419).

Kumaratunga's economic agenda was largely shaped by a group of liberal minded elites and business elites (Venugopal 2008: i). Kumaratunga is known to have shaped policy in response to support from this group, including both her pro-political negotiation for peace and her re-conceptualization of the discourse of conflict, war and peace using the slogan 'peace by peaceful means'[5]. Further, because Sri Lana had a developing economy and a substantial debt[6], Kumaratunga's agenda for peace by peaceful means was not entirely a local political construction but also coincided with international political ideologies and realities, including the Agenda for Peace (Boutros-Ghali 1992) and the global multilateral financial institutions and western donors countries' aggressive promotion of a market economy (Paris 2004; 5). Further, Kumaratunga's strategy of peace seems to have been influenced by a specific set of ideas from international multilateral financial institutes meant to accelerate the growth of global capital, which were tied to a fresh set of theories on internal armed conflicts or civil wars in developing countries (Collier et al 2003: v). These theories posited that internal armed conflicts in developing countries impeded their efforts towards a favorable environment for the expansion of local-global markets, resource flows and the local and global wealth production. Thus when Kumaratunga had to seek the assistance of the international community, they expected her to begin political negotiations with the LTTE, a process for which she invited Norway as the facilitator.

However, an in-depth understanding of the agenda of peace by peaceful means during her first term (1993-2004) requires an understanding of a few other dynamics of the period.

There were the struggles faced by the ruling class and the political parties. According to the findings of this research, in the early 1990s and at the centre of politics, these were two fold. The first was restoring the legitimacy and the hegemony of the ruling class. This had been seriously undermined by the Bonaparte politics of Premadasa era, fear politics of JVP under Premadasa government and most importantly by the entrance of new actors from the underworld and local gangsters in the local political scene (Uyangoda 2008: 73) who created blurred boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate authority in politics[7]. The second, at a more micro-meso

level, was essentially about the individual and personal level. As this research shows, both are finely blended in Kumaratunga's agenda of peace by peaceful means, especially in the struggles Kumaratunga faced as leader of the PA and as the party leader of SLFP.

In this regard, the legacy of her parents (both been the ex-prime ministers of Sri Lanka and her father been the founder of SLFP) was definitely an added advantage when the young Kumaratunga launched her political career in left politics. She also married the famous film actor (later a leftist politician) Vijaya Kumaratunga, and together they formed a new political party, the Sri Lanka Mahajana Peramuna (SLMP). In its initial years of operation, it embarked on a political dialogue with Tamil political forces, including the LTTE, with the hope of enhancing mutual understanding and bringing about a political solution to the *Sinhala-Tamil conflict*. The principles the party stood for in resolving the minority political issue made SLMP popular and acceptable for the Tamils and Tamil political forces. It irritated president Premadasa of the UNP and in 1988 eventually resulted in the daylight political murder of Vijaya Kumaratunga.

The political murder of Kumaratunga is allegedly linked to president Premadasa and as well as to the JVP (Samarasinghe 10994:1021). After her husband's assassination, Chandrika Kumaratunga was absent from the local political scenario for two years and lived abroad with her two young children. Until re-entering the political scene in 1991[8], she played an insignificant role in national politics, with her brother Anura Bandaranaike becoming more active in the national legislature and in SLFP party politics. Kumaratunga returned to national politics in 1991, taking over the deputy leadership of SLFP and in 1992 succeeded her feeble mother Sirimavo Bandaranaike (world's first woman prime minister) as party leader. Her success made some old party stalwarts in the SLFP and especially her brother Anura, unhappy, with a rift occurring between the two political siblings. This resulted in Kumaratunga taking control of the party with her mother's blessings and Anura leaving the SLFP and joining the rival UNP (1994-2000). The back and forth mud slinging between the two siblings in the national political theatre not only exposed the dilemmas of individual political leaders[9] but also provided free entertainment to the general public ('gallery politics').

In 1993, Kumaratunga received 68.4% of the vote (www.slelections.gov.lk) when the People's Alliance first won the Western provincial council elections and then the presidential elections. In western provincial council elections, Kumaratunga became the chief minister and upon winning the general elections in 1994 she became the prime minister. In 1995 she assumed the office of the executive president (Samarasinghe 1994). In 1999, she was re-elected as the president. By securing these victories, Kumaratunga surprised her political skeptics within SLFP and outside the party by proving her ability to bring victory to SLFP after 17 years of UNP's political domination. This rash of election victories also increased trust that Kumaratunga could deliver on the promises she made during the election campaigns. During this time, in the eyes of many voters, both with and without strong political party affiliations, Kumaratunga was seen as the hope of peace and prosperity. The high esteem in which she was held by all ethnic groups lent Kumaratunga's agenda of peace by peaceful means further reinforcement.

2.2 Kumaratunga challenged: Crisis in the coalition

The 1993 PA government was constituted with Sri Lanka Freedom Party as its leader and nine other smaller parties, with many of its minor supporters left leaning political parties. However, following the general elections, the PA was able to form a parliamentary majority in the national legislature by adding 7 seats through the support extended by the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC)[10]. At this time, SLMC was the only political party formed to address the issues of minority Muslims. Until 1993, its influence in politics had been regional and was mainly confined

to the Eastern province, where Muslims live side by side with an equal percentage of Sinhalese and Tamils. The support of the SLMC was secured by the PA by entering into a number of deals with the leader of the Muslim Congress, M. Ashraff. This, as Keethaponcalan described, was a significant change in coalition politics during Kumaratunga's first term as the president, and elevated SLMC leader, Ashroff, as the new "King maker" (earlier this title was given to S.Thondaman, leader of CWC) (2008: 3).

Apart from the Muslim Congress, numerous other Tamil political parties also extended (sometimes conditional) support. In order to secure this coalition government, all parties in the coalition received state patronage. This state patronage offered to the coalition partners and for Kumaratunga's close circle of friends was widely criticized by the general public (see chapter 3 for more details). This criticism centered around Kumaratunga both going back on the promises made to the voters during the campaign and also failing to reduce of cost of government. Criticism came from Ashraff as well, despite the lucrative ministerial posts offered as a bargaining chip. This criticism from the SMLC leader included constant challenges to the PA government and threats to withdraw support of his party.

These demands became increasingly aggressive, creating tensions between the SLMC and other minority political parties within the PA government that put Kumaratunga under enormous pressure (Keethaponcalan 2008:4). They help create a turbulent political context in which a victory in at least one area of people's concern (settling the ethnic conflict and the armed conflict) became ever more important as a way to silence the critics and to sustain the support of the public. These circumstances seem to have both influenced and reinforced the PA decision to embark on and continue a process of political negotiations with the LTTE in an attempt to avoid or forestall political troubles that Kumaratunga and her PA government foresaw and later actually experienced.

2.3 Negotiations with the LTTE (1994-1997): Internal political party dynamics

As promised in her election campaign, during her first term as president, Kumaratunga embarked on political negotiations with the LTTE. This negotiating effort was widely regarded as a courageous, especially since the LTTE in this time period carried out a number of high profile political assassinations (i.e President Premadasa in 1993, DUNF leader, Gamini Dissanayake in 1993, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991)[11]. According to some observers, these peace talks were entered into by the LTTE in 1995 on an exploratory basis, as a way to enhance their political status and to preserve both military and quasi-state in Jaffna (Schaffer 1999:138). Whether this is true, false or partially true, this paper suggests negotiating with the LTTE was necessary to counter the political and economic pressures.

However, the dynamics of national politics and the various military actions carried out by the LTTE during negotiations made peace and a political settlement increasingly difficult. This was made worse by the economic burden of the protracted the civil war. In addition, Kumaratunga was personally challenged to prove her credentials in the terrain of peace, necessary political capital not only for the survival of her government but for her political career. Rumors about her ambition of securing the Nobel peace prize by settling the conflict in Sri Lanka were widespread (De Silva, www.kalaya.org). This meant that delivering peace and peace dividends were not options for Kumaratunga; rather they became political compulsions.

According to many respondents of this research who regard themselves as moderates in Sri Lankan politics, Kumaratunga's 'peace package' was the most advanced and progressive effort taken by that date by any political leadership in the country to address the ethnic conflict and civil

war through genuine political means. One Tamil respondent, a leading lawyer, a scholar and an ex-commissioner of the Human Rights Commission: *I should credit the efforts of Chandrika with reservations. …Chandrika was genuine in finding a solution. For example, she was even ready to accept the Post-Tsunami Joint Operation Mechanism (P-TOMS)*. Another highly ranked Tamil civil servant described "Chandrika was a democratic leader, and she did not go too far in the extremist end". Analyzing the shifting discourses and various mental frameworks supporting peace and war that were used interchangeably in electoral politics in the south, a Tamil scholar and political commentator also credited Kumaratunga by pointing her out as the only Sinhalese political leader able to liberate Sinhala people from the war mentality and, according to this respondent, to create space for peace by backing new peace projects such as *Saama Balakaaya* (peace solidarity groups), *Sudu Nelum Vyaparaya* (white lotus movement), *Sama Thawalama* (peace caravan) and by establishing the National Integration Programme Unit (NIPU) at the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs. In addition to these projects to mobilize the general public mainly with symbols of peace, during her first term Kumaratunga simultaneously embarked on a process of constitutional reforms. In 1997 this constitutional reform process, widely known as the *political package*, produced the introduction of a draft constitution. In 2000, during her second term, an updated version of the draft constitution of 1997 was presented by Kumaratunga to the national legislature.

Although it is important to mention that the highly militarized context in which these interviews took place seems to have influenced the opinions given, at the time of field work in the first quarter of 2009, when taking stock of multiple peace initiatives undertaken by the Sinhalese political leadership, respondents belonging to Tamil and Muslim communities expressed a reserved appreciation of Kumaratunga. The majority of the Sinhalese respondents (who have no strong or declared political affiliations) concurred, and also saw these initiatives as both positive signs towards a permanent political solution ending the war and, more importantly, as a positive breakthrough in southern politics. As a female respondent recalled, "even today, we can be happy about Chandrika's time; if not peace, at least the symbols of peace were there, and even federalism which was a dirty word in Southern political discourse, became more accepted among the people".

Quite in contradiction to the above public views and general appreciation of Kumaratunga, in 2002, the leadership of the LTTE remarked in his Hero's Day speech "for the Tamils and the liberation tigers, Chandrika is no goddess of peace. We consider her a hardliner who bets on a military solution … in our eyes Chandrika is a warmonger" (Prabhakaran 2000 Hero's Day speech, quoted in Rajanayagam 2009:91).

Further analyses of Kumaratunga period suggest that she was able both to make federalism and political negotiations more acceptable in southern politics and also to make international mediation acceptable to the local communities and the LTTE. This was a genuine change from both the Jayawardena regime (1977 to 1989) and the Premadasa regime, during which, for number of reasons, the controversial role played by India in Sri Lanka's conflict made any form of intervention by an international third party extremely sensitive and unwelcome. During the Jayawardena regime, the JVP and other small-scale Sinhalese nationalist political parties were vocal in rejecting foreign intervention[12]. The JVP rejected outright any international engagement, since this would raise associations with their painful experiences during the second JVP uprising during Premadasa period, when India deployed Peace Keeping Forces in the war zone; the role played by IPKF left lasting painful memories. This sentiment is especially strong among the Tamil population in Jaffna. For the JVP, more than the sufferings of the Tamils in the hands of the IPKF, it was Indian regional hegemony, and speculation concerning an Indian conspiracy to

expand in Sri Lanka, that determined their resistance (Wijeweera 1986: 156-158). During the Premadasa regime, JVP unleashed series of island wide protests against the IPFK involvement.

The measures Premadasa took to respond to the situation including killing JVP cadres and "anti-state activists" who took part in these protests. Premadasa also granted the Sri Lankan police and security forces vast powers to handle the situation 'effectively'. The reaction of the JVP to these state actions was to kill and threaten those who served in the military forces and in the police as well as their family members[13]. As many as 40,000 may have died (Moore cited by Spencer 2000:125). Huge losses in the JVP's high ranks, and the painful experiences of surviving JVP members, strengthened its opposition to any form of external intervention. Finally, external intervention was ruled out by the JVP's general capitalist and anti-imperialist ideological stance. However, during the second term of Kumaratunga from 1999-2005, by becoming a partner for her coalition government and becoming a member of the ruling class, JVP muted these sentiments and initially showed more tolerance for a Norwegian role in Sri Lanka's conflict transformation processes.

3. PA and the beginning and the end of peace by peaceful means

Negotiation efforts launched in 1994-95 can be considered a political breakthrough, even though for the PA the political capital generated by the initial cessation of hostilities declared by the LTTE was short lived. These negotiations shifted the dynamics in domestic politics and generated a pro-peace, pro-federalist feeling, but their overall success was marginal.

Under Kumaratunga's political leadership, government forces secured numerous 'politically valuable' victories in the battlefield. This affected the peace-process negatively in a time period which intensified the longstanding UNP-SLFP struggle for state power. One manifestation of this was the intensification of the clash of personalities between UNP leadership Ranil Wickramasinghe and Kumaratunga who, to settle these differences, tried to negotiate with the LTTE and entered into a pact of political cohabitation with Wickramsinghe. This pact, which was especially aimed at searching for a bipartisan solution (Bandarage 2009:161), was brokered by a British parliamentarian, Liam Fox. The main clauses of the pact were meant to develop cooperative environments in which to address nationally important issues. Although the Liam Fox agreement appeared fine on paper, in reality, it had no success. For instance, when Kumaratunga presented the draft of the new constitution in 1997 and 2000, going against the pact, UNP did not extended its promised support to Kumaratunga, although the draft constitution presented to the parliament claimed to have incorporated the changes proposed by the parliament select committee appointed on Constitutional Reforms, in which UNP also took part in (Edrisinha 1999:170).

The actions and reactions of the LTTE in the north made southern politics vulnerable. Thus, although Kumaratunga seemed to have good intentions, the LTTE stymied her. As this paper finds, the developments in the battle front in the North and in the political front in the south are interlinked and function in complementarily. For example, from time to time the LTTE put pressure on Kumaratunga's government by entering into military actions hurt the political-peace plans. This caused the initial glimpses of success gained during the negotiations to fade and contributed to mounting dissatisfaction of the Sinhalese south with the negotiations. The LTTE then declared its "Eelam War 3", launching heavy military attacks in the North, sinking valuable Sri Lankan naval craft and shattering any hope of peace as Kumaratunga ordered a major offensive. The LTTE were in the end completely driven from the area as government forces regained the control of Jaffna peninsula. Initially, this turn-around of events brought extra (southern) political capital to Kumaratunga and to her ailing government.

Despite the initial victories, at the end of Eelam war 3, in the overall list of wins and loses, the performance of the government forces became marginal. For example, even after capturing the Jaffna peninsula, the area became under siege as a result of series of offensives carried out by the LTTE under the code name, *Oyada Alaigal* (unceasing waves)(Keethaponcalan 2008: 17). With the successes gained by the LTTE in the military front, it also entered into an aggressive path of attacks, particularly targeting the economically important areas in the south. Among these attacks, the bomb attacks carried out on Central Bank of Sri Lanka killed about 100 persons and international airport in Sri Lanka in 1997, hard hit the economy of the country. According to the estimates of the International Alert (IA), the expenditure and output lost due to war was over Rs.Billion 1443.52 (www.internatinal-alert.org/pdfs/costwarxsum)). Apart from the economically important targets, in 1997, the LTTE also carried out an attack on the Buddhist sacred site, the temple of the tooth in Kandy, sparkling outrageous reactions in the south. All these attacks and counterattacks carried out by both parties steadily undermined Kumaratunga's negotiation efforts and cast doubts on the promised peace.

Seizing the opportunity, the political opponents of Kumaratunga and the PA government rallied the public. They managed to shifts in public opinion, eventually encouraging Kumaratunga to change her policy of 'peace by peaceful means' to 'peace by limited war'. However, the government took this approach with no credible guarantees of a military win against the LTTE. Instead, pressures from her opponents and the southern polity pushed Kumaratunga and her government to sacrifice valuable state resources for a limited war, going against the warnings of her military advisors. This hurt the ordinary Tamils, the most. It also increased nation-wide check-up operations, making the PA government even more unpopular with the Tamils. Further, in 1999 an unsuccessful attempt on Kumaratunga's life was made by the LTTE. She survived but sustained serious injuries and became blind in one eye. Meanwhile, in 2000, the government's main military base in Elephant Pass was captured (Sambandan 2000).

Thus, the heavy military confrontations and heavy losses incurred by the government in its 'limited war' placed a heavy burden on the country's economy. At the same time, the constitutional package worked out for a political settlement by the PA government became an increasingly difficult sell in the south. The lack of options provided fine opportunities for Kumaratunga's political opponents to undermine her leadership and her political credibility.

3.1 Kumaratunga's second term and majority-minority politics

In her second term, Kumaratunga also experienced a similar series of decisive challenges. These came from within the SLFP and from the coalition partners of PA. For example, she faced enormous criticisms from the SLMC leader, MHM Ashraff (Keethaponcalan 2008:4), who believed the issues of Muslims should deserve the same level of attention as the issues of minority Tamils. This immediate threat to the PA government was averted by the sudden demise of Ashraff and the subsequent conflicts over the future leadership of the SLMC. Meanwhile, capitalizing on the intra-party squabbles in the SLMC, Kumaratunga made use of the situation to secure a working majority in the parliament. After much personal persuasion, she managed to establish Mrs. Ferial Ashraff, the wife of late Ashraff and a complete novice to national politics, as one of the co-party leaders of SLMC. The SLMC continued to support the PA government and prevented the falling of the government. However, this was not to last. Within the SLMC, Ferial Asraff's leadership was challenged by Rauf Hakeem, the deputy leader of the SLMC. Eventually, two factions developed. Initially both factions extended their support for PA. Later, the Hakeem (known as National Unity Alliance –NUA) faction crossed over to the opposition, affecting the balance of power in the national legislature and making the PA government a parliamentary

minority. Following Hakeem, a number of ministers and other members in the PA government (altogether 9 members including the General Secretary of the PA) crossed over to the opposition and joined hands with the UNP.

Taking the opportunity, the UNP planned to bring a no –confidence motion against the PA government (Keethaponcalan 2008: 79)[14]. It also gained support from the Ceylon Worker's Congress and another minority Tamil party which, following these dramatic political developments crossed over to the opposition. These changes sent a clear signal to the PA that it might lose the no-confidence motion. The only disadvantage for the UNP was the crossing back of President's brother, Anura Bandaranaike to the SLFP. By end of 2000, the combination of conflicts in southern politics as well as battles in the north gave rise to a new political constellation in the national legislature and in the national political scenario. This new constellation was unfavorable for the PA government's survival.

Taking all these opportunities in hand, on 3rd of August 2000, the UNP unleashed its final move against the PA by opposing the constitutional bill of 2000. Their reasons included the threat that the new constitution bill posed to the unitary status of Sri Lanka. According to a few respondents interviewed during this research, the UNP claim was more "a tune played to the gallery" and according to them (especially those who were close observers of high politics of Sri Lanka) the actual reason the UNP opposed the 2000 Constitutional Bill was UNP unwillingness to extend a new lease of life to the ailing government. The UNP stance was met with disappointment by Kumaratungam, as her speech during the parliamentary debates on the new constitution bill of 2000 shows:

> "Today is indeed historic. It is a special day in the history of a great people, with a history of over thousands of years. This Constitution is designed to end the ethnic war, which totally destroyed the lives of the people of this country, a war which has been a curse impeding the forward march of this country. I ask whether the UNP, which deepened the ethnic crisis and caused it, at least now, on behalf of the country, can they not act in mature manner, when our Government has taken the responsibility, at the risk of our lives, to establish a permanent peace, there by putting an end to this war, which was started under the patronage of the UNP Government, by killing, and burning the Tamil people and destroying their property, on five occasions between 1977-1983? If the UNP members here today, like a pack of jackals, it is a major concern for me as to how can they form a responsible government in this country?" (Somasundaram 2000:181)

The only way to avoid facing the no-confidence motion was to suspend parliament and call a general election, which, without a parliamentary majority, Kumaratunga was compelled to do in 2001.

As this paper finds, during Kumaratunga period, the shifting state-in-society dynamics and the new military balance, bringing peace was important for number of reasons that cannot be divorced from the general political realities in politics and specific challenges faced by the ruling regime and the ruling class of the country. For example, like for her predecessors, Kumaratunga could use either war or peace to generate powerful political capital, to secure credibility and legitimacy for her policies and for her continued presidency and party leadership. Therefore, it can be argued that, winning either peace or war is desirable and losing either brings disastrous outcomes neither for the political leadership personally nor to the political party or the coalition in office. It is correct to suggests that Kumaratunga sought the much needed political capital or war or/and peace, during her two terms in office, sometimes simultaneously and separately, by using whichever approach fit prevailing political-economic circumstances the best.

However in these approaches, negative peace seems to be the morally and politically desired end result, which cannot be divorced from the desire for state power, political legitimacy and establish moral hegemony of the ruling class as well as from the expectations of the powerful international community. As one respondent, who is a high profiled political figure closely linked at personal level to the UNP leadership partially explains the reasons why UNP opposed the 2000 constitutional bill. In the words of this respondent, "for political parties, it's a matter of staying in power. I think reality changes when you are in power. You get isolated. When you are a leader, you automatically become a political celebrity. How you think changes with power in your hand. For example, for Chandrika, it was all about staying in power". Below is an excerpt from the reply speech made by the Opposition leader, Ranil Wickramasinghe in parliament further explains the realities of power politics.

"… on the 20th July, we were informed by the Government of the matters raised by the Tamil parties. A joint meeting of the UNP Parliamentary group and the UNP Working Committee was held on the 27th July to consider the transitional provisions to retain the executive presidency for a period of six years. At this meeting, it was decided that the UNP could not agree to this provision since the government and the UNP had already agreed to the abolition of the executive presidency in accordance with the government's Constitutional draft in 1997.This was conveyed to the Government by the UNP delegation. Thereafter, the government unilaterally decided to present this bill to parliament, to repeal and replace the existing Constitution. This bill retains only part of the agreements reached between the government and the UNP. Some of the important areas of consensus have been changed unilaterally. Furthermore, several issues, which have not been discussed during these meetings, have been included in the Bill… (Somasundaram 2000:283)

For both leaders, analyses of the contents of the speeches explain how their desire for power is articulated through policies intended to address the issue of war and peace through institutional and constitutional means, which is the dominant framework promoted by the global hegemonic political project of the right, to which the country's ruling class has increasingly subscribed to.

3.2 Political Turmoil in the South and the context of the General Election in 2001

The general election in 2001 was the second general election held within two years. At this time, looking at the popularity of PA regime in the 1994 elections, many political commentators doubted that in the near future the UNP would return to power (See table 1 for a comparative analysis of the percentages of votes received by UNP, SLFP and SLFP with it's alliances in four general elections between from 1994-2004). However, they were ignoring the gradual negative political and economic performance that had occurred since 1994. When the election took place, dissatisfaction with the PA had been mounting steadily as a result of its failure to deliver on the promises made during the previous elections, especially for not fulfilling the promises made on the economic development and peace dividends. As table depicts, in 2001, SLFP's share of total votes including the votes of its allies were as low as 37.19%). This explains a number of dynamics and few cardinal characteristics of local electoral politics during this period, inspired and strengthened by short sighted simplistic "give and take mentality" of the voters and the pressure faced by the ruling regimes on delivering its promises in the short run. As some suggest, PA's defeat can be well linked to the insensitivity to the social consequences of economic mismanagement that resulted in high inflation (for details See Table 2), rising cost of living, withdrawal of subsidies and dwindling unemployment for the young (Uyangoda quoted in Jayasuriya 2005:65) as well as for backtracking on visionary idealism and ethnic politics (Ibid).

Table 1: Voter (per Cent) for UNP, SLFP and Allies, General Elections 1994-2004

Year	UNP % Votes	SLFP % Votes	SLFP and Allies % Votes
1994	44.04	48.94	50.74
2000	40.22	na	45.11
2001	46.86	na	37.19
2004	37.83	na	45.60

Source: adapted and modified from Jayasuriya (2005:138)

Table 2 - Colombo Consumers' Price Index (CCPI) & Greater Colombo Consumers' Price Index

Year	All Items	Rate of Inflation	Food	GDP deflator, 1996=100
1991	1131.5	12.19	1220.3	62.50
1992	1260.4	11.39	1366.0	68.76
1993	1408.4	11.74	1519.4	75.28
1994	1527.4	8.45	1654.1	82.29
1995	1644.6	7.67	1768.1	89.20
1996	1906.7	15.94	2107.6	100.00
1997	2089.1	9.57	2336.9	108.67
1998	2284.9	9.37	2592.1	117.83
1999	2392.1	4.69	2695.4	122.98
2000	2539.8	6.17	2815.8	131.18
2001	2899.4	14.16	3244.7	147.3
2001	3176.4	9.55	3589.9	159.59

Source: Price Indicator of Sri Lanka (http://www.ices.lk/sl_database/price_indices/ccpi.shtml) (Adapted and modified by the author)

Note: Although the rate of inflation shows an improvement during Kumaratunga period, the skyrocketing trend of food prices shows a worrisome picture.

As this research finds, this dissatisfaction with PA and Kumaratunga was only one aspect of this reality. For the majority Sinhalese in the south, dissatisfaction grew as private sector investment stalled. It also grew as a result of the direct violence and everyday economic hardships brought by the unwinnable war's huge social and economic costs. These costs were in part paid during PA rule through a "defense levy" in addition to the existing Goods and Service Tax (GST). This in turn increased the burden on the people and tremendously affected business.

The entrepreneur class, despite the positive initial steps taken to incorporate the private sector to build the economy with state patronage, remained skeptical about the PA's militarized agenda. In the PA agenda on paper, the private sector was treated as the engine of growth, but in practice, this was disappointing (Venugopal 2008:4). Also, traditionally the entrepreneur class favored the economic principles followed by UNP administrations. They were not, this author suspects, fully appreciative of the fact that by the mid 1990s the SLFP had abandoned its socialist economic outlook, but aware that the type of state bureaucracy nurtured under the PA government operated in the old mindset. Moreover, entrepreneurs saw the PA as dragging its foot on implementing a

fully fledged liberal economic plan that assigned the private sector more responsibility. Thus, the initial interest expressed by the local business community was lost, as they saw no economic benefit. Under these circumstances, during the 2001 election campaign, the entrepreneur class switched their support to the UNP.

3.3 Saving Kumaratunga: PA –JVP memorandum in Sept. 2001

The self-proclaimed nationalist JVP was then convinced to enter into a pact with a PA desperate to stay in power. In this way, the JVP capitalized on the expanding political feud between SLFP and UNP and was able to actively take part in government affairs as a member to the ruling coalition. In other words, the JVP, which otherwise had no chance whatsoever to form a government on its own, used a new episode in the traditional UNP-SLFP grudge surrounding the threats of impeachment and no confidence motions to taste state power. Also, the JVP was acutely aware of the opportunity this presented to expand its support base by using state patronage. It had observed how, from 1994 to 2000, the SLMC and Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) were able to use their ability to deploy patronage as coalition partners to consolidate their power bases and advance their ethnically-based claims on number of nationally important issues. Moreover, the JVP must have calculated that, by becoming a coalition partner, it could also counter the rising influence of other minority parties. They were particularly aware of the imminent threat posed by the SLMC. The JVP's temporary suspension of its traditional anti-bourgeoisie criticism of the SLFP thus makes sense in the context of this new constellation in national politics.

The pact between the two parties, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), was effective for one year from Sept 2001 to Sept. 2002. The main areas of JVP's concern reflected in the MOU were issues related to democratization, growth of the capitalist economy, the continuation of the privatization of state assets by the PA and reduction of government expenditure. All of the clauses in the MOU, as Keethaponcalan notes, were similar to the clauses of JVP's election manifesto and within its general line of propaganda (2008: 76). Two side agreements concurrent with the MOU prevented the JVP from launching any course of action that directly destabilized the PA government and committed the JVP to extend necessary support for the continuation of the PA government to gain stability in parliament. Numerous additional side agreements the PA was pressured by the JVP to accept included one preventing the PA from sharing political power based on minority ethnic lines. According to the UNP, members of the business community and minority political parties, the MOU and related agreements did more harm to the country than good. Particularly, JVP-imposed clauses on the devolution of power and the anti-LTTE negotiation stance. The pact thus became unpopular among many who wished to see an end to the war through a political settlement.

Clauses of the MOU were accepted by the PA knowing its inability or lack of will to implement them. Thus, after four months, both parties realized they were unable to manage a fruitful and mutually beneficial partnership, and eventually the JVP pulled out of the agreement. The end of this cooperation triggered another general election in 2001. As soon as the political cohabitation fell apart, the JVP began both to exert pressure on the PA and to mobilize the public against political negotiations and the Norwegian intervention in the country. According to number of those interviewed for this study, JVP's fall-out with the PA in 2001 was due to the unreasonable demands they demanded in exchange for support. As one veteran left wing political party leader observed, the nature of JVP became even more apparent during this period " JVP is not left; it is a "peculiar animal", fanciful in its demands, 'ultimatist' and with no transitional approach to politics. Their vision is guided by proposing what cannot be done, resist any reforms, play flesh and fowl. They are left in appearance, but they are chauvinists, repressive, undemocratic and

violent". According to members of other political parties, JVP's initial cooperation and later opposition to external inventions during the PA regime can be only understood within the logic of political survival.

It appears that this small political party with a sophisticated propaganda machine was particularly effective among rural and certain lower middle class urban pockets, and identification with the PA, and its agenda of peace and economic development might, in the long run, have threatened the core identity of JVP as a Marxist-nationalist political party and its need to stay out of the political projects of the bourgeois ruling class advancing the hegemony of the right. Therefore, the advantages of being a partner to the government might have appeared unfavorable to attaining their ultimate goal of capturing state power as a single political party vis-à-vis the horizontal patronage they receive as a minor coalition partner.

Thus the PA lost public support in several constituencies in the south. This coincided the unpopularity with the Tamil community in the north of its economic embargo there, and criticism from Tamils living in other parts of the country whose mobility was affected by the increased security measures. Together, these developments explain the intrinsic linkages between peace, economic wellbeing and political stability in national politics. A range of uncontrollable variables decides the fate of all governments, and in this case, the UNP seized the opportunity to mobilize the voters and eventually to capture state power.

3.4 2001 General elections - People's verdict dismissed!

Until 5th December 2001, when the parliamentary general elections were held, President Kumaratunga repeatedly appealed to the public to give her and the People's Alliance a clear mandate. She stressed the importance of winning a clear majority in the elections for the effective functioning of the government. Her appeals for support reflected the frequent bitterness in UNP–SLFP and Wickramasinghe–Bandaranaike relations. Kumaratunga needed an outright win for her political coalition to avoid a situation in which UNP led the parliament as she continued as executive president.

However, the election results forced Kumaratunga as the executive president to work with the United National Front led cabinet (constituted of UNP, SLMC, CWC and dissidents of PA) led by her archrival Ranil Wickramasinghe of UNP. According to many political analysts, this was one of the rare occasions in politics where voters gave a clear verdict to the factionalized ruling class to develop a common vision and a bi-partisan approach. The victory of UNP can also be interpreted as an attempt by the voters to redirect attention to their own social and economic struggles. Owing to the underlying factional conflicts, a government in which the UNP and PA had equally important stakes did not inspire confidence. As Uyangoda (applying a Freudian psycho analytic approach) points out, there was a 'narcissm of minor differences'[15] (2000:71-72) undermining any mutually supportive role.

4. 2002-2003 Political negotiations with the LTTE under the UNF government: Experimenting (Neo) Liberal Peace

In 2001, the leader of the UNF, Ranil Wickramasinghe, who had the support of few minority political parties, gained an election victory on the peace-economic development platform. The UNF was extended support by one of the key members of the UNP led alliance, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) of four Tamil political parties. This support of the UNF was contingent upon willingness to hold negotiations with the LTTE. The UNF accepted the support and agreed to hold settlement talks with the LTTE. This was, as a number of UNP members interviewed for

this research claimed, consistent with the UNF's belief in political power sharing. The UNF was also motivated to continue the talks given a number of other state-in-society dynamics.

Within the UNF, the UNP leader framed the conflict in Sri Lanka differently from his predecessors. He viewed the situation as a "north-east war" that needed to be settled for economic reasons. He of course also faced significant pressure from the international community. His approach was 'liberal peace' (Uyangoda and Perera 2003: 4, Stokke and Uyangoda 2010: 1). These internal dynamics were, it appears, affected at about this time by the September 11 attacks in the USA, specifically by international "war on terrorism", as both the UNF and the LTTE agreed to conduct political negotiations based on the theory of mutually hurting stalemate (Zaartman 2001:8)[16].

The negotiation initiative of Wickramasinghe was built on the foundation laid by the PA government, and extended the role of Norway as the facilitator[17]. Although it managed to attract enormous level of attention from the western countries, soon this initiative was less welcomed by the nationalist lenient and rival local political forces. Even before the signing of the ceasefire agreement with the LTTE in 2002, rival political forces (mainly the PA, JVP and EPDP) mobilized opposition among the public. There were also factional conflicts among the Tamil political forces at this time, including conflicts between the EPDP and its political arch rival TNA (known as the LTTE proxy).

As usual, in the south opposition to a ceasefire was based on a prediction that it could only lead to the establishment of a separate state in the north. With the covert blessings of the PA, during 2002/ 2003, massive demonstrations against the ceasefire agreement were organized by the JVP. This and the related propaganda from the JVP and the usual political archrivals of Wickramsinghe, slowly yet successfully shifted the previously established pro-negotiation public opinion of to an anti-negotiations stand. What are interesting to observe during this period were the actions of Kumaratunga, who in her first term successfully lobbied the southern polity in favor of a negotiated political settlement and in this new political context lobbied against it.

Those who publicly criticized this MOU focused on both the usual politics on and supposedly a-political technicalities. For instance, there was wide criticism of Article 1, which suspended military actions against the LTTE (see CJPD 2006:42-429 for a copy of the MOU). Others, especially the JVP, SLFP and the other opposition parties, criticised the suspension of military actions by the government forces, claiming that this allowed the LTTE to rearm themselves freely. This argument found support among southerners, who recalled previous, failed negotiations efforts and the scale of violence experienced afterwards. In addition, liberal human rights groups and loosely organized 'apolitical technical oppositions' opposed the negotiations by citing the issues of constitutionality and legality. They felt the MOU violated two major fundamental provisions. First, they felt that the Prime Minister lacked the constitutional authority to enter into any agreement pertaining to war, since such powers lie in the hands of the Executive President. Second, they believed that signing an MOU with a group that was not only armed but had been banned under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) of 1972 violated the PTA. Although these groups caused difficulties, by using Norwegian communication channels, Wickramasinghe managed to get the LTTE to agree to attend the negotiations, by providing assurances that the internal ban would be lifted 10 days ahead of the negotiations.

This MOU also faced criticism from number of other interests groups that claimed to have non-political status in Colombo or in the North and Northeast. For instance, Colombo based human rights organizations pointed out that by entering into the MOU, the Sri Lanka government legalized and legitimized LTTE's self-proclaimed position of being the "sole representative" of

Sri Lanka's indigenous Tamils. They also argued that the MOU automatically disrespected the claims of other Tamil groups, especially the moderates, who also claimed to represent the same constituency but adhered to democratic means. Painting a worrisome picture, these human rights groups also accused the UNF of deliberately trying to eliminate alternative, moderate, democratic and liberal Tamil groups, who often suffered in the hands of LTTE's brutal, de-facto state. Further, they predicted that the MOU would eventually enable the LTTE to impose totalitarian rule in the north and east. For them, the MOU was the deliberate acceptance of LTTE's violation of regional minorities' human rights and the discarding of democratic means and pluralism in politics. The signing of the MOU, for them, indicated that the government was paving the way for 'totalitarian peace' and nurturing LTTE as a fascist organization (Uynagoda and Perera 2003:21).

Further complicating the situation in the south, the LTTE refused to begin the proposed political negotiations until the proscription imposed on them during the PA regime (after attacking the Temple of the Tooth in 1998) was lifted. The LTTE felt that their status as a banned organization was unacceptable and undermined their status as the sole representatives of the Tamil people. The LTTE's argument was received differently by different groups in the country. For example, the theorists of conflict resolution filled the theoretical vacuum by citing internationally used academic jargon, such as "parity of status" and signaling the importance of the lifting of the ban for a successful process (Uyangoda 2007). Meanwhile, the opposition political parties, including the SLFP engaged in their usual destructive politics, urging that the ban be continued. The PA, which had worked tirelessly to secure the ban domestically (and eventually internationally in 2006 when the LTTE was listed as an international terrorist organization in Europe, United States and in number of other western countries) saw lifting the ban as decreasing its past and future political capital and were vehemently opposed.

On 10th April 2002, to rescue Wickramasinghe, the LTTE leadership made one of its rare televised appearances. In it, Prabhakaran suggested a way out of the war. A key point of his speech, one that took by surprise by various political forces in the south, was his willingness to seek a political solution to end the war. The LTTE leader strongly hinted that a political framework based on autonomy and internal-self determination would be an acceptable settlement. This move of the LTTE leadership was in contradiction with its past tradition of hard bargaining based on the controversial Thimpu Principles.[18] It was the first time, in the history of the conflict that the LTTE publicly declared its readiness to accept a settlement that only partly met the first four Thimpu principles (recognition of Tamil as a separate and a distinct nation, recognition of a Tamil homeland and guarantee of its territorial integrity and the right of Tamils for self-determination (Uyangoda and Perera 2003:31). On the part of the LTTE, this expression of willingness to shift its political position from conditional negotiation to principled unconditional negotiation was a welcome gesture for the UNF government. However it sparked mainly negative reactions in the south, as people continued to turn against the UNF, further intensifying and fragmenting the ruling class and the southern polity.

4.1 Working around politics of peace: Re-shifting of the discourse

Thus, with few blessings, the LTTE and the UNF government entered into political negotiations with a mutually accommodative understanding of peace. They were careful to define the conflict in non-controversial ways. From the LTTE perspective, the conflict was both a national question and a problem between the Sinhalese and the Tamil nations. From the UNF government's point of view, as mentioned previously, it was a 'war in the north and the east'. These seemingly politically neutral, non-comprehensive definitions agitated critics in the south even further, because accepting the UNF's definition meant limiting the phenomenon to a mere war in the north and the east, diluting or even hiding deep rooted aspects of the conflict. As a result, it

became obvious that the very conceptualization of the conflict was a threat to certain political forces whose political survival largely relied on a different reality. In this regard, nationalist political parties like the JVP seemed to be the most hurt, politically.

Further in terms of re-conceptualizing and re-making of the national discourse, LTTE and the UNF agreed and shared a particular conception of peace, that is both pragmatic and limited. As Uyangoda observed, their notion of peace entailed a political engagement to achieve '*what is possible'* (Uyangoda and Perera 2003: 26). Based on this limited pragmatic thinking, initially, both parties have stepped into negotiations leaving aside the contentious issues such as constitutional reforms, power sharing arrangements, etc. Therefore, from the very beginning, both parties were very evidently interested in conflict management rather than conflict transformation. From the government's point of view, the primary focus was to secure a limited peace agenda by deliberately limiting the emergence of unfavorable trajectories, that is, by de-linking the ethnic conflict from war and violence. Therefore, of the range of possible issues, the UNF initially selected only a few concerning consequences of the armed conflict and it was keen to develop a step by step approach to manage the conflict through a number of interim phases. According to technical experts on conflict negotiations, this kind of an approach usually allows the parties to address one issue at a time (Uyangoda 2003:4). The UNF government saw the possibility to make incremental progress as a better option than aiming only for a permanent solution. By following this strategy, the UNF government expected to open space for the institutionalization of a political process in which, at a later stage, all the parties could design alternatives.

As Uyangoda points out, the aspect of peace and the framework of negotiations employed by the UNF can be regarded as a "peace deal" (2003: 4). The main aim of this "peace deal" was to manage the conflict within a framework acceptable for the international custodians of the peace process. Its negotiation framework, as Uyangoda's analysis of its technical aspects suggests, from the very beginning largely ignored the political conditions required from the broader society for the negotiations to succeed (2003:29). However, as the interviews conducted for this research makes clear, there was little belief in the possibility of reaching such a wider consensus in an extremely polarized polity with a ruling class who has developed the political *habitus* of opposing each others endeavors.

4.2 Shifting opinions: International actors and new faces of nationalism in Sri Lanka

As mentioned previously, the external conditions that developed in the aftermath the 9/11 incident gave a crucial role in the 2002 negotiations to international actors. These actors were warmly welcomed in a variety of capacities by the UNF, despite its acute awareness of past negative experiences related to international involvements in domestic political negotiations[19]. As a result, the process became largely characterized by the overwhelming involvement of the international community (Goodhand 2006: 215-219). In addition to Norway, which been assigned the most direct role as facilitator, communicator and mediator, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada and Japan were the main custodians of the 2002/2003 negotiations[20]. The American, British, Canadian and the Japanese governments sent their individual representatives to Colombo to assess the progress of the peace process. In addition, a few notable international multilateral organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB) also began to work closely with the parties involved in the negotiations. Further, the United Nations and its agencies, which had been working in Sri Lanka for some time, also began to adjust their project activities in line with the needs and concerns emerging from the post-ceasefire context. For the UNF, this overwhelming international involvement was essential to legitimize the process and to secure financial

commitments necessary for delivering the promised peace dividends. This is evident in the role assigned to the international custodians in the post-conflict economic recovery and the efforts geared towards reconstruction of the war ravaged areas (Goodhand 2006: 218-221).

This overwhelming involvement of international custodians was heavily criticised by political parties and few vocal members of the local academic community (Bastian 2003:149-150, Rajasingham-Senanyake 2003:129-130). Therefore, in 2002/2003 the idea that international actors could hijack war, peace and conflict in Sri Lanka became the dominant subject in the national political discourse and among the polarized local academic community. Their involvement was often labeled an experiment of '(neo) liberal peace'. The role of Norway in particular was heavily criticised by the nationalist political parties, as usually spearheaded by the JVP. The multilateral financial institutions also became targets of these criticisms (Rajasingham-Senanayake 2003: 112).

Thus it seems that in theory, with both parties showing considerable mutual distrust combined with a willingness to open a political front to negotiate, the role of international actors with their technical skills, supposedly neutral communication and valuable financial resources can be helpful. They can offer 'carrots and sticks' to encourage accountability in the behaviors of the parties. However, when international actors are the primary designers of such a new constellation for peace in an extremely sensitive political context, they risk undermining the local knowledge, local political forces and their ambitions in power politics. In this way, the negotiation process and the UNF government increasingly became isolated from the rest of the society. As many respondents of this research pointed out, the UNF and Wickramasinghe became increasingly ignorant of and insensitive to local political realities, providing opportunities for eagerly waiting spoilers to destabilize the negotiations.

As this research finds, the so-called neo-liberal peace approach of the UNF government conceived a new form of nationalism specifically around the issue of peace negotiations and conflict transformation, during which the efforts to establish the moral hegemony of one faction over the others in the ruling class was evident. This neoliberal approach, according to people interviewed for this research who self-identified themselves as Sinhala-Buddhist nationalists, welcomed international actors unconditionally and was opposed by them during the 2002/03 negotiations for this reason. Attempts made by the international custodians of the peace process to establish new institutional and market structures that satisfied the needs of the global capitalist project and the bourgeois factions in the ruling class was, according to them, the most worrisome scenario. This, they felt, not local peace, was the main intention of international forces or the UNF with vested economic interests. International forces together with their local counterparts were thus seen as using the neo-liberal peace framework and the theatre of peace[21] to implement the neo-imperial economic and political project of the global west and help advance establishing the hegemony of the right. As this research finds, the above views provide evidence of the emergence of new forms or the fresh articulation of anti-western nationalism. Further, a critical assessment of above debates not only reveals the political-economic agenda of the international custodians but also of the political-economic agenda of the Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist project pursued by the oppositional groups too.

International scholarly critics and from a number of local discourse makers essentially argued that the neo-liberal framework endorsed by the UNF government did not have the capacity to address the deep rooted structural issues of the conflict. They argued that the new set of institutional arrangements proposed by the international multilateral institutes to settle the conflict in Sri Lanka was harmful (Bastian 2003:149-150, Rajasingham-Senanyake 2003:129-130). Their criticisms were picked up by the so-called nationalists and sparked fresh debates on Sinhala-

Buddhist nationalism, post-colonial national self determination and neo-colonial resistance. These debates, as observed previously, brought additional political capital and enhanced cultural capital useful for political survival of self designated nationalists. The result, according to a respondent of this research who is an active member of SLFP, was that Wickramasinghe's economic development proposal "Regaining Sri Lanka", tied to the peace process, was strictly developed according to a neo-liberal peace framework aligned with the political and economic project of the international multilateral institutions (or the so called Washington consensus); this was insensitive to the needs and aspirations of the local communities. As another respondent, who is a western educated theoretician for a nationalist political party, shared, "Ranil and his cultural, social and economic background are not local; he (and also Chandrika, during 1994-2004) did not allow Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism to exist; instead, they told the people to be Sri Lankan". According to a reputable economist among my respondents, the UNF's 2002/03 negotiations sought technocratic solutions and disregarded local knowledge and participation. The fact that this complaint is repeated raised in both academic and political circles suggests that the situation is best described in terms not both the serious technical flaws of the neo-liberal peace framework but the conduct of the factionalized ruling class and their intellectual allies.

Thus during the first phase, UNF and the LTTE were unable to not hold the proposed nine rounds of peace talks. They were limited to six rounds of formal talks. Furthermore, during the last three rounds of formal talks tensions developed around the issues of security, accelerating the North and east rehabilitation work, status of parity, and so on, and in March 2003 the negotiation process permanently stalled when the LTTE withdrew. The LTTE cited not having been invited to the international pre-donor conference organized in Washington D.C as the immediate reason. As tit for tat, the LTTE later boycotted the donor conference held in Tokyo, during which agendas of reconstruction and development were discussed. LTTE engagement was of paramount importance for Wickramasinghe, not only to challenge his opponents and the critics of the negotiation process but also to access US$ 40 million of aid pledged during the Tokyo conference and strictly tied to the progress of the negotiation process (Government of Sri Lanka 2002).

From this period onwards, complementing the negative political developments, a number of negative developments emerged on the battlefield, where the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) found that the LTTE committed a large number of ceasefire violations.[22] Reportedly, during this period the LTTE carried out 119 assassinations, 253 abductions of children, 579 abductions of adults and 1743 child recruitments (www.peaceinsrilanka.org/negotiations/slmm-statistics). LTTE ceasefire violations put enormous pressure on the UNF government. These ceasefire violations were reported from the eastern province and covered a range of violent acts, including all those mentioned above and also the killing of Muslims and extortions. They provided ready ammunition for critics in the south, who opposed the negotiations and also accuse Wickramasinghe of being a traitor to the country.

From the fourth round of negotiations the apparently cordial relations between the parties began to wither away, especially when discussing Muslim-Tamil relations in the east[23] and the removal of the high security zones. Cordiality was also disrupted by various naval confrontations instigated by the LTTE that provoked the Sri Lanka Navy to react. Thus, outside the negotiations, Kumaratunga ordered counter attacks on the LTTE. Altogether, these incidents on the military and political fronts raised questions about both the motives of the LTTE and the rival approaches of Kumaratunga and Wickramasinghe.

When analyzing the ways in which political forces supported or opposed the UNF political initiative in 2002/2003 and comparing this to the reactions of social and political groups during similar initiatives in the past, it is clear that it was not the various conceptualizations, theories and

frameworks of the UNF that finally failed. Instead, it was largely the nature of politics in the country, particularly in the south, that failed. Although some respondents reported in this research would disagree, it was not the conditions for political negotiations with the LTTE that caused negotiations to fail, but the absence of general democratic political conditions. Based on these sub-conclusions, the absence of favorable political conditions in the polity and the democracy deficit in domestic politics is what keeps this national issue unresolved and keeps the ruling regime from finding a national policy for the political settlement. This deficit of deep democracy is a long-standing issue in the post-colonial politics of the country, and periodically gains momentum around events of conflict, war and peace. Thus against the backdrop of negotiations in 2002/2003, it would be reasonable to suggest that taking a path of pro-political negotiations or anti-negotiations by the factions in the ruling class and shifting opinion for and against the war and peace by the society under a given social-political and economic context was none other than a means to continue a familiar notion of politics.

5. Kumaratunga strikes back: From liberal peace to limited war

Concurrent with the setbacks in the 2002/2003 negotiations, the tensions between the President Kumaratunga and premier Wickramasinghe set in motion a dramatic political scenario surrounding the issue of internal power sharing arrangements. These tensions, raised by Kumaratunga around issues of power sharing, were part and parcel of the internal power struggle and the personality clashes between the two leaders. Initially, a few rounds of open conflict with Kumaratunga, in February 2002, gave the UNF control of the ministries of finance, defense and media. This, the UNF government claimed, was important for the resolving of the north-east war. Thus on one hand, the actions of the UNF can be interpreted positively, because, taking control of these ministries allowed it to have access to the necessary resources to conduct negotiations with the LTTE. However, the UNF, in taking charge of these ministries, also undermined Kumaratunga's powers as the executive president.

Further, the LTTE began to aggressively demand the withdrawal of the government forces from the high security zones, citing the urgent need to resettle the Tamil civilians and normalize life. However, the UNF government was not ready to concede to this demand, and their position was supported by several anti-LTTE political groups, such as EPDP. According to the EPDP, withdrawing troops from Jaffna would only lead to losing the government's control over Jaffna peninsula and paving the way for the LTTE to gain control over the entire region by force. This was viewed as foolish by Army Commander, General Sarath Fonseka, who cited the dangerous consequences of such a step when the LTTE was neither demobilized nor disarmed. His opinion was also reflected in an international report compiled by retired Indian Army official Sathish Nambiar[24]. However, although the premier oversaw the activities of the ministry of defense, on three separate occasions government naval forces conducted massive defensive attacks on the LTTE naval vessels and boats under the direct direction of Kumaratunga, who as the Executive President was the Commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Her efforts were supported by hardliners in the navy, for instance, naval chief, admiral, Daya Sandagiri. These naval confrontations systematically undermined the UNF's negotiation efforts (Wije Dias, 23 May 2003, www.wswb.org). Thus one part of the government could and did undermine another part.

During the same time around the LTTE also began to aggressively demand establishing the proposed interim self government administration (ISGA) in the Northern Province. They could not overcome the pressures exerted by southern political forces, and Wickramasinghe could not commit to this demand. Meanwhile, the LTTE presented its own proposal of the future ISGA[25], sparking anxiety and criticism from various groups in the south as well as among anti-LTTE Tamil political parties. According to these critics, the LTTE proposal was in complete

contradiction with the ISGA proposed by the Government. According to them, the ISGA proposed by the LTTE was the first stepping-stone towards establishing a separate state.

Capitalizing on the growing criticism against the negotiations by the UNF government, especially the directions these were taking toward consensus for establishing ISGA, in November 2003 President Kumaratunga declared state of emergency and took over the control of three vital ministries: ministry of Defense, Interior Affairs, and Mass Communications[26]. The immediate reason behind the takeover was claimed to be the UNF's appeasement of the LTTE and the dangers posed to national security by the concessions already made to the LTTE by Wickramasinghe. At this point, the Norwegian government and other co-chairs of the negotiation process suspended negotiations and left Kumaratunga and Wickramasinghe to solve the immediate power crisis. This withdrawal of international facilitators left Wickramasinghe handicapped in terms of negotiating with the LTTE. Meanwhile, the LTTE also expressed its disappointment in UNF's ability to make any credible commitments to them. Reflecting on the 2003 political crisis in 2005 Wickramasinghe recalled "the President took over the Ministry of Defence and dissolved Parliament, making it impossible for my government to effectively manage the peace process any further" (Wickramasinghe 2006:9).

Following these events, in January 2004, although the previous pact between the PA and JVP had failed, during the 2004 election and for a period afterwards, the SLFP willingly entered into a new agreement with United People's Freedom Alliance (the UPFA) with the JVP. This did nothing to temper JVP rhetoric. For example, during the election campaign, in a firebrand speech, JVP's propaganda secretary, Wimal Weerawansa hinted the possibility of a future total war. Such hardline JVP opinions were tolerated by the SLFP, as the political advantages of such propaganda were mutual. During this election campaign, the JVP also came out strongly against any future negotiations with the LTTE. JVP propaganda pushed the LTTE to react after the election, by rejecting in any form of negotiations with the UPFA.

In the elections, the UPFA secured 105 seats out of 225 in the national legislature. With this, they were unable to secure a parliamentary majority or to form a government, and the new situation ultimately led to the establishment of a hung parliament. With the defeat of the UNF in the elections, JVP also began to mobilize people by criticizing the 2002/2003 negotiations. These criticisms were well received by voters, who were disappointed that the UNF had failed to deliver on the promised peace dividends.

Following the same fate of the previous alliance, the UPFA survived only a few months. According to various sources, JVP demands became increasingly unacceptable to Kumaratunga[27]. Moreover, JVP behavior in the ruling coalition also created divisive tensions between the SLFP and JVP party members that eventually made Kumaratunga dissolve the parliament and call another general election in April 2004.

5.1 Complexcities, threats and opportunities : Tsunami Politics

Adding both further complications and further opportunities for refigure politics and paths for peace or war, in December 2004, giant Tsunami waves struck Sri Lanka. This affected the east and Deep South as well, but hit the north the hardest. In this disaster, more than 30,000 people are estimated to have died (Goodhand et al. 2005: 22). The tsunami caused immense financial, and infrastructure damage[28] and brought pressure from the international community, which wanted Kumaratunga to work together with the LTTE and other groups in the north and the east to address the immediate needs of the people in these areas and to accelerate the recovery process. The catastrophe pushed the state and international actors to search for a mechanism to address the

suffering of the people, namely the post-tsunami joint operation mechanism (P-TOMs) signed on the 23 June 2005.

In the south, the usual politics were undermining Kumaratunga's effort towards implementing the P-TOMs. During this period, who manages the relief funds, and how they are distributed provided useful insights into politics succumbed to patronage was more clear (Jayasuriya 2005:xx). To protest the P-TOMs JVP withdrew its support of Kumaratunga. Further, for two consecutive weeks, JVP held a number of public rallies, attracting a massive number of protesters. Simultaneously, JVP also filed a legal case against the implementation of the P-TOMS, and the Supreme Court declared P-TOMS unconstitutional and suspended most of the clauses. The decision of the Supreme Court helped the JVP to accumulate more political capital and shine in politics once again. Meanwhile with the defection of JVP, Kumaratunga announced the next presidential elections in November 2005.

5.2: Complexcities, threats and opportunities: Split in the LTTE
"A nation has no permanent enemies and no permanent friends, only permanent interests."
Winston Churchill

While the crisis in southern politics marked by number of incidents that further polarized the southern polity and the factionalized ruling class, an unexpected development took place in the Tamil military-political balance. In March 2004, LTTE suffered a major split. This divided the Northern and the Eastern command of the LTTE into two factions. The split was interpreted in various ways by the media (Fernando, www.asiatribune.com/news/2011). The most popular reasons cited were that eastern LTTE cadres were mistreated by the northern command and discrimination against eastern cadres at administrative level. Further, it was felt that money from abroad was not fairly divided with the east and that the soft line taken with the SLMC during 2002/2003 negotiations had destabilized the authority of the eastern command.

Much to the joy of the south, the split in LTTE posed a serious threat to its claim that it was the sole representative of the Sri Lankan Tamil community. As per a recent US diplomatic cable released in Wikileaks, the defection of Karuna from the LTTE was allegedly linked to Wickramasinghe during the peace process (quoted by Fernando, cable dated 15 March 2004 in www.asiatribune.com). Undoubtedly, for the majority in the south and for the Sinhala faction of the ruling class, Karuna's defection was a welcome gesture and also a rare opportunity and serendipity in politics. Karuna then entered the national political scene, first as a provincial councilor, subsequently as a Member of Parliament under the Rajapakse Government that came to power in 2005. In exchange for support for the UPFA in elections in the eastern province, he was granted political immunity for various atrocities committed in the past. Most recently, in April 2009, under the direction of President Rajapakse, Karuna was appointed as the deputy president of SLFP. According to numerous newspaper reports, Karuna's support of Rajapakse played a major role in the 2008 the decision of Rajapakse regime to embark on a total war against the LTTE and in the LTTE's defeat in May 2009. Reminiscent of the ancient proverb, *the enemy of my enemy is my friend*, Karuna from 2006 was an important Rajapakse ally, undermining the influence of previous 'king makers'. His entry into national politics increased polarization and factionalization, not only among the post-LTTE re-emerging Tamil national politics, but also among of the Sinhalese faction of the ruling class.

6. Rise of Rajapakse: From total war to victor's peace and dynastic politics

Towards the end of Kumaratunga's tenure as the president, within SLFP, her position as the party leader was challenged. Although some predicted her brother Anura Bandaranaike would receive

the party nomination for the 2005 presidential election, it was also being eyed by Rajapakse. Additional tensions within the SLFP arose as Kumaratunga attempted to prolong her tenure by manipulating the dates of her swearing into office of her second term.

This internal party crisis gave rise to two factions within the party. One faction supported the continuation of Bandaranaike leadership. The other demanded a non-Bandaranaike leadership, and supported a Goyigama from the low-country, Mahinda Rajapakse as successor. This newest political crisis within the SLFP was another reminder of the underlying class, regional and family conflicts in country's politics. Interestingly, the conflict increased intra-party political competition and gave rise to new waves of alliance formation with extensive use of material patronage, both among members of the SLFP and across political parties. These changes brought significant material benefits to minority political parties and small-scale Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist parties that were helpful in building these parties and securing new and old political alliances.

Both Kumaratunga and premier Rajapakse actively sought allies and to mobilize support within the SLFP ranks. Both also actively sought alliances outside the party. Much to Kumaratunga's and her allies' dissatisfaction, Rajapakse managed to secure support from various factions within and outside the SLFP, capture the party leadership and secure party nomination for the presidential elections. Among the factions outside the SLFP supporting Rajapakse were small Sinhala nationalist political parties (the JVP and JHU). They, together with a few other minority political parties, helped Rajapakse take the election. However, within his own party Rajapkse was isolated, and he increasingly relied on his own family members.

Rajapakse's 2005 election manifesto, the *Mahinda Chinthana,* laid down a framework for addressing numerous local issues. According to current advisors to the president interviewed for this research, since Rajapakse's party refrained from supporting him, *Mahinda Chinthana*, was drafted with the help of the JVP and JHU. As one respondent who is among the top brass of JHU proudly claimed, " …at that time, there was no party to help Mahinda even to draft his election manifesto, there was no money to run for elections, only the JVP and JHU helped him". Because of the influence of the JVP and JHU, *Mahinda Chinthana*, a number of other respondents (whose self-claimed status was as unbiased individuals) claimed, had its foundations in Sinhala-Buddhism. Further, *Mahinda Chinthana* and the future policy directives of the Rajapakse administration were based, according to a significant number of respondents, on an anti-negotiation platform propagated by the nationalist political parties. This meant that the agreement reached by Rajapakse, JVP and JHU embodied an explicit denial of the claim to an exclusive Tamil homeland, rejection of the P-TOMS and of the ceasefire agreement.

The sentiments of anti-negotiation and critical views on the approach of 'peace by peaceful means' were, in negative campaigning, linked to the aristocratic and bourgeoisie domination of national politics of which both Wickramasinghe and Bandaranaike were living examples. As observed, sharpening such sentiments in politics was helpful in elevating the stock of cultural capital of the small political parties with petty bourgeoisie and proletariat orientations. Painting a patriotic picture of Rajapakse by emphasizing his personal and political roots in rural Hambatota district allowed the JVP and JHU to effectively harmonize the struggles of the centre and the periphery by mainly appealing to the rural masses. This also created a new wave of regional southern nationalism in the country. This type of campaigning also strengthened Rajapakse's voter base by arousing regional rivalry between the rural south and the urban-capitalist Colombo and its suburbs (home for both Wickramasinghe and Kumaratunga and their main constituencies). It led, interestingly, both during the election campaigning and thereafter, to Rajapakse as well as the JVP and JHU comparing him to King Dutugemunu and regarding him as the 'son of our

south'; *Dakune ape kena* (our Southern man). This, especially the *Dakune ape kena* sentiment in the national political platform, is essentially a form of sub-conscious expression of political economy of Southern nationalism. Moreover, this sense of nationalism began and expanded in since UNF government also demonstrates the class bias of emerging sub-nationalisms (Jayasuriya 2005:87). Further, the sense of *ape kena* feeling (our person) is inseparable from attempts made by lower classes living in margins of society to meet an important need for identification that had found no place in the UNF government and its neo-liberal outlook. This need of identification essentially links to the unfulfilled social-political-economic interests of these classes.

With this support from various traditional and non traditional allies, Rajapakse won the presidential election with a narrow margin. He received 50.29% votes, with Wickramasinghe receiving 48.43% (www.slelections.gov.lk). His narrow victory suggests the difficulty of ignoring the strength of Wickramasinghe and his allies (who despite losing elections for nine consecutive years were worthy opponent in national politics). Moreover, the results of this election also raised questions concerning the impact on electoral outcomes of 'floating' or 'swing' votes and concerning voters' behavior. Perhaps, as one respondent pointed out, when it comes to elections, the vote bases of the main political parties are somewhat stable, and the main fight is for the 20% of floating votes. Or, possibly, as another respondent suggested when attempting to debunk the myth about 'majority politics', "in all the respects, politics in Sri Lanka is an affair of (various) minorities where a minority gets to decide who wins". However, these statements should be viewed in a context in which election violence and other kinds of violations often carried out by the party in power. Thus, as both a close ally of Rajapakse and another respondent who is a senior member of the national legislature opined, it was not only the nationalist political forces in the south that helped Rajapakse to win the 2005 presidential election, but also the leadership of the LTTE[29].

This is in part why the policies of the new coalition Rajapakse had to put together that drastically differed from the previous regimes, especially in terms of the directions that it eventually took to address the issue of war and bring peace. Those who were tired of waiting for peace dividends under Wickramasinghe and Kumaratunga moved to support the JVP, JHU and Rajapakse, this time favoring the policies of "war for peace" and "war against terrorism" and post war-peace dividends. Thus, in a Gallup survey, 88% of respondents expressed confidence in Rajapakse in handling a peace process to end the war and the conflict (Srinivas and Crabtree 2006, www.gallup.com).

6.1 Rajapakse and the saga of All Party Representatives Committee (APRC)

In mid 2006, under the direction of Rajapakse, the All Party Representatives Committee (APRC) was established to find a political settlement to guarantee the rights of the Tamil minority (www.peaceinsrilanka.org). Establishment of APRC was quite contradictory to the election rhetoric of Rajapakse and his allies. The primary aim of the APRC was to forge a peace-bringing consensus among all the political parties. At the beginning, its deliberations included many political parties, but the UNP withdrew to protest the President's decision to induct rebel members of his party (Karuna)[30] and the JVP also walked out, demanding that the committee be dissolved. Despite these desertions and the questions of legitimacy they raised, the APRC continued to work. It, according to many respondents of this study including those within the inner circles of Rajapakse regime, is only a drama playing to the international community. According to one highly ranked UNP member interviewed for this research, "APRC is a hoax".

Similar views of the ARPC were expressed by a number of other respondents, who called it a puppet of Rajapakse. The APRC is, respondents said, pressured by the Rajapakse administration

to present as its findings Rajapakse's pre-determined solutions. For example, in 2007, its long overdue interim report merely recommended the full implementation of the 13th Amendment of the constitution[31]. This garnered protest from the JVP, the LTTE the UNP, the latter claiming it harmed the unitary status of the country. According to some respondents who have close relations with the chairman of APRC, the interim report did not include the committee's original conclusion, which was much more far reaching. Instead, a number of interviewees alleged, the recommendation to fully implement the 13th Amendment was the president's pre-cooked solution. At the moment this paper is being written, the final report of the committee is yet to be released, and neither the general public nor the political forces have much enthusiasm. It is probably correct to state that the APRC has become a forgotten affair to many and for the ruling regime, a useful footnote in politics.

Given the 2009 domestic military defeat of the LTTE and the government's ability use state patronage and state terrorism to make political alliances with numerous Tamil political parties and with the TNA, the deliberations of APRC do not seem to offer much. Instead of a consensus settlement, the numerous institutional and constitutional changes brought by Rajapakse government signal the establishment of victor's peace, reinforcing the hegemony of the Sinhalese faction of the ruling class and the Sinhalese-Buddhist hegemonic state. Behind the APRC drama, Rajapaske is expected by many respondents to make institutional changes that establish his political domination and power over his rivals. For example, as the leader of the Muslim Congress, Rauf Hakeem stated in 2009, during an interview "... for certain, this (APRC) was only a mirage and nothing tangible would happen even after the next presidential election… Frankly, I do not expect President Mahinda Rajapakse to publicly take a position, until and unless he gets a fresh mandate in an island-wide presidential or parliamentary election" (17th May 2009, Sunday Leader). Similar sentiments are being shared by other political parties and vocal political voices. Further, in this research, some respondents viewed seeking a political solution agreeable to all the political parties' unnecessary and futile. They see the APRC as a waste of time spent devising a *new solution* that will not be implemented, and instead want the democratization of the state and the restoration of democratic principles and values. This, they pointed out, is inconsistent with the way in which post-war Sri Lanka's politics operates under the political, military and muscle power of president Rajapakse and his allies, and thus no strong demands addressing the issue of the democracy deficit is likely.

6.2 Total war and the military defeat of the LTTE

Despite the anti-LTTE and anti-negotiation stand taken by Rajapakse, a delegation of the Rajapakse Government met with the LTTE in Geneva with the assistance of the Norwegian facilitators. The most important immediate reason for going to Geneva was the continued violation of the LTTE-GOSL ceasefire agreement signed in 2002 (Rupasinghe 2006: 45). As predicted by number of political observers, the initial agreement reached in Geneva, aimed at cessation of hostilities, ended rather quickly.

Inspired by the European Union's decision (much to the dissatisfaction of the LTTE) on 30[the] May 2006 to list the LTTE as a terrorist organization and to pressure them to seek a political settlement to the conflict(K.Nesan 2 June 2006, www.wswb.org)[32], the nationalist parties in the Rajapakse government began to call for eradication of the 'Tiger terrorism'. In this regard, JVP and JHU organized massive propaganda campaigns in favor of such a direction, making links between the *local Tiger terrorism* and the *international war against terrorism*. As these local and international developments harmonized, Rajapakse was pushed to go to war with the LTTE. Considering the support base of Rajapakse in the national legislature at that point, for example that the JVP had committed their 30 seats to him, it was unthinkable for Rajapakse to go against

the demands of his supporters. This suggests it is correct to see the shifting of public opinion in favor of war[33], the pressure exerted by JVP and the prevailed international circumstance, all providing a context for Rajapakse government to enter into a military campaign against the LTTE.

Among the respondents, many believed that at the beginning, President Rajapakse was not ready to go for a costly "all out war", preferring a low intensity military campaign against the LTTE which could provide political capital through occasional military successes in the battlefield. Perhaps, as could be argued, through such means, Rajapakse expected to silence his critics and brush aside the alleged links he had with the LTTE during the 2005 election. On one hand, these views suggest the blurring of boundaries between war, conflict and peace in Sri Lanka and on the other they suggest that the attempts of the ruling class to delink war and conflict in the recent past succeeded. In view of this research, this deliberate shifting of discourses sometimes legitimating peace and war and military means conveniently also suggests the successful establishment of the moral hegemony of the dominant Sinhalese factions in the ruling class.

It can also be suggested that the smaller Sinhalese nationalist parties like JVP and JHU have played a most vociferous role in shifting public opinion in the direction of war and, since 2005, toward total war. One should also not rule out the possibility that the drastic shifts occurring in public opinion since 1994 are parts of the hegemonic ideological-political-moral project of the ruling class, rather than autonomous decisions of the people. Whatever the case, the majority of the respondents in this research also indicated that from the beginning of 2009 there was an observable major shift in public opinion in the south, in favor of a 'final war'. Confidence in the military was, according to a Gallup poll, as high as 92% (Naurath, www.gallup.com). This shifting of opinion can indeed be linked to the euphoria created by the state media around the numerous victories in the battle field. Overall, this repositioning of public opinion within a relatively short span of time suggests that the public support for total war corresponds with the conscious shifting of the national political discourse by the ruling class in favor of such a move. These shifts also demonstrate the deepening of the economic struggles in the periphery and the political struggles at the centre of this period.

Domestic support for war coincided with a shift in the positions of the international actors too. Perhaps, after Geneva talks, the international community seemed to have begun to see the LTTE as an impediment to any kind of political solution. This conjuncture of local and international opinion also allowed Rajapakse and his allies to manipulate the situation and begin a full scale military assault against the LTTE. Along the way, a political compulsion was created for Rajapakse and his military advisors (mainly his brother, an ex-lieutenant in the Sri Lanka Army) to enter into a full scale war and to emerge as the victor.[34] Pressure was intensified by the strengthening of 'psychology of winning' among the majority in the south. This has been vividly described by various media local and international.

"The war is not far off. The strip of sand where the Tamil Tigers rebels are holed up with thousands of civilians is an hour up the coastline, but this is as close as reporters can get without government approval. We have no such permission, and are forced to turn back. This has been called a war without witnesses" (Stuart Bell, 10 May 2009, Sunday leader)

"The current military hold up in the north now with a mere four square kilometers to be cleared is due to some difficulties in terrain coupled with harsh weather conditions but that would in no way daunt the prospect of reaching the anticipated photo finish, top government defence officials believe. The government is of the view that end of May would see an end to the island's civil strife. According to Military Spokesperson, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara there are no new

challenges but the troops are moving ahead with extreme caution in a bid to prevent civilians from being harmed. In warfare, it is pointless to give deadlines. There are diversions, tactical withdrawals, wins and defeats. All these factors are common to all parties to a conflict. The war will soon end, insists Nanayakkara" (Dilrukshi Handunnetti, 10 May 2009, Sunday Leader)

"No time for ceasefire: time yet for surrender - President. We have at no time gone for a ceasefire. We will not do so now. There is no time for that now. In the five or six days remaining we have given the opportunity for the LTTE to lay down their arms and surrender to the Armed Forces and, even in the name of God, free the civilians held by them" (http://www.defence.lk/situ.asp?fname*)*

"If Another 1000 civilians break out of captivity .Defense sources have reported in that over 1000 civilians broke out of the conflict zone at the Mullaittivu end over 24 hours, ending noon, May 11. The LTTE sentries, initially overwhelmed, recovered and opened fire on the fleeing civilians" (http://www.defence.lk/situ.asp?fname)

"Rajapaksa may be keen to broaden his Sinhala support base rather than providing a constitutional solution," says V Suryanarayan, South Asia expert… Sri Lanka's state television station announced on Monday that Tamil Tiger rebel Chief Velupillai Prabhakaran has been killed, and the army commander said the last pockets of rebel resistance have been cleared from the north"(V.Venketaraman 19th May 2009, Times of India)

"LTTE International Head KP Pathmanathan as issuing a statement of surrender on May 17 which stated " We have decided to silence our guns. However as the LTTE received no confirmation regarding the final surrender arrangements from the military desperate cadres mounted a last ditch attempt to break out of the no fire zone on May 17 by crossing the Nanthikadal lagoon at which point a majority of them were killed and the LTTE came to a final end. However the   report states that several senior LTTE leaders were massacred by the army in subsequent mopping up operations and that LTTE political wing leaders. B. Nadesan and S. Pulidevan and their wives were gunned down by troops while holding white flags and attempting to surrender on May 18. The report offers no conclusions on the final fate of Pirapaharan's wife and his daughter Dwakara. It however highlights inconsistencies in reports from the government regarding developments in the final days and hours of the war and offers its version as the clearest and most accurate account of events" (14 June 2009, Sunday Leader)

Meanwhile, the LTTE was waiting for a major offensive to draw the attention of the international community to the catastrophic human cost of the war (Uyangoda 2007:4). Thus the above mentioned "logic of circumstance"[35] of most parties, locally and internationally, guaranteed a favorable environment for a dirty war that between 2008 and May 2009 alone killed more than 30,000 people. According to a respondent who is a keen observer of local and international dynamics of this time period, in this new phase of total war under Rajapakse government, the LTTE seemed to have misjudged both international and regional responses. It seemed not to have expected the political and military leadership in the southern Sri Lanka to embark on an all-out war, sacrificing all its valuable resources and disregarding the international concerns over the catastrophe humanitarian consequences. As one Tamil respondent said, Rajapakse going to war with the LTTE cannot be divorced from the realities of politics in Sri Lanka, since "the political capital embedded in war is enormous and no one using war and military victories for accumulation of political capital in electoral politics can be blamed".

I observed, during a period in the vicinity of a total military victory against the LTTE, constant open attempts of harnessing of the political capital of war by numerous factions in the ruling class and their intellectual and ordinary allies in politics. Further, the ways in which the voters were manipulated and integrated through different measures, even from far away corners of the country, were quite extraordinary. One interviewee from Kandy district shows how extraordinary these were, saying, "These days there is a 'Ranaviru business' going on. For example, poor villagers in Doluwa in the Central province were forced to contribute with Marmite for the soldiers fighting in the war. This order was given by the chief minister in the province. The people who were contributing to this were sufficiently manipulated. They think not contributing with Marmite is an anti-Sri Lanka and anti-patriotic act. Also, these people were made to think that if the war is not won, that they will have to jump in the ocean"[36].

A few respondents who are popular individuals in national political theatre and also openly supported the war efforts of Rajapakse regime did not forget to blame the groups advocate anti-war sentiments in the country and those who supported the peace initiatives of Wickramasinghe and Kumaratunga. As one high rank JHU member angrily remarked "… the so called peace discussions held in Colombo by ICES, CPA, SSA and NPC left us out. The idiots like Keerawella, Sara, Uyan were bribed by NIPU. Also the Berghof initiative called ONE TEXT even excluded JHU, while having LTTE representation in it. …There is a manifest antipathy towards Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism. Flawed articles were taken as articles of faith. Rhetoric was changed later by CPA. Earlier these people said the government cannot defeat the LTTE. Now they are silent. All these are Catholics; they have a hidden agenda"[37]. Similar attitudes were shared by other respondents who are members of JVP and JHU, indicating further polarizations and fragmentation of the ruling class in Sri Lanka around the already finished war. Moreover, as can be captured in the above statement, the feeling of exclusion (self imposed exclusion?) in national politics cannot be limited to superstitious political coalitions and the actual or perceived roots of the conflict by different political forces. They seem to stem from perceptions of deep seated class conflicts. Thus, the imminent military victory of the government also seemed to have rekindled anti-political solution sentiments in the south. Moreover, the further polarization of political society provided a new lease of life to old political conflicts between the self identified nationalists and non-nationalists and those nationalists dubbed 'turncoats'. This situation was reflected in a comment by one respondent with a JVP background, who quoted John F. Kennedy with sarcasm, "*ada jayagrahanayata piyavaru gananawak innawa, parajaya hariyata anatha daruwek wagei* (Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan).

The above trajectories in domestic and international politics and on the individual and group level undoubtedly appear to influence the new directions in Sri Lanka politics and state transformation and state building. Here, Rajapakse's subsequent embarkation on the path of "war for peace" is an important trajectory of state transformation and state building. The approach Rajapakse took to address the issue of war, peace and conflict exposes the Clauzawitzian problematique of "war (in this case conflict and peace) as the continuation of politics by other means". The various actions, strategies and policies used by Rajapakse government during and in the post-LTTE era firmly indicate a grand political strategy (blessed with little serendipity) developed to retain political power, legitimacy, hegemony of the Sinhala dominated ruling class and their Sinhala-Buddhist hegemonic state that benefits them the most.

6.3 And, what is next?

There are a few important landmarks in post-war Sri Lanka.

"Now the war is over, Tamil people must be given freedom to live. We should not contribute towards creating a situation that can give birth to another Prabhakaran. We should not allow the country to go on the wrong path. If this happens I am ready to correct the path, leaving behind my uniform" (excerpt of a speech delivered by Former Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka in Washington, reported on October 27, Washington, Sri Lanka Guardian)

"A number of factors helped sweep him to re-election victory on Tuesday: his fiery rhetoric and sure popular touch; his emphasis on his role in last year's war victory; and ordinary people's sense that their streets are simply safer than they have been for the past 30 years because of the defeat of the Tamil Tigers" (Charles Haviland, BBC News 29 January 2010).

"Entitled "Sri Lanka War-Crimes Accountability: The Tamil Perspective," the cable from the Colombo embassy was written 11 days before the poll that saw President Mahinda Rajapaksa defeat General Sarath Fonseka, his erstwhile war ally now in jail…"While regrettable, the lack of attention to accountability is not surprising. There are no examples we know of a regime undertaking wholesale investigations of its own troops or senior officials for war crimes while that regime or government remained in power…In Sri Lanka this is further complicated by the fact that responsibility for many of the alleged crimes rests with the country's senior civilian and military leadership, including President Rajapaksa and his brothers and opposition candidate General Fonseka" (Bryson Hull Quoting US diplomatic cables -posted in Wikileaks, sent by the US ambassador in Colombo, H.E.Butenis, 2 Dec, 2010 Reuters)

Post-war Sri Lanka, the data collected in this research indicates, is not free of dangers inspired by deeper polarizations along new lines in politics surrounding war and peace. The old lines of politics will continue to negatively influence the trajectories of state transformation and state building and redefining state-in-society dynamics. Especially, the sense of regional sub-nationalism prevailing in the south and the deepening of the democracy deficit under Rajapakse regime do not provide much hope. As a respondent with no open political party association noted, "today people like war, they focus on a set of selected events". Also in the words of an academic with UNP background "in 2003, there was a muted sense of security, under that context people supported peace. But today in the context of heightened security the same people support war". As a Marxist parliamentarian observed, "the Sinhalese are happy about the LTTE defeat".

Such statements demonstrate further polarization of opinions of the top brass of politics and fragmentation of the society and open attempts of capitalizing on the role that these individuals and groups played during the war. They also suggest the possibility of re-occurrence of violent social and political conflicts, their emergence contingent on number of factors, especially related to the democracy deficit, economic development and political development.

Numerous dynamics unveiling in the post-war period point to 'square one of politics' in which the conflict over political power and state power and the deepening democracy deficit is obvious. However, at the moment of writing this paper, the directions these will take are both unclear and not promising. The LTTE defeat and the new political alliances secured by the Rajapakse regime with the previous pro and anti-LTTE Tamil political parties and Sinhalese extremists combined with the further weakening of the opposition and shrinking space for political action and rise of state violence have only strengthened both Rajapakse's personal political image and the government he leads. According to some interviewed for this study, a new ruling class headed by a Rajapakse dynasty is creating another brand of politics, in which kith and kinship and *Bonapartism* are the main characteristics. This view is supported by numerous election victories secured during and in the post war period by the UPFA (i.e 2008, 2009, 2010) under the leadership of Rajapakse at provincial, regional, district and national levels. It is also supported by the fact that Rajapakse has been able to bring an 18th amendment to the constitution,[38] which

removes limits on the term of office, and processes are currently underway to bring about a 19th amendment to the constitution[39], which will change the electoral system. Both of these, together with Rajapakse's re-election in January 2010, are important milestones along a road toward long-term power. These indications of a strategy to stay in pinnacle of political power and state power seem to be unaffected by the local and international communities concerned about widespread allegations of human rights abuses, charges of war crimes, securitization of the state, nepotism, media censorship and curtailment of freedom of speech.

As the political destinies of his predecessors have proven, in the long run, winning war may not be sufficient to survive in political power. As has been historically proven, when the struggles of the periphery on social and economic development deepen, a mandate given by the voters for peace or war under a specific context becomes less important. Also as observed already in the post-LTTE period, euphoria over war victories diminishes with looming economic hardships. Thus, before the euphoria of war victories completely vanishes, the promised post-war dividends must be delivered for Rajapakse to survive. Many respondents questioned the ability of Rajapakse to wage the war on development and economic prosperity with the same coalition that won the war against the LTTE. As a young JVP member warned, "things can go either way. Due to the economic hardships faced by the country and people, sometimes even Ranil can get elected. Ranil is the image of the liberal consumerist society".

This paper argues, after eliminating the LTTE, which had been portrayed as long standing common enemy of the majority Sinhalese and the umbilical code tied the Sinhalese ruling class to the Sinhalese majority, it will be more difficult to politically manipulate the voters and to harmonize the struggles of the centre and the periphery. This difficulty may increase the use of direct violence and state repression to curtail the demands of the society for their social and economic development. There are strong signs of realization of this direction, in the current security state model and military-dynastic model under way in the post-LTTE period (Rajasingham-Senanyake in www.groundviews org). The ways in which the international community responds and engages with the situation also seems crucial for shaping the future political landscape.

Whatever course of action the Rajapakse government will take in the name of settling the ethnic conflict will definitely influence the trajectory of state building, because, the so-called ethnic conflict was never a simple ethnic conflict. It was a costly manifestation of the political conflict of the Sinhalese and the factionalized the ruling class. The strategies, ingredients and the processes that Rajapakse will set in motion in the name of post-war *whatever* will be challenged (perhaps not immediately) by social and political forces both in the centre and in the periphery.

7. Concluding remarks

The evidence gathered here points to the embedded multiple struggles and conflicts around social, political and economic development both at the centre and in the periphery. By applying Clausewitz's problematique on war, this paper unravels the politics behind these developments and expressions of such developments through various discourses on war, conflict and peace. This paper confirms that conflict, war and peace in Sri Lanka are indeed politics by other means. Further, it shows that the ruling class in Sri Lanka has been able to create, recreate and shift discourses on conflict, war and peace and to devise associated strategies to turn this trio into their most trusted political capital and to establish their moral and political hegemony over the majority Sinhalese and to reproduce the necessary conditions to prevail the hegemonic state dominated and beneficial for them. Lastly, this paper indicates that adhering to the principles of deep democracy and strategies to generate non-symbolic capital is the most crucial step towards positively

influencing future trajectories of Sri Lankan state building and state transformation processes and reducing the propensity towards reproduction of violent conflicts.

End notes

[1] The concept of positive peace refers to a situation where structural inequalities led to the violent conflict is addressed, whereas negative peace refers to a situation where absence of direct violence and finally justpeace refers to a situation where it is not only the conditions of positive and negative peace are met, but importantly where justice is delivered to the parties involved in the violent conflict.

[2] This paper uses politics as derived from Harold Lasswell, in his classic work, Politics, who gets what, when, how (1958) Lasswell suggests politics as the study of influence and the influential (quoted in Leftwitch 2004: 6). For the purpose of this research this paper adheres to a combined explanatory approaches entailing structure and agency dimension in politics (more details on these two approaches separately see Leftwitch 2004:6).

[3] Other aspects related to this outcomes explain the passive-active engagement of the society in conflict, war and peace in Sri Lanka are to be read in light of the conclusions arrived in the previous chapters on nationalism and patronage.

[4] In the years 1987, 1988,1989, 1991, 1992 the economic growth of Sri Lanka were at 1.5,2.7,2.3,4.6 and 4.3 , respectively (Central Bank of Sri Lanka cited by Kelegama 2000)

[5] Preamdasa also carried out talks with the LT.T.E. However the negotiations with the LTTE during his time were a less public affair.

[6] At the end of 1995, total amount of national debt was estimated at Rs.289,410 Millions (IMF 2001: 79)

[7] Details of this situation are explained in chapter 3 in relation to patronage politics of this period.

[8] She started a short lived new political party called Bahujana Nidahas Peramua

[9] For a scholarly discussion on this aspect please read Volkan, Vamık D. (2004.)

[10] Others who extended support for PA were a Tamil MP of the Up-Country People's Front, and three Tamil parties represent the Northeast.

[11] In 2005, L.T.T.E assassinated the Foreign minister of PA government Mr.Kadiragamar

[12] JVP's political position on the framing of the conflict was shaped by Mr.Rohana Wijeweera's, the leader of the JVP, in the 1960s. According to Wijeweera, the problem in Sri Lanka is rooted in the class issue rather than on the issue of ethnic identity. According to JVP, when the class emancipation is achieved the problems of self determination of Sri Lankans will be solved, naturally. Therefore, in JVP's thinking, there is no especial attention or a process needed to address the so called ethnic conflict. Following this logic, even contemporary members of the JVP is quick to blame the Tamil nationalist project and the armed struggle of the L.T.T.E for distracting the struggle of entire Sri Lanka in achieving self determination in its post-colonial phase of state building.

[13] Due to these reasons during this time period Sri Lanka recorded highest incidents of violence and killings. However, it is also known, it is not only those who took part in these anti-state activities that got killed, but also thousands of innocent civilians who had no connection to these events as well. Under the umbrellas of state of emergency, many other political scored were believed to be settled by various groups.

[14] Instead of widely speculated impeachment motion against the executive president, UNP brought a no confident motion against the chief Justice, who was a political appointee of the president.

[15] In Civilization and its discontent Sigmund Freud refers to the ways in which insignificant differences among people, who are otherwise, are alike, form the basis of feelings of strangeness and hostility between them. According to Uyangoda's analysis the two leaders of the UNP and SLFP (PA) also faces this paradox in politics, where the real differences of them have begun to diminish, while symbolic and personal differences have become belligerently salient (Uyangoda and Perera 70-71 :2003).

[16] According to Zaartman mutually stalemate refers to a situation when a party will pick the alternative which it prefers, and that a decision to change is induced by increasing pain associated with the present (conflictual) course (2001:8)

[17] Advent of Norway to the context of Sri Lanka was largely borne out of a personal invitation by the Sri Lankan foreign minister to the Norwegian ambassador to Sri Lanka in 1997

[18] For an analysis of Thimpu Principles see http://www.sangam.org/ANALYSIS_ARCHIVES/Edirisinghe.htm

[19] Particularly the role played by India as the mediator for the 1987 peace process and the bitter memories it created aftermath of the failed peace talks facilitated by Norway in 1997, are significant in this regard

[20] Norway support for peace processes in the Middle-east, Guetamala, Colombia and elsewhere, Norwegian participation in a number of international peacekeeping operations, as well as the fact that Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in Oslo, all have contributed to Norway's reputation as a country of peace. the Sri Lankan conflict (Paris

[21] According to Paris, neo-liberal peace endeavors are based on two paradoxes; the nature of democracy and capitalism. In his view these are essentially competitive systems of political and economic management. Therefore, relatively cohesive groups in societies that had been traditional rivals over ethnic, social, political, economic or resource issues tend to remain in conflict within new context of elections where groups compete for votes and in the market where competition for resources, contacts and consumer is tensed. Further, Paris concludes that the neo-liberal political and economic reforms introduced by powerful actors to domestic institutions as remedies to civil conflicts have not been able to either reduce or eliminate internal conflicts. Further in some cases, such reforms have further destabilized the domestic environment, a situation more applicable to the third world states (For a detailed account see Paris, Roland

(2004) At War's End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict, Cambridge University Press,U.K) Lipchutz is another critic of neo-liberal peace thesis. His main argument is that neo-liberal settlement could only bring the warring elites to the negotiating table (Winter 1998:5-19)

[22] According to the Sri Lanka monitoring Mission during the period from 2002-2007, LTTE has committed 3830 ceasefire offences and 351 offences by the Government forces (www.peaceinsrilanka.org/negotiations/slmm-statistics)

[23] SLMM leader was later included in the talks and signed a bilateral agreement with the LTTE leader to resolve the issues)

[24] More details of the report can be read at http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cnotes2%5Cnote174.html

[25] The ISGA proposal of the LTTE at http://www.idpsrilanka.lk/Doc/Related%20Articles/ISGA.pdf

[26] Later Kumaratunga also took over few other important state bodies that generate large sums of revenue for the government. i.e. National Lotteries Board. As reported, during the year 2002, under the UNF, the lotteries board had generated 940 million rupees but only 470 million rupees was put in the President's Fund—according to Kumaratunga (Wije Dias, 23May 2003, www.wsws.org).

[27] JVP was demanding the portfolio of ministry of Mahaweli development. The work of this ministry of closely tied to the agricultural and rural areas of the country, both that constitute JVP's main voter base.

[28] Estimated at US$ 1.5 billions (Goodhand at al 2005:22)

[29] In 2007 there were numerous news paper reports published by Rajapakse's ex confidants Sripathi Suriyaarachchi and Tiran Alles for providing LTTE with Rs.15 billion to prevent Tamils in the North for casting their votes. The electoral results from the North of the country provides clear evidence for people under the LT.T.E control have not had casted their votes. During this time period, many predicted Wickramasinghe would win the elections provided that eh Tamil vote, as their political leniency is suspected towards the UNP and Wickramasinghe over Rajapakse, who contested elections in alliance with JVP and JHU, the nationalist political parties(Lanka newspaers.com minister calls Prabhakaran as witness,14th June 2007).

[30] Rajapakse secured the support of 17 parliamentary members of UNP, including its deputy party leader, Karu Jyasuriya. All these members received important cabinet ministerial portfolios in Rajapakse's government.

[31] 13th Amendment of the constitution established the Provincial Council system in Sri Lanka in 1987 as a part of the Indo-Lanka Agreement.

[32] Following the ban, the EU member states to froze LTTE's financial assets and prohibited the provision of fundraising directly or indirectly to the LTTE, and enforce a travel ban on LTTE officials (K.Nesan 2 June 2006, www.wswb.org)

[33] As a number of respondents pointed out, in general, at the time of field work, a large number of Sinhalese people still seem to be "Okay" to find a political settlement at the same time waging a total war with the LTTE. According to an opinion survey conducted in the whole island (excluding the Northern Province) in 2008, the violence of war has been cited as the top priority to be addressed in Sri Lanka (Irwin 2008: 3). According to 60% of the Sinhalese interviewed for this survey, continuation of violence of the LT.T.E was mentioned as a very significant problem faced by the country, whereas 73% of Tamils recognized the ongoing war as the main problem faced by them(Irwin 2008:5). According to the opinions expressed by the Tamil respondents of the same survey, escalating violence during 2006 and 2007 was a major concern of them as an ethnic group (Irwin 2008:5). Also see www.gallup.com/poll for more opinion surveys conducted in Sri Lanka since 2006-2010 on the issue of conflict, war and peace

[34] In local propaganda Rajapakse was compared to King Dutugemunu (2nd C) according to an epic story in Sinhala Vamsa stories that defeated the Tamil king Elara in a final battle and unified Sri Lanka. http://www.lankalibrary.com/geo/kings/dutugemunu.htm

[35] Term borrowed from Uyangoda

[36] Doluwa is a small village is situated in the in the hill country, far way from the actual conflict zone and from the coastal areas.

[37] The acronyms and short names refers to government and civil society institutes that dedicated their work in promoting peace in Sri Lanka

[38] 18th amendment to the constitution broadly include repealing Presidential term limits, repealing the Constitutional Council, and giving the President more power over commissions, including the National Police Commission.

[39] As reported in the newspapers 19th Amendment will introduce a hybrid of proportional representation and first-past-the-post systems. Further it will also reform the 13th Amendment to enable a measure of power from the centre to the provinces and, thus, from the majority to the minorities. As reported the government also plans to reduce the number of constituencies from 160 to 140 via a re-demarcation process. As suspected all these changes is geared to secure maximum politico-electoral advantage to the UPFA and to ensure an adequate parliamentary majority for the Rajapaksa, for a long time to come (Gunasekara, www.sundayleader.lk/2010/09/19).

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