THE ROLE OF SRI LANKAN TAMIL DIASPORA IN CONFLICT AND PEACE PROCESS IN SRI LANKA, 2002-2014

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "The Role of Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora in Conflict and Peace Process in Sri Lanka, 2002-2014" submitted by me for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of the University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAs	Alumni Associations
APC	All Party Conference
APRC	All Party Representative Committee
APSL	Americans for Peace in Sri Lanka
ATC	Australian Tamil Congress
BTF	British Tamil Forum
CAD	Canadian Dollar
CanTYD	Canadian Tamil Youth Development
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CFA	Ceasefire Agreement
CPA	Centre for Policy Alternatives
CTC	Canadian Tamil Congress
EPRLF	Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front
EROS	Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students
EU	European Union
FMF	Foreign Military Financing
FP	Federal Party
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organization
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GSP+	Generalised System of Preferences Plus
GTF	Global Tamil Forum

HRW	Human Rights Watch
HVAs	Home Village Associations
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMET	International Military Education and Training
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force
ISGA	Interim Self Governing Authority
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
LLRC	Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Committee
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MIOT	Medical Institute of Tamils
MP	Member of Parliament
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
OHCHR	Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights
OMP	Office on Missing Persons
PEARL	People for Equality and Relief in Lanka
PILPG	Public International Law and Policy Group
PLOTE	People's Organization of Tamil Eelam
PTA	Prevention of Terrorism Act
P-TOMS	Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure

RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RC	Refugee Council
RRN	Relief and Rehabilitation Network
SCOT	Standing Committee of Tamil Speaking People
SCTA	Selangor Ceylon Tamil Association
SLAF	Sri Lankan Air Force
SLANE	Sri Lankan Association of New England
SLDF	Sri Lankan Democracy Forum
SLFP	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLMM	Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission
SLWT	Sierra-Leone War Trust for Children
TAG	Tamils Against Genocide
TCC	Tamil Coordination Committee
TEEDOR	Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organization
TELA	Tamil Eelam Liberation Army
TELO	Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization
TESOC	Tamil Eelam Society of Canada
TGTE	Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam
THO	Tamil Health Organization
TIC	Tamil Information Centre
TNA	Tamil National Alliance
TNC	Tamil National Council
TNPF	Tamil National People's Front
TRC	Tamil Relief Centre
TRO	Tamil Refugee Organization

TULF	Tamil United Liberation Front
TYO	Tamil Youth Organization
UAF	Universal Adult Franchise
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNF	United National Front
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Education Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNICEF	United Nations International Commission for Educational Funds
UNP	United National Party
UPFA	United People's Freedom Alliance
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USTPAC	United States Tamil Political Action Committee
UTHR (J)	University Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna)
VR	Vaddukoddai Resolution
WTCC	World Tamil Coordination Committee
WTM	World Tamil Movement

Introduction

Diasporic communities participate in their homeland conflict and peace process. A prominent case in hand is the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora whose role in the homeland conflict has added transnational dimensions to Sri Lankan Tamil nationalism. The proposed study seeks to examine the changing nature of the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic role in the island and its impact on conflict and peace process in the island.

The phenomenon of diasporic participation in homeland politics is not new, nor is the diaspora-peace-conflict nexus a subject that is less researched about. This research aims to address the largely unexplored topic shifting strategic objectives that take place in diasporic approach due to several developments in the homeland as well as international political scenario. In South Asia, we find that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, particularly those settled in the West, have been active in their homeland conflict by raising support in their fight for their kin group' right to self-determination against the Sinhalese government forces in Sri Lanka. Their activism has not only led the war sustain for a long time, also their involvement in various international forums has opened the different avenues to continue their struggle even after the war has come to an end. Their activism has undergone different shifts and ideological changes due to various factors such as development of hostile policies in their host country, the global 'war on terror', regime change in homeland, etc. In this context, this thesis highlights the varying role played by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the conflict and peace process in Sri Lanka for the period 2002-2014. While the year 2002 was marked by the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement, marking the beginning of the peace process, the year 2014 has been remarkable in marking the victory of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora with the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) passing a resolution to conduct an international investigation into alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka.

Diasporas are formed as the result of migration of people from one place to another that takes place due to various reasons. Despite being settled in another country, the diasporas tend to maintain their relations with their homeland. This relation gets stronger when their migration is a forced one rather than a choice. In this context the thesis provides a conceptual framework on diasporic responses to different situations in its homeland. In an attempt to make an assessment of the role of diaspora as peacemaker or as contributor to conflict, the thesis seeks to explore various factors that are linked to diaspora's role and involvement.

The journey of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, from a displaced/ migrant community to one among the prominent non-state organizations, has been an inspiring one. Having migrated in various time periods, the Tamil diaspora has emerged as one of the most dynamic diaspora communities in the world. The process of their migration has played a key role in shaping their ideology and defining their connections with their homeland. In this context, the thesis gives a detailed insight into the process of migration of the Sri Lankan Tamils, their settlement patterns and their economic and political status in various countries.

Having seen the war in their homeland, this 'victim diaspora' has always remained connected to its kin group in its homeland. Moreover, presence of a more democratic space in its host country and equal access to resources has made the community to realize what their people back in homeland have been denied. This has motivated the diaspora more to fight on behalf of its kin group and raise its voice against every unjust action of the Sri Lankan state. In reference to this, this research makes an attempt to analyse the objectives and motives of the diasporic involvement in its homeland politics. It will be based on analysing various organizations that are set up by the diasporic community in its host countries.

The active participation of the diaspora community has resulted in adding an international dimension to the Sri Lankan Tamil problem. The active participation of the international community in the wake of the 9/11 incident had pressurized the warring parties in Sri Lanka to opt for a ceasefire in the year 2002. During the CFA period, the diaspora had not only contributed in terms of articulation of the Tamil demands, but also mobilized support for the LTTE.

However, with the failure of the peace process and resumption of hostilities in mid-2006, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora had to change its supportive attitude from funding the war to highlighting the Tamil grievances during the fourth eelam war. In this context, this research makes an attempt to highlight the strategies adopted and the pressure exerted by the diaspora community globally against the military attacks on the Tamil areas by the Sri Lankan government forces. The political engagements of the diaspora in its host land, which ultimately led to the mobilisation of Western opinion against the Sri Lankan state on the issues of human rights violations, are scrutinized in the following chapters.

The way the war was waged and the way it ended (with the destruction of the LTTE) have deeply affected the Tamils in Sri Lanka and the Tamil diaspora. Yet, the diaspora's zeal to work for its kin group back in Sri Lanka is still strong. The diaspora community has been continuously raising alarms against the brutalities of the Sri Lankan army on the Tamils in the island. In this context, this research is an attempt to analyse various strategies of the diaspora to get justice and peace for its ethnic kin group in Sri Lanka. Involvement of various diasporic organizations in highlighting human rights violations and the issue of accountability is examined and their influence in Sri Lankan politics is also assessed.

Review of the Literature

The general literature on diaspora is plenty. But there is hardly any full-length study available on the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's role in ethnic conflict. The review in this section provides a general overview of: diaspora in conflict and peace, ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, Tamil diasporic response to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, and post-war activism of the Tamil diaspora.

Diaspora in Conflict and Peace

The diaspora-conflict-peace nexus has emerged as a key area of research in recent years. The concept of diaspora was traditionally connected to the displacement of the Jews, who developed an image of suffering, loss and wish to return to their country of origin. Safran (1990; 1999) provides the foremost definitions of what diaspora refers to and gives two factors associated with the diaspora: involuntary movement and the 'myth' of having wish to return. Tambiah (2000) explains the

causes and consequences of transnational movement of people from the developing countries to the developed ones. He explains that such transnational movements lead to inter-relatedness and, hence, contribute to more active participation in homeland politics. Scholars specializing in cultural studies see diaspora has a phenomenon rather than entity itself. Clifford (1994) defines diaspora as a 'type of consciousness', while Hall (1990) sees diasporas formed through a process that involves making of 'hybrid entities'.

In contrast to these earlier versions of definitions, writings of Axel (2002; 2004), Kleist (2007), Ostergaard-Nielsen (2006), Sheffer (2003), Werbner (2002), and Wahlbeck (2002) provide more comprehensive understanding of what diaspora should consist of. The recent years have witnessed a remarkable shift in defining diasporas. Now they consider more on the factors that are responsible for the making of diasporas rather than focussing more on who a disapora is. In this context, Werbner (2002) and Kleist (2007) talk about migration as the main factor that leads to formation of diasporas and explain various factors that result in the diasporas to maintain their heterogeneity, despite being considered as same in their different countries of settlement. Wahlbeck (2002) suggests that the definition of diaspora should include three aspects: dispersal, settlement in multiple locations, and the idea of a 'homeland'. Ostergaard-Nielsen (2006) claims that diaspora is a heterogeneous group who share commonalities over their past experiences or may have same identity in terms of community, caste, religion etc. It may have common goals and objectives a swell, but should not be mistaken as a homogenous community as each one of them maintain their differences over ideologies and way of life. Diasporas may behave or react in similar manner, but that does not make them a homogeneous group (Axel 2004; Kleist 2007; Werbner 2002). Sheffer (2003) identifies that diasporic communities may be either state-linked or stateless. He maintains that there is more probability of presence radicalism, stubbornness, more inclinations towards separatism, impatience in stateless diasporas than the state-linked diasporas. Thus, the conceptual understanding of diaspora is enhanced by a body of literature reviewed above.

The basic understanding a conflict is done on the basis of work of Ramsbotham et.al. (2009). Apart from this, Collier et.al. (2003), Sambanis (2004) and Fearson

and Latin (2003) also give deep understanding of what a conflict is all about. Ramsbotham et.al. (2009) divide the conflict into two categories: inter-state and intra-state conflicts. Since the fall of Soviet Union in 1991, there has been a rapid increase in number of 'intra-state' conflicts. These are also known as 'civil wars' and they have been dominating the literature of peace and conflict studies for a long time. However, both these types of conflicts are generally defined under the realist-narratives of international relations and the tendency to have a perspective from a non-state actor or group remains to be little. Hence, the diaspora as a non-state group and its relation with its homeland (which is a state) remains less attended by the scholars of international relations. This means that such debates have largely contributed to establishing and re-establishing the hegemony of the state, in which the dynamics of diasporic involvement at social, political and economic levels have received inadequate attention. Such relations have been seen as dominating the world politics in recent times, giving way to identify links between diaspora, conflict, peace and state-building (Tilly 1985; Theis 2005, Taylor et al. 2008).

Galtung (1969, 1996) and Lederach (1997, 1999) have successfully identified a number of variations of peace. Their literature helps in making a better understanding of different forms of peace and various circumstances which would lead to attain those kinds of peace situations. Similarly, various scholars have explained various phenomena associated to peace, particularly 'peace agreements' (Bell 1999, 2006; Hartzel 1999, Stedman et al. 2002, Wallensteen and Stollenberg 1997), 'peace processes' (Darby and Mc.Ginty 2000, 2003; Darby 2001), 'spoilers in peace' (Stedman 1997), 'positive peace' (Galtung 1985, 1996; Galtung and Webel 2007), 'negative peace' (Galtung 1985, 1996; Webel and Galtung 2007), and 'just peace' (Lederach 1999). Galtung (1996; 2007) describes positive peace as, 'not merely absence of war', but a condition that can be achieved only when the root causes of the conflict has been addressed properly and various measures are taken in place to make sure that the re-emergence of the conflict or war like situation is rarest of the rare possibilities. In this context, this thesis seeks to present a detailed study of the role of diaspora in establishing peace in their homeland with particular focus on establishing democracy based on the norms like

freedom (political and economic) and justice, which according to them have been the primary cause that had forced them to leave their countries of origin.

In the context of diaspora's response to peace and conflict situations in homeland, Demmers (2002: 86) maintains that there are certain reasons that are responsible for the growing interests of diasporic communities in their homeland politics. The first reason is the growth in number of diasporas itself which again is attributed to increasing level of differences within a country which leads to a conflict and hence, people worried about their safety and security are forced to flee their countries. This results in increment in the number of refugees and internally displaced people, which adds strength of the diaspora community in the long run. Further, the greater ease of modes of communication and access to information helps these diasporas to maintain contacts among each other on one hand, while being the connecting factor between their homeland and the global level. He suggests that the long distance involvement of diaspora groups in homeland politics is facilitated by modern communications (internet, email, television, and telephone). They take part in 'virtual conflict' without direct (physical) 'suffering, risks or accountability'. Wirsing and Azizian (2007) uphold the view that diasporas can make a significant impact on domestic and foreign policies of states. They argue that the endless tide of international migration continues to generate large and new diasporic minorities. They suspect that these groups can be manipulated and also can manipulate their host states according to the new ideologies they bring forward with them or the ideologies they inculcate and develop during the course of time. In this context, Lyons (2006; 2007) suggests that conflict in homeland plays a vital role in shaping the transnational identities of diaspora. It serves as a motivating factor for the diasporas to come together and assert themselves so as to gain support for their kin group and their cause.

Much of the existing literature tends to portray diasporic communities negatively by stressing the influence they exert on conflict situations. But Smith and Stares argue that "diasporas can be both peace-makers and peace-wreckers. Prior to making any claims about the impact of diasporas on any given conflict situation, it is essential to understand the historical context, interests and efforts of the diaspora group in question, as well as their organisational structure and the general

background to the conflict"(2007: 8-9). Besides, the circumstances under which the diasporic groups intervene or wish to intervene in conflict and, how do they influence political scenario have also been discussed in detail in their edited work. Thus, for conceptual understanding, this book is important as it defines various concepts and presents empirical case studies that highlight the complexity of diasporic politics.

Many authors such as Anderson (1992; 2006), Byman et.al. (2001), Collier (2000), Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Duffield (2002), Kaldor (2001), Skrbis (1997) and Sheffer (1994; 2007) argue that diasporic participation in their homeland conflict leads to its aggravation. Collier (2000) considers diaspora as 'risk factor' because of its greater financial capacity than its kin group. According to Collier and Hoeffler (2004: 575), 'diasporic remittances can be dangerous if they reach to insurgents and terrorist groups' than to their families and civilians purpose. Kaldor (2001) and Duffield (2002) argue that diasporic role in conflict leads to its 'transnationalization'. Kaldor (2001: 85) proclaims that diasporas are also a great source of providing technical services about setting up organizations and industries. Also they have better plans and training about propagating the issues correctly and more aptly. Apart from financial support, lobbying for their cause in their host societies has also been part of their political activism (Sheffer, 2007). Diasporas are less hesitant and bound to aggravate a conflict situation in their homeland. They are less hesitant because they remain untouched by the consequences and involve 'virtually' in conflict situation (Anderson 1992; Skrbis 1997), and bound to support because they may feel guilty about leaving their homeland and their kin group alone to suffer in conflict and, therefore, determined to help them (Bymen et.al. 2001). According to Bercovitch (2007: 26-37), 'the best way to conceive of the role of diasporas in conflict is to think of the various phases or stages of a conflict and then to evaluate the possible role diaspora may play in each phase'.

Rejecting the negative portrayal of diaspora, many authors argue that diasporas contribute to conflict resolution and peace-building. Leroy and Mohan (2003: 612) talk about the constructive roles of diasporas by stating that instead of ignoring the diasporas there should be more efforts towards giving them opportunities as well

as motivations for getting engaged in their homelands. This would make them feel empowered and accepted in their homeland and hence, their collaboration would become more constructive rather than destructing. Collinson (2003) claims that remittances are often underreported and there remains scarcity of evidence which would prove that the diasporic involvement in their homeland financially has more negative impacts than the positive ones. In the similar context, Mohamoud (2006) and Zunzer (2004) support the view that remittance can be proved to be more constructive than destructive. Mohamoud (2006: 6) suggests that the diaspora send remittances to its family members so as to support them, and not for make their life more difficult, which would definitely be the case if they support a war. The money they send back home is to enable them to live a smooth life and not to hold them at risk in a warring zone. He concludes that it is possible that some diasporic groups may support extremist activities, but one should not treat the entire diaspora community as a source of threat. He also sees diasporas as a link that connects their homeland with their host societies. Also they form a great source of information, which gives real information about the human rights situation and war-areas to their host societies as well as to the entire world. In this sense, he does see constructive potential of the diaspora community more than the destructive one.

Challenging Collier's assertions, Zunzer (2004) says that there are various ways and levels of diasporic contributions to and participation in homeland politics. The remittances sent to poor and socially disadvantaged members of society can, in fact, play a constructive role. As Wayland (2004: 417) notes, 'people who migrate from a close[d] society to an open society are able to capitalise on newfound freedoms to publish, organize and accumulate financial resources to an extent that was impossible in the homeland'. Shain and Barth (2003) and Naim (2002) see diaspora as 'critical agents for social change'. Diaspora groups can act as connecting link or as means of negotiators between their countries of origin and their countries of settlement. They can also serve as a means to transmit the values of pluralism and democracy from their countries of settlement to their countries of origin (Shain and Barth 2003: 450). In this context, another scholar Toloyan (2002) notes that diaspora groups are well equipped to deal with media companies. Hence, they can be essential for mobilizing and promoting constructive dialogue in

their homeland. Cochrane (2007) and Orjuela (2006, 2012, 2015) posit that there has been a growing trend of involving various non-state actors in conflict resolution. A much known example can be seen in form of growing emergence of diasporas and civil society members playing an important role in pacifying the conflict in a peaceful manner. Particularly, Orjuela (2006, 2015) maintains that the financial aid provided by the diaspora can have more positive aspects if given proper support and environment to invest. They can help in setting up different small and big industries which would lead to rise in levels of employment, and hence, decrease the tendency of the youth to indulge in war or any kind of destructive acts. Also these investments and trade initiatives by diaspora can bring about significant changes during the post-war reconstruction phase (Orjuela 2012; Mohamoud 2005). Cheran (2003) gives importance to skills and know-how that can be transferred from diaspora to war-torn areas from where much of the educated population has left.

Like Horst (2007) and Mohamoud (2005; 2006), Lyons (2004 a: 18) appeals that there is a need for increased communications and dialogues with diaspora communities so as to help them to become more active in constructive arenas, particularly, in the rebuilding of war-torn areas. Vertovec (2005) explains that diasporas remain quicker in adapting to changes that take place in world. They also understand various strategies that should be undertaken in order to maintain their asserting place in world politics. They are very well aware of all the shifts that are taking place in global politics and accordingly they strategize their actions and policies so as their position remains hard to ignore and always remain significant in context of both politics in their homeland as well as host societies.

Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka

There is a good deal of writings available on the history of Sri Lanka. Much of this have, however, exhaustively researched the ethnic conflict that plagued the island for more than two and half decades. This section provides sub-categories in terms of literature dealing with the historical background of the conflict, political and economic causes of the conflict, strategies and mobilization of the Tamils and impact of the conflict.

The history of Sri Lanka has been traced to those days when it was known as Ceylon by many scholars and experts particularly De Silva (2005), Kearney (1973; 1967), Wilson (1974) and Shastri (1990, 1992, 1999). They provide a reasonably reliable account of the early history of the island in terms of its social and political organization since its inception. De Silva (2005) illustrates the process of social and political evolution which led to unifying the whole kingdom under its sway. He gives a detailed analysis of the very first classical Sinhalese kingdom, the kingdom of Anuradhapura, which enables the readers to understand the Sinhalese way of dealing with administrative and economic and social activities. Also the incursions and interventions from South India which had a marked contribution to laying the foundation of the conflict and succession disputes, find place in his work. De Silva (2005: 21) opines that 'these political crises were themselves a reflection of a crucial flaw in the form of administrative and political structures unable to keep pace with the political ambitions of the Sinhala rulers who sought control over the entire island without acquiring the requisite administrative machinery, which alone was responsible for converting this aspiration into a hard political reality'. Tracing the roots of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka along the same lines, Kearney (1973) upholds the view that Sri Lanka has had political problems since the time it was known as Ceylon. He presents an analysis of the Ceylonese political system since 19th century and mentions that the Ceylonese society experienced the tensions and problems of a communally divided, economically underdeveloped society undergoing profound social changes. He mentions that 'the trend of politics since the independence has been toward a vertical integration of ethnic communities, reducing or blurring internal class, caste, and regional distinctions, but creating a sharper horizontal distinction between communities as the major ethnic group has tended to draw into itself and emphasize its own language, religion and culture' (Kearney, 1973: 159). In the same context, Shastri (1999) considers the Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948 as the very first development that actually marked the initiation of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. It deprived the estate Tamil population of the citizenship rights which implied that they were excluded from the post-independence polity of their country (1999: 2). This led to development of closer connections between them and the Sri Lankan Tamils as a combined opposition to the Sinhalese.

There are plenty of writings available that deal with the causes or reasons for the eruption of ethnic conflict. Manogaran and Pfaffenberger (1994) explore the dimensions of the Sinhalese-Tamil relations and explain the ethnic conflict in a historical perspective. They discuss the issue of language, colonisation, and admissions to university, and employment opportunities as the fundamental causes of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. They suggest that peace could be attained only through a greater devolution of powers. According to Kearney (1973: vii), the problems of slow economic growth, of rising popular aspirations and demands, and of lingering social cleavages, along with the areas of political stability and sophistication led to the eruption of the insurrection in 1971. Wilson (1974; 2000) opines that the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka was continuously fuelled by a surging, recalcitrant nationalism of the Sinhalese majority, which used Buddhist community and Sinhalese language as twin symbols of the state and hence, resulted in alienation of the Sri Lankan Tamils. He mentions that the relations between the two ethnic groups deteriorated rapidly after the Official Language Act of 1956 was passed. In the same context, DeVotta (2005) argues that institutional decay, which was produced by the dialectic between majority rule and ethnic outbidding, was what led to Tamil mobilisation and an ethnic conflict. Explaining ethnic outbidding, he says that 'outbidding stems from politicians' desire and determination to acquire and maintain power and may be practiced in varied contexts and whenever it incorporates race or ethnicity, it 'marginalises minority communities, exacerbates interracial or polyethnic tensions, and undermines the state's ability to function dispassionately' (DeVotta, 2005: 142).

Shastri (1990) postulates that the urban middle class Tamils from Jaffna in the Northern Province traditionally relied on government employment and public services in the southwest of the island; they were hard hit by the Sinhala-only Act of 1956. The proportion of Tamils in public services and the rapidly expanding state sector fell sharply thereafter. Elaborating further, she says that though efforts for decentralization were made repeatedly, the strong and strident Buddhist clergy, pressure groups and political parties didn't allow these demands to sustain for long. Hence, eventually the Tamil discontent began to get mobilized towards demand for separate state in the years 1960 and 1965 (Kearney 1967: 112- 14, Wilson 1988: 85). Inspired by the role of material factors in intrastate conflicts, as

explained by Shastri (1990; 1999), Sriskandarajah (2005) examines socio-economic inequality between ethnic groups in Sri Lanka. Drawing on available empirical data, he suggests that actual disparities in income, education and employment between Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamils were small compared to inequalities within each group, but these inter-ethnic disparities were increasing in the decades since independence. Inter-ethnic rivalry over access to economic resources became instrumental in the intensification of ethno-political conflict in Sri Lanka. He argues that 'real and relative welfare losses among North-eastern Tamils, the politicisation of key areas of disparity, and incendiary state policies served to transform relatively marginal inter-ethnic disparities into salient political issues' (2005: 341). Not only these, there were other economic policies which were planned in such a manner that the Tamil areas became 'dry zones' and the Sinhalese areas kept flourishing. All this resulted in protraction of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka (Shastri 1990; Ropers 2008).

A minority is always rebellious when faced with discrimination. As suggested by Wilson (2000), 'A national consciousness in the form of a conviction that a national group is not being accorded equality of treatment can itself, if pushed to extreme, evolve into national resistance', as has been the case in Sri Lanka. Sahadevan (2006) upholds the view that a long history of denial of legitimacy to, or lack of recognition of, a group's identity in relation to its ethnic territoriality and its growing sense of relative deprivation, may initially appear to be a mere ethnic grievance but, in the long run, creates a fear of its extinction and leads to war for its protection. DeVotta (2000) and Sahadevan (2006: 245) explain the Tamil mobilization under two phases-- political and military-- which altogether gave a push towards the demand for Eelam (a Tamil state). They elaborate the political strategy by mentioning the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) and its call for independent Tamil state of *eelam,* in 1976, which represented a 'shift from the struggle for equality to an assertion of freedom, from the demand of fundamental rights to the assertion of self-determination, from the acceptance of the pluralistic experiment to the surfacing of the new corporate identity' (DeVotta, 2000: 63; Tiruchelvam, 1994:198). While commenting on the military strategy, DeVotta (2000) considers the 1983 riots as the main factor, which highlighted the breakdown of the country's institutions, drove thousands of young Tamils into

becoming insurgents, and eventually the Liberation of Tamil Tigers replacing the TULF. In this context, Sahadevan suggests that 'the second phase of mobilization comes as a continuum of the first if there is no advancement of the conflict goals of the group, proving the non-violent agitation tactics as a failure' (2006: 245).

The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka has become a protracted one. It took a civil war dimension in 1983. In this context, Ganguly (2004) analyses the developments during the peace process (2002-2006). He identifies the compulsions under which both the LTTE and the GoSL agreed for a ceasefire agreement (CFA). As mentioned by many authors (Shastri 2003, 2009; Sahadevan 2006; Sahadevan and DeVotta 2006; Uyangoda 2007), the CFA was mediated by Norway and supported by the international community. But rather than creating peace, this phase was used by both the warring parties as an opportunity to look for more differences and return to a more intensified war that eventually broke out in mid-2006.

While Cheran (2009), DeVotta (2009), and Hariharan (2009) describe the last phase of the eelam war, Wickramasinghe (2008) posits that the post-ceasefire time was more deadly than the peaceful time of 2002-2006. Although it was marked by a very important phenomenon of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka getting freedom from the insurgents, the cost Sri Lankan state paid for this victory was much disastrous. Cheran (2009) upholds that this was the onset of the human rights violations committed by the Sri Lankan Army, which had no limitations and, hence, was inevitable to be questioned by the international community. Hariharan (2009) analyses the rise and fall of the LTTE and the Tamil separatist movement in Sri Lanka and concludes that LTTE leader Prabhakaran's single minded insistence on the creation of a Tamil eelam and his unwillingness to compromise ultimately transformed the organization into a fascist force, imposing its ideology over the entire Tamil community. He opines that regional divisions within the Tamil community allowed the government to facilitate a major split within the LTTE with the defection of one of Prabhakaran's main lieutenants, Colonel Karuna. DeVotta (2009) says that sustained and massive military operations by the Sri Lankan armed forces wore down the already weakened LTTE, eventually leading to its complete military collapse. As concluded by DeVotta, 'even though the state's military victory has crushed the LTTE, the

lingering effects of decades of discriminatory treatment continue to fester within the Tamil community' (2009:1051).

Sri Lankan Tamil Diasporic Responses to Homeland Conflict

The role of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the ethnic conflict has steadily increased over the decades. Yet, it has been an under-studied theme. While there has been attempts to describe the origin and evolution of the diaspora particularly by Sriskandarajah (2004), Baser and Swain (2008), Cochrane et al. (2009), Orjuela (2006) and Zunzer (2004), the diasporic activism has not been explained fully. Cheran (2003), Fair (2005, 2007), Fuglerud (1999), Nandakumar (2011), Velamati (2008), Wayland (2004) and Weiss (2011) make an attempt to trace the activism of the diaspora during different phases of conflict and peace in their homeland.

Sriskandarajah (2004) traces the origin of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the context of ethnic violence in 1983, which led to a massive influx of people. He states that the events of 1983 made the diasporic community more reluctant to return to their homeland and most of the members lodged asylum claims in different host societies as and when they reached. He notes that the pre-migratory experience of this group has shaped the political identity of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. Aspirations about a separate nation that was promised by the LTTE to the Tamils in Sri Lanka, has been conveyed to the diaspora community staying abroad, with such conviction that a small fraction of diaspora still dreams of achieving it, despite seven years have passed (2004: 498). In this context, Zunzer (2004) elaborates that the incidents of 1983 induced the emigration flows of professional and middle-class Tamils and along with their migration, their level of participation in homeland affairs tended to increase. He notes that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora as a community has been created in several migration waves since independence from the British colonial rule in 1948. He gives a detailed analysis of the key Tamil organizations that have been active in their respective host countries. Zunzer (2004) has focussed on four countries, which are densely inhabited by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, and provides a detailed analysis of their size and activities. Sriskandarajah (2004), Zunzer (2004), Orjuela (2006), Cochrane et al. (2009) and Baser & Swain (2008) posit that the members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community can be differentiated according to when they

migrated, the means by which they gained residence in the host countries and by the extent to which they integrated into the host country. The diaspora community is by no means homogeneous considering the fact that there are pre-migratory cleavages along the lines of caste, class, gender and religion. This point of view also holds true concerning the variation of political views within the diaspora.

The literature on the shaping of the Tamil nationalism among the diaspora community remains limited but significant. Fuglerud (1999) finds that the nationalist policies of the LTTE had played an important role in making the Tamil diaspora community aware about its identity and motivated it all the more to help LTTE achieve eelam. He suggests that Tamil nationalism provided 'a name for individual nostalgia and shared exclusion from the host society' while constructing new representations of migrants of Sri Lankan Tamil origin and connectedness. In this regard, Velamati (2008) analyses the impact of nationalism on the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. She maintains that though the Tamil nationalism has been transported but there remain different kinds of approaches within the diaspora community, regarding how to move forward with the Tamil struggle in the island. Majority of the Tamil diaspora remains critical of the methods of spearheading the cause of Tamil eelam that included killing of its Tamil brethren. However, a common feeling of disgust against the government does prevail among them. Furthermore, most of the members of the diasporic community look up to the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora residing in southern India. This has strengthened the extra-territorial pan-Tamil feeling among them.

A few studies dealing with the strategies and objectives of the diaspora are also available. Fair (2005, 2007) identifies the different levels at which the diasporas intervene and affect the homeland conflict and, in turn, politics. She claims that the role of a diaspora depends upon the means of mobilization and identity production, use of technology and scope of their institutional arrangements. According to her, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, in order to assert itself, has established various organizations that promote Tamil equities in Sri Lanka. She also makes note of the extensive use of the World Wide Web by the diaspora community to establish cyber communities, chat rooms and users' group which basically deal with creating awareness about the problems faced by its kin group back in its homeland.

In this context, Wayland (2004) highlights the nexus of diaspora and homeland politics by demonstrating the strategies of the diasporic community to pursue political goals in its host society as well as homeland. She argues that the formation of ethnic networks in the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora during the ethnic conflict enabled the LTTE to engage in protracted insurgency against the Sri Lankan army. She supports the view that a consideration of the transnational dimension provides new insight into how ethnic conflicts may be sustained or resolved. Cheran (2003) suggests that sustaining a society under stress, strain and displacement has been the most important function of the Tamil diaspora.

Some writings have focussed more on the negative aspect of the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic activism in its homeland conflict. While Byman et.al. (2001), Lyons (2004 b), Wayland (2004), ICG Report (2010) and Nandakumar (2011) maintain that the remittances sent by the diaspora has played a role in 'fuelling' the conflict; very few work has been done to show the positive and constructive role of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. Vimalarajah et al. (2011) argue that the contribution of the Tamil diaspora has mostly been misinterpreted. According to them, this community has been engaged in improving situations in Sri Lanka through peaceful and democratic means. It prefers for dialogue than armed conflict. It is more keen to develop its nexus with its host governments as well as open to Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) so as to bring all the issues to the negotiating table and have a peaceful resolution which would be acceptable to all. As described by Nandakumar (2011), the events of early 2009 swayed both the moderate and uninterested Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora groups to become almost "hardcore" supporters of the Tamil cause and have motivated them to fight for it. The lack of recognition to human rights violations in Sri Lanka by the international community has led to a more strengthened resolution of the diaspora. Now that it has been betrayed by the countries like the USA and other powers, there remain certain segments in the diaspora community who see arms as the only means to fight for their cause as neither Sri Lankan government nor the international community is worth trusting.

However, seeing the constructive potential of the diaspora, Velamati (2008) comments that though the diaspora supported the militant movement of LTTE at

one point of time this support would not have made impact had the Sinhalese leaders responded positively to the Sri Lankan Tamils' aspirations. In this context, Kadirgamar (2010) observes that the mobilisation of the diverse Tamil diaspora abroad has become the rationale for reinforcing the security restrictions in Sri Lanka and that a constructive approach on behalf of the diaspora is required to establish a democratic and plural society in the island.

Mentioning the relevance of the diasporic engagements in homeland conflict, Cheran (2003) says that diasporic groups, capable of maintaining and investing in social, economic and political networks that span the globe, are of increasing relevance and interest to policy makers in home countries as well as host countries. Therefore, the concept of 'diasporic circulation' can be seen as an effective tool for engaging the diaspora in a meaningful way in reconstruction and development of war–torn areas in Sri Lanka. Nandakumar (2011) states that the Tamil diaspora, despite being away from its motherland and its kin group residing still in the island, has been striving to make sure that it is always there for its kin group and would always continue to fight for their betterment.

The existing literature tends to focus on the fact that over the years, the diasporic engagement in homeland affairs has increased and systemic changes such as globalization, the spread of democracy and greater international involvement in domestic affairs are encouraging diasporas to adopt a negotiation based approach to homeland conflict. However, questions like 'what are the conditions under which diaspora contributes to resolution of conflict?' remain unaddressed. The literature fails to address how the dynamic Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community is a significant factor in both host land and homeland politics. This study seeks to explain the nature of the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic role and assesses the impact it has made on the conflict.

The Post-war Activism of the Tamil Diaspora

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has been more active than ever since the civil war came to an end in May 2009. However, literature regarding their post-war activism is few. In this context, Cheran and Vimalarajah (2010) give an insight on the post-war engagements of the Tamil diaspora. They argue against the conventional view

that diasporas are a hindrance to sustainable peace as they have been funding the war. Instead, the importance of the diaspora cannot be neglected if the Sri Lankan state wants to achieve sustainable peace and just order. The authors suggest that the diaspora should be seen as a rational political actor vested with interest and agency. The Tamil diaspora will remain a critical factor in any conflict resolution effort, including those by host countries, due to its interest in 'homeland politics' and its stance on the domestic politics of the host country.

The relevance of the diasporic engagements in the post-war situation is aptly summed by Bandarage (2010), Vimalarajah et.al. (2011) and Ananda et.al. (2010). Bandarage (2010) says that the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic activism has been of so much importance, particularly after the war in Sri Lanka has ended, that it cannot be ignored. It becomes difficult for the Sri Lankan government to reach a solution without the diasporic involvement in the policy making as it is very much attached to homeland politics. As stated by Vimalarajah et.al. (2011), the high level of activism of the diaspora on the economic front (through sanctions and boycott campaigns), on the legal front (collecting evidences of human rights violations and war crimes) and on the political front (by lobbying western states) makes it an indispensable factor in Sri Lankan affairs. In this context, Ananda et.al. (2010) suggest that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has been an unrivalled resource, with legitimate claims to space in Sri Lankan politics. They argue that the transnational politics has been a product of the war, and till the basic causes of the war remain unaddressed, the members of the diaspora community will remain connected to Sri Lanka, even though their homes are abroad.

The literature reviewed in this section shows that the studies on the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora is extremely limited. They do not focus on the opportunity structures created by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in order to foster conflict transformation initiatives and actively engage in developmental activities in war-torn areas of Sri Lanka. The proposed study is an attempt to fill the gap and seek a more nuanced analysis of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora and its campaign for justice and development of its ethnic kin group in Sri Lanka.

Definition, Rationale and Scope of Study

Diaspora is a social group that (i) has settled and established itself in another country and (ii) is internally heterogeneous. A diaspora group can have the same interests, defined among other things by class, gender, generation, occupation or religion. Diaspora is rarely constituted by a single factor. The nature of the diasporan intervention is the result of the respective power relations within the diaspora community and between diaspora, home country and the host country. The capability of diasporas to participate actively in homeland conflict, depends on whether they are well organised, have a defined strategy and enjoy material and political power.

Diaspora sometimes contributes towards pacifying the conflict and helps attaining resolution, while, on other occasions, its activities may tend to fuel an existing conflict. It is relevant not only during the violent stage of the conflict, but also in the post-conflict situation. Its post-conflict activities in its home country remain an area that has not been seriously studied. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the West was initially active in extending financial support to the Tamil insurgents fighting the Sinhalese government forces in Sri Lanka. Later, particularly in the post-civil war period, it is engaged in influencing its host governments and the international community to expose the human rights violations and hold the Sri Lankan government accountable for massive killings during the fourth eelam war.

This study seeks to address how significantly the diaspora activities contribute to peace and conflict in homeland. There is an increasing recognition of role and importance of diaspora in facilitating peace and development in countries of origin. This acknowledgment accompanies a call to engage the Tamil diaspora organisations in finding a solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. The study is diaspora-centred and focuses on the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's activism during and after the civil war. It covers broadly the diaspora settled in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Canada, Norway, Australia and the United States of America with special reference to the ones settled in the United Kingdom. In this regard, the Sri Lankan state's responses are also assessed.

The present study proposes to understand and analyze the ways and methods used by the diaspora in responding to peace and conflict in its homeland. In this context,

it examines the process of emergence of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora as a transnational factor, through a textual analysis of the writings, speeches, policies and actions of various government and diaspora associations.

The study covers period 2002-2014. The peace process began with the signing of a ceasefire agreement in 2002. In 2014 the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) passed a resolution to conduct an international investigation into alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka. This is in a way victory for the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. Earlier, it indirectly influenced the peace process during 2002-2006. During this time huge remittances flew from abroad to the island with an aim to deal with the loss the natural disaster had caused. The negative peace period lasted for four years after which the deadly fourth eelam war started. During the last phase of the war, the diaspora community rendered support to its kin group more in terms of highlighting their grievances rather than financing the conflict.

In 2006, the fourth eelam war broke out and in May 2009, it came to an end with the death of the LTTE Chief, Vellupillai Prabhakaran. The fourth and final phase of the eelam war took place at a time when the whole world was preoccupied with 'counter-terrorism strategies' after the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. In this context, the study seeks to analyse the change in diasporic approach of raising voice on Tamil issue in Sri Lanka. In the wake of growing suspicions about the immigrant population in Western societies, the diaspora has not only managed to assert itself as a significant stakeholder in resolving the conflict in Sri Lanka, it has also managed to bring the Sri Lankan government under international scrutiny.

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora was primarily engaged in political lobbying and creating public awareness about the homeland conflict. Thus, it played an important role in framing the conflict issues. They used all the modern tools such as internet and various social networking sites to highlight the problem of its kin group and gather support in its favour. Also, they created websites to help out their people who were in need of house, jobs and asylum when they fled their homeland. The diaspora lobbied the international community to stop the Sri Lankan government's military offensive against the Tamil Tigers.

The post-war era has seen the active involvement of the diaspora not only in its homeland affairs but also in international forums and organizations. The diaspora has continued to mount human rights charges against the Sri Lankan government and demand international support to protect the Sri Lankan Tamils' interests. It has been a major force behind the international community's move in the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), which has by now passed four resolutions, asking the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the LLRC recommendations and allow for international investigation. The study is an attempt to analyse the nature of the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic responses against the background of twelve years of conflict-peace developments in the island.

In the post-war phase, the diaspora has assumed a significant role in the homeland politics, in positive as well as negative ways. The post-war phase has opened space for new collective action. With the end of the war, the Tamil ideology has not disappeared. Hence, the assessment of the activism of the Tamil diaspora depends upon various internal and external factors, which are studied in detail. How well Sri Lanka recovers depends on policy-making at both the local and international levels and the transformation of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are to:

- Analyse the emergence of Tamil diaspora as a transnational factor in the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict.
- Critically examine the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's interests and motives behind its active engagement in its homeland conflict and peace process.
- Assess the diaspora's involvement in the fourth eelam war and its impact on the state and the Sri Lankan Tamils.
- Examine the post-conflict activities and strategies of the diaspora community and its role in peace-building efforts in Sri Lanka.
- Critically examine the response of the Sri Lankan state to the diaspora activism.

Research questions

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

(1) How did the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora emerge?

(2) What were the reactions of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora to the various phases of ethnic conflict and peace processes since 1983?

(3) How did the diaspora manage to mobilize the world opinion and influence the developments in its homeland during the ceasefire period (2002-2006)?

(4) How did the diaspora react to the fourth eelam war and what were the strategies adopted by the diaspora community?

(5) What are the changes in the diaspora community's strategies and objectives in the post-civil war period and to what extent have they succeeded?

(6) How has the Sri Lankan state responded to the diasporic activism particularly in the post-civil war period?

Hypotheses

These research questions are answered by testing the following hypotheses:

(1) The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has emerged as a dominant transnational force to empower and protect its kin group against the powerful majoritarian state because of the shrinking liberal democratic space in the homeland.

(2) International responses to the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic mobilisation strategies have largely become positive in view of the community's growing influence in host societies and the Sri Lankan government's refusal to pursue a credible reconciliation policy.

Research methods

The study has adopted the inductive method to answer questions regarding the diasporic role. This is a flexible approach because there is no requirement for a pre-determined theory to collect data and information. Rather, it refers to observing data and facts to reach at tentative hypothesis and define a theory as per the research problem. This method of enquiry generates rich, detailed and comprehensive information. It is also referred to as "bottom-up" approach, in

which the researcher uses observations to describe a phenomenon that is being studied. It is helpful in examining the similarities among various social phenomena so as to develop concepts and ideas. It is also useful for improving the understanding about the level of involvement of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in its homeland affairs.

Data has been collected from both primary as well as secondary sources. A field visit to London was made by the researcher in this context, where various Tamil activists were interviewed and events and meetings were attended. The secondary sources include research reports published by NGOs and other organizations, books and articles written by scholars in the field, and news reportage from magazines and newspapers. Further, materials have also been collected from three major Tamil websites: TamilNet; Ilankai Tamil Sangam; and the British Tamils Forum (BTF). These websites are chosen for their popularity within the Tamil diaspora and their accessibility in terms of language and archives. Most importantly, these websites provide a nuanced understanding on the online Tamil discourse. Since the end of the war in Sri Lanka, the diaspora has been relying heavily on the internet to propagate their ideology, explain their strategies and demonstrate their objectives to the entire world.

Chapterisation

This study is divided into eight chapters, which deal with various aspects of the theme of research. The current chapter has already introduced the theme and prescribed the objectives, questions, hypotheses and methodology of the research. The review of the literature has also been done. The following chapters have dealt with other aspects of research.

Chapter I: **Diasporas and Ethnic Conflict: A Conceptual Framework**

This chapter defines various concepts and develops a conceptual framework on diasporic responses to different homeland conflict situations. By using theories of conflict and peace, the chapter assesses the role of diaspora as peacemaker and as well as contributor to conflict. Various factors that are involved in enlisting diaspora's role and involvement are discussed in detail. Further, the diasporic

groups' sentiments and perceptions about their homeland conflict have also been examined in this chapter.

Chapter II: **Mapping the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora**

This chapter provides a background to the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. Particularly it analyses the process of migration of the Sri Lankan Tamils, their settlement pattern and their economic and political status in various countries. This chapter also provides a profile of various organizations founded by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora for various activities aimed at promoting its kin group's interests in homeland.

Chapter III: **The Diasporic Responses to Conflict and Peace, 1983-2001: An Overview**

This chapter presents the dynamics of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. In this context, it explores the Tamil diaspora's involvement at various stages of the ethnic conflict during 1983-2001. It examines the impact such transnational involvement has made on the conflict and peace process and also on the relationship between the Sri Lankan state and their affected kin group.

Chapter IV: **Diaspora's Role in the Peace Process, 2002-2006**

In this chapter, the Sri Lankan Tamil diasporic involvement in concluding a ceasefire agreement is discussed in detail. The active participation of the international community in the Sri Lankan peace process was attributed to the presence of politically active Tamil diaspora in the West. The diaspora contributed to reframing issues, mobilised itself in support of the LTTE, and provided logistics to peace negotiations held in various capitals. Besides analysing these contributions, the chapter also examines the diaspora's role in terms of formulating the LTTE's proposals and evaluating the Sri Lankan government's position on the framework of peace.

Chapter V: **The Fourth Eelam War and the Diasporic Responses**

This chapter analyses the main agenda of the Tamil diaspora during the fourth eelam war. Particularly, it examines the strategies adopted and the pressure exerted by the diaspora community globally against the military attacks on the Tamil areas

by the Sri Lankan government forces. Finally, the chapter deals with the political engagements of the diaspora in its host land, which ultimately led to the mobilisation of Western opinion against the Sri Lankan state on the issue of human rights violations.

Chapter VI: **The Transnational Role of Diaspora in the Post-Civil war Period**

This chapter covers the post-civil war developments in Sri Lanka and the role of diaspora in highlighting the grievances of the Sri Lankan Tamils. In the process, it examines various strategies of the diaspora to get justice and peace for its ethnic kin group in Sri Lanka. Diasporic organizations involved in highlighting human rights violations and the issue of accountability are also examined and their influence in Sri Lankan politics is assessed.

Conclusion

The concluding chapter summarises the arguments and draws some broad insights on the diasporic participation and impact during war and peace by testing the hypotheses. The chapter also assesses the challenges and limitations faced by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in advancing the ethnic cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Chapter I

Diasporas and Ethnic Conflict: A Conceptual Framework

Introduction

In recent years there has been an enormous increase in migrating population, with its decisive cultural and political impacts. While these immigrants in their turn may create their own demands, they are also at times supporting their ethnic supporters back at home. This may lead to either creation of a conflict in or aggravation of a persisting conflict in homeland.

The current discourse of international politics lacks a discourse on various 'outsiders' (non-state actors) such as 'international organisations, refugees, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and, most prominently, diaspora'. Smith and Stares note:

> The study of diaspora in conflict reflects an urgent international social problem. The capacity of some diaspora to secure tangible and intangible resources in support of armed conflicts, the opaque institutional and network structures that can allow for transnational transfers of arms and money to state and non-state actors, including terrorist groups, as well as to more deserving causes (for instance as humanitarian assistance), along with rapid transnational communication, mean that, in the era of globalization, diasporas have been reconstructed as new and potentially powerful actors in international politics (2007: 3).

In the present globalised world, the process of migration has been accelerated by the quick and easy modes of travel and communication. People move from one place to another for various reasons and needs. Sometimes their movement is in search of better opportunities and better life, at times there is threat to their lives in their homeland which results in forced displacement of people. Recent times have been characterized by intensification in the process of migration and emergence of a stronger diaspora community which has been successfully engaging itself in both

its host societies as well as homeland. "Rather than being de-territorialized, they experience and live in dual locations and manifest dual consciousness" (Tambiah 2000: 163).

There has been a growing trend of diasporas participating actively in conflicts in different parts of the world. In some cases, they may induce the conflict. In some other cases they may play the role of a pacifier or remain silent spectators or contribute to peace-building measures. Bercovitch notes:

> Diaspora communities challenge the socio-spatial/territorial assumptions of community and politics by transcending physical space, reaching across international borders and incorporating members based on ethno-national identities. Such identities can create, exacerbate or ameliorate a conflict (2007: 20).

Diaspora has been gaining increasing recognition as a prominent actor in international politics due to its active involvement in its homeland's affairs as well as that of the host land.

Changing conditions in the homeland affect the diaspora. Some conditions may incline it more towards homeland affairs (such as in moments of pride or in conditions like natural disasters or any kind of social or economic crisis). On the other hand, incidents bringing shame and embarrassment may drive the diaspora further away from the homeland.

This chapter aims to establish a better understanding of the complex relationship that exists between diasporas and ethnic conflict. It discusses in detail the various factors in the homeland and their impact on the diasporic involvement. Particularly, it deals with the various aspects of the effects of homeland conflict on the diasporas and in turn the diasporas' reaction to these conflicts.

Definitional Aspect

The word 'diaspora' is derived from the Greek *diaspeirein,* meaning 'dispersal or scattering of seeds.[1] Since the concept and nature of diaspora varies, it remains difficult for one to come up with a universal definition of diaspora. Safran (1990:

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[1] The concept was originally used to refer to the dispersal of the Jews from their historical homeland. Today we speak of Koreans, Palestinians, Chinese, Kurds, Armenians, Mexicans, Tamils and numerous other groups as constituting the new diaspora (Brubaker 2005: 2).

84, 1999: 256) provides the foremost definition of a diaspora, emphasising more on 'their unwanted movement from their country of origin' and 'their wish to return to their motherland, someday or the other'. Safran (1990: 83-86) uses a rather strict definition of diaspora, defining them as expatriate minority communities that:

> (1) are dispersed from an original 'centre' to at least two 'peripheral' places;
>
> (2) maintain a memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland;
>
> (3) believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host countries;
>
> (4) see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right;
>
> (5) are committed to the maintenance or restoration of their homeland; and
>
> (6) of which the group's consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by this continuing relation with the homeland.

In short, "diaspora are those social groups that (i) settle and establish themselves in another country and (ii) are internally heterogeneous" (Smith and Stares 2007: iv). A diaspora group can and does have the same interests, defined among other things by class, gender, generation, occupation or religion. However, they are rarely constituted by a single factor.

Clifford (1994: 304, 1997) explains diaspora as not an entity but as a phenomenon: a phenomenon of developing a certain kind of consciousness about who they are and how the world identifies them. Hall (1990: 234-237) emphasises the 'hybrid identities' of diaspora. These identities are generally a mixture of the identity given from the country of origin and the identities developed in their host societies. These notions generally criticise the 'idealistic representation' of diaspora given by Safran and others. Clifford (1997) questions Safran's definition on the ground that the idea of 'attachment to land of origin' and the 'desire for return' did not stand true for the entire Jewish diaspora, a context that Safran had in mind while defining diaspora. According to Tambiah, "Diasporas are also defined as communities that find themselves in 'de-territorialised' situation and state of mind" (2000: 170). This view coincides more with the earlier status of the

diaspora – when they had just settled in their host societies – than with the later stage of their settlement.

Recent definitions of diaspora emphasise more the factors that generate diaspora rather than focusing on who a diaspora is. In this context, Vertovec (1999: 2) attempts to define diaspora in three ways: the first definition is similar to the earlier ideological type; the second definition comprises of a description of the experiences faced by the diaspora and includes their state of mind; the third definition is usually described in the context of globalisation. The first definition refers to diaspora as a 'social form', which implies that there are certain characteristics of diaspora which are derived from the social relations it shares with its environment. According to Vertovec (1999: 3-4) these characteristics include:

1. Social relationships which are defined by the historical backgrounds of the diaspora and their new as well as old geographical setups:
    - Diasporas emerge out of either voluntary or involuntary migration from one particular territory to another.
    - Diasporas tend to maintain their identity around certain specific commonalities, which include their origin, their historical experiences and their relationship with their countries of origin.
    - Diasporas tend to organise themselves and work together towards some causes in their host countries.
    - They develop varying degrees of direct and indirect connections with their homeland.
    - They tend to develop sympathetic and unifying relations with other migrant communities settled in various parts of the world.
    - Finally, the diasporas tend to carry with them the baggage of a certain degree of alienation and exclusiveness in their host societies, which results in making them feel different from the citizens of their host lands.
2. Political inclination and tendencies:
    - Diasporas as a community are divided on the issues of loyalty towards their host land and patriotism towards their homeland.

Hence, it remains to be a heterogeneous community whose divided loyalties and the degree of dedication to work towards both homeland and host land varies within the community.

- While some members of a diaspora community may tend to derive their motivation to work for their host land from the interests they have for their homeland, others may simply feel their obligation more towards their host land as it has provided them a secure life, which their homeland might not have been able to assure, thus resulting in their migration.

3. Economic strategies:

- The diasporas form a new yet strong source of finance and commerce in the international political and economical scenario. "The economic achievements of certain diasporic groups are seen to result from the mutual pooling of resources, transfer of credit, investment of capital and provision of services among family, extended kin, or co-ethnic members" (Vertovec 1999: 4).

A second approach to define diasporas has more to do with 'what led to making of a diaspora' than 'who is a diaspora'. In this context, Vertovec defines diasporas as 'a type of consciousness' (1999: 8). This approach defines diasporas in terms of their identity, their thought process and their ways and perceptions towards life in the receiving territories. This approach can be summed up as follows:

- Diasporas tend to create a certain kind of identity the very moment they leave their homeland and enter into another country. This new collective identity remains different from that given in their homeland. However, the old identity remains latent and continues to motivate them to help others in protecting those identities. Appadurai (1989: i) notes that when people move from one place to another, they leave behind their footprints to be followed by their kin group and provide them with the guideance or channel through which they maintain their hopes and desires to do something for their homeland (Vertovec 1999: 1).

- The experiences of a diaspora group in the process of migration from one place to another contribute towards conditioning their minds in a specific way, which in turn enables them to empathise with other members of the community all across the globe. "The awareness of multi-locality also stimulates the need to conceptually connect oneself with others, both 'here' and 'there', who share the same 'routes' and 'roots'" (Vertovec 1999: 8).

- It is the conditioning of the thought process of diasporas, which motivates them to voice their opinion either in favour of or against a certain issue in both homeland and host land. "Awareness of their precarious situation may also propel members of a diaspora group to advance legal and civic causes and to be active in human rights and social justice issues" (Cohen 1995: 13).

Werbner (2002: 123) and Kleist (2007) speak about migration as the main factor that leads to the formation of diaspora and explain various factors that result in the diaspora maintaining their heterogeneity, despite being considered same in different countries of their settlement.

The most recent approach to define diaspora includes globalisation as the base. Tambiah (2000: 165) explains the process of the formation of diaspora community in the wake of the growing effect of globalisation and its impact on the migration process. According to him, the process of migration has seen an enormous growth in the last two to three decades and has been categorised as voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary migrants are motivated towards getting better employment and life. In involuntary migration, a person leaves his country of origin out of fear for life caused due to political turmoil, natural disasters or civil war. Both types of migrants carry with them their culture, their skills and their memories related to their homeland to their host societies. To the host country, the former is 'an asset or human resource' while the latter are more of a 'burden in need of relief'.

Diasporas are also defined as 'imagined communities' who tend to identify themselves as rooted away from their original habitat and who tend to share commonalities in terms of image of their homeland and commitment towards maintaining and serving their homeland. These commonalities not only serve as

part of the diaspora's identity but also strengthen the nexus between the diaspora and its kin group both at home and in other host countries (Demmer 2007: 9).

Clifford (1997: 21) notes that the term 'diaspora' does not represent any particular person or community but it is actually a process of travelling. Hence, he calls diaspora a 'travelling term, in changing global conditions'. Bercovitch (2007: 19) defines diasporas as "the transnational communities created as a result of the movement of people, living in one or more host countries, organised on the basis of solidarity, shared ideas and collective identities, and showing loyalty to, and affinity with, their host country as well as their original homeland".

So we see that despite high levels of ambiguity in defining diaspora, the conceptual understanding of diaspora includes its movement from its countries of origin; its settling down in a host country; and its continued attachment to its motherland. Anderson (1992: 6) terms this connection with the homeland as 'long distance nationalism'. Basch et al. (1994) term it as 'transnationalism'. Diasporas tend to develop a closer attachment to their homeland more when their migration was a necessity rather than choice.

Concept of Peace

Galtung (1985: 144) distinguishes between positive and negative peace. Negative peace is 'the absence of organised collective forms of violence', or the absence of war. It is the kind of peace envisaged by a law-and-order-oriented person. This concept of peace is obviously in the interest of the status quo powers at the national or international levels, and may equally easily become a conservative force in politics. Galtung defines positive peace as integration. In the wake of recent developments in world politics this definition has been upgraded to become an "umbrella concept, devoid of meaning of its own, which people fill with their own subjective values. These values are usually political values, and peace thinking can fruitfully be seen as a function of general political orientation" (Schmid 1968: 223-224).

Peace tends to mean different things to different people. In the context of Sri Lanka, the government defines peace according to territorial unity of the state, whereas the Tamils have fought for peace in regard to justice, achieved through

self-determination (Orjuela 2008). The transition to positive peace is thought to be achieved through the process of 'peacebuilding'. Peace building was originally defined by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his proposal, titled *An Agenda for Peace* (1992) as "actions to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict". Boutros-Ghali proposed different methods for the international community to deal with contemporary conflicts in a more efficient manner. These methods included: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peace building. He proposed that by using these methods, the probability of avoiding conflicts would be more close to reality.

This multifaceted approach has, however, been criticised for its heavy concentration on international interventions and 'quick fix' solutions (Barakat 2005 a: 13). Though this approach provided a new role for UN agencies in the post-Cold War period, it failed to offer a richer concept of peace that could encourage local ownership and bottom-up development. As a result, peace-building, promoted by the UN, appears to be primarily concerned with restoring the status quo rather than supporting a more transformative process (Grewal 2003). This undermines the emancipatory nature of positive peacebuilding and fails to reflect on the variety of needs of each post-war state.

The achievements of positive peace must be conceptualised as a process, which extends beyond peace agreements, to consider the broader aspects of relief, reconstruction and development (Barakat and MacGinty 2002; Junne and Verkoren 2005). This proposes an integrated approach that reflects the underlying causes of conflict as well as attempts to overcome the inherent mistrust prevalent in post-conflict societies (Korn 1999; Barakat 2005 a; Oberschall 2007). In the short term, post-war recovery requires physical security, to support and legitimise the post-war order (Barakat 2005 a; Jeong 2005; MacGinty 2006). In the long term, it recognises that post-war recovery 'is fundamentally a development challenge' (Barakat 2005 a: 12). Moreover, positive peace must be rooted in non-discriminatory participation and local ownership, supported with integrating 'return' with 'recovery' by the international community (Barakat 2005a; Richmond 2005).

Peacebuilding does not start and stop with, say, the launch and the termination of a UN operation, or with the establishment of political parties or the holding of elections. Rather, "peacebuilding is understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflicting parties towards more sustainable, peaceful relationships" (Lederach 1997: 84-85). Lederach begins constructing his conceptual framework for building peace by asserting that genuine peacebuilding is more than the post-conflict support of a peace agreement. The term thus involves a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords. "Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct. Such a conceptualisation requires a process of building, involving investment and materials, architectural design and coordination of labour, laying of a foundation, and detailed finish work, as well as continuing maintenance" (Lederach 1997: 20).

Defining Conflict

Societies and their political environments are dynamic; they keep changing, whether the expectations are in a state of harmony or disruption. However, when there is a change influencing and affecting the interests, capabilities or wills underlying a structure of expectations, there remains a possibility of a conflict. Change in political structure, technology, economic development, education, and communications, and so on can intensify and alter interests, produce differences in capability, and enhance or weaken the will. They widen the gap between these elements and expectations, and increase the likelihood that some trigger will disrupt its structure. Simply put, change in the premises of political structure of expectations increases the probability of conflict.

Change which alters power relationships promotes conflict.[2] Conflict can be seen in terms of a fight between two or several groups for the same resources. Conflict

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[2] Conflict is shaped by power and different types of political power generate a distinct range of conflict behaviour. Authoritative societies are governed by the weight of tradition. The elite are granted the right to govern on the basis of widely shared religious or ethical principles. The political system is based on a consensus, on legitimacy. Conflict behaviour may occur between groups. Bandit groups may prey on outlying villages, food riots may occur in time of scarcity, and peasants may revolt against exploitative landlords, even in an authoritative society isolated from

takes place when different parties have different opinions about the sharing of power and fail to reach a mutually acceptable position through negotiations or discussions. The difference in claims in having a more prominent status in society also leads to a clash between different sections of the community or between different communities in society (Miall 1992).

The United Nations and the peace and conflict research community have both struggled to arrive at a satisfactory definition of conflict. The international community refers to 'disputes' as conflicts between states, which include contestation of claims and possible counter-claims. However, the academic community has been successful in defining conflict, albeit vaguely. The North American school defines conflict as the clash of interests between interdependent parties. This school focuses on international conflicts and tends to provide measures to avoid such conflict. As defined by a proponent of this school, Kenneth Boulding (1977: 77-78), "'conflicts over interests' are situations in which some change makes at least one party better off and the other party worse off, each in their own estimation. If the change is 'positive sum', it opens the possibility that both parties may be better off. If the change is 'zero sum' or 'negative sum', this perception is no longer available. A 'fight' is a situation in which each party to a perceived conflict over interests acts to reduce the welfare of the other". Another prominent definition is given by John Galtung (1990), who proposes that conflicts may not necessarily be violent, but a broader range of situations causing injustice may also lead to conflict. He emphasises the concept of 'structural violence' rather than 'physical violence' and focuses on both conflict between states and within states themselves.

Although there are in peace research many different definitions of conflict, there seem to be two basic views about what conflict is: (1) the subjectivist view and (2) the objectivist view. The various definitions are all formulated in terms of incompatible values or goals. As a proponent of the subjectivist view, Galtung (1969, 1990) distinguishes between three aspects of conflict: the conflict itself, which is defined in terms of incompatible values or goals between two or more

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external sources of change. Moreover, coups or palace revolutions may settle ambiguities in elite succession, or replace a ruler who has lost his legitimacy or 'mandate from heaven'. Conflict in coercive societies is manifested by class terror and repression, and elite purges (Rummel 1976).

actors, the conflict behaviour and the conflict attitudes of the actors. In the objectivist model, conflict is conflict of interest. Interest is not seen as a matter of subjective definition but as determined by the social structure. In other words, conflict is given an objectivistic definition. "Conflict is incompatible interests built into the structure of the system where the conflict is located. A class conflict, for example, is not a conflict because the classes have incompatible goals, fight each other, and hate each other. It is a conflict because the social structure is such that one class loses what the other class wins, and such that exploitation is profitable" (Schmid 1968: 225-227).

A conflict is affected by, and in turn affects, the surroundings in which it has its roots. And not only its origin but a conflict may also affect and in turn, get affected by the neighbouring surroundings and the global atmosphere as well. A conflict is said to emerge when there is a clash of interests among human beings residing in a particular environment.[3] In contemporary literature, conflict can be divided broadly into interstate and intra-state (Ramsbotham et al. 2009: 119-120; Collier et al. 2003). While interstate conflicts centre on issues of power, territorial control, refugee crisis, etc., intra-state conflicts are known to take place on issues of resource distribution, identity crisis, unjust treatment of citizens, etc. (Kaldor 2001; Ramsbotham et al. 2005). Intra-state conflicts are generally termed as insurgent movements also as they involve the use of guerrilla war tactics. The use of violence is also evident in these conflicts (Ramsbotham et al. 2005). Intra-state conflicts which tend to arise on these issues are fought against governments rather than any other particular group. The past one or two decades have witnessed a significant increase in intra-state conflicts, particularly ethnic conflicts which have also occupied the centre stage of global discourses on international politics.

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[3] This environment can be categorised on the basis of people residing in it and in turn, it will classify the conflict as well. The environment is known to be 'structured' if people who are part of it share a certain level of understanding and behave according to their declared norms. A conflict arising in a 'structured environment' is supposed to be basically non-violent as the people who are part of it share a certain level of bonding among themselves. Conflicts arising in families are classic examples of such kind of conflicts. However, the other kind of environment is the 'unstructured environment' where the parties do not share such an understanding and see each other with suspicion. They consider the other party as a threat to their own survival and hence, the conflict becomes a 'zero-sum conflict' in which violence and armed struggle remains inevitable. Civil wars fall under this kind of conflicts (Guerin 2009: 138-162).

Ethnic Conflict

Intra-state conflicts which are based generally on the issue of ethnicity and identity are termed as ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflicts are based on issues of either demanding or refusing to give recognition to one or more group on the basis of their similar identity and origin. Generally, ethnic conflicts turn into ethnic civil wars when one of the conflicting parties adopts violence as a means to achieve its interests or goals. When the differences among various ethnic groups of a society are not addressed equitably, they take the form of conflict and eventually a prolonged conflict tends to turn into a civil war. It becomes necessary for a government to take note of the variety of interests prevailing within the purview of territorial boundaries. The states having multi-ethnic populations are more prone to ethnic conflicts than homogeneous states. However, there have been certain heterogeneous states that have a history of peace. The main reason for this remains the state's capability to make each segment of its citizens satisfied with whatever resources they have. Equal distribution of resources among all the sections of society, democratic manner of making policies, and treating every section at par is the key for such states to have a peaceful record. No matter how small a community remains in number, their dissatisfaction with the state can result in the creation of disturbances, which can eventually result in ethnic conflict. If a community has to fight to assert its identity, which is continuously denied by the state, then there emerges a condition known as 'ethno-nationalism', which if supported by arms and violence, can lead to a deadly ethnic conflict.

According to Effendi,

> Ethno-nationalism can best be defined as follows: When a certain racial, linguistic, religious group of people in a country finds itself in one or more of three different situations.
>
> 1) It is marginalised in the politico-economic affairs of the country.
>
> 2) It feels itself superior and distinct in civilizational characteristics from the rest of the countrymen.

3) On being threatened by other coexisting ethnic group(s), it starts realizing the need to project its concerns under a particular framework (2007: 23-25).[4]

Ethnic conflict arises due to various reasons or there can be many factors that lead a simple conflict to turn into an ethnic civil war, such as, the history of any particular ethnic group, the political scenario in their country, their level of ethnic consciousness and perceptions, and the balance of power in the country.[5] The basic grounds for emergence of a conflict remain in discrimination of a particular section of a society, economic inequality, and socio-cultural differences. An insensitive government which fails to address its minority population may act as a catalyst to a conflict to adopt violent measures. Moreover, lack of communication and improper mechanism for communication between the state authorities and different social groups is also seen as a major reason for a conflict to turn into a war. As explained by Effendi,

> Ethno-nationalism may take a violent form (armed movement) in case of aggressive behaviour of ethnic groups which utilise violence as a means to their ends. This violent form of ethnicism can be transformed into a full-fledged secessionist movement, demanding a separate area of land by exercising the right of self-determination. Ethnic groups claiming to be (or to possess) nations and states in the past or that have the potential of becoming (nations or states and) are now demanding and asserting these claims as (historic) rights to self-determination for local autonomy or independence (2007: 24).

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[4] "Unequal distribution of resources produces conflict when the subordinate group rejects its previously accepted negative self-image, and with it the status quo, and starts working towards the development of a positive group identity. When social identity based on intergroup comparisons is unsatisfactory, individuals will either strive to leave the group for a better identity or make their own group more positively distinct, thus causing conflict" (Zartman 1997: 5).

[5] A state faces internal disturbances only when the government fails to address the issues of its various strata or communities staying within its territory. The failure to address the issues can be unintentional or intentional. If it remains unintentional, then even though there have been disturbances, the state immediately responds to the situation and the risk of opening the entire nation to a situation of war is saved. But sometimes the states intentionally do not address the issues as they might be having a different agenda such as holding a majoritarian rule, or they may not consider the minorities' issues as important as theirs. Another factor for internal conflicts to emerge is the discriminatory policies due to which a certain section remains devoid of opportunities to basic opportunities (ibid.).

Diaspora's Involvement in Homeland as well as Host Society's Political and Social Structure

Generally, in an ethnic civil war a particular identity group is seen struggling against the state for its equal rights and way of living. This makes a civil war an 'internal issue' but the involvement of the people, states or any organisation beyond the conflicting territory, which sympathise with these identity groups (sometimes people who have fled the country but remain connected for their families and relatives) takes the conflict to an 'international level'. Many scholars (Zartman 1997; Kriesberg 1997; Uyangoda 2005 b; Stedman et al. 2002) have suggested that in order to reduce violence in conflict it becomes imperative to include various non-state actors in the process of resolving a conflict, as states are accused of being partial and biased, but non-state actors generally tend to remain neutral. These non-state actors may include international organisations, refugees, NGOs, and above all, the diaspora and can be included by means of mediation etc. The participation of these organisations has resulted in the 'internationalisation' of the conflict.[6] The reasons for the internationalisation of a conflict may be many, among which migration and diaspora remain the most important.[7]

According to Smith and Stares, "Diasporas, in the present scenario, are seen as active political actors who can influence events within their territory (e.g. elections) or outside it (e.g. a foreign policy action or a vote in the United Nations)" (2007: 22). This means they now act on the international stage and have an influence on events well beyond one territory, ranging from economic cooperation to conflict duration (Bercovitch 2007: 43). Diasporas are involved in numerous conflicts all around the world. A very particular feature worth noticing in these conflicts where diaspora remain an important actor, is that these conflicts generally revolve around some basic issues such as 'ethnicity or identity', 'cultural discrimination', and having an 'inequality in way of living' within a particular

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[6] Internationalisation of ethnic conflict is a process by which a conflict between two or more ethnic groups in a country becomes a problem of the international community and also gets integrated into the global political system (Sivarajah 1995).

[7] For too long diasporas have been largely excluded from the theories and discourses on international relations. Boundaries and sovereignty defined all international phenomena. All international problems were seen as territorial in nature. However, with increased globalization, migration and overall mobility of people, goods and ideas, this position was no longer tenable. The growth in ethnic and civil conflicts since 1989 brought the viewpoint of sub-groups and other non-state actors (Smith and Stares 2007: 21).

territory. These issues may generally lead to a violent conflict as they are 'zero-sum conflicts'. However, when diasporas get involved in such matters, they become highly sensitive and significant. Sometimes their participation contributes to conflict resolution while on other occasions their activities may well exacerbate an existing conflict. The diaspora's role is relevant not only during the violent stage of the conflict, but also in the post-conflict situation.

A very important factor for diasporas' activism is the level of their incorporation in their host societies. There can be four ways in which this incorporation takes place and accordingly decide their way of approaching issues at the global level: assimilation, exclusion, integration and multiculturalism (Tambiah 2000).

Assimilation stands for the process in which the diasporas adapt themselves to the host society and in return the host society also sets them free to compete in all sectors and make their own mark in the socio-political and economic spheres of the host society.[8] In this kind of situation, the diasporas are usually contented and recognise the value of international laws.

Exclusivist host societies tend to accept migrants partially. This implies that the diasporas do get acceptance in their host societies but they remain confined to particular sectors when it comes to employment. Such host societies often tend to have a legal mechanism that supports certain kind of privileged treatment for their 'own' people while discriminating against the diasporic group as 'others' or 'outsiders'.[9] The diasporas in such societies are more united as they collectively feel the discriminatory attitudes of their host societies and hence, they are ever ready to challenge and fight for their rights.

Integration is a process in which both the migrants as well as the host government make an effort to mutually help each other and enable the migrants to lead a peaceful life. This is a slow process. In such practice, first the migrant is given a refugee or asylum status, then they are allowed to compete in the economic or labour market, and the state gives them ample opportunity without any

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[8] The United States of America represents such kind of society.

[9] Examples of such societies are the Gulf states and Japan. According to a UN report, these societies are archetypal closed societies and diaspora in such societies remain more of an 'outsider' forever.

discrimination from its own people. The migrant community is also provided with equal access to social services such as education, health and housing and eventually the migrant community becomes a citizen of such host country.[10] The migrants in such societies are eventually more contented, even if their migration was involuntary.

Multiculturalism is almost the same as integration, with the difference that under multiculturalism the migrant community tends to maintain its dual identity: one of its host society and the other that of its roots or homeland (Tambiah 2000: 167-168). For example, a Sri Lankan Tamil settled in the UK tends to represent himself/herself as a British Tamil rather than just British or just Tamil.

Factors Enhancing Diaspora's Activism

Globalisation as a Catalyst for Diaspora's Involvement

The modern world has witnessed a higher frequency in the movement of people both voluntarily and involuntarily. Statistics suggest that approximately 175 million people, i.e. 2.9 per cent of the world population have opted to move out of their homeland and this number is increasing (Lyons 2004). This increase may be attributed to the process of globalisation which has provided an immense boost in the level of technology, eased the process of communication, and eased transportation of goods as well as human beings. This movement of people has resulted in the transfer of ideas and harmonisation of cultures, making them live in harmony with others who are both similar and different from themselves. Also, it has strengthened the bond between them and their past as it has helped in sustaining and maintaining the links with their people residing in their homeland. Globalisation has tended to increase the pace at which the formation of diaspora used to take place in earlier times in three ways:

- Globalisation has facilitated communication, through which the dispersed population is able to act internationally without any interference from either the host country or the homeland.

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[10] An ideal example of such type of societies is the United Kingdom. It has given ample space for growth to its migrants' community, which has now become an important political and economic part of it.

- Globalisation, having removed the foundations of a territorial boundary, has strengthened the diasporas' connection with their homeland. They can now see whatever is happening in their homeland on television, which increases their eagerness to keep abreast of what is happening in their homeland's political and social affairs.

- Globalisation, having limited the confinement of boundaries, has let people across borders connect through various ways. This in turn has given the diasporas an opportunity to raise their voice on behalf of their kin group in their homeland.[11]

What makes these diasporas so active when this participation is lacking among their compatriots in their homeland? The answer is that they are no more controlled by their homeland authorities, with their restrictions on free speech and expression. The diaspora groups take advantage of these freedoms and lobby the host government as well as the international community to implement desired foreign policies towards the homeland. A major role in deciding the level of their activism is played by the kinds of social and political position they hold in their host societies. For example, if the diasporas are well settled and have held citizenship for a long time, then the host countries tend to see them as a major vote bank and hence, take every measure to gain their confidence. According to Bercovitch,

> The effect of homeland conflicts on diasporas economically, socially or in terms of their self-image, and how that affects their identity or how they are viewed by their host society, ensures high stakes for diasporas in either the continuation or the resolution of the conflict (2007: 34).

Globalisation and the rise of ethnic conflicts have given immense space for these migrant communities to occupy a very significant and prominent place in global politics. There has been an increase in the intensity of the diaspora groups' ties with their homeland and, hence, an increase in their involvement in a conflict in their homeland. Since they play an important role in conflict, it is natural that in a direct or an indirect manner they would be affecting the politics of their homeland as well. Not only this, since they remain a connecting link between the host

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[11] The modern world has seen many uprisings in a particular country that have been initiated by the diaspora. For example, the Sikh movement for an independent 'Khalistan' in India was basically an initiation from the Sikh diaspora and not from the state of Punjab in India.

country and the homeland, they remain an integral part of regional and international politics as well. The ease of communication and information explosion has facilitated these processes. According to Sriskandarajah,

> … the proliferation of insurgencies and intrastate conflicts around the world has produced growing numbers of refugees and migrants, seeking a new home. This, in turn, has created a number of diaspora groups that have a more recent, stronger, and arguably more intense emotional connections with developments in their erstwhile homes, especially when there is social or political upheaval (2004: 4).

Pre-migratory Experiences and the Homeland Background

The patterns of the diasporic engagements in homeland politics are generally shaped by their prior experiences, which involve the institutions that transmit political ideas, values and norms, and the practice of political participation itself. A pre-migration political participation is bound to generate continued interest in homeland matters even after migration.[12] As membership in civic and political organisations imparts political dispositions as well as skills, diasporas with a prior record of activism or membership will have a stronger homeland orientation than those lacking such experience. Similarly, higher the level of pre-migration activism, greater is the level of post-migration homeland interest (Waldinger 2008).

As explained by Lyons (2004), diasporas are termed as 'conflict-generated' if they have a history of leaving their country amidst some kind of conflict or war. Generally, conflict takes the form of war due to the state's inability to address its root cause. Hence, the people who have to leave their lands and homes and look for alternative places to settle down, always have a feeling of disgust, betrayal and hatred towards their homeland authorities. These feelings tend to grow stronger even if they settle down in some safe places and start their life all over again (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). It may not be the same case with their kin group who have been there in the conflict-ridden areas or war zones. The diaspora over time

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[12] For example, voting history is a powerful predictor of future behaviour. While migration may disrupt the norms that support continued voting, it is anticipated that voting, as a symbolically important act undertaken in public, generates other commitments, such that persons with a pre-migration experience of voting will retain greater interest in home-country politics than those without (Plutzer 2002).

tends to strengthen its feeling of distrust towards its homeland state and therefore, becomes more inclined to be impatient, while its kin group, who are still staying in the war zone, would be ready to accept all kinds of peaceful methods that would help to end the war. Here we clearly see how diaspora can be a factor in contributing towards conflict (Lyons 2007).

To conclude, diaspora groups who have fled their homeland due to some kind of conflict or war are generally very weak in terms of social unity in their host societies initially. When they arrive in a new environment, they keep their different origin, race and caste alive. It is only over years that they tend to overcome their own differences over their origin and unite under the umbrella of being 'conflict-generated diaspora'. The more the homeland government is unable to address the root cause of their grievances, the more is the level of unity and activism within its diaspora communities.

Relationship with the Host State

In their host state, diasporas undergo experiences of displacement and alienation. Also, they might suffer from inferiority complex, when it comes to adjusting with the modern way of life in their host country. These make them all the more attached to their homeland and seek to engage themselves more into long-distance nationalism (Anderson 1992, 1999; Fuglerud 1999). The level to which the diasporas have been accepted and accommodated at par with other citizens in a host society defines the level of activism of the diasporas in their homeland affairs.

How far the diaspora would remain effective in their homeland intervention is another question that is addressed again by the environment provided to them by their host society. If the latter is based on democratic credentials, then the diaspora would get the rights to self-assert and to express its views safely. The host land might also give the diaspora open access in terms of: limiting governmental control, security of financial independence and timely redressal of its grievances.

On the one hand, the political parties in the host state give the diasporas numerous options for civic engagement,[13] by making policies for them, which eventually

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[13] "The diasporas' civic engagement is facilitated when the host country establishes a separate ministry which takes care of diasporas and migrant community. It might also help in navigation of

boosts the morale of the diaspora for its involvement in homeland political affairs (Zolberg 1999). As the diaspora learns new meanings and forms of representation in its host society, it simultaneously contributes to and participates in hegemonic constructions by 'bringing them back home'.

On the other hand, the host state gives the newcomers access to the wealth, thereby providing the migrant community with a material base that it can use to exercise leverage back home. The diaspora groups take advantage of these freedoms and lobby the host government as well as the international community to implement desired foreign policies towards the homeland. They are able to maintain resources and have access to some powerful factors[14] that can affect their homeland affairs. Their ability to have an impact over their homeland as well to convince their host government of their activism is generally the outcome of their adjustment within their host society and the rapport maintained by them. What kind of social values they represent, how far they are cooperative in their host society, how fair or unfair they remain to their neighbours in their host society and how they approach an issue – all these factors lead the host government to take a stand either in their favour or against them. Diasporas who are not very much accommodated and who are seen with suspicion, tend to develop a stronger bond with their homeland.

Growing Trends of 'Securitisation' and Proscription of Diaspora's Activities

A new paradigm of power and security has emerged since the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States. The emergence of 'homeland security' as a major ideology and practice has led to serious consequences for diaspora's involvement in its homeland affairs. In a security-dominated paradigm, the diaspora communities are often viewed as breeding grounds for terrorism and thus, their involvement in their homeland's political affairs may be seen with suspicion which, in turn, may impact their involvement in their homeland affairs. The notion that diaspora communities

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their issues to its foreign offices and embassies and helping them out in their needs. These help them maintain and improve their relations with the migrant communities in their countries and also in turn, get the confidence of the migrants. In many countries legislative seats are reserved to represent diaspora voting preferences" (Spiro 2006: 120).

[14] These factors are: access to international media and organisations and also their powerful or significant host government. All these contribute to making the diaspora an actor at the global stage and impact the events going on in its host land as well as homeland.

automatically represent security threats[15] and therefore are appropriate targets for law enforcement's attention seems to be predominant (Cheran 2003).

The new perceived linkages between the diaspora and terrorism have drastically reduced the efficacy of the diaspora in participating in its homeland politics.

Long-distance Politics and Governance of the Homeland

The long-distance politics in the homeland, which uses its embassies and high commissions in the host countries to monitor and gather intelligence about its diaspora population, thereby essentially co-shapes the diasporic involvement in its homeland affairs. The diaspora's involvement in its homeland politics depends upon these institutions' attitude towards it.[16] Homeland politics also affects the diasporas in their economic and social sphere, and to some extent is also responsible for the making of their image. Higher level of incorporation of diasporas would emerge only if their association with their state is smooth (Baechler 2002).

Reasons for Diaspora's Response to a Conflict

A diaspora community may have some general or some specific reasons for responding to conflict in its homeland. It might be interested in providing a peaceful solution to a protracted conflict or it may be more interested in making more opportunities available to its people. It may also be interested in working with different international or local organisations in this regard. In all such cases, the diaspora community also benefits. For example, the role of peacemaker gives it a different status of helpful people, and leads to a condition where people in the war zone tend to believe it more than its own government. The diaspora's activism through different NGOs makes it more connected to their people.

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[15] Refugees and non-citizens are particularly vulnerable in the terrorism discourse. The fear that newcomers may hold sympathies for rebels fighting against a state that oppressed them also prevails in the host states and hence, law enforcement is a natural way to curb the diaspora's activities that link them to their homeland.

[16] For instance, in the case of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, since it has been identified by its homeland as 'a threat to its security and integrity', the Sri Lankan High Commission has been making efforts to curb any activity that questions the Sri Lankan state. In this effort it has been noted to provide false information to the host land authorities about the illegal activities of its diaspora. As a result, the referendum process in the United Kingdom and Canada witnessed the absence of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members as they feared negative repercussions for their families and friends (Baechler 2002).

Some of the other reasons why the diaspora community feels motivated to participate in its homeland matters are as follows:

- A conflict or a war-like situation in the homeland is an obstacle to prosperity. The diaspora, situated miles away from its kin group, tends to feel more responsible to protect it.

- The diaspora might also respond to a conflict to limit the involvement of 'outsiders', who are often seen as taking advantage of a conflict situation. Greater involvement of foreign powers might also lead to dilution of the diaspora's status in its homeland.

- The diaspora may also intervene by facilitating dialogue to maintain its status and reputation as a peace-loving and peacemaking community. Successful mediation may also earn the gratitude of its homeland government.

Diaspora's Responses to Conflict and Peace

There are several ways in which the diaspora affects or responds to a particular conflict and peace process. It may participate in conflict prevention, conflict regulation, conflict termination and post-conflict reconstruction (Miall 1992; Bercovitch 2007). The impact of these responses can lead either towards acceleration of the conflict or reaching a resolution.[17]

The nature of the diaspora's intervention is basically dependent upon the kind of power equation it holds within its own host community and with its homeland. A diaspora group intervenes in conflict if it is organised and enjoys material and political power. A diaspora group without these does not intervene in conflicts. To what extent its interests are getting fulfilled remains the diaspora's main concern while intervening in a conflict. As the conflict keeps changing its shape, the diaspora's role also keeps changing accordingly.[18] The diaspora's ability to

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[17] For instance, the Albanian diaspora clearly supported the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in the mid-1990s. The Croatian diaspora was also very active and helpful in making the international community come forward in support of the Croats in their conflict with the Croatian Serbs. As regards South Asia, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the West was active in extending financial support to the Tamil insurgents fighting the government forces.

[18] The entire lifecycle of a conflict consists of: (i) *Conflict prevention phase*: when even though there are differences they are not that much strong that individuals or people might start resisting

intervene in their homeland conflict can be measured on two basic parameters: (i) what status it holds in the international community, and (ii) how far it can assert itself in its homeland.

Each phase of the conflict predicts the kind of response the diaspora will give to that particular phase of conflict. The diaspora's intervention can be categorised as either positive or negative or neutral, based on the type of outcome of the conflict.[19]

There are also four different parameters on the basis of which the diaspora can influence a conflict. These parameters are: political, economic, military and socio-cultural (Bercovitch 2007). All of these parameters and factors, when combined, give a proper assessment of diasporic response to any phase of the conflict, which we can interpret in ways such as: politically and militarily positive, negatively contributing in the economic sphere, and neutral in the socio-cultural sphere.

Diasporas in Conflict Prevention Phase

The conflict prevention phase of the conflict is a phase during which the differences among the individuals or group of people are latent. At this juncture the parties are not mentally prepared for a war. Hence, they generally prefer any intervention that would ensure avoidance of the conflict.

At the political level, the diasporas are of immense importance in conflict prevention. They are generally seen as the important factor that can nip the conflict in the bud. They can lobby the host government as well as international organisations (such as the United Nations) and induce them to intervene in their

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each other; (ii) *Conflict regulation*: after the parties have become fully aware of their interests, their mobilization is done and they are motivated and prepared to use violence against each other. It is during this phase that the conflict grabs the attention of the media and comes into the limelight. (iii) *Conflict termination*: during this phase the warring parties have realized that their loss of men and material is too much for them to afford and hence they finally go for either resolving the issue or some kind of settlement. This phase can be a result of the mediation or negotiation done in the earlier phase. However, this not always is the case. (iv) *Post-conflict restructuring*: during this phase certain internal changes are worked on to ensure that such conflict may not erupt again (Miall 1992).

[19] If the diasporas lead the warring parties towards a resolution, then their contribution is considered as a positive one. But if they aggravate the conflict, their contribution is supposed to be negative. Finally, if their participation does nothing significant and does not bring about much change in the condition, then their contribution remains neutral.

homeland for conflict prevention. They can be a crucial factor in pushing their host government and the international organisations to establish appropriate informal channels of communication and platforms for discussion. Being able to express their concerns freely, the diasporas can work as the mobilising agency by gathering an international public opinion over the issue and influence it to favour their ultimate motive of establishing human rights, justice and political freedoms by non-violent means in their homeland.

At the same time, the diasporas' intervention can have a negative aspect as well. The diasporas, through their lobbying and advocacy, can bring an issue to a level where it might become easy for a conflict to turn into a civil war. They can highlight an issue by bringing it at the international level and raise such sentiments which may be aggressive and violent and might worsen the conflict situation. Furthermore, their involvement in their homeland might make them the ideals of their kin group and hence, their kin group might feel that injustice is being done to them when the diaspora say so.

Economic assistance is an important and a positive tool of conflict emergence, so far as it contributes resources to parties who may feel deprived of them. As stated by Bercovitch,

> Many of the conflicts and wars today are fought in the underdeveloped and least developed countries. Poor countries have fewer economic and political resources with which to manage conflicts. Strategies to reduce poverty and to achieve broad-based economic growth are an essential part of conflict prevention. Diaspora can raise money in its host countries and transfer it to its homeland. Such remittances are an important economic source (in some poor countries remittances account for a substantial proportion of total income), making parties more reluctant to engage in conflict and risk losing such money (2007: 43).

This economic assistance, however, can turn to be a negative contribution if the diaspora become biased and start recognising and encouraging a particular community that might create a feeling of dissent among the rest of the natives and in turn aggravate their differences. Further, if not watched, the remittances might have serious security implications for their homeland as this money can be channelled to turn the conflict into a war by filling it with arms and ammunition.

Diasporas in Conflict Regulation Phase

During this phase the conflict takes a serious mode and is considered to be a serious and intense issue for those involved as well as those staying in their neighbourhood. This phase marks out the detailed aspects of a conflict by defining who all are the people involved, what are the reasons for them to get involved by identifying the issues concretely, and describes the varying viewpoints of the conflicting parties. During this phase the general mentality of the parties is that if conflict continues, then only they will be benefited and hence, they are pretty much sure about taking the conflict to the international level as they can gather support in their favour.

At the political level, during this phase the diasporas can be of immense importance as they can help their kin group in their homeland by providing momentum to the international forums and drawing their attention towards the emerging conflict in their homeland, mainly by lobbying and advocacy. They can be of immense importance when it comes to the matter of conveying the real matter to the international actors as well as making their kin group in their homeland aware of the information that is suppressed by their home state. Engagement with the media both in their host land as well as the international media can help them bring many third parties to initiate the process of mediation and avoid war. Apart from this their strength in their demonstrations and other ways of protesting can be useful in bringing the conflict to a global level and hence, open to all governments for their suggestions to resolve it.

While all these efforts lead towards pacifying the conflict, there are several ways in which the contribution and participation of the diasporas can lead towards its aggravation. The diasporas are the main actors at the international level who are responsible for portraying the conflict to the whole world. If they do it with a moral responsibility of having a peaceful state then it is good, but there can be other reasons for them to bring the issue to the global level. They might be resistant of the government in their homeland and hence portray the homeland state as an evil state and can mobilise the world against it. This can make their homeland state more hostile to their kin group and in turn aggravate the conflict.

At the economic level, the diasporas can intervene by advocating the boycott of their homeland products, particularly to their host land.[20] Furthermore, their remittances can be used both positively as well as negatively. If they channel their remittances in such a manner that they are used to do away with poverty and enhance literacy level among the residents, then it will lead towards resolving the conflict. But if they channel the money to wage a war, creating rebel groups, providing them with arms and ammunition, and facilitating their training, then it is certainly going to escalate the war.

During the phase when conflict tends to aggravate, the diasporas can provide military support. They can also arrange for more and more people who would serve as combatants. As noted by Bercovitch, "Diasporic communities are often able and more than willing to offer any level of military support their homelands may require. The overall effect of such support on the conflict itself can hardly be positive" (2007: 32).

Diasporas in Conflict Termination Phase

This phase is marked by clear exhaustion of the warring parties. They now wish to settle for a profitable compromise.

The diasporas at this stage can be of ultimate significance as they possess the power to make their host government and other international organisations to come forward and provide a platform for the warring parties. They can make an appeal to the warring parties to provide some sort of settlement so that their kin group can live peacefully. The diasporas can also promote non-violence by luring the warring parties with some kind of reward.[21] Apart from this the diasporas can also make a

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[20] A good example is the involvement of the diaspora of Arab states in opposition of Israel by boycotting Israeli goods and services. Similarly, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community called for a boycott of the textiles imported into its host countries from its homeland, during the anti-Tamil riots in Sri Lanka.

[21] For example, Jewish Americans played a very important role in the Oslo Peace Process. They held talks and gathered support in favour of Arab and Islamic states, which marked the beginning of a smooth relationship between Israel and other Arab states.

condition for the warring parties that they will continue to give remittances only on condition that they maintain peace and order.[22]

The diaspora's activism for the promotion of peaceful methods can include providing a platform for the conflicting parties and bringing in third parties who would be acceptable to both and then discussing the matter in detail and look for alternative solutions acceptable to both. If the warring parties refuse to come to the negotiation table, then the diasporas may call for international parties and associations like the United Nations to get involved.

The diaspora community, being economically well endowed, can engage the warring parties by involving them in various workshops organised by it. These workshops can be based on different themes such as democracy, equality, and grievance redressal having a problem solving approach. Through organising such workshops, the diasporas can enable the warring parties to get connected to various specialists and influential people well versed in negotiation.[23]

Diasporas in Post-conflict Reconstruction/Peacebuilding Phase

The significance of this phase is that whatever policies are made and whatever compromises are made on, the previously warring parties undertake that such a conflict would not recur in the future.

The diasporas can suggest to their homeland government to make such policies that seek to hammer at the root cause of the conflict. They can make the homeland government as well as the international organisation aware of the real conditions if

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[22] A classic illustration of the diaspora's participation in conflict escalation as well as conflict termination is the case of the Irish American diaspora. Although they supported the rebellious militant group at first, later on they also helped the conflict to reach its end. It was basically due to the internal faction within the diaspora group that was peace-oriented and laid the ground of the peace process of Ireland. This in turn drove the entire community of Irish American diaspora to advocate for the peace process.

[23] For example, Herbert C. Kelman, a Jewish American, has been active for many years for bringing about a peaceful situation between the American Jews and the Palestinians by basically getting them involved in a series of workshops which have a problem-solving approach, held at Harvard University.

a false portrayal is happening and in turn make real efforts towards a radical rebuilding and a more peaceful structure.[24]

The post-conflict phase is marked by political and economic restructuring. This is an area where the diasporas can be of enormous help. They can help in political restructuring of their homeland by providing conditions that can develop a literate and strong civil society.[25]

There might be situations when the need for international organisations' help and aid is felt. During this phase the diasporas can link themselves with these organisations and pressurise their homeland government to abide by their norms for maintaining peace in the country. They can also ask their homeland government to provide their kin group with democratic institutions and free media. Also they can make their kin group aware of the international norms that define and limit democracy, and make them aware of their basic human rights.

Diasporas potentially involve themselves in development policies in different ways, such as through

- o actively involving in policy formulation;
- o supporting capacity building and network formation among diaspora organisations so as to enhance their ability to undertake development initiatives;
- o directly sustaining development initiatives of the diaspora by providing financial and/or organisational support;
- o involving diasporic organisations as 'experts' or 'consultants' in development projects designed by development agencies; and
- o involving diasporic organisations in programmes of permanent or temporary return.

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[24] This was seen in the case of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora when it started blaming its homeland government for the human rights abuse against its ethnic kin group just after the war with the LTTE had ended. It accused the Sri Lankan government of still targeting the Tamils in the North even though the war was over.

[25] For example, members of the Sierra Leone diaspora living in the United Kingdom established the Sierra Leone War Trust for Children (SLWT), which remains committed towards improving the lives of the war-affected population, particularly children, by working for the reconstruction of the war-affected areas.

In the economic restructuring aspect of their participation in post-conflict peacebuilding,[26] the diasporas are the most important source of income for their homeland in the reconstruction efforts. Foreign companies investing in a particular offshore location prefer to consult the local residents. In this context the diasporas can play a vital role by mediating between their homeland and the foreign investors. These investments aim towards long-term sustainability and help in ensuring peace in the homeland. Diasporas who wish to return to their homeland can also become a major source of expertise and provide their homeland with a more efficient and planned strategy for economic growth. The diasporas can also be of immense importance when it comes to resettling displaced people and reorienting the soldiers. The diasporas also can provide basic healthcare facilities and residence through their own NGOs.

The diasporic participation can also be seen in terms of socio-psychological rehabilitation of the victims of the conflict. It can create community centres to organise various social gatherings and celebrations so that the victims' mind is occupied with various arrangements that have to be made and wipe away the trauma of the conflict. According to Rigby (2001), diaspora's activism has been gaining more significance due to its orientation towards establishing justice and truth in a post-conflict society. Its activism is for search of truth and not for accusing and punishing, for a more nuance understanding of the situations. It tends to focus more on means to achieve justice and address the root cause of the conflict through reconciliation.

Reconciliation is the means to heal people and rebuild the webs of relationships that have been broken down during the conflict. When it comes to reconciliation, people in the homeland are more accepting and willing to listen to advice from members of the diaspora rather than any other foreigners. Members of the diaspora can offer expertise, knowledge and understanding of cultural norms, how to amalgamate different norms, and a deeper appreciation of the situation in its

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[26] Post-conflict policies can have a clear influence of diaspora's participation as the main actors of this phase. Such policies are supposed to be risk eliminators in the sense that they reduce the risk of the re-emergence of disputes and make more opportunities for the war-affected population in both political and economic spheres. This proves that a diaspora can be of enough potential if it is handled with maturity and can work wonders towards effective conflict resolution.

homeland. The diaspora's literature and other cultural productions can contribute to the process of healing by countering negative images. An added feature of expatriate involvement is that it may lead to repatriation, as diaspora members lay the groundwork for the kinds of institutions they would like to participate in as they fulfil the dreams of returning to their homeland (Bercovitch 2007: 48).

Conclusion

Migration is an ancient phenomenon. But for a long time migrants have not been included in any kind of study. They remain with the identity of 'refugee', 'diaspora' or 'displaced person'. But with the advent of globalisation, politics has become unbounded and since then every other person could be a part of the political affair. Diasporas were recognised as international actors and today they have proved to be an important actor. They are no more "virtual". Today they ensure that they count both in their homeland as well as host land as a different group altogether. Their number is continuously increasing. They have started making their presence felt among the other international actors, in their host land as well as homeland. They are now the connecting link or the binding thread between their host land and their homeland on every front, be it political, economic or socio-cultural.

Diasporas remain connected to the homeland by remaining involved in homeland affairs. But the relationship with their homeland is not simple. It is complex usually and depends on various socio-cultural, political and economic norms. This is why diasporas have gained so much importance in the wake of globalisation. They keep affecting the politico-social norms both in their homeland as well as host land, and also affect the relationship between their host land and their homeland. Hence, they remain an important factor in global politics. The various aspects of their effects can be measured along the lines of conflict and peace situations both in their homeland as well as host land. These conflict situations come in phases and each phase marks a different reaction from these diaspora groups.

A diaspora and its participation in its homeland conflict is something that cannot be judged at one instance. It has to be judged across several criteria and levels. They can be contributing to peace or aggravating the conflict. They can be highly

cooperative and dangerous at the same time. Thus a state cannot ignore these groups. There definitely remains a need for the international community to recognise their presence and give them appropriate conditions in which they are free to assert themselves and have the power of decision-making for themselves as well as their kin staying in their homeland.

Chapter II

Mapping the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora

Introduction

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora is a transnational community, which has its roots in northern Sri Lanka and has been formed as a result of migration from India for livelihood prospects. The members of this community still retain their bonds with their country of origin. While migrating, they have tended to carry along their identity and their rootedness in their homeland. They remain united by their belief of belonging to a similar culture and motivation of working for the betterment of their kin group in their homeland.

Nonetheless, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community is not a homogeneous one. It remains stratified on grounds of caste and class. The Sri Lankan Tamils are also categorised on the basis of the time period during which they migrated and the reasons that made them migrate. A major chunk of this diaspora is now well settled in various Western states and enjoys privileged status in its host societies, while there remains a significant section which is yet to be brought into the diaspora's mainstream activism. The former has achieved either permanent resident status or citizenship in its host societies while the latter section works mostly in the low-skilled service sector. Despite having differences within themselves, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has successfully emerged as a single entity in international politics (Sriskandarajah 2004: 495).

Members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community have successfully marked their presence in global politics by maintaining their connections both within and outside the community. Through their activism at the global stage, they have been instrumental in shaping various issues that are related to their homeland.

This chapter highlights the process of the formation of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora as an entity in world politics. It discusses how their migration took place and explores the factors that enabled them to relocate in a new country. While discussing their settlement patterns, it also explores their political and social status in their host societies and how it contributes towards shaping of their nationalism towards their homeland.

Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora are an immigrant community that remains distinct yet united in its host society but has not lost connections with its homeland. Since ethnic persecution was the basic reason for the Tamils in Sri Lanka to migrate, their acceptance in their host societies as refugees first and citizens later, has enabled them to practise their cultural, linguistic and religious traditions more freely and securely than in their homeland. According to Wayland,

> The movement of immigrants and refugees from a situation of persecution and absence of political rights to open societies characterised by democratic governance, freedom of expression, and anti-discrimination laws has profound political implications. People who migrate from a closed society to an open society are able to capitalise on newfound freedoms to publish, organise and accumulate financial resources to an extent that was impossible in their homeland (2004: 417).

This has resulted in 'Tamil identity-building from abroad'. Their transnational nationalism is all about their involvement in long-distance politics back in Sri Lanka. "The sustenance of religious traditions from the 'homeland' is an important feature of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, and religious institutions are significant not only as places of worship but also for their wider role in community-building" (Reeves 2013: 71).

Sri Lankan Tamils have migrated to other countries since time immemorial. Earlier, migration was basically the choice of the elite class in search of a better life. They opted for temporary emigration for higher and better education and employment. Britain and North America were the preferred locations to settle. Later, Middle East and South East Asia also became preferred choices (Sriskandarajah 2004: 494).

Phases of Migration

"Sri Lanka's external linkages, forged before and during colonisation by successive European powers over nearly four centuries, and consolidated since independence from Britain in 1948, have underpinned a long tradition of people moving to and from the island" (Sriskandarajah 2004: 493). After independence, the primary reason for migration changed from economic prospects to the need for survival. As they migrated, their struggle to relocate themselves in a different environment strengthened the bond within the community more than with its host society. The memories of their struggle in the homeland for survival also played a crucial role in bringing the community together despite having caste and class differences. "Political formations (most notably, the Tamil 'nation') and aspirations (Tamil Eelam) that were forged at home have been transported across space and time, and continue to be relevant in the diaspora" (ibid.: 497).

The Sri Lankan Tamils' migration history may be seen in terms of pre-colonial migration, migration during the colonial period, and post-colonial migration. The latter may be seen in three distinctive phases, namely, 1950-1980, 1983-1995 and 1995-2010.

Pre-colonial Migration

The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed a strong wave of migration to South East Asia, particularly Malaya, to work as plantation workers, labourers, etc. (Apputhurai 2013: 78). The economic development in South East Asia, particularly in Malaya and Burma, in the 1820s was the main attraction for the migration. Until the 1890s, the migrant population accounted for a significant share in the social and economic life in these states. Mostly the migrants were male, because female employment was scarce at that time (Guilmoto 1993: 111-120). This group of migrants attained citizenship in their resident societies in due course and had their families settled as well.

Migration during the Colonial Period

At various times in history, Sri Lanka has been colonised by the Dutch, Portuguese, French and the British. The island nation's strategic location was a special attraction for them. The South Asian region was also a huge market that

provided cheap labour. The colonisers exported labour to their home countries. Apart from these labourers, many educated and English-proficient Tamils arrived in Malaya. These migrants were basically invited or sent for training by their British rulers. In the late 19th century, these migrants emerged as the most educated Asian group in Malaya and remained highly active in public services and other professions (Apputhurai 2013: 79-81).

Post-colonial Migration

Independent Sri Lanka witnessed events[27] that ultimately led to widening the rift between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. According to Suntha, the migratory pattern in the post-independence era can be divided into three phases, as follows:

> Phase I occurred in the post-independence era of 1950-1980; phase II took place following the 1983 pogroms; and phase III resulted due to the commencement of President Kumaratunga's 'war for peace' campaign from 1995 to 2011 (2011:13).

Since the historical background of the conflict and peace phases in Sri Lanka has been overlapping, hence, a clear division remains difficult. Yet, there have been attempts to categorize the formation of diasporas according to the phase in which they migrated. "For example, discrimination over access to further education is often cited as a central theme to the migration of the Sri Lankan Tamils in phase I and II, but this may not feature for those joining the diaspora in phase III" (ibid.: 2011: 13)

Phase I: 1950-1980

The first three decades after Ceylon's independence are the years that introduced the Sri Lankan Tamils to discrimination. Despite article 29(2) of the constitution which prohibited legislation that discriminated against any individual on the basis of religion or community (de Silva 1997: 248f, 260), discrimination against the Tamils kept occurring. The Official Language Act of 1956 declared Sinhalese as the official language, under which all the business, education and all the government activities were to be conducted in Sinhalese. This prevented the

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[27] British politics made the Tamils the privileged community, which the Sinhalese resented. They in turn tried to monopolise the privileges for their own community. This gave the Tamils the feeling of being discriminated against (de Silva 1997).

Tamils from undertaking or even continuing with their employment (Weerakoon 1998). This led many of the educated Tamil population to emigrate. The standardisation policy also deprived the Tamils of the opportunities of higher education in the country. This led to a serious brain drain within the Sri Lankan society (Suntha 2011: 14-15).

Members of this phase of migration always had the hope of returning to their homeland when the Tamils were given equal status.

Phase II: 1983-1995

The second phase of migration happened in the wake of the emergence of various Tamil militant groups in the island. The major cause of this Tamil militancy was the Tamil youths' feeling of being betrayed by their political leadership, especially its failure to honour the Vaddukodai Resolution[28] (Wilson 2000). There was an enormous increase in the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) following various instances of clashes between the government and the Tamil militants. The simmering anger was also heightened by incidents of inter-communal violence, particularly the riots of 1983 (Wilson 2000; Rupesinghe 2006).

Anti-Tamil incidents in Colombo alone accounted for more than 3000 Tamils killed, but the government maintained a sphinx-like silence over the developments. The Tamils' faith in the government shattered further with the pogrom of 1983, marking the onset of a separatist civil war in the island. In its first two decades, this war claimed 60,000 lives directly, and accounted for mass destruction in the north-east and displacement of the Tamils usually residing there (Sriskandarajah 2004: 494).

The Sinhalese perceived hostility to Tamils opened the floodgates of Tamil emigration. Moreover, the social elite class that used to go to the West for temporary engagements decided to leave the country permanently. The number of asylum seekers also grew across Europe and North America. Initially, the migrants included the professional and middle-class Tamils who could afford to travel and

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[28] The Vaddukodai Resolution was adopted at the first National Convention of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) on 14 May 1976 under the presidency of S.J.V. Chelvanayakam. The TULF's participation in the 1977 general elections was anchored in this resolution, in which the TULF declared its intent of forming a sovereign State of Tamil Eelam.

ensure their own safety. Later on, they would work for bringing their families and relatives through various family reunion events.[29] According to Suntha,

> This phase of migration comprised of mainly younger men and women, many of whom were students or activists for the main Tamil political parties. Within this group, particularly among the activists, many had suffered ill-treatment and torture at the hands of the Sri Lankan police; some migrants at this time included survivors of the Welikada Prison massacre of 1983 (2011: 15).[30]

This generation of migrants had an ideology that was totally different from that of the migrants of phase I. The latter's non-violent approach was unable to convince these newer diaspora and hence, there was a wave of support to Tamil militancy. They connected more with Tamil militant organisations like the LTTE (Singh 2006: 22). The LTTE's militancy and its war tactics were justified in the wake of the continuous failure of the TULF and others to raise support for the Tamil cause and their inability to implement the Vaddukodai Resolution (Suntha 2011: 16).

Phase III: 1995-2010

The previous migratory phases of the Sri Lankan Tamils were essentially a product of the discrimination shown against them by the state. Phase III came along with an increased militarisation by both the Tamil Tigers as well as the government, which eventually resulted in a huge bloodshed. This phase was marked by Eelam Wars III and IV, which were more intense than the earlier two Eelam wars. The Tamils were already affected by the war, and the implementation of the Indian Peacekeeping Forces' operations since 1987 worsened their plight (de Silva 2005: 705f).

The most recent influx of these migrants was basically due to Eelam War IV in mid-2006, which paralysed the whole of north-eastern Sri Lanka till the middle of 2009. "Their settlement in various Western countries led to the founding of

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[29] The highest number of people applied for asylum in Europe during the 1980s. This was when the civil war began. UNHCR claims that the number of asylum seekers during this phase was around 256,307 (UNHCR 2001). During the 1990s, Sri Lankan Tamils became the most numerous people applying for asylum in Canada – around 34,186 (UNHCR 2001), of which a major chunk was granted some form of residential status.

[30] The Welikada Prison massacre took place in July 1983. Fifty-three prisoners were killed inside the high-security prison by the Sinhalese. On 25 July, 35 Tamil prisoners were killed; two days later, 18 Tamil detainees and three prison deputies were killed.

numerous community groups that had become a key source of funds for aiding the development of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka, while also being linked to militant groups as fund-raisers" (International Crisis Group Report 2010 b). Advocacy groups also emerged which sought to alleviate the plight of the Tamils by bringing it to the attention of their host governments. The people who migrated during this phase were generally householders in their late 30s and 40s. Their children now form part of the Tamil diaspora youth.

The formation of diaspora depends on various factors that include economic reasons as well as threat of state persecution. Whereas economic reasons tend to be a matter of choice, state persecution leads towards the formation of 'victim diaspora'. Victim diaspora were basically the result of "mass displacements that were occasioned by events wholly outside the individual's control – wars, 'ethnic cleansing', natural disasters, pogroms" (Cohen 1997: 180). "The term 'victim diaspora' represents the culmination of a series of deleterious episodes that resulted in forced external relocation. As a victim diaspora the Sri Lankan Tamils are no different and their involvement in their homeland politics is neither surprising nor unique" (Suntha 2011: 9).

Countries of Relocation

Most of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora come from north-eastern Sri Lanka and are mostly 'victim diaspora'. As accounted by the UNHCR, during 1983-2001, around 917,000 Sri Lankan Tamils left the country because of the civil war (UNHCR 2001). Sriskandarajah notes:

> The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora consists of an estimated 700,000 people settled in Canada, Europe, India and Australia and the UK. It is likely, therefore, that one in every four Sri Lankan Tamils now lives abroad. There has been a long tradition of Tamil migration from the Jaffna peninsula for education and employment. However, it is in the context of civil war in Sri Lanka that the emergence of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora should be studied (2004: 493).

India has not only served as the host country but also as a transit route to the West for these migrants. "About 170,000 Sri Lankan Tamils live in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, whose coast line is less than fifty miles from northern Sri Lanka" (Krishna 2000: 91; Wayland 2004: 418). About 65,000 of them live in camps, and

about 100,000 are considered as non-camp refugees (Suryanarayan 2013: 73). "The geographical contiguity, cultural affinity and above all, New Delhi's liberal policy of granting asylum made Tamil Nadu an attractive destination" (ibid.: 74).

United States of America

The United States has been accepting Sri Lankan Tamil migrants only after the 1980s, when the conflict started to aggravate in the island. But due to its close relations with the Sri Lankan state, the US had not accepted many of the Tamil migrants as refugees. As estimated by various research reports, around 40 per cent of the Sri Lankan diaspora in America is Tamil. During the years 1989-2000, the influx of the Sri Lankan Tamils increased 27-fold, making them the most prominent voice among the Sri Lankan diaspora group. Even though the Sri Lankan Americans comprise all ethnicities, the share of Tamils remains more significant than others (Mendis 2013: 101).

Canada

Canada has been hosting Sri Lankan Tamils since the 1950s as the two countries always had good trade relations. Also, Canada has been continuously reforming its emigration policies, which have always worked as a pull factor for many migrants. The deteriorating conditions in Sri Lanka, and the easier process of working and staying in Canada, have led the Tamils to continue to migrate more frequently (Zulfika 2013: 110). From a population of about 2,000 Tamils in 1983, Canada's Sri Lankan Tamil population has grown to about 200,000 persons. About 90 per cent of them live in Toronto (Wayland 2004). During 1987-2001, Sri Lanka was among the top three countries which sent refugees to Canada. Apart from Toronto they are located in Montreal, Vancouver and Edmonton. In the northern areas, Richmond Hill, Markham, Hamilton, Waterloo, Niagara Falls, Windsor and Ottawa are the areas that account for major Tamil population (Zulfika 2013: 111).

United Kingdom

The 2001 Census reported the number of Sri Lankans to be approximately 67,832, which was double from 39,402 (1991 Census). According to the Labour Forces Survey in 2006, Sri Lankans accounted for around 102,950, making them the fourth-largest group of Asian migrants in the UK. They are basically located in

London, East Ham, Croydon, Rayners Lane, Wembley, and Kingston upon Thames are some of the areas where the density of the Sri Lankan Tamils remains higher than other parts (Deegalle 2013: 116).

Australia

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1986 Census, around 65,000 Sri Lankan Tamils were living in Australia, primarily in Sydney. Between 1961 and 1971, the Sri Lanka-born population rose from 3,433 to 9,091 and again to 22,516 by the time of the 1986 Census. According to the 2006 Census, during 1986-1996, the Sri Lanka-born community in Australia was doubled in size (Gamage 1998: 37-38). Since 1991, there has also been significant migration from Sri Lanka under the family migration, onshore protection, and skilled migration categories. According to population data, Victoria had the largest number of Sri Lankan Tamils (31,482), followed by New South Wales (19,086), Queensland (4,805) and Western Australia (3,385).

South Africa

South Africa has a population of about one million persons who are Tamils. This group consists of Tamils of both Indian and Sri Lankan origin.

Europe

According to the UNHCR (2001), "During 1980-1999, 256,307 people of Sri Lankan origin applied for asylum in Europe." About 150,000 Sri Lankan Tamils live in Western Europe, primarily in Germany, Switzerland, and France.

Germany

Germany hosts more than 50,000 Tamils, who reside mostly in North-Rhine/Westphalia and areas around Berlin. This is the area which supports the Tamil style of living through its infrastructure, which includes temples, Tamil schools, Tamil associations, etc. (Wilke 2013: 133). Despite being spread in varying numbers all across Germany, Sri Lankan Tamils remain actively connected through various Tamil cultural associations. Regular organisation of Tamil-language teaching seminars helps in mobilising the youth within the diaspora community (Zunzer 2004: 16).

Switzerland

Switzerland has been accepting Tamil migrants since the 1990s. There has been a major increase in the number of asylum seekers after 1993, when the island was experiencing Eelam War II. Sri Lankan Tamil migrants who had applied for asylum status before 1993 easily acquired permanent resident status in some time (Zunzer 2004: 17; Ganesh and McDowell 2013: 137). As a result around 45,000-50,000 Sri Lankan migrants are now Swiss Tamils. According to Guha,

> There are 45,000 Tamils in Switzerland, a number more significant than it might at first appear for there are less than 3.5 million Tamils in Sri Lanka. And there are only about 6 million Swiss. Thus, one in every 80 Sri Lankan Tamils lives in Switzerland. Some live in isolated villages, but most in the cities of the north. In parts of Zurich and Bern one in every 20 residents is a Tamil (2004: 63).

Out of these, approximately 95 per cent have got permanent resident status, which makes them eligible to affect both the homeland as well as host country's politics.

France

Over 60,000 Sri Lankan Tamils are living in France. This figure is exclusive of the children born in France to these 60,000 Tamils. The earliest arrival of the Sri Lankan Tamils can be traced to the 1970s, when the major chunk of the migrants came in search of better living. By the 1980s, there was a major increment in their numbers (Dequirez et al. 2013: 127). This diaspora group is mostly located in Paris and in less number in Lyon and Rennes too. Paris has an area designated as "Little Jaffna", located at La Chapelle, which is known to be a major hub for the Tamil migrants from Sri Lanka. The migrants meet here amidst a number of shops which clearly show their proximities with the LTTE. They share their grievances and form networks. It is also a place where migrants can get low skilled jobs easily (in shops and household help, etc.). Little Jaffna is also famous for the annual chariot procession held during Ganesha Chathurthi. Both the area and event have become popular tourist attractions (Dequirez et al. 2013: 129-130).

Political Status of Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora

As Citizens in their Resident Countries

Canada

With the increase in numbers and the change from refugee claimants to citizenship or permanent resident status, Canadian Tamils have become influential factors in their host country's politics as well. "The Toronto constituency consists of approximately 6,000 eligible Lankan Tamil voters. Year 2003 marked the importance of the Lankan Tamils when they elected 86 Liberal Party delegates in Ontario from a total of 1,434 delegates" (Cheran 2003: 10).

United Kingdom

The estimated figures of the United Kingdom's Tamil diaspora range from 100,000 to 200,000 (PILPG 2009, *Engaging Diaspora Communities in Peace Processes,* www.diaspora-centre.org/DOCS/PILPG_Engaging_Dia.pdf, last accessed 15 January 2012). Being the last colonial power in Sri Lanka, the UK had the earliest immigrants from Sri Lanka since the 1950s only. During the 1950s and the 1960s the migrants belonged to both cheap labour, skilled and also well-educated group, which served the British land in many ways (Deegalle 2013: 115). This group was marked by class structure. Those who belonged to the upper class came here to pursue higher education as they were deprived of admission to the higher education system on the basis of language in Sri Lanka. The lower uneducated people were brought by the British rulers to serve their business and other household works. With the increased discrimination in employment in Sri Lanka, the majority of them decided to stay back in the United Kingdom.

Norway

Norway became the other major hub for the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora during the 1990s when India changed its attitude towards the LTTE after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. The cultural centre of gravity also shifted away from India and at this point of time the members of the diaspora already settled in Norway felt the responsibility to protect the political and cultural future of their brethren. These migrants ended up settling in many parts of Norway, making fishing a way to earn

their livelihood. A section within this diaspora has been of the view that it is through migration that they can preserve their culture and be Tamils in a non-Tamil environment while the rest of them see migration as a form of exile that compels them to stay connected to their homeland and be there to bring about change in there. These migrants remain actively involved in the diaspora political organisations but not all of them are supportive of the LTTE.

As Refugees

In India, Sri Lankan Tamil migrants have mostly been under the category of refugees. They arrived in four phases:

i.   *Phase 1*: The first round of the arrival took place during 1983-1987, when the island witnessed a communal holocaust. Around 134,053 refugees came in 1983, out of whom 25,538 returned in 1987 when India intervened in the conflict.

ii. *Phase 2*: Around 122,078 refugees came during 1990-1992, when Eelam War II had begun. However, in the wake of Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, they felt their acceptance in Tamil Nadu might be hampered. Hence, around 54,188 refugees returned to their homeland voluntarily.

iii. *Phase 3*: The onset of Eelam War III in 1995 initiated the third wave of influx of Sri Lankan Tamils seeking refugee status.

iv. *Phase 4*: The fourth phase of refugee arrival took place during Eelam War IV from 2006-2009, leading to the arrival of around 24,823 Sri Lankan Tamils (Suryanarayan 2013: 75).

Around 44,951 Sri Lankan Tamil migrants were reported staying in camps till 2010. These refugees are dispersed in more than 100 camps, which are located across the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Apart from these, there are refugees who have been staying outside the camps in various rehabilitation and separate camps (meant for those who were suspected of having connections with the LTTE). The Lankan Tamil diaspora residing in India as refugees accuse India of supporting the Sri Lankan government and ignoring the atrocities committed by the Sinhalese state to their ethnic kin. They expect India's greater support and say in the matter of providing autonomy to the Tamil nationalists. This section prefers to call the

LTTE as 'part of the problem' and not 'the problem' (Cheran 2001: 4; Bose 1994: 84).

It was only after the 1983 pogrom that the Sri Lankan Tamils started moving to the UK as refugees and still continue to do so.

Canada

The formation of the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board in 1989 eased the process of claiming asylum status for the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees. This board cleared around 85 per cent of the asylum claims during 1989-1999. This was also the time when several European Tamils moved to Canada in search of better life prospects. By the year 2000, citizenship was given to the Sri Lankan Tamils who had entered Canadian territory either as asylum seekers or refugees. According to Zulfika,

> In addition to refugees, three main categories of Sri Lankan Tamils were given priority for immigration to Canada. These were: (1) Family reunion to maintain emotional well-being of family in particular and community harmony in general; (2) independent skilled workers; and (3) internationally qualified professionals to contribute to the Canadian labour market (2013: 110)

Switzerland

Swiss Tamils on their advent in Switzerland had to undergo strict enquiry by the Swiss authorities before they could get the refuges status. However, after getting the refugee status, they were given the opportunity to work and earn their living. This not only helped them sustain themselves, it also emerged as a contribution to the Swiss economy. Since, the Tamil refugees were poor hence, they started working for as low wage as possible. But eventually their journey to the cities in Switzerland started taking place in search of more money for their work. "Being quick learners, just two decades after the first lot arrived, the bulk of the Tamils in Switzerland are to be found in the German-speaking cities of Zurich, Basel, Lucerne, and Bern" (Guha 2004: 64).

France

The vast majority of Parisian Tamils fled Sri Lanka as refugees in the 1980s, escaping the violent civil conflict. The French Prefecture was initially reluctant to

grant asylum to Tamils. In 1987, the Office for the Protection of Refugees (OFPRA) granted asylum to many. This liberal period eventually ended in the 1990s as a result of new European measures designed against migrants (Dequirez et al. 2013: 127).

Other European Countries

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), The Hague, 2011, the Netherlands has more than 20,000 Tamils, the majority of whom had arrived seeking refuge from Sri Lanka since 1984. The small number of the Tamils is due to the strict policies of the Dutch authorities towards refugees and immigrants. The highest influx of Sri Lankan Tamils was in 1985, when in Sri Lanka anti-Tamil riots were taking place more frequently. However, the foundation of the Sri Lankan Tamils as a diaspora community was laid in 1993, when the Dutch government gave a chance to the refugees to apply for permanent residence status. Even though lesser number of applications was approved, the Tamil community once settled in this country gave hopes to the rest of the Tamils in Sri Lanka to have a safer life ahead by migrating. Hence, during the years 2000-2009, around 13,000 Sri Lankan Tamils came to the Netherlands seeking refuge (Choenni 2013: 123). These diaspora are mainly settled in central Netherlands, particularly in Zeist, Utrecht, Amstelveen and Nieuwegein (Choenni 2013: 124).

Denmark has over 7,000 Tamils, the majority being refugees. There are two well-patronised Hindu temples – one for Vinayagar and another for Abhirami – and the Tamil population has got well adapted to the Danish environment.

Occupational Profiles of Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora

At first, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members got engaged in low-skilled jobs and small occupations. But with time they worked on raising their capabilities by getting trained and educated, hence, making themselves more affluent and well settled.

United Kingdom (UK)

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the UK continues to have well-developed social, cultural and economic networks that function as powerful 'social capital' in

sustaining Tamil communities both in UK and Sri Lanka. They work as doctors and consultants and in other white-collar jobs. They have continued to contribute in making a stronger middle class in the UK. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora group is also now one among the prominent business holders in the UK. A shining example is the two most popular telecom companies, Lyca and Lebara, owned by Tamils of Sri Lankan origin.

Canada

Canada has been host to the most well settled Sri Lankan Tamil migrants all across the world. The influx of Sri Lankan Tamils in the 1950s was basically due to the friendly immigrant policies of Canada. Hence, the major chunk of the immigrants during this phase has been highly educated and fluent in English. They have taken employment in community-owned business. Montreal and Toronto house some of the prominent business communities, law firms, educational institutions, and hospitals which are owned by Sri Lankan Tamils either solely or in partnerships (Zulfika 2013: 112).

Switzerland

Since the 1980s, the Sri Lankan Tamils in Switzerland have been consistently working in the hotel industry (McDowell 1996: 5-6; Ganesh and McDowell 2013: 137). Prior to 2001 the LTTE along with its wings had been influencing the Tamil people in Switzerland. According to Zunzer,

> They run their own business, the so called People's Shops, and their own restaurants, they sell telephone cards, organise dance competitions, cricket and football matches and less frequently, political demonstrations. They have been running Hindu temples by themselves or have a presence on the board of directors (2004: 17)

France

France has around 70 associations which are based on the idea of bringing the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members together on a single platform and assert their identity freely. Initially these associations worked as 'umbrella organisations' under the name of Tamil Coordinating Committee (TCC). After being accused of having connections with the LTTE, the TCC was banned in 2009 and was replaced by another organisation known as Tamil Eelam House. Apart from these

associations, several Tamil newspapers and radio channels also operate to cater for the needs of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in France (Dequires 2013: 128).

Australia

Among the first Sri Lankan immigrants to Australia were those recruited to work on the cane plantations of northern Queensland in the late 19th century. There are also reports of Sri Lankan workers in the gold-mining regions of New South Wales and the pearling industry in Broome, Western Australia. Estimates of numbers during this time range from 500 to 1,000 persons. In 2001, of the total Sri Lanka-born people aged 15 years and over, 57.1 per cent held some form of educational or occupational qualification compared with 46.2 per cent for all Australians. Among the Sri Lanka born, 37.2 per cent had higher qualifications and 10.3 per cent had certificate level qualifications. Of the Sri Lanka-born with no qualifications, 24.9 per cent were still attending an educational institution. Among Sri Lanka-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 67.5 per cent and the unemployment rate was 7.9 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 63.0 and 7.4 per cent respectively. Of the 30,500 Sri Lanka-born who were employed, 51.7 per cent were employed in a skilled occupation, 30.8 per cent in semi-skilled and 17.4 per cent in unskilled. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 52.6, 28.9 and 18.6 per cent respectively (Ganewatta 2013: 163-168).

Engagement in Homeland Affairs

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has always asserted its political identity in the context of the issue of Tamil independence. Although there have been differences of opinion within the community itself regarding the ways to address the Tamil cause, there have never been any doubts about the relevance and sustainability of the Tamil nationalism from abroad (Suntha 2011: 20-21).

With the twin role of creating awareness at the global level and strengthening the Sri Lankan Tamils' demand for autonomy and equal rights, the diaspora-run media have played an important role in framing and articulating the issues of peace and conflict. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has founded community organisations, websites, newspapers, and radio and TV stations in its resident societies which

contribute to the campaign against the atrocities done to its ethnic kin group in its homeland by the Sri Lankan state. Further, many diaspora organisations are involved in raising awareness about the ground conditions of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and strive to gather support in favour of promoting the Tamil cause. These include the Ilankai Tamil Sangam, the most active political group representing the Sri Lankan Tamils in the United States; the Standing Committee of Tamil Speaking People (SCOT), a London-based group concerned with providing relief to the Sri Lankan Tamils; and the Ceylon Tamil Association (Australia), a Tamil community association in Sydney.

The activism of the Malay Tamils has existed even before the 20th century, as this community has tried to represent its interests through organising itself around certain issues. The formation of the Selangor Ceylon Tamil Association (SCTA) in Kuala Lumpur is an example. SCTA was formed to represent the welfare needs of the Tamil migrants in Malaysia. Their focus on preserving and promoting their culture has resulted in organisations like Sangeetha Abivirthi Sabha in Kuala Lumpur, which was formed way back in 1923 in order to promote Tamil music and literature (Apputhurai 2013: 79).

United States of America

The American Tamils' ability to organise themselves can be traced back to the 1970s, when the sheer motive to have a collective voice was to promote the interests and welfare of expatriates like them. However, with the intensification of the ethnic conflict back in their homeland, their motive to organise and come together started to shift, to make sure they backed their kin group in their homeland.

In an attempt to lobby for the Tamil cause, the Sri Lankan Tamils in Washington have formed some groups such as Americans for Peace in Sri Lanka (APSL) and Tamils for Justice, New York Ilankai Tamil Sangam, etc. Their pro-LTTE stance was more firm since the war intensified in Sri Lanka after 1977. Their initiative such as the World Tamil Coordination Committee (WTCC) was declared as an LTTE branch working for raising funds under the garb of providing humanitarian relief to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Since 9/11, many such organisations of the American Tamils have come under suspicion. The US branch of the Tamil

Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) was also shut down by the US Treasury Department (Mendis 2013: 104).

Canada

There is a trend in Toronto to help and support the villages and schools in north-eastern Sri Lanka (Wayland 2004: 422). However, till the 1980s, the major activism revolved around maintaining the Tamil identity and culture among the diaspora communities through organising various cultural and literary programmes related to Tamil culture. It was only in 1983 that the concern for raising support and awareness regarding the Sri Lankan state's discriminatory treatment of the Sri Lankan Tamils grew. In this context, the first Tamil political group in Canada was formed, known as TESOC (Tamil Eelam Society of Canada). It gathered information about the situation in Sri Lanka and asserted its identity in the international arena. The World Tamil Movement (Ulaga Thamillar Iyakkam) was another initiative in this regard. Apart from all this, there are around 25 weekly Tamil publications in Canada. Also, there are seven radio channels and four Tamil channels on TV (Zulfika 2013: 113).

In 1998 the Canadian Tamil Youth Development (CanTYD) Centre was established in order to connect with the Tamil youth and strengthen the Tamil identity within them. CanTYD was focused on mobilising the Tamil youth by involving them to various seminars, talks and conferences on the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka (Zulfika 2013: 113). However, in the wake of 9/11 the support to the LTTE or Tamil secessionist ideology was minimised as the LTTE was proscribed as a terroristic organisation by Canada (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010: 1-28).

United Kingdom

British Tamils have been politically active since the inception of the conflict in Sri Lanka in 1983, but their focus of activism seems to have taken a shift. They now try to draw global attention towards the refugees. The Sri Lankan Association of New England (SLANE) was the foremost attempt to bring the economic and political situation of Sri Lanka into the global news. It was created by initiatives of Sri Lankan Americans in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1998. In the words of Vimalarajah et al.,

> … as Tamil politics on the island evolved, new organisations also emerged among the Tamils in the UK seeking to further their political cause. Many of these organisations were representative of one or another political formation in the Tamil homeland, but some were formed entirely of individuals in the UK to provide general support to the Tamil national cause,[31] rather than to support a particular organisation (2011: 12).

Their initiatives of Refugee Council (RC) and the Tamil Relief Centre (TRC) support Tamil immigrants.

Apart from these welfare organisations there are religion-based organisations, which also remain active. They provide space for exchange of information and for transferring resources for the development of schools and universities in north-eastern Sri Lanka. Various alumni organisations provide primary healthcare services, besides IT training facilities. There also are professional organisations such as TEEDOR-UK (Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organisation) which closely cooperate with TRO and contribute knowledge and finance to infrastructural development in the North and the East. They have been providing substantial resources for humanitarian relief to thousands of families displaced from the war-torn areas in Sri Lanka (Vimalrajah and Cheran 2010: 1-28).

A major chunk of the Tamil migrants during the last phase of the war resorted to London which was active and accommodative of its kin group, despite the ban on the LTTE in 2001. The LTTE's international secretariat was also located in London. However, there has been speculation that the diaspora's activism has been more proactive than ever and is in greater predominance (Wayland 2004). In addition, the post-civil war era has witnessed the formation of a number of organisations such as the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE), Global Tamil Forum (GTF) and the British Tamil Forum (BTF). These groups mobilise support in their host societies and urge the governments to raise their voices at the global forums against the human rights violations in Sri Lanka.

TGTE: The TGTE aims to consolidate the diaspora and their resources into an elected governance structure. It hopes that elections held throughout the diaspora-settled countries would eventually provide it with democratic credentials and a

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[31] "For example, the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS) was formed entirely by intellectuals in the UK, and recruitment among the Tamils in Sri Lanka and transfers back from the UK led to the presence of the organisation in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka" (Vimalarajah et al. 2011: 12).

moral authority to compel the international community to support an independent state for Sri Lankan Tamils. It is seen as a long-term project, achieving its ultimate goal in 30-60 years.

GTF: The GTF is a conglomerate of organisations from 14 countries that all claim to speak on behalf of their respective Tamil population. The GTF seeks to become a quasi-advocacy and humanitarian organisation. It aims to draw the Western governments' attention to the immediate humanitarian concerns of the Sri Lankan Tamils in Sri Lanka, rather than getting bogged down in larger political questions. It wants to convince the Western governments to pressurise the Sri Lankan government to negotiate a political deal with the Sri Lankan Tamils.

BTF: The BTF is an umbrella organisation, which brings together individuals and Tamil community groups to highlight the humanitarian crises and human rights violations perpetrated by the government of Sri Lanka, and to advance the Tamil national cause through democratic means.

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora group in Britain has modified its actions according to the changed global environment since 9/11. During the last phase of the Eelam War, it was more channelled into bringing the ground-zero situation in front of the international community and sought its intervention. The post-2009 period has been marked by the emergence of peaceful demonstrations and protests by the diaspora against the injustice done to its kin group in its homeland, and it increasingly demands speedy redressal of the Tamils' grievances in the island nation.

Germany

German Tamils are mostly the extended families of the first-generation migrants who remain influenced by their elders and hence, are deeply attached to the struggle for an independent Tamil state in Sri Lanka. The political ideology of this particular group remains close to that of the LTTE, which was a major representative of the Tamil cause, by establishing a far-reaching network of organisations, which mostly aim at collecting revenue for humanitarian purposes. The German Tamils have maintained their dense networking through various political organisations, which at a time were close to the LTTE. Organisations

such as the Tamil Refugee Organisation (TRO) were basically established for the LTTE's civil administration through funding and expertise. During the 1980s and the 1990s there existed other Tamil political groups such as PLOTE (People's Organisation of Tamil Eelam), TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation) and EPRLF (Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front). But the most important organisation is WTM (World Tamil Movement), which used to publish and distribute political campaign material and on issues about Sri Lankan Tamils (Zunzer 2004: 15-17).

Switzerland

Till 2000 the Sri Lankan Tamils in Switzerland were so convinced by the ideology of the LTTE that Switzerland had become the centre for Eelamist diaspora politics. Meetings and talks were held with prominent LTTE leaders and activists from London and Paris. The Swiss Tamils were a good source of funds for the LTTE, as Switzerland, being not a part of EU, did not ban it. Hence, gradually Switzerland became the banking destination for the LTTE as well. After the LTTE's defeat, Swiss Tamils have been consistently working on organising demonstrations against the Sri Lankan state and also have been actively propagating the idea of Eelam state (Ganesh and McDowell 2013: 138).

Netherlands

The Netherlands has a small yet significant presence of Dutch Tamils. The first generation has been actively engaged in establishing websites and various other media networks. Through these media networks and radio channels, not only do they try to propagate Tamil language and culture, but also bring a detailed coverage about the ground situation in North and East Sri Lanka. But so far this activism seems to be limited to the first generation of diaspora (Choenni 2013: 125).

Participation in Host Country's Politics

The diaspora's involvement in their host countries is usually the result of the host states' environment surrounding them. Suntha notes:

> Host country's attitudes and approaches towards diaspora communities
> affect the way in which the political identities of a diaspora form. A few

members of the diaspora, with the patronage of an established political party in their host country, can be able to represent their community by being elected to council wards where Tamils form large constituencies (2011: 7).

Wherever Sri Lankan Tamils have settled, they have successfully managed to preserve their culture and traditions, besides getting adapted to their new circumstances in their host societies (Suryanarayan 2013: 72).

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the election system is based on first-past-the-post (FPTP), which means that people vote for different candidates according to their order of preference. The candidate who gains the majority of the top preferences wins the election. The FPTP system limits the parliamentary representation as it tends to under-represent smaller parties. Hence, even though the Tamil diaspora is in a big number in the UK, its distribution all across the country remains a hurdle to getting it proper representation in Parliament. Nonetheless, it continues to own a position among some of the main pressure groups which are crucial for the established parties of the UK (the Labour Party, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats) to win the elections. According to Deegalle,

> In recent years, during election campaigns in Britain, both the Labour and Conservative MPs have sought support of the Sri Lankan community in local elections. In this domain, the politics of the 'homeland' and the 'host country' are sometimes enmeshed because these MPs – dependent on Sri Lankan lobbies – have some interest in seeking political solutions to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka (2013: 117)

However, the UK's Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has been so influential that it has been playing an active role in the formation of local municipal laws and other state policies as well. The diaspora is widely spread among the prominent positions in the fields of finance, investments and now its members have also been making a place for themselves in interstate relations, aid and sanctions.

Canada

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's significant position in the Canadian polity makes it the most vibrant and possibly the most advanced Sri Lankan diaspora community worldwide (Zunzer 2004: 19). A remarkable achievement of this

community has been the election of Rathika Sitasbaiesan to the Federal Parliament of Canada in 2011. This is the first time any member of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora group has been elected in its host country's parliament across the globe. This diaspora has also given city counsellor for Markham and a school board counsellor to its host society from its community (Zulfika 2013: 114).

It was the pressure of the Canadian Tamils that led the Canadian government to include the issue of Sri Lankan Tamils in its foreign policy agenda. Not only are they highly mobilised and active in political terms, they also influence and shape the political ideology of the American Tamils who stay in their close proximity.[32]

United States of America

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community's growing influence in the United States can be seen in terms of the change in the US approach towards the LTTE and the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka. The US did proscribe the LTTE way back in 1997 as a 'foreign terrorist organisation'. In 2001, the US changed the LTTE's status to 'Specially Designated Global Terrorist'. It is speculated that the US could not take any action against the LTTE because of the increasing pressure created through Tamil diaspora members' activism in the country (Mendis 2013: 106).

Switzerland

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's political status in Switzerland remains strong. More than 25,000 Sri Lankans received Swiss citizenship before 1993 and this number has been increasing. Guha notes in this context:

> Exiles everywhere tend to stick together, at least in the first generation. But in the Swiss case, the natural desire to hang out with one's (likewise vulnerable) fellows is strengthened by conscious and directed social organisation. In the heart of this immigrant ghetto of Zurich is an office that runs 73 Tamil schools in Switzerland. These schools hold classes twice a week. The children come in after they turn five, and sometimes stay until the age of twenty. The kids start with Tamil songs and stories, before moving on to the alphabet and the construction of sentences. They use well-designed and lavishly illustrated textbooks, their content supervised by a committee of Tamil professors. The association that runs the schools calls itself the World Tamil Education Service which is a very significant

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[32] Around 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamils live in Greater Toronto area of Ontario, which is close to the American states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and New York, which account for the major group of immigrants from the South Asian region (Mendis 2013: 101).

institution even for the sympathisers who are Swiss and not Tamils (2004: 65).

Due to the Sri Lankan Tamils' social unity and ability to assert itself as a distinct community, its say in political matters is of utmost importance.

Malaysia

Political consciousness in Malay Tamils was noticed only after World War II. In the context of the growing demand for freedom in Ceylon, this community started realising the need for demanding its political recognition in its host society. Over time, it started getting involved in various cooperatives, trade unions and professional associations, which eventually enabled them to perform significant roles in policymaking and constitutional development in the then Malaya. A remarkable achievement in this regard was the formation of a political party, the Ceylon Federation of Malaya, which was dominated by many prominent Jaffna Tamil diaspora members (Apputhurai 2013: 82).

Emergence of the Second Generation

A remarkable development in the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community during the last few years has been the emergence of the second-generation diaspora members, who have been mostly born and brought up in their host countries. They have never experienced the war situation, but both through formal and non-formal education methods, they have learnt about the ground situation. The first-generation diaspora members have been trying hard to make sure that the second generation would carry forward their struggle once they retire. However, this new generation has its own interpretation of carrying the struggle forward.

Being well educated and comfortable with the working system of its host country, the second-generation diaspora has been getting into Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora organisations by being interns or trainees, etc. The members of the new geenration have been taking up careers like journalism, unlike the first-generation diaspora who went more for white-collar jobs and business. This has given the second generation the upper hand in terms of having awareness about the happenings around the world. It enables them to be more effective in their calling.

Several factors have shaped their political ideology. Also, different host societies have different environments that condition their minds.

The issues that are instrumental in shaping the political identity of this second generation, and will be the crux of their involvement in their homeland politics, are:

1. The status and influence of the diaspora group in their host societies.
2. The condition of their ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.
3. The Sri Lankan state's role in addressing the grievances in the post-war era and to what extent it exceeds the mandate.
4. The international community's role in delivering justice to all parties who have been there in the war zone.
5. The effectiveness of the peace-building process in the homeland.

Canada

Homeland environment has been a key factor in shaping the political ideology of this emerging generation among the diaspora. In Canada, the belief of the first-generation diaspora members in the LTTE has been transferred to some extent to this newer generation. Hence, this generation has been allegedly involved in 'gang violence', particularly in the early 2000s (Zulfika 2013: 111). Canadian second-generation Tamils have been experiencing this political divide between their kin group back in Sri Lanka and themselves.

United States of America

The second-generation Tamils in the US have been approaching different routes to propagate the Tamil cause. They tend to raise their concerns in forums like Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and International Crisis Group. These groups are supposed to create pressure on the US State Department and Congressional Committees, etc. The NGOs in the US are now more serving as a platform for these Tamils to share their families' experiences and make the locals aware about the atrocities done to the Sri Lankan Tamils by their own state (Mendis 2013: 106).

France

France houses the most mobilised and active second-generation Tamil diaspora group. Being close to the LTTE, the second generation here has more or less a similar ideology to the second-generation Canadian Tamils. They actively demonstrated in support of the LTTE during the Eelam War in 2008-2009.

Germany

In countries having strict rules for migrant political indulgence, the not-so-friendly environment restricts the diaspora members from being politically more active. The second-generation Tamil diasporas in Germany remain active and highly involved in propagating the Tamil issues and in explaining the reasons for the decades-long conflict in their homeland. Their open criticism of the Sri Lankan state has no obstacles, but they cannot declare their sympathies or closeness with the LTTE. In order to attain German citizenship, they have to have a record of not having any relation on connections with the LTTE because it is a banned organisation in Germany (Wilke 2013: 134).

Malaysia

Unlike the highly mobilised second generations in other host societies, the Sri Lankan Tamil youth in Malaya can be said to have little attachment or concern for their ancestral homeland. However, they are very active and highly mobilised for their role in their host society's political and socio-economic developments (Apputhurai 2013: 84).

Switzerland

The youth among the Swiss Tamils are known to be very assertive about their Tamil identity. But their participation in homeland issues has been way less effective and significant than their involvement in their host land's politics. The younger generation Sri Lankan Tamils in Switzerland formed two-thirds of the members of the National Assembly of Swiss Council of Tamils in 2010. Switzerland, being the hub of international agencies like the United Nations, has time and again witnessed the protests and demonstrations from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora communities from all around the world. The second-generation

diaspora directs such movements and works for the logistics arrangements, being both the host and the leader (Mc Dowell 1996).

Netherlands

Another less active second-generation Tamil diaspora can be seen in the Netherlands. Unlike their predecessors, the youth among this community feel less obliged and sympathetic to their homeland issues. Their focus remains on their own development and career in their host country (Choenni 2013: 125).

What the youth among Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has sensed about the issues in its homeland is mainly driven by the irresponsible response of the international community to its homeland conflict and the sheer ignorance about the Sri Lankan government's atrocities done to its kin group. Many of them still believe that a separate eelam state is the only solution to Tamil grievances in Sri Lanka. Hence, their activism has been more for supporting the LTTE ways of dealing than looking for peaceful methods of engagement. This has led them to have differences with the Tamils who had been trapped in the war for more than two decades. The growing difference between the Tamils in the homeland and the Tamils abroad can dilute the extent to which the diaspora can be effective. On the other hand, there remains a section which promotes inclusion of more democratic ways to find a solution for the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka. They opine that for so long the war has not been able to solve the issue and has caused immense destruction. They advocate for greater involvement of the international agencies and transparency in the negotiation process. Hence, just like their elders, the second-generation diaspora also suffer with the political ideology divide on the ways to deal with the Tamil issue in its homeland.

Conclusion

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's journey from a displaced/migrant community to one among the various non-state organisations marking their presence in world politics has been an inspiring one. The majority of them arrived in their resident societies when they were most vulnerable. But in due course, not only have they emerged more secure and well established, they have also become powerful enough to make the world hear their voices and concerns on various issues. Their

emergence as a single entity has led them to influence their homeland affairs much the same way as impacting their host society's political and socio-economic sphere.

Despite being dispersed all over the world, members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora group have managed to sustain their unity by an efficient communication system within themselves and mobilising the community towards effectively campaigning about the Tamil cause at the global level. As a result, this community has been able to emerge as a significant non-state actor not only in its respective host societies but also at the global level.

The Sri Lankan Tamils have migrated in various time periods. Prior to the 1980s, the migration was generally voluntary and the migrants were basically educated and had taken up lucrative jobs in their resident societies. Though they had plans to return to their homeland, the hostile conditions there made them reluctant to return. Gradually they achieved permanent residence or citizenship in their respective host societies.

Migration during the 1980s till 2009 was mostly due to the growing threat to the Sri Lankan Tamils lives in their homeland. The majority of the Sri Lankan Tamils fled the island as refugees and took shelter in various countries starting from India, to Canada, United States, United Kingdom and other European countries like France, Germany and Switzerland.

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has been a highly mobilised group. Countries like Canada, the US, the UK and France host the most dynamic section of this community. The situation in these countries allows the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora communities to foster their political ideologies regarding their homeland as well as host societies, which explains the reason why a marginalised community has emerged so significantly in so little time.

Most of these Tamil migrants entered their host country as refugees. Gradually they were given the status of refugees by their host governments and consequently the majority of them have now become citizens or permanent residents in their host societies. These migrants were the first generation of the diaspora community. Having seen the war in their homeland, they have always connected with and felt

the grievances of their kin group in their homeland. The presence of a more democratic space in their host country and equal access to resources has made them realise what their people back in homeland have been devoid of. This has motivated them more to fight on behalf of their kin group and raise their voice against every unjust action of the Sri Lankan state.

With time, the first-generation Tamils have been getting old and the responsibilities they had taken upon themselves have not yet materialised. Hence, they now have the task of training and preparing their children to carry forward their struggle.

Chapter III

The Diasporic Responses to Conflict and Peace,

1983-2001: An Overview

Introduction

In South Asia, we find that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, particularly those settled in the West, have been active in their homeland affairs by supporting the Tamil insurgents fighting for their right to self-determination against the Sinhalese government forces. They seek to work towards maintaining their unity in their host societies and maintain their unique identity. They are in regular contact with the various prominent people in their host country and keep working to expand their networks. They work more towards exploring various political and economic channels in the host country (Axel 2002: 411). Hence, they have become an integral part of homeland politics and international politics as well.

In the wake of globalisation, these migrants have also been enabled to access their homeland despite being miles away from it. The information explosion enables the diasporas to maintain their interests in their homeland affairs as efficiently as the people resident there (Bercovitch 2007: 20). Thus, the diasporas have emerged as a powerful actor in the world where politics is an affair that extends much beyond the states and political forces (Smith and Stares 2007: 3). New arenas for political expression have been opened, particularly for ethnic communities which are denied the freedom of expression in their homeland. According to Bercovitch,

> Diasporic communities' role in politics can be seen at four levels: at the domestic level in home country; the regional level; the trans-state level, and the level of the dispersed group in other countries. At each of these levels the diasporic activities focus on maintenance, defence and promotion of their interests (2007: 22).

There are several ways in which the diasporas affect or respond to peace and conflict situations in their homeland. They may participate in policymaking, holding elections, preventing or mediating a conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.

Sri Lankan Ethnic Conflict: Historical Roots

Sri Lanka is inhabited by approximately 20,277,597[33] people belonging to various religions and ethnicities which comprise of Sinhalese, Tamils, Up-country Tamils (also referred as Indian Tamils), Moors (also known as Muslims), Burghers, and Veddah. The Sinhalese remain to be in majority with having 74.9 per cent share in total population. They speak Sinhala language and practice Buddhism. They are mostly located in Central and Southern provinces of the island. The Sri Lankan Tamils stand upto 11.2 per cent of the total population and are usually inhabited in the Northern and Eastern province of Sri Lanka. They speak Tamil language and practice either Hinduism or Christianity. They are different from the up-country Tamils who were bought into the island by the British as tea/coffee plantation workers during the colonial era. The up-country Tamils comprise of around 4.2 per cent of the total population and inhabit the Eastern parts of the island. The rest 9.2 per cent of the population belongs to the Moors, and 0.5 per cent to the Burghers and Veddah. The Moors inhabit the Eastern parts of the island and speak Tamils primarily (Refer to map 3.1 in Appendix, page number 205).

The historical setting of the socio-economic and political interaction among these various communities has been crucial in determining their relationship in the post-colonial period. The traces of differences between the Sinhalese and the Tamils can be seen in the claims and counter-claims made by their respective elites on the issue of who came first or which community was originally settled in the country. A major section among both communities saw 'prior arrival' as a factor that would provide special rights as 'sons of the soil' (de Silva 1986: 45; 2005: 3; Kearney 1967). This view was particularly strong among the Sinhalese and had a major role in motivating them for giving Buddhism and the Sinhala language a special status in the country.

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[33] Department of Census and Statistics 2012, Sri Lanka.

Causes of the Ethnic Conflict

There have been many reasons for the emergence of the ethnic rivalry between the Sinhalese and the Tamils, which eventually turned into a civil war. The differences between these communities had been the result of various discriminatory divisions of political and social status between them. As explained by Horowitz (1986: 243-249), a minority group never wishes to leave its homeland, unless it faces discrimination on the basis of its identity. State policies are more responsible for a minority claiming for secession. In the case of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, despite being in a small minority, they always saw their well-being in an integral and united Sri Lanka. However, when they lost state protection, they opted to demand for a separate state where they could live in safety and have an equal opportunity to flourish.

The major causes of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict are: (i) conflicting nature of political interactions between the Sinhalese and the Tamils; (ii) continuous degradation in the Tamils' perception of their ethnic identity; (iii) growing difference in the relative economic status of the two communities; and (iv) state-sponsored discriminatory and asymmetrical power distribution mechanism.

1. *Conflicting Nature of Political Interactions Between the Sinhalese and Tamils*

The Sinhalese in the island kept justifying its demand of claiming themselves as the 'sons of the soil' since the Elara-Dutta Gamini conflict of the 2nd century BCE, in which the Tamil king Elara was routed by the Sinhala king Dutta Gamini (de Silva 2005; Sivarajah 1996: 17). Repeated attempts by Tamil kings to attack Sri Lanka and bring it under their hegemony eventually made the Sinhalese abandon their ancient kingdom of Anuradhapura, and hence, the anti-Tamil feeling was strengthened. More strength is given to their claim by their great chronicle Mahavamsa,[34] which says that King Vijaya's father and his followers came much

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[34] "The importance of Mahavamsa in Theravada Buddhism has been undisputed. It tends to explain the origin of Sri Lankan history starting from the time of Siddhartha Gautama. It provides a detailed journey of the founder of Buddhism, Gautam Buddha and establishes the Sinhalese population as the followers of Buddha. Every chapter of the Mahavamsa ends by stating that it is written for the 'serene joy of the pious'. From the emphasis of its point of view, it can be said to have been compiled to record the good deeds of the kings who were patrons of the Sinhalese (de Silva 2005: 5; Sivarajah 1995: 18).

ahead of the Tamils in the country, i.e. around the 5th BCE and their language Sinhalese is supposed to have some linkages to the Indo-Aryan language family (de Silva 2005; Kearney 1967; Sivarajah 1996: 19-21). The Mahavamsa also proposes that the Sinhala people have something special about them. All these factors together have precipitated the thinking of the Sinhalese about their separate (and superior) identity against the Tamils and as guardians of the Sri Lankan territory.

The Tamils on the other hand claim their association with the Sri Lankan island to be as old as that of the Sinhalese, or even older. They argue that if the Sinhalese follow the Mahavamsa's declaration that King Vijaya was the first to come to the island, then they should accept that the Tamils also came at the same time along with a Pandyan princess from Madurai as his queen. Along with his queen came several maidens and also 1000 families from among 18 craft guilds entered the territory of Sri Lanka.[35] The Tamils claim that prior to the rule of the Sinhalese, the kingdom of Anuradhapura was ruled by two consecutive Tamil kings, Sena-Kuttika and Elara, for 22 and 44 years respectively (de Silva 2005: 18; Kearney 1967: 20; Sivarajah 1996: 18-20).

This animosity between the Sinhalese and the Tamils remained dormant for a long time. But the frequent South Indian invasions in the late 13th century, which led to the collapse of the Sinhala civilisation, pushing the Sinhalese towards the Southern and Central parts of the island, led them to perceive the Tamils as their rivals.

2. *Continuous Degradation in Perceiving Ethnic Identity*

From 1505 onwards, Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) was continuously colonised by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, who left the island nation in 1948. The last to arrive, the British, opted for a policy of divide and rule. Their developmental efforts, which consisted of coffee plantations and tea estates (which led them to bring labourers who were mostly ethnic Tamils), centred on the Southern and the

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[35] "At the beginning the Sinhalese settlers and their descendants intermarried with Dravidians who came to the island from South India and there was considerable mixing of the two ethnic groups. Hence, Sri Lanka has been from early in its recorded history a multi-ethnic society in which a recognisable Dravidian component was present. Thus, the Sinhalese-Tamil ethnicity was not an important point of division of society at least in the early period because neither Sinhalese nor Tamils remained pure." (Sriskandarajah 2004: 17)

Western parts of the territory, which made the Tamils in the north-east feel left out. To make them feel inclusive in the system, several schools were set up by the missionaries in these regions. This led the Sinhalese to drift away from the American and British education system (de Silva 2005).

From the Sinhalese perspective, the 1950s were dominated by the Sri Lankan Tamils as they held all the prominent positions in the bureaucracy. The Tamils accounted for more than 40 per cent of the jobs and held more than a third of the total strength of various universities in higher education. The Sinhalese began to shape the policymaking process according to their own interests and to deprive the Tamils of all the basic needs (such as equal and fair access to education, participation in policymaking, etc.) in the country (De Silva 1999: 428-432; Bush 1990: 41-58; Kearney 1967, 1986: 899).

The two main political parties, namely the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), that had emerged in an independent Sri Lanka, protested against the "ethnically imbalanced patterns of representation, patronage, and power aggressively to distribute jobs to members of the majority community and development benefits to their regions" (Shastri 1990: 59). The disappointed Tamils then began to support the idea of a separate state.

3. *Growing Differences in the Economic Status of the Two Communities*

Considering that most of the infrastructure development was done by the British colonisers in the Sinhalese-dominated Southern and Central provinces, the Northern and Eastern provinces were mostly left to be the 'dry zone'. This zone was dependent on the monsoon for successful paddy cultivation. The government started developmental activities in this dry zone after the 1930s. However, the underlying motive behind these developmental efforts was to make these areas self-sufficient for the Sinhalese. This created a growing gap between the economic statuses of the two communities. "Although the rural Dry Zone developed as a whole, the Sinhalese areas and components of the population benefited disproportionately" (Shastri 1990: 64). The encroachment policy opted for by the Sinhalas to counter the Tamil-majority areas also led the Tamils to mobilise and wage a war against the state (de Silva 2005; Bose 1995; Wayland 2004: 412).

As the country progressed towards independence, the differences between the Tamils and Sinhalese sharpened. Huge debates took place on the issue of minority status, language and religion. The Sinhalese attitude was not very promising and the Tamils perceived a greater threat to their survival. In 1956, the Tamils faced a threat when the Buddhist-backed SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party), which wanted Sinhala as the sole official language of government affairs, came to power. The SLFP was of the view that it was important for it to support the Sinhalese traditional culture and abandon the one they had inherited from the British colonisers (de Silva 2005; Bose 1995; Wayland 2004).

"The Sinhala Only Act of 1956 not only sparked the ignition but it also resulted in the first ever anti-Tamil riots. These were followed by the 1958 riots and spawned policies that promoted Sinhalese Buddhist hegemony" (DeVotta 2009: 1026). This was an indirect attack on the Tamils as they were predominantly English-speaking and held the majority of governmental offices. Tamil civil servants were forced to learn Sinhala language. Sinhalese civil servants were stationed in Tamil areas and Tamils were forced to interact with them in Sinhalese (de Silva 2005; Bose 1995; DeVotta 2009: 1025). The Sinhala language was also used in all the offices, including those situated in Tamil-majority areas, which brought the entire administration there under the rule of the Sinhalese.

In a further move to disadvantage the Tamils, in 1971, the 'quota system' was introduced in universities. This system enabled the Sinhalese to get university admission easily and made it more difficult for the Tamils. Previously, admission to higher education was based on the results of the secondary school examination. But the new system shifted the basis of higher education from merit to the 'medium of education'. Sinhala-medium students had lower cut-offs than the Tamil students (de Silva 2005; Bose 1995; Wayland, 2004: 412; Sriskandarajah 2005: 345). "During the mid-1970s, further revisions included the introduction of standardisation of raw marks across all language media and a district quota system to allocate university places according to local population" (Sriskandarajah 2005: 345). These measures made the Tamils less fit for pursuing higher education in the island as they were in fewer numbers and had to compete with the comparatively lower cut-offs for the Sinhalese students.

4. *Discriminatory and Asymmetrical Power Distribution*

Unequal power sharing does not necessarily lead to ethnic conflicts, but a few conditions can expedite the process. These conditions are: (a) social mobilisation of a segment of the population; (b) growing fear about the future amidst various kinds of disadvantages felt; and (c) the competition for basic resources for developing oneself. In the case of Sri Lanka, the Tamils have faced all these conditions (Rajeshwari 2008: 484-486).

Since the introduction of universal adult franchise in Sri Lanka by the British regime in 1931, the Tamils had successfully positioned themselves as the majority in two out of nine constituencies[36] in the island. However, the continuous neglect by the majoritarian policies of the state marginalised them politically. Despite the continuous efforts made under the leadership of the Federal Party (FP),[37] the Tamils' concerns remained neglected as their political position in Parliament was minimised by the major opposition of the Sinhala politicians. The maximum the Tamils ever achieved was 'regional autonomy' in the Northern and Eastern provinces through the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1957.[38] But the pact got abandoned in 1958 because of the immense opposition of the Sinhala Buddhist parties and pressure groups (Shastri 1990: 59).

When the island got its independence in 1948, there was already a widespread feeling among the Sinhala population about the Tamils having more than 60 per cent of the government jobs. This false rumour tended to shape the Sinhala nationalism, which eventually focused on making anti-Tamil policies. According to Sriskandarajah,

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[36] For administrative purposes, the Sri Lankan territory has been divided into nine provinces: Northern, Eastern, Uva, Southern, Western, North-Western, North-Central, Central and Sabaragamuwa Province. The Northern and the Eastern provinces were mostly inhabited by the Tamils; the rest of the provinces were home to the Sinhalese (Refer to map 3.2 given in Appendix page number 206).

[37] The Federal Party was known to be the representative of the Tamils' aspirations in the country till the time the LTTE took over and became the sole voice of the Tamils in the island.

[38] The Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1957 gave Tamils the powers to govern the matters regarding agriculture, land settlement, regional development, law and order, local revenue allocations, use of Tamil language and preserving the Tamil culture in the two provinces they inhabited (Shastri 1990: 59).

From the late 1950s onwards, these kind of sentiments were given greater political salience as the two major Sinhalese-dominated political parties (which have alternated in and out of the governments since independence) sought to outdo each other in promising to correct the Tamil advantage. To the majority Sinhalese electorate, these were seen as just measures to re-establish their rightful position. To most Tamils, these policies were seen as discriminatory (2005: 344).

Sri Lanka's constitutional development has equally contributed to widening the power asymmetry between the two communities (Refer to map 3.3, given in Appendix, page number 207). The island nation began its independent journey from a Westminster model of democracy in 1948 and later changed to the Presidential system in 1978. The country witnessed the development of three different constitutions under different regimes in 1948, 1972 and 1978 respectively. The constitution of 1948 was given by the British regime and opened avenues for the issues of the minorities. The latter two constitutions, however, failed to address the minorities' concerns and instead took a radical step towards the formation of a 'unitary state'. According to Sahadevan,

> The 1972 Constitution represented the political ideology and objectives of the United Front regime led by SLFP leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Similarly, the 1978 constitution was the brainchild of UNP leader J.R. Jayewardene who emphasised the need for a strong and stable government to achieve economic development (2013: 34).

The mid-1970s witnessed increased demands for a separate state by the Tamils. However, their voices were unheard as the sole voice of Tamils; the Federal Party was meanwhile eclipsed by the growing predominance of the two major Sinhalese parties. Since the new coalition had got absolute majority in Parliament, it got the power to alter the constitution. The 1972 Constitution went a step further in depriving the Tamils of whatsoever they were left with. Not only did this constitution introduce the discriminatory policies of Sinhala Only Act, it opted for measures that would confine the Tamils' political power in the legislature and the executive. This meant that the Tamils' power to affect the decision-making procedure was diminished, as the legislature and executive went out of their reach. "From their perspective, the new constitution institutionalised and legitimised the growing dominance of the majority community in the state and polity" (Shastri 1990: 60). This also meant that the distribution of benefits of various

developmental projects would be shifted to the majority population, as policymaking had no representation of the minorities.

Phases of the Ethnic Conflict

The Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, and the consequent civil war, lasted for 26 years. The war had four distinct phases and three negative-peace periods. This chapter considers the first three phases of the war (Eelam War I, II and III), including the first negative-peace period (Indian intervention through IPKF in 1987). The rest of the phases (negative-peace period of 2002-2006 and Eelam War IV) are discussed in the ensuing chapters.

Eelam War I (1983-1987)

The Tamils had started recognising the need for their autonomy during the 1950s and the 1960s. In this context, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was established in 1976, which gained huge support in the Tamil-dominated provinces. During the late 1970s and early 1980s several other organisations came up with the agenda of addressing the Tamil demands and grievances. Prominent among these were the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), the People's Liberation Organisation for Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Gradually, the LTTE sidelined all these groups and became the sole voice and organisation dealing with the Tamil movement (de Silva 2005: 674; DeVotta 2009; Fair 2005: 138; Wayland 2004: 412).

In July 1983, anti-Tamil pogroms pushed the island to face a brutal and full-scale civil war.[39] As noted by Wayland, "The government failed to condemn or quell the rioting, and there is evidence that it actually encouraged the anti-Tamil violence"

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[39] 24 July 1983 is known as 'Black July'. On this day, the 13 servicemen killed in an LTTE ambush were to be buried. Some Sinhalese civilians who had gathered at the cemetery, angered by news of the ambush, which was magnified by wild rumour, formed mobs and started killing, raping and assaulting Tamils, and looting and burning their properties in retribution for what had happened. The Sinhalese civilians were equipped with voter registration lists, and they burnt and attacked only Tamil residences and businesses, while the army and government officials stood by. Even Sinhalese civilians who harboured Tamil families in their households (or suspected of doing so) were set upon by the mobs. It was estimated that at least 1,000 Tamils were killed, tens of thousands of houses were destroyed, and a wave of Sri Lankan Tamils left for other countries (Tambiah 1986).

(2004: 413). The mid-1980s were marked by another attack on Tamil villages by Sinhalese chauvinists and the armed forces, which resulted in the destruction of several hundred Tamil villages and death of Tamil civilians (Sivasegaram 2009: 50). The period 1983-1987 is marked as Eelam War I, when there were a number of attacks against each other by the Sinhala chauvinists and the Tamil militants. During this phase a large number of Tamils were displaced and forced to flee from their homeland.

Indian Intervention in Eelam War I

It was only in the latter part of the 1980s that Eelam War I came to a halt, when the Indian government intervened in the conflict due to number of internal as well as external factors.[40] The Indo-Lanka Peace Accord was signed in 1987, which was consented to by both the warring parties. However, the Tamils felt betrayed when the Indian Peacekeeping Forces (IPKF) ended up being an alternative of the Sri Lankan Army where they were concerned and the war turned from Tamils versus Sinhalese to Tamils versus IPKF. Also, the provision of the 13th constitution amendment mentioned in the accord did not find support among the Sinhalese nationalist forces, particularly the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), which later on resorted to terror tactics to stall the functioning of the government. The JVP got support from similar mindsets. The then Prime Minister R. Premadasa of the United National Party (UNP) initiated work in the field of anti-terror laws so as to bring down the Tamil militants who had become the sole voice of the Tamils by that point of time. According to Sivasegaram,

> With the government armed forces in the South preoccupied with the JVP insurrection and the forces in the North and the East confined to barracks, armed conflict erupted between the LTTE and the IPKF. The latter proved vulnerable to the guerrilla tactics of the LTTE; and the heavy handed response of the IPKF and incidents of misconduct by IPKF personnel further antagonised the people. The net result was that the people of Jaffna

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[40] India intervened in the Sri Lankan conflict for mainly two reasons: (i) it had to save its image as the 'regional power' by maintaining stability in its neighbourhood and also by limiting other foreign interventions in the region; and (ii) the domestic political pressure as the state of Tamil Nadu held major connections with the Sri Lankan Tamils and, being a major factor in the government in India, its voice was hard to ignore.

suffered a severe loss of life[41] and property and the IPKF lost many soldiers (2009: 53-54).

After this there was a strong assertion from both the Tamils as well as the Sinhala nationalists urging their voices to send back the IPKF. From the Sinhalese nationalists' perspective, the IPKF could not limit the LTTE; and in the Tamils' view, the IPKF worked as their enemy. Finally, the IPKF was withdrawn from Sri Lanka in 1990.

Analysing the IPKF intervention in Sri Lanka in its totality, de Silva notes:

> In the long term, the Indian intervention in the Sri Lankan Civil War was a tactical victory for the Sri Lankan Government. The Indian intervention angered the Tamil Tigers who retaliated by killing over a thousand IPKF soldiers as well as assassinating Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 which in the long term effectally ended Indian government's co-operation with the LTTE and instead initiated close co-operation between the Indian and Sri Lankan governments to defeat the Tamil Tigers (1999: 432).

As the IPKF retreated and finally withdrew, the LTTE moved in to take absolute control of much of the Northern and Eastern provinces. February 1990 witnessed the very first attempt of the Sri Lankan government to discuss the issue with the LTTE officially. Although the warring parties did go to the negotiating table, neither trusted the other and both of them intended to undermine the other. This soon led to Eelam War II (1990-1995) (Sivasegaram 2009: 55).

Eelam War II

The truce arrived at after the IPKF withdrew was broken on 10 June 1990, when the government launched an offensive to retake Jaffna. The government placed an embargo on food and medicine entering the Jaffna peninsula and the Air Force bombed LTTE targets in the area. The LTTE responded by attacking Sinhalese and Muslim villages and massacring civilians. It also expelled all the 28,000 Muslims residing in Jaffna. One of the largest civilian massacres of the war occurred when

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[41] "The Jaffna hospital massacre happened on 21 and 22 October 1987, when soldiers of the Indian Army entered the premises of the Jaffna Teaching Hospital in Jaffna and killed about 68–70 patients, nurses, doctors and other staff members. The LTTE, the government of Sri Lanka, and independent observers such as the University Teachers for Human Rights (UTHR) and others called it a massacre of civilians, whereas the Indian army officer in charge of the military operations, Lieutenant General Depender Singh claimed that they were fired upon from inside the hospital and people were caught up in a cross-fire. Soldiers responsible for this massacre were not prosecuted by the Indian government" (Krishna 2000: 190-192).

the LTTE massacred 166 Muslim civilians at Palliyagodella.[42] According to Human Rights Watch,

> The largest battle of the war was in July 1991, when the army's Elephant Pass base, which controlled access to the Jaffna Peninsula, was surrounded by 5,000 LTTE cadres. More than 2,000 died in a month-long siege, before 10,000 government troops arrived to relieve the base (1992).

The LTTE got a major lead over the government forces when it assassinated President Ranasinghe Premadasa in May 1993 and also got victory in November 1993 in the Battle of Pooneryn[43] (Human Rights Watch Report 1992).

Eelam War III (1995-2002)

Following the election of Chandrika Kumaratunga as President, who had promised to deal with the Tamil issue through negotiations and addressing their demands, the LTTE called for a unilateral ceasefire of 100 days in 1994 so as to give a fair chance to the government to address the Tamils' issues. On 19 April 1995, the LTTE blew off the Navy's two major gunboats, named as *Sooraya* and *Ranasuru*. The new government then pursued a policy of 'war for peace' (DeVotta 2004: 173). As violence continued in the North, LTTE suicide and time bombs were exploded several times in populated city areas and public transport in the south of the country, killing hundreds of civilians.[44] In response, the government outlawed the LTTE and with some success pressed governments around the world to do so, significantly blocking the LTTE's fundraising activities (Sivasegaram 2009: 57; DeVotta 2004: 174). "The LTTE unilaterally declared a ceasefire which was soon

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[42] "The Palliyagodella massacre occurred in October 1991 in which LTTE cadres massacred 109 Muslim men, women and children in Palliyagodella. The background to this massacre was the growing tension between the LTTE and the Muslim community. The Palliyagodella villagers had asked the Sri Lankan military for protection from LTTE extortion. The Sri Lankan forces issued shotguns to the Muslim villagers but these were inadequate to beat off LTTE attacks. Female LTTE cadres and child soldiers were involved in this attack." (Gunaratne 1998: 217-218)

[43] The Battle of Pooneryn for the naval base at Pooneryn was fought in order to get access to the southern shore of the Jaffna lagoon and was being used as a command centre for government forces, preventing the LTTE from using the lagoon to supply the peninsula. The Tigers captured several naval gunboats, heavy mortars and two tanks, though one was later destroyed in an air attack. Also, large quantities of other arms and ammunition were captured (Athas 1996).

[44] Throughout the 1990s, the LTTE became even more violent and attacked many such places where several civilians also got killed. Almost 90 civilians were killed and more than 1000 were injured in their attack on the Central Bank in 1996. The attacking spree continued throughout the 1990s as it attacked the Sri Lankan World Trade Centre in 1997 and blew off various Buddhist shrines all over the island. This also included the Temple of the Tooth, which was considered as one of the holiest Buddhist shrines in the world.

followed by a ceasefire agreement (CFA) and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the government and the LTTE in 2002" (Sivasegaram 2009: 58).

While this entire upheaval of events was taking place in Sri Lanka, many Tamils abroad were an active part of all this as the Tamil militants in the island itself. According to Orjuela, "When the war took place in Sri Lankan territory, many soldiers stood by their Tamil brethren by holding placards in their hands, in a country several miles away" (2012: 26).

Diaspora's Responses to Different Phases of the Conflict

The then President J.R. Jayewardene has acknowledged the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora as the 'world's most powerful minority' (Wilson 2000; Wayland 2004). As noted by Velamati,

> In the past two and a half decades, they played an enormous role in the sustenance of the … LTTE armed movement in Sri Lanka. Diaspora's political freedom and ability to organise as a community encouraged the Tamil Tigers to develop an international network, which helped it in mobilising funds from the diaspora, acquiring weapons, setting up international enterprises and involving itself in trade along with securing of political support to carry forward its armed struggle (2008: 131).

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's responses to the various political upheavals in Sri Lanka from 1983 till the onset of CFA in 2002, can be studied under the categories of Eelam War I, Indian intervention, Eelam War II and Eelam War III.

1. Eelam War I (1983-1987)

In the early 1980s, the Tamil militant movement was nascent. At this point, there were several Tamil organisations in Sri Lanka which stood up for the Tamil rights. EROS, TELO, PLOTE and EPRLF were some of them, along with the LTTE. All of them had their offices in the United Kingdom and other western countries. As Velamati notes,

> All the groups were united and they even organized common protest marches against the Sri Lankan Government. Subsequently, as the LTTE started to attack other militant groups on the ground, their representative diaspora groups also got marginalized. With the domination of the Tigers from 1986, the participation of diaspora in the West narrowed down to those with nationalist sentiments (2008: 136).

During Eelam War I, a large number of Sri Lankan Tamils managed to flee the country in search of a safe and better life. The pogrom of 1983 was a watershed event. According to Balasingham, "Tamil people had faced frequent outbursts of communal violence in the past but the July 1983 holocaust was unparalleled, qualitatively different in its ferocity, brutality and in its scale of destruction" (2004: 101-102).[45] Most of them fled to the UK, Canada, Western Europe, Switzerland and Australia or New Zealand as these were the places where they could find their kin group already settled since the colonial times.[46]

This phase of migration strengthened the Tamil diaspora. Not only it grew in numbers, but also its feeling of being oppressed and the memories of the injustice done to it started getting crystallised. This in turn motivated the members of the diaspora group all the more to maintain their idea of separate nationalism and work collectively towards having such an identity that could be recognised by the whole world (Nandakumar 2011: 5).

From an insurgency viewpoint, Eelam War I served two purposes for the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community. Foremost, the incidents helped link the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora – the fundamental component of the insurgency's financial, propaganda and procurement strategy – to a cause. Second, it helped heighten what were already significant tensions between the Sinhalese and the Tamil diaspora communities all the more. Hence, those who left the island after 1983 felt it easy to become connected to those voices that stood against any kind of repression and injustice. Since the early 1980s, the diaspora had been supporting the cause of a separate eelam. During Eelam War I it entirely supported the LTTE. The political environment of 1983 encouraged the growth of Tamil militancy and the July 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom led many Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora memebrs to spontaneously support all Tamil militant groups that came up

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[45] The incident of July 1983 claimed 3,000 innocent lives, which resulted in the Sri Lankan Tamils' massive migration from the island. Most of the migrants landed in India as they had limited resources, while the Tamils with means went to Western countries for shelter.

[46] Canada held the largest number of Sri Lankan Tamils during Eelam War I, with a number of 40,000, who were inclusive of both permanent citizens and refugees. The United Kingdom accounted for holding the politically vibrant diaspora up to around 30,000, who consisted of mainly the citizens and less of refugees.

in its way. Their reaction took several forms, as described in the following paragraphs.

- *Lobbying*

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members were organised as well as politicised to some extent even before the events of Black July took place in their homeland.[47] For example, the expatriate Sri Lankan Tamils lobbied Members of Parliament in Great Britain and legislators in USA and Australia in support of the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka. Much publicity was given to a resolution in 1980 passed by the Tamil Coordinating Committee in London that the 'new Government of Tamil Eelam will come into being on the Pongal day 1982' (Sivarajah 1995: 270).[48]

- *Funding the War*

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has been very active since the conflict began taking the form of war in the first phase itself. It strove to work for providing economic aid and assistance to the LTTE in order to support its demand for a separate eelam. Funds came from countries where there were large numbers of Sri Lankan Tamils. These countries were, mainly, the United Kingdom and the USA, apart from Switzerland, Canada and Australia (Fair 2007: 181).

- *Protests and Demonstrations*

"As early as 1984, the protests against the Sri Lankan government had already begun by the new additions to the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora" (Nandakumar 2011: 6). Switzerland was the first country to witness such a demonstration, when around 1,000 Sri Lankan Tamils protested before the Swiss Parliament demanding the status of "asylum seekers" for their kin group who had fled their homeland and came to seek shelter in Switzerland.

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[47] Even before witnessing anti-Tamil riots in their homeland, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora stood by the side of the Vietnamese, Pakistani and Polish demonstrators to protest against the acts of repression in their respective homelands. This was the time when the 12th World University Games were held in Edmonton in early July 1983 (Suntha 2011).

[48] The Eealm Tamil Liberation Council was set up at a convention in 1982 and Professor Blanstain was appointed as a consultant. He outlined a strategy to canvass the international bodies dealing with human rights and funds were collected on a worldwide scale.

Another form of their protest was seen in the UK in 1984 when the Sri Lankan cricket team came to play a tournament with England. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora demanded that the Sri Lankan team should not be allowed to play as Sri Lanka had failed totally to implement the international standards of human rights protection, and instead had indulged in committing genocide. Through the protests, the diaspora requested all the peaceful countries to stop having cordial relations with a country which had not been fair and democratic in dealing with its minorities[49] (Nandakumar 2011: 6).

All these protests continued to take place frequently until Eelam War I was over. These efforts were not a huge success but eventually were able to give an idea to the entire world about the organisational capabilities of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora and showed the world as well as their homeland how active it was in political terms. They also highlighted their non-violent strategies of protesting against the violent acts that its homeland committed. These early protests were just the onset of greater activism that was supposed to be seen by the community at the global level. Moreover, it marked the beginning of the mobilisation of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora into a greater political force at the global level and it became so prominent that it became inevitable for the international community to listen to its demands and raise objections against the Sri Lankan state and ask for accountability.

Response to the Indian Intervention (1987-1990)

According to Sivarajah,

> Signing of the Indo-Lanka Accord in 1987 was a big relief for the Sri Lankan Tamils, both in Sri Lanka and abroad, and they hoped for more. Following the Indo-Lanka Accord there was a ceasefire which led many of the refugees, particularly from India to return to their homeland. The first repatriation took place after the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord in 1987 and between 24 December 1987 and 31 August 1989, around 25,000

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[49] "Security staff at Lord's cricket ground was made aware of the possibility that a small number of Tamils might protest the Sri Lankan team's presence. As the first ball was about to be bowled, a dozen Tamil protestors surged onto the pitch and sat down on the turf, until they were forcibly moved by the security forces. Then, after the lunch-interval, a much larger group ran onto the pitch again. Seventeen people were arrested that day and many more injured." (Nandakumar 2011: 6)

refugees and non-camp Sri Lankan nationals returned to Sri Lanka[50] (1995: 257)

However, the Tamil hopes were shattered when the IPKF indulged in a direct war with the LTTE and eventually many Tamil civilians were targeted by the IPKF. The agitation among the Tamils abroad increased all the more when in 1990 the Indian government decided to withdraw its forces and let the Sri Lankan government handle the situation. This move of the Indian government was perceived as a mere act of 'appeasing the neighbourhood' by the diaspora community and hence, India's stance was criticised heavily. After being disappointed by the Indian government, the diaspora activity regarding its homeland conflict increased, including funding the war and lobbying its host governments. The International Crisis Group (2010 a) has stated that the Tamil diaspora members had to sell their assets in order to give strength to the struggle of their kin group back in their homeland. However, to many of the Tamil diaspora members, a small win or achievement of the LTTE was a big reason to celebrate. These people never questioned the LTTE and blindly believed their agendas. Prabhakaran was a hero figure to these expatriates they had even made him 'Sun God' and funded in his name. They used their finance to modernise the LTTE armoury and equip them with latest and more efficient tools to get an upper hand over the Sri Lankan security forces.

Political and material support from India, particularly the state of Tamil Nadu, was the key to the growth of Tamil militancy in Sri Lanka during this phase. At least on two occasions, Prabhakaran was saved from death thanks to Indian intervention. But after the LTTE under his leadership assassinated Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, popular support in Tamil Nadu for the LTTE dried up (at least in India) and the Eelam Tamil cause was pushed to the backseat even in political rhetoric.

2. *Eelam War II (1990-1995)*

The LTTE's uncontested power in the early 1990s ensured the powerful mobilisation and tremendous financial support for the war by the Tamil diaspora.

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[50] The second wave of repatriation began in 1992, after Rajiv Gandhi's the assassination, during which 54,188 refugees voluntarily repatriated to Sri Lanka, until March 1995. Eelam War III commenced in April 1995, starting the third wave of refugees. By 12 April 2002, nearly 23,356 refugees came to Tamil Nadu. The flow of refugees stopped in 2002 because of the CFA (2002).

Since the LTTE had sidelined all the other Tamil activist groups in Sri Lanka and eliminated all other armed movements in the late 1980s, the diaspora community was left with no other alternative group to rely on for the struggle of its kin group in its homeland. Rather than trusting the Sri Lankan government, the diaspora community preferred the LTTE's militant movement and offered its full support to it. As noted by Kadirgamar, "In the 1990s, the LTTE also began to systematically take over social forums in the diaspora. It used coercion and mobilisation based on exile nationalism" (2010: 24). Among the diaspora community, the LTTE had three platforms to maintain contacts and sustain the dominance as the Tamil activist group:

1. The LTTE represented a liberation movement with exiled nationalist politicians.
2. It formed a multinational corporation with attendant finances, operations and institutions.
3. It posed as a mafia with underworld and extortionist activities. (Kadirgamar 2010: 24)

Further, the Sri Lankan Tamils' social and psychological alienation in their host societies also pushed them towards the LTTE and the nationalistic wave and resulted in enhanced fundraising and advocacy.

During the early 1990s, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community was actively making efforts to lobby its host governments as well as other international organisations to support its cause. The diasporic efforts were fruitful to some extent as the LTTE got political support for its struggle from major states around the world. The international media also started initiatives to bring the issues to the limelight and show the world the human rights abuse done by the Sri Lankan government (Sivarajah 1995: 264-270). A number of diaspora organisations were behind this achievement, including the Australian Federation of Tamil Associations, the Swiss Federation of Tamil Associations, the French Federation of Tamil Associations, the Federation of Associations of Canadian Tamils, the Ilankai Tamil Sangam, the Tamil Coordinating Committee in Norway, and the International Federation of Tamils (Fair 2007: 184).

During this phase, according to Fair,

> the primary objectives of the diaspora organisations and their efforts were to attack the government of Sri Lanka while creating the support for the cause of the LTTE. This was done by consistently propagating a threefold message:
>
> - That the Tamils in Sri Lanka were innocent victims of military repression by the Sri Lankan security forces and of Sinhalese and anti-Tamil discrimination;
>
> - That the LTTE was the only legitimate voice of the Tamils and was the only vehicle capable of defending and promoting Tamil interests in Sri Lanka; and
>
> - That there could be no peace until Tamils achieved their own independent state under the LTTE's leadership (2007: 184).

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora was a major source of financial help for both the LTTE as well as for the Tamils in the island. The fact, however, was that the funds given by the diaspora to the families and villages were not intended to help sustain the conflict but to help its kin group in sustaining its livelihood which was affected due to the war. Eventually, however, the diaspora also played a role in prolonging the conflict. These remittances enabled the Sri Lankan Tamils to remain in the conflict-affected areas. Without such financial support, there was a possibility for those Tamils to either flee the country or seek employment in other parts of Sri Lanka. Because these remittances subsidised, the Tamils who remained indirectly contributed to the LTTE's ability to recruit cadres by keeping them in the region (Fair 2007: 182-183) and take the conflict to another level.

3. Eelam War III (1995-2002)

With the LTTE's assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and resorting to more violent methods, the diaspora community started witnessing the first ideological difference among themselves on the grounds of supporting the LTTE and funding the conflict further. However, it was not until the late 1990s that the 'moderate or the non-LTTE diaspora'[51] groups became free to operate and voice their opinion

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[51] Nomenclature adopted from Velamati (2009: 282). As defined by Velamati, this category of dissident Tamil groups among the diaspora, who called themselves "Democratic Tamils", lamented that they were a minority and were not financially sound to counter the LTTE propaganda. They were generally anti-LTTE and, at the same time, they did not trust the Sri Lankan government completely. They functioned as a very small group in the early 1990s and it was only towards the end of the 1990s that they started gaining prominence and support from other international groups as well, particularly for their support to multiculturalism.

without any fear as the LTTE was still having the predominance and its militant approach was something to be scared of. Also, with the LTTE taking to violent measures which accounted for innocent civilians' lives, the diaspora also started becoming hesitant to support it as their sole representative in its homeland. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's activism did not lose ground and it started trying to get the LTTE and the government to the negotiating table.

The work carried out in the international arena was of utmost significance in the period between 1996 and 2002. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members were able to deliver 20 per cent more than what was expected from their kin group back in their homeland. In the late 1990s the number of protestors had grown into thousands. "For example, after the Kalutara prison massacre[52] in 1997, a vigil outside 10 Downing Street was attended by 400 people carrying large banners and dozens of placards with slogans condemning the massacre" (Nandakumar 2011: 6). It was heart-warming for their kin group residing in Sri Lanka to know that the Tamils staying abroad and away from the violence and threats besetting their kin group back in the homeland still wanted to play an important part in achieving the demand for Tamil Eelam. South Asia expert Christine Fair notes:

> Because most of the members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora had family members in Sri Lanka and because most had at least one family member (however near or remote) killed, raped, or tortured in the war, the diaspora Tamils had a strong distrust of Colombo (2005: 134)

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora organised local offices, thus establishing a global infrastructure to develop and maintain political and diplomatic support, raise funds and procure weapons and equipment by selling the promise of an independent Tamil Eelam. With access to the growing Tamil diaspora, the LTTE developed an extensive global network that used both persuasive and coercive techniques to achieve its end.[53] It was noted by the World Bank (2003) that the level of remittances sent to homeland has always been high in case of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. The Canadian-Tamils and the European-Tamils had been behind

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[52] The Kalutara Prison riots occurred on 12 December 1997 at the high-security prison in Kalutara, wherein the minority Tamil political prisoners were killed by the majority Sinhalese prisoners.

[53] The LTTE was known to have a presence in over 44 countries, of which it had a structured presence in 12 top-level contributing countries such as England, Canada, Australia and the United States (ICG Report 2010).

the long term sustainability of the armed movement in Sri Lanka. However, apart from this, their involvement in various organizations for the refugees for their homeland has also remained significant. As mentioned in ICG report (2010), approximate collection of the LTTE was raised by US$200-US$300 per year from the diaspora community alone, during the war, much of which was spent in equipping the LTTE cadres with latest arms and ammunitions.

Conclusion

The Sri Lankan Tamils have had a long history of oppression in their own country. It was the unjust policies of the Sri Lankan state which forced them to migrate in large number. In this context, this chapter has aimed at explaining various reasons that led the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora maintain its cohesion with its homeland despite stayimg miles away from it.

As the country got independence the British, the Tamils got marginalized in their own country due to the discriminatory policies of the Sinhalese dominated government. The passing of 'Sinhala-Only Act' was a major step of the Sri Lankan government to sideline the Tamils from the mainstream. Further, the 'quota system' led to oust the Tamils from the education system as well. These developments created a lot of anger in the Tamil community in the island and abroad. There had been continuous efforts by the Tamil political leaders to get their due political share in the country's politics. However, the government kept ignoring their concerns and gradually converted the state from a secular one to a unitary state. All this led to fuelling the feeling of separatism in the Tamil community (Sriskandarajah 2005: 344). As a result the diaspora community also started mobilizing in their host societies in order to ensure a collective support for their brethren in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan diaspora community was working at various levels and through various global forums to make the world aware of the problems their kin group faced and sought help.

The Tamil diaspora community throughout the world founded community organisations, websites, newspapers, and radio and TV stations in order to maintain its cohesion with its homeland and support its ethnic kin group in their struggle. It worked towards setting up different organisations so as to effectively ensure greater participation of various sections of the Tamil diaspora themselves

and also to be able to help its kin group back in their homeland more efficiently. Through these organisations it was also able to bring the ground situation in front of the entire international community and challenged the fake propositions and statements that were being given by the Sri Lankan state.

During the years when the LTTE was active, it infiltrated the diaspora community organisations to extract funds for its militant operations in Sri Lanka. Many within the Tamil diaspora communities supported the LTTE voluntarily, viewing it as the sole actor with enough power to stand up against the Sri Lankan government. However, there were less obliging members who did not support the LTTE's methodology and hence, were hesitant to give funds.[54] Even though they did not support the LTTE, yet their presence at Tamil public functions such as 'Heroes' Day' celebrations or a march on the legislature provided strength to their separatist cause.

Hence, the Tamil diaspora had a great role in sustaining the conflict and raising funds for the LTTE till Eelam War III came to a halt. It was only in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and subsequently signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in 2002 that resulted in diminishing its effective role. Though its activism was brought under the tight security trends growing all around the globe, its level of expansion and organisation remained intact.

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[54] Such group of diaspora even complained later on that the LTTE used coercive methods in gathering donations.

CHAPTER IV

Diaspora's Role in the Peace Process, 2002-2006

Introduction

This chapter examines the role of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in initiating and carrying out the Norwegian peace process, which started in 2002 and lasted till mid-2006. The peace process was born out of the need to end the Eelam War, which had spawned a large-scale displacement within the country and well beyond its borders. This peace period happened at a time when the international political discourse was tilted towards 'war on terror'; a phrase that was coined in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States. This chapter analyses the different approaches of the diaspora to assert its legitimacy in a world grappled by suspicion towards immigrants and its response to the peace development initiative in their homeland.

Starting from 1983 till 2002, Sri Lanka was plagued by the continuous ethnic conflict which not only destroyed the Northern and the Eastern provinces of the island, but also led to a huge displacement of the Tamils from these areas. Displacement occurred more than once for many households, sometimes within the borders of Sri Lanka and sometimes beyond, until a Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) between the government and the LTTE was drawn up in February 2002.

During the CFA phase a number of military checkpoints were dismantled and the major transportation routes to Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka were reopened. Preliminary peace talks between the LTTE and the government were held in September, November and December 2002, with plans for future talks. Nonetheless, no peace agreement or plan for the demobilisation of the warring factions was long lasting. Human rights continued to be violated by both sides.

"Despite repeated promises by the LTTE to end their use of child soldiers and to halt extortion of money and property from civilians in the north and east, these practices continued. Human Rights Watch has received numerous reports of such incidents since February" (Human Rights Watch 2002; UTHR (J) 2002 a). The CFA did not formally acknowledge the human rights issues faced by the civilians. There remained an urgent need to discard or reform the government's Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and to release the hundreds of detainees held by the authorities without trial under its draconian provisions. Most of these detainees were Tamils arrested on suspicion of links to the LTTE. Many of them were arrested months or even years earlier pending investigation, with no evidence to support police suspicions beyond their own confessions − often extracted under torture (Human Rights Watch 2002).

Thus, the peace process was largely a story of failure. Instead, it worked as a mechanism which intensified the civil war to a next level. "The ceasefire … failed to induce fundamental changes in the disposition of the state and anti-state formations in Sri Lanka, and to some extent it caused a further entrenchment of positions" (Goodhand et al. 2011: xv).

The Period of Peace Process (2002-2005)

The peace process had begun in 2001 when a new government came to power. After the 2001 elections were won by Ranil Wikremesinghe, there was a cessation of hostilities, and there was a vibe felt across the island that a peaceful solution would be reached with the advent of this new government. However, the same vibe was not seen in any of the parties to the conflict. Guha states:

> Twenty years of war in Sri Lanka had produced many deaths and no winners. When a cease-fire was agreed upon in February 2002, both sides had their reasons to temporarily put away arms. As for the Sri Lankan government, the war had hugely dented their finances. Debt servicing (chiefly to pay for arms bought abroad) exceeded government revenues. And it was clear to the top Sinhala commanders that while this was a war they could not lose, they did not appear to be winning it either (2004: 71).

The Norwegians played a very significant role in carving out the CFA by holding various rounds of talks between the warring parties in various locations including Thailand, Norway, Germany, and Japan. Anton Balasingham, a prominent name among the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, was given the responsibility of presenting

the case on behalf of the LTTE. He was considered as a top confidant of the LTTE chief Prabhakaran. Balasingham got the support of various political experts of the LTTE, which included names such S. P. Thamilselvan and Karuna, who was then the commander of the LTTE's eastern military in Sri Lanka. The government's side was represented by Prof. G.L. Peiris, who apart from being a professor of constitutional law at Colombo University, also held a position in the cabinet in Sri Lanka.

During the peace talks, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was agreed on and was signed by both the sides on 22 February 2002. Both parties agreed to follow the rules of international mediation and abide by the permanent ceasefire agreement (CFA). Both accepted Norway as mediator and accepted that Norway would monitor the ceasefire through a committee of experts, named as Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM)[55] (DeVotta 2004: 177-178).

Main Features of the Peace Process

The overall objective of the CFA mediated by Norway was to explore a negotiated solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka. In this context, some basic provisions were framed to which both the parties consented. These provisions mandated:

- Both the warring parties to work towards establishing a positive environment which would help in finding a lasting solution through peaceful means.
- The warring parties to contribute in improving the living conditions for all the communities affected by the conflict.

With reference to the above, following key actions were undertaken by the warring parties separately in order to stand by their commitments.

1. Both the LTTE and the GoSL had to refrain from activities such as intimidation, abduction, extortion and harassment in order to ensure normalcy in the lives of war-affected people.

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[55] The SLMM was expected to monitor the ceasefire and enquire into reported violations of the CFA. Its members were drawn primarily from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland.

2. The GoSL was given the responsibility of disarming the Tamil paramilitary groups and to integrate them in the Sri Lankan security forces in Central and Southern regions of the country.

3. In order to ensure smooth movement of goods and services, the Trincomalee-Habarana road was opened on 24-hour basis, the commitment to extend the rail services on Batticaloa-line to Welikanda was agree to and lastly the A9 Highway was opened which led to movement of goods and services from the South of Sri Lanka into the LTTE controlled regions (BBC News 26 August 2002).

4. The GoSL's Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) was suspended in order to contribute in creation of a positive atmosphere in the island.

The CFA gave a confidence to the international community about investing in the region, which was conditional to keeping the spirit of the CFA alive by both the parties. Various rounds of talks were held between the LTTE and the GoSL in Phuket, Norway, Germany and Japan.

However, the peace period was short-lived as it witnessed continuous attempts by both the LTTE and the government to attack the other.

Disruptions in the Peace period

Some major incidents of disruption during the peace period are mentioned below.

(i) *21 April 2003:* The LTTE decided to walk away from the negotiations as it was not happy with the advances that were made during the talks.[56] The LTTE called for establishing an Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA).[57] This

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[56] It was alleged by an organisation named the University Teachers for Human Rights-Jaffna (UTHR) (J) that the entire peace agreement was a strategy in disguise because both the LTTE and the government had been secretively arming themselves. The UTHR (J) claimed that the LTTE indulged in recruitment of children as soldiers in its army, while the government also indulged in kidnapping and interrogating various Tamil writers and others, suspecting them of being involved in the LTTE. There were also reports that the Army had caught a couple of LTTE boats when they were trying to bring in arms and ammunition (Guha 2004: 72).

The LTTE was also upset at not being invited to the 'Reconstruction Talks' held in Washington DC on 14 April 2003. Also, the LTTE was not happy with the fact that the economic aid which was given to Sri Lanka by the international community for maintaining peace was mainly under the control of the government. The LTTE blamed the government of being partial and not distributing the aid in the Tamil areas.

[57] The ISGA was a proposal for power sharing in the North and East. It was supposed to be fully controlled by the LTTE and would have broad powers in the North and East.

provoked a strong backlash among the hard-line elements in the South, who accused Prime Minister Wickremesinghe of 'handing the North and East to the LTTE'. Under pressure from within her own party to take action, President Chandrika Kumaratunga declared a state of emergency and took over three key government ministries, namely, the Ministry of Mass Media, the Interior Ministry and the Defence Ministry. She then formed an alliance with the JVP, called as the United People's Freedom Alliance, which opposed the ISGA and advocating a harder line on the LTTE, and called for fresh elections. The elections, held on 8 April 2004, resulted in victory for the UPFA, with Mahinda Rajapaksa appointed as Prime Minister.

As aptly summarised by Smith,

> In November, President Chandrika Kumaratunga, incensed by the perceived audacity of the LTTE proposal and also in response to her perceived exclusion from the peace process by the Prime Minister, declared a state of emergency, deployed troops in the capital, fired three ministers holding key portfolios and suspended parliament. From that point on, the political framework that underpinned the concept of self-government for Sri Lankan Tamils became history and the peace process never recovered (2007: 70).

(ii) *March 2004*: There was a split in the LTTE itself, when the Eastern Tamils disassociated themselves from the organisation under the leadership of Colonel Karuna.[58] The reason for their separation was their allegations that the Eastern Tamils were not given sufficient resources and power positions within the LTTE. The LTTE blamed the government forces for bringing about the split.

(iii) *December 2004*: A further conflict of interests between the LTTE and the government came into the limelight when the country was hit by a tsunami on 26 December 2004. The tsunami claimed around 30,000 to 40,000 lives, displaced half a million people and destroyed infrastructure. The North and East Provinces were the worst affected, followed by the Southern and Western Provinces. About 30 per cent of the deaths were in Ampara district in the East.[59] Though relief aid

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[58] Colonel Karuna was a trusted aide of Prabhakaran. His dissension resulted in a significant loss to the LTTE, as he pulled around 5,000 eastern cadres along with him. Some scholars suggest that later on this group started receiving assistance from the Sri Lankan army in attacking and countering the LTTE from the eastern side.

[59] The North and East Provinces of Sri Lanka comprise eight districts, three in the east (Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee) and five in the north (Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu and

kept coming from the foreign countries, due to improper distribution by the Sri Lankan Government, the North and the East were left to suffer on their own. The LTTE blamed the government of being partial in distributing the aid while the government blamed the LTTE for keeping the aid to itself for the purpose of armed conflict.

Meanwhile, the government was severely fractured when it decided to make the LTTE a part in a Post-Tsunami Operations Management Structure (P-TOMS) on 24 June, and agreed to share an aid of $3 billion with it. This resulted in a huge amount of distrust among the parties supporting the government and eventually led to ousting of JVP from the government in mid-2005. The Supreme Court intervened in the matter and voided the decision to include the LTTE on the ground that the LTTE indulged in anti-national activities and could not be trusted with any task that was supposed to be in the national interest (Lunn et al. 2009). President Kumaratunga eventually had to scrap P-TOMS, which led to widespread criticism that sufficient aid was not reaching the North and East of the country. This also angered the LTTE all the more and it decided that the entire Tamil community would boycott the upcoming elections in 2005.

The boycott called by the LTTE eventually proved fatal to it as the Rajapaksa regime came back to power[60] and upheld its policy of 'war on terror' against the Tigers. Following the elections the LTTE also declared that if proper measures were not taken by the government to meet the Tamils' requirements, it would renew its struggle once again. Even though there was a lull in the violence immediately after the tsunami, violence erupted once again in December 2005, leading to Eelam War IV (discussed in the next chapter).

(iv) *July 2006*: By this time there was a sudden spurt in the clashes between the LTTE and the government, when the LTTE tried to take over control of a major

Vavuniya). All three districts in the east and three districts in the north (Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu) were affected by the tsunami. Kilinochchi was only marginally affected.

[60] The election was contested by former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe of UNF, who had an agenda of having a peaceful method to address the Tamil cause. This included talks with the LTTE as it represented the Tamil voice, while the other candidate Mahinda Rajapaksa of UPFA adhered to his agenda of not being benevolent to any kind of terroristic activities in the island. Rajapaksa won the elections because the ones against whom he had an agenda boycotted the election on a call given by the LTTE.

dam in Trincomalee.[61] This incident is marked as the first official violent clash between the warring parties since the signing of the peace accord in 2002. Despite the active mediation of the SLMM in the conflict over the dam, peace eluded the country and both parties continued to resort to military means. The Sri Lankan armed forces started bombing LTTE hideouts through air missiles. They also bombed an orphanage, claiming that it was a LTTE hideout. The attack claimed more than 60 lives. This act of the government was heavily criticised by the mediators. "In a letter to Maj. Gen. Ulf Henricsson, the Head of the SLMM, S. Elilan (who was also the LTTE's Trincomalee district political leader), said that the continual aerial bombing and artillery attacks being carried out by the armed forces smacked of a declaration of war. It is now appropriate for the SLMM to declare publicly that the ceasefire agreement is not holding any more on the ground", he said (Balachandran 2006). As noted by Lunn et al.,

> While the ceasefire agreement was not declared officially dead until January 2008, the actual date of its death, in retrospect, was probably April 2006. By this point it was clear that both sides were using the ceasefire to re-arm, with the Sri Lankan Government receiving large quantities of new weaponry from long-standing allies such as China, and dramatically increasing its military budget (2009: 17).

The peace period was just a strategy of both the parties to buy time so as to strengthen themselves against each other. For example, the great Jaffna library, which was destroyed in the earlier phases of the war, was rebuilt with active participation of the Ford Foundation and UNESCO along with the Sri Lankan government. However, it could not open as there were continuous protests and demonstrations against it, which were allegedly sponsored by the LTTE itself. Whenever there were even minor disturbances, the government took a step back from giving anything to the Tamils (Uyangoda 2004: 45). August 2006 was marked by major attacks by both the warring parties.

Meanwhile, the LTTE had captured the Jaffna peninsula and closed the road connecting Jaffna and Colombo, which was the only route for the international negotiating teams to access the northern areas of the island. The LTTE was

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[61] The government alleged that the LTTE had captured and closed the dam in order to harass the Sinhalese, who were dependent heavily on this dam for irrigation and drinking water.

apprehensive of the foreign presence or vigilance in its areas. The closure of the road affected the civilians trapped in the Northern area, depriving them of access to basic needs items that were provided by various humanitarian agencies, as agreed upon in the CFA. The Harbana bomb blasts in October were also done by the LTTE, which claimed more than a hundred military personnel's lives. Naval attacks also took place. Finally, the CFA was declared defunct by the LTTE.

According to a summation of the events by the International Crisis Group,

> The peace process was a brave attempt to break through an apparently intractable conflict. The 2002-2006 interlude brought a measure of normalisation to people's lives in the North and East for the first time in over a decade. But the conflict is enormously complex, and the peace process ignored many of the hard questions. It was always going to be difficult to bring together a factionalised Sinhalese polity with a semi-totalitarian armed movement in the north and produce a political settlement respectful of democracy and human rights (2006: 23).

The onset of the peace process war marked by the emergence of various excluded political actors who opposed the idea of giving the Tamils autonomy in the north and east of Sri Lanka. Hence, the decision to give to LTTE the command of these areas became more and more problematic. Also there was continuous abuse of human rights in the Tamil areas by the Sri Lankan army, which led to diminishing of trust in the state authorities. This also undermined the effectiveness of the peace process. As usual, it has been civilians – mainly the Tamils in the northern regions of the island – who got caught between LTTE oppression and security force brutality, and suffered the brunt of the violence.

The peace process had many ups and downs. It gave many opportunities to both the Sri Lankan state and the LTTE to resolve the issues and address the root cause of the conflict. However, the distrust between them and the continuous efforts at rearming themselves led them to not only undermine the entire peace process but also led to resumed hostilities in 2006. The LTTE no longer trusted the process to produce an acceptable political result, and the military inactivity was undermining their cohesion and limiting diaspora funding. Moreover, the split in LTTE was a major setback which not only weakened the military movement but also gave the GoSL a hint that peace could be achieved through raging a war against the militants.

International Response to the Peace Process

Due to increasing processes of globalisation, contemporary conflicts have been significantly influenced by the changing nature of the international community. Thus, most current internal conflicts have an external component. This growing trend, described by Kaldor as 'the intensification of global inter-connectedness political, economic, military and cultural', has changed the character of warfare by introducing new non-traditional actors[62] into internal conflicts (2007: 14).

India

The ICG describes India as 'the most important amongst Sri Lanka's foreign supporters (2008: 20). Despite the surface cordiality, there is always a degree of mutual ambivalence between the two countries. Sinhalese nationalists view India as a powerful neighbour with a large Tamil potential on its territory, whose instinct to dominate Sri Lanka must be resisted. The position of successive Indian governments has been that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka and that a political settlement, based on autonomy for Tamil-majority areas in the North and East, must be sought. But India has always been lukewarm about an autonomy deal that goes much beyond the type of federal arrangements that exist within its own borders (BBC News 7 May 2009).

Regarding peaceful settlement between the LTTE and the government of Sri Lanka, "the Indian view was that the solution has to be within the framework of constitutional arrangements which would ensure Sri Lanka's territorial unity and integrity, a logic which India had been applying to its own violent separatist movements in different parts of the country" (Dixit 2004: 30). India always feared that a successful liberation movement in Sri Lanka could inspire radical nationalistic groups in Tamil Nadu and lead to separation or instability within its own boundaries. Thus, India's foreign policy and peace initiatives in Sri Lanka were always framed keeping domestic issues and interests in mind. As stated by the then Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee, "India fully supports the peace process in Sri Lanka but will not play an active role because it may

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[62] States, governments, IGOs, NGOs, militia groups, guerrilla groups, and independent actors who intervene with a conflict in which they are not directly involved are considered as non-traditional actors of warfare.

complicate the situation" (Hindustan Times 3 June 2006). Hence, when other nations, such as Norway, the US, etc. were taking part in promoting peace in Sri Lanka in the early 2000s, India chose to keep a minimal profile.[63]

Although India chose to separate itself from the peace processes, the international community and the Sri Lankan government both understood that India could undermine the entire process, if overlooked (Hindustan Times 3 June 2006). Thus, during the talks leading to the CFA, the Norwegian envoy kept India involved by consulting it at all stages. India, although supportive throughout of the peace process, maintained its role at verbal communications without any intention to formally engage with the conflict. India also maintained a very strict position against the LTTE throughout the peace processes, seeking to bring the LTTE leadership to trial in India. Further, as stated by a high-ranking official in the Indian High Commission in 2004, India was willing to conduct business with all groups in Sri Lanka but the LTTE (Keethaponcalan 2011: 13). However, many of Sri Lanka's Tamils both at home and abroad have always been criticising this stand of India and decided to move ahead of the 'Indian model'.

India's limited role led to huge levels of disappointment among the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora all over the world. They had high hopes from India, being the regional power and a nation which has the same ethnic population, expecting a deeper involvement in the peace process. Mr. Varadakumar in the Tamil Information Centre notes:

> We didn't have faith in the LTTE or the GoSL, not even in Norway for that matter. We expected India to take the lead. If India was there, the peace process would have definitely involved the civil society of Sri Lanka which would have yielded different results (Personal interview, London, 24 March 2016).

The United States

As stated by Lunstead, "the attention the US has placed on Sri Lanka since late 2001 has been out of proportion to US interests in Sri Lanka" (2011: 57). The US declared the LTTE as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) in early 1997. This

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[63] India's decision to limit its involvement after the 1990s was essentially a result of the death of over 1,000 IPKF troops between the signing of the 1987 Peace Accord and the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by an LTTE member in 1991.

resulted in causing limitations to the US's role in the peace processes since it was not portrayed as a 'neutral' party. "The US applied pressure to the LTTE, focusing on its use of child soldiers and human rights violations, while at the same time providing the Sri Lankan government with security assistance" (ibid.: 60). The US provided multifaceted humanitarian and military aid to the government of Sri Lanka so as to make sure that the LTTE remained weak in comparison to the Sri Lankan military. In this attempt, small US military units provided training to the government military members and continued funding the International Military Education and Training (IMET) programmes in the island.

As estimated by Lunstead,

> the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program, through which the US government provided grants to other countries in order to let them purchase US military equipment, went from zero in 2003 to $2.5 million in 2004 for Sri Lanka. From 2005–2009, this amount would range from nearly half million to one million annually (2011: 29).

In March 2008, the US donated $220,000 worth of anti-terrorism equipment to the Sri Lankan Police (ibid.: 60). The main condition laid for Sri Lanka to receive this assistance was to ensure that the aid did not by any means provide support to the LTTE.

The US also remained supportive of the Wickremesinghe government, which was in power from 2001 to 2004, during which the negotiations were held between the LTTE and the government, in both concrete and symbolic ways. During this period, the US increased its assistance in military and development projects, and increased its involvement with the peace processes. Further, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe was invited to the White House twice, in July 2002 and November 2003, to meet President George W. Bush. These two meetings in such a short time were remarkable, considering that the US had minimal strategic interests in Sri Lanka (ibid: 71).

The US administration under President Bush endorsed the prevailing international consensus that there could be no military solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka. There could only be a political one which protected the rights of all citizens, including those of minority communities. It was also a strong supporter of the

2002 CFA and of the wider peace process. However, like its predecessors, the Bush administration opposed the idea of an independent Tamil state (Lunn et al. 2009: 28). Apart from interactions with the Sri Lankan government, the US also engaged with other groups, such as the Tamil National Alliance and various Tamil political groups, as well as with Muslim political parties and factions in order to facilitate the peace process. After the devastating 2004 tsunami, USAID contributed about $135 million in relief and reconstruction aid for Sri Lanka (Lunstead 2011: 71).The Tamils in Sri Lanka and abroad, however, remained very critical of the US sympathies during the presidency of George W. Bush with the Sri Lankan government.

Because of the LTTE's terrorist categorisation, US citizens were barred from providing funds or materials to the LTTE, which had important consequences for the LTTE as well as the Tamil diaspora. Although the US did not have any direct contact with the LTTE, it did accept the LTTE as a negotiating partner during the peace talks and sent messages through the Norwegian facilitator. It also communicated to the LTTE that a change in its behaviour and terror tactics could change the US position regarding the LTTE. However, the US did not invite the LTTE to the May 2003 Washington Conference, a precursor to the Tokyo Conference. Some have argued that the LTTE might have withdrawn from the negotiations because of its exclusion (Keethaponcalan 2011: 42).

Lunstead has assessed that US engagement in peace building was hindered by its commitment to use minimal resources, a time-lag in deploying the resources due to poor communications from both sides, and a focus on terrorism, which limited its level of engagement in the conflict (Goodhand et al. 2011: 42). Although the US did not engage with the LTTE, some US Senators and the Tamil diaspora residents in the US criticised their nation's role because they argued that the US was supporting the Sri Lankan government security forces which had also been responsible for human rights violations.

With the arrival of the new US administration of President Barack Obama, there were hopes of some constructive actions, which eventually got shattered when the Obama administration also decided to keep the LTTE on the terrorist list and banned the diaspora community from supporting it. "With regard to the LTTE's

designation as a terrorist organisation, successive US administrations argued that the US would have considered removing the LTTE from its list once it had convincingly proven through its actions that it was genuinely committed to peace" (Congressional Research Service 2008: 27).

Norway

Norway played the leading role in brokering the 2002 CFA and coordinated the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, established to monitor the ceasefire, which was staffed predominantly by Norwegians and other Scandinavians. Norway extended financial, diplomatic and logistical support in the peace process (Goodhand and Kleim 2005: 10). The Sri Lankan government relied heavily on Norway to steer the peace process (ibid.: 70). In April 2003 when the LTTE left the negotiations, Norway continued to facilitate between the two sides through track two diplomacy (Keethaponcalan 2011: 42).

As a provision of the CFA, the SLMM, established on 22 February 2002, was tasked to monitor the ceasefire and address truce violation accusations from both sides. Although it had a limited mandate, SLMM helped maintain the commitments of the key protagonists through problem-solving and consensual approaches. However, from May 2006 onwards, the SLMM faced difficultly in exercising its mandate due to an increase in hostilities from both sides.

Norway, as a country whose claims to neutrality and impartiality are deemed to carry credibility, has a strong track record in such roles. Its special envoy, Jon Hanssen-Bauer, undertook the bulk of Norway's diplomatic work with regard to Sri Lanka. In August 2006, Hanssen-Bauer said that the adding of the LTTE to the EU list of terrorist organisations, thereby subjecting it to an asset freeze and travel ban, had hurt the peace process (TamilNet 20 August 2006). However, by this time both the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE were indicating that they had lost faith in Norway as the 'lead broker', with both suggesting from very different vantage points that it could no longer be considered neutral or impartial (Congressional Research Service 2008: 11). According to an ICG report,

> Since the official death of the ceasefire agreement in January 2008, Norway's role diminished significantly, although it remained involved with

international efforts to end the fighting and ensure the provision of humanitarian aid to civilians caught up in it. However, other countries may have to fill a future 'lead brokering' role. The Sri Lankan Government has said that it sees no future role for Norway in this regard. There have been calls for the US, EU and India to work together to establish a broader-based 'contact group' (2008: 22).

European Union

The EU has played a significant role in the Sri Lankan conflict and peace process for more than a decade. The EU strongly supported the 2002 Norwegian-brokered CFA and, as it came under ever greater strain from 2005 onwards, regularly called for it to be upheld. However, both the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka repeatedly accused the EU of 'taking sides'. In May 2006, following years of lobbying by the Sri Lankan government, the EU, following the example of the US, Canada and India, listed the LTTE as a terrorist organisation and imposed an asset freeze and travel ban against it. There has been vigorous debate about whether or not this damaged the peace process. The LTTE declared that, by doing this, the EU had taken sides in the conflict. EU members (mainly Danes, Swedes and Finns) working for the SLMM had to leave the Mission (Lunn et al. 2009: 26).

Japan

Japan has been Sri Lanka's biggest bilateral aid donor. It played a significant part in supporting the post-2002 peace process. It vouched for a political settlement based on the principle of devolution. However, it also remained reluctant to directly criticise the atrocities done by the Sri Lankan government. "A newly independent Sri Lanka argued strongly against punitive reparations against Japan by the international community after World War II, in the process relinquishing its own claim, something which Japan was, and remains, grateful for" (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2005). The fact that the two countries share a strong Buddhist heritage also shapes Japanese feelings towards Sri Lanka. At the June 2003 donor conference in Tokyo, the Japanese government pledged nearly 25 per cent of the $4.5 billion total (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 2009). Following the decision in January 2008 of the Sri Lankan government to formally terminate the 2002 CFA, Japan stated that it would be reviewing its aid programme to Sri Lanka. However, no action followed. Meanwhile, as the current

humanitarian crisis intensified, Japan joined with other members of the international community in calling for civilians to be adequately protected and providing humanitarian assistance (ICG 2009).

Diaspora's Mobilization by the LTTE during the Peace Process

The LTTE had emerged as the sole voice of the Tamils in Sri Lanka by the mid-1980s. The Norwegian peace process not only brought Eelam War III to a halt, but also gave some sort of legality to the LTTE as a party to the Sri Lankan politics, which the government had been denying for long. This recognition in the domestic politics contributed to strengthening the confidence of the Tamils abroad in the LTTE.

During the peace process, various LTTE members moved to different locations in the United Kingdom and parts of Europe and United States and tried to mobilise the Tamils abroad through their engagement with various Tamil community groups, temples, Tamil-language schools and businessmen. Through this means, they were able to reach the affluent and skilled diaspora who could contribute towards sustaining the conflict. But there also remained some voices who questioned the LTTE time and again.

While a large section of the diaspora community asserts that it openly supported the LTTE as it had no other agency which would fight for its kin group in Sri Lanka, there remains a section that claims that there was intimidation, assault and threats used by the LTTE people to get aid and support from the Tamils in the West. In the view of Rajasingham,

> The intimidation of independent media outlets was a key arm of this strategy. The LTTE had for a generation sought to dominate the 'Tamil narrative' – martial, dogmatic, missionary, zealous, leader-fixated – with many tales of military valour, of brave conquest against a marauding Sri Lankan army, of resolute 'final wars', of 'operation motherland redemptions'. To a great extent it had succeeded (2009: 5).

The LTTE had its channels and websites of propaganda. The diaspora had limited means of verifying the claims made by the LTTE. According to Emmanuel Jesuthasan, a leading Sri Lankan Tamil activist in London, "We had no means to influence people or verify facts from the ground (Tamils in Sri Lanka) because

media in those regions were held by the LTTE" (Personal interview, London, 19 March 2016).

The period of negotiation was sought by the LTTE as a phase in which it could prepare itself for the 'final war'. It used to emphasise the huge number of casualties of the LTTE combatants as a measure of its commitment towards the Tamil cause (Lilja 2011: 321). Jesuthasan also noted, "We knew that the LTTE was going all wrong but we remained quiet. And gradually the sympathy towards the LTTE started turning into disgust" (Personal interview, London, 19 March 2016).[64]

The LTTE had a clear strategy of getting its recognition as a party to the conflict, which the government of Sri Lanka was not willing to give. It is alleged by some authors (Martin 2006; Rupesinghe 2006) that the LTTE was involved in talks with Norway since 1999 when Eelam War was still on. As a result of these talks, Norway helped in getting the chief negotiator of the LTTE, Anton Balasingham, get out of the war-torn Sri Lanka. This shows that the LTTE had a clear strategy of taking a halt from the war and was planning to go for negotiation once the new government came to power in Sri Lanka in 2001.

The positions and demands of the LTTE during the entire peace period and even in the preceding period had a clear strategy of convincing the diaspora to continue with its support for the conflict. After suffering from three phases of war and achieving nothing out of it, not only the diaspora but the Tamils in Sri Lanka had also started losing faith in the LTTE. Most of them were not convinced of the ways the LTTE handled the Tamil issue. Also, they had got tired of being in the war zone. Hence there was a growing demand for peaceful negotiations for resolving the issue from the Tamils both in Sri Lanka and abroad.

To bring back the faith and confidence, the LTTE entered into the peace process with the demand for normalisation and improvement in the economic status of the

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[64] Interview held during the fieldwork in London on 19 March 2016. Emmanuel Jesuthasan had left his homeland in 1974 to pursue higher studies in the UK but due to the deteriorating conditions back home, decided to stay back and since then has been working for the human rights of the Tamil refugees. He currently works as Joint Secretary of T.N.A. UK. He has served some of the prominent positions in the international organizations such as Director of Tamil Information Centre (TIC) UK; Retired U. N. Consultant, WHO and UNDP.

war-torn areas in Sri Lanka. In an attempt to show a positive gesture towards the peace process, the LTTE declared unilateral ceasefire in December 2001, i.e. even before the CFA was signed officially.

During the peace period, the LTTE maintained its non-violent approach and agreed for a federal setup. This stance managed to gather wide support from the international community, particularly the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, but it also created a level of disagreement within the LTTE. The LTTE cadres were trained and had hoped for an independent eelam and they were not ready to settle for any kind of federal setup. This in turn pressurised Prabhakaran to make sure that some positive measures were taken in the peace period so as to convince the LTTE's own combatants and keep them united. "The Tigers' initial negotiation position on improved economic living conditions and increased aid was a way to convince LTTE combatants of the utility of talks and to generate tangible public benefits for the Tamil community" (Lilja 2011: 323).

Diaspora's Activism during the Peace Process

According to Kuhanendran, a leading GTF activist in London,

> The diaspora can be categorised into two groups: the LTTE diaspora and the other group comprised of people like us who knew the problems. The LTTE diaspora had no idea what was going on ground. They believed in the LTTE blindly and hoped to win in the end (Personal interview, London, 21 March 2016).

Beginning in 1983, the ethnic conflict, including widespread government abuses targeting the Tamil population, prompted hundreds of thousands of Tamils to flee Sri Lanka. By 2001, when the inception of the peace process was getting in place, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora were estimated to be around 600,000-800,000, accounting for approximately one-quarter of the global Sri Lankan Tamil population (Venugopal 2003). Canada and the United Kingdom were the main countries to host a politically dynamic Tamil diaspora and it was the diaspora's activism that could bring the LTTE to the negotiating table.[65]

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[65] Between 1996 and 2001, Canada's Tamil community grew by 38 per cent, making it the country's fastest growing ethnic population (Zunzer 2004). The vast majority of Canadian Tamils live in the Toronto area, creating a larger urban Tamil population than is found in any city in Sri Lanka itself. Similarly, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the United Kingdom, particularly in London and some parts of Europe as well grew immensely. Both these regions have been

The members of the diaspora were active in various forms. From fundraising to lobbying in their host countries, diaspora groups had successfully marked their presence. They also played a role in providing logistical support in the peace process. Mr. Varadakumar (Director, Tamil Information Centre (TIC), London) said in a personal interview:

> We did a lot of work behind the scenes. We negotiated with the LTTE, international NGOs and even with Norway. Unlike other organisations where they publicly criticised the LTTE, we noticed mainly the failures of the government that led the armed conflict to arise in the first place. We justified armed conflict but the way the LTTE carried out the struggle, we were not convinced (London, 24 March 2016).[66]

After seeing their homeland and their ethnic kin group suffering from the war for almost two decades and achieving nothing, a major section among the diaspora community had started questioning the LTTE's methods. The diaspora community also played a very important role in bringing about the CFA in 2002 (Fair 2007). Broadly, the main reactions of the diaspora can be studied under following subheadings:

- *Countering and questioning LTTE tactics to deal with the Tamil issues*

As the Tamils settled abroad, particularly in areas with high Tamil concentrations such as in Toronto or London, they established a range of Tamil institutions and organisations, including Tamil-owned businesses, media, temples and churches, and cultural, political and service organisations, including agencies that helped new arrivals to find housing or employment. To ensure both political and financial support, the LTTE had sought – and gained – influence or control over many of these institutions (Human Rights Watch Report 2006). The influence was so deep that it resulted in sustaining the conflict for almost two decades. The diaspora initially trusted the LTTE blindly. On a condition of hiding identity, a Tamil activist in London, said in a personal interview with the researcher,

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witnessing a highly dynamic and politically active diaspora, who have time and again successfully asserted their influence in their homeland's affairs.

[66] Personal interview, London, 24 March 2016. Varadakumar is a prominent figure among the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. He arrived in London in the 1980s for studies, but due to the war could not return. Currently he is director of one of the prominent Tamil organisations in London that helps the Tamil refugees and works as an information centre.

> We supported the Tamil movement under the LTTE's leadership as long as we thought it was a freedom struggle for the Tamils. We were always in support of solving it through democratic means. However, the news kept affecting us that whatever support we gave was not reaching 'our people' and it was used for fuelling the LTTE's thirst for power. Hence, after the third phase of the war, the diaspora support was getting more and more diluted as the voices of democratic means kept dominating among the diaspora members (Anonymous 1, personal interview, London, 22 March 2016).

The reduced diaspora support was a major factor that led the LTTE to go forward with the peace process. Even though both the LTTE as well as the diaspora remained apprehensive of the Sri Lankan government, Norway's mediation gave the diaspora some hope of achieving some positive outcomes from the peace talks, while the LTTE and the government continued to take this opportunity to rearm and prepare themselves for a 'final war'. As told by Emmanuel Jesuthasan in a personal interview, "We thought it (coming to the negotiating table with the government) would be a good opportunity to achieve peace. However, the failure remains more on the LTTE side" (19 March 2016)[67].

- *Decline in money contribution to LTTE*

Following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the United States and other Western countries began to view groups such as the LTTE in very different terms. Increasingly, states were inclined to view the LTTE as a terrorist organisation rather than an insurgent organisation representing the legitimate interests of an oppressed group which was politically discriminated and marginalised by its own government. Many states had already banned the LTTE, but until 9/11, many states did not prioritise efforts to limit the activities of the LTTE and its supporters (Fair 2005: 145).

The U.K. government officially designated the LTTE as a terrorist organisation in 2001, forcing the LTTE to shut down its London office.[68] The terrorist designation

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[67] Personal interview, London, 19 March 2016. Having arrived in London in 1974 for studies, he has been quite active in the field of the refugees' human rights.

[68] Under the U.K. Terrorism Act 2000, an organisation may be proscribed (or outlawed) in the U.K. if it "commits or participates in acts of terrorism, prepares for terrorism, promotes or encourages terrorism, or is otherwise concerned with terrorism" (Part II, 3(5)). The LTTE was included in a list of 21 organisations for proscription prepared by the Home Secretary in February 2001. The Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2001 came into force on 29 March 2001 (Human Rights Watch Report 2005).

and global focus on anti-terror initiatives following the 9/11 attacks made many members of the diaspora community more reluctant to give funds to the LTTE or its front groups.

As stated by Paul Sathianesan, Labor Councillor from East Ham, London,

> Diasporas were responsible for giving arms worth millions to the LTTE at one point of time. They raised funds and provided arms and contributed to sustain the conflict which they thought was for their own good[69] (personal interview, East Ham, London, 19 March 2016).

After 9/11, many overseas Tamils who supported the LTTE were shocked at its portrayal as a terrorist group. Fundraising activity continued, however, but became more limited and confidential to compensate for individuals' increasing reluctance to give. In an effort to shed the label "terrorist", the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community sought the LTTE representatives at home and abroad and encouraged them to abandon the military struggle, pursue a diplomatic solution and restore legitimacy to the cause of the Sri Lankan Tamil community (Fair 2007: 188).

According to some scholars, even before the events of 9/11, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora had started becoming hesitant in supporting the LTTE blindly. Instead it had started asking for their strategy and justifications about the acts of violence against the Tamils in their homeland. There was news about the forcible recruitment of children and the tactic of suicide bombing that provoked some supporters to question the LTTE's operations and check whether the LTTE ultimately helped or hindered the Tamil cause (DeVotta 2005 a).

Due to this change in the policy towards the LTTE, the overseas funding from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community started shrinking. They claimed that the government forced them to stop aiding the LTTE financially through its enhanced vigilance and fear of reprisals. However, it was the main preference of the diaspora community itself as it wanted the LTTE to come to the negotiating table with the government for a peaceful solution. Since the LTTE relied on the diaspora community for its economic assistance, it had no choice but to come forward for a negotiated approach to peace (Fair 2007: 189). The intensity of contributions was

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[69] Personal interview, London, 19 March 2016. He is a prominent political figure from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community. He arrived in the UK as a refugee in 1985. Since then he has been dedicated to work for the refugees and others from Sri Lanka as well as in local areas.

also affected by the CFA: with a halt in active hostilities, many in the Tamil diaspora no longer perceived a pressing need to contribute to the LTTE (Human Rights Watch Report 2006).

Several factors may thus be cited for the decline in fundraising activities of the diaspora and the LTTE abroad:

(i)   Proscription of the LTTE in the 1990s in several countries.

(ii)   In the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks, the immigrant population was seen with a certain degree of suspicion. In an attempt to assert their legitimacy, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora had to cut down their direct involvement with the LTTE or any other activity that could raise a question regarding them.

Table 4.1 shows a comparative picture of funding before and during the peace period. During the peace period, the agenda for funding for the Tamil cause started making a shift towards the reconstructive and developmental approach from its earlier stance of 'funding for freedom'.

Table 4.1

Time period	Funds raised	Methods
Prior to the Norwegian Peace process (1983-2001)	Around $200-$250 million per annum*	Through various fundraising activities in the name of helping the LTTE in fighting for the Tamil cause
During the Peace Process, 2002-2006	Around $80 million per year**	In the name of helping the Tamils back in Sri Lanka, for development and reconstruction in war-torn areas

Source: *ICG (2006, 2010) and **Human Rights Watch (2006) report.

- *Visiting homeland's conflict-affected areas*

The Sri Lankan Tamils viewed the CFA as an opportunity to visit family and friends in the North and East of Sri Lanka, the areas that were largely under the

control of the LTTE. Later, these visits also became a source of revenue for the LTTE as the LTTE kept identifying the visiting expatriates and pressurised them to contribute to the 'cause'. An anonymous Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora businessman said in an interview:

> During the peace process, I continued with the charity work. I was a part of Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation. We were aware that the funds we could raise went to the LTTE and we were okay with it (Personal interview, London, 19 March 2016). [70]

These visits also enabled them to observe the ground situation more closely. The diaspora observed what it had been contributing to for almost two decades. Some diaspora members were satisfied with the kind of administration the LTTE had over the Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka, while to some it was not acceptable. An anonymous interviewee said:

> The LTTE had established a de-facto state during the peace period. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora who visited LTTE-controlled areas like Vanni, etc. felt that these regions stood below the poverty line (Personal interview, London, 4 April 2016)[71].

This marked the onset of the diaspora being divided over the issue of representation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. There were reports that the LTTE not only spied on the expatriates in the regions controlled by it, but also pressurised them to donate for the 'cause'. This upset the diaspora all the more as it felt that the contributions it had made went into fulfilling the adamant desires of the LTTE chief Prabhakaran and not for the well-being of its people.

- *Changing approach of participation in the homeland peace process*

Since 2001, the political activities of the diaspora community and its participation underwent a change. The actions evolved more towards legitimacy and now the diaspora was in no mood to blindly support the secessionist conflict. Now the diaspora members wanted the LTTE to come to the negotiation table and deal with the Tamil grievances peacefully rather than militarily. During this phase, the supporters of the LTTE in the diaspora focused more on working within the

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[70] Anonymous 2 in the references.
[71] Anonymous 3 in the references.

system by getting Tamils elected to office and using electoral clout and money to influence policymakers (ICG 2010).

However, as estimated by the Sri Lankan government, the LTTE's overseas fundraising reached $80 million per year even during this phase, when diaspora activism was seen with suspicion (Wayland 2004: 421). During the ceasefire period, the funds raised from abroad were used for destruction and reconstruction alike. However, the major portion of the diaspora's contribution was used for sustaining Tamil societies in war-affected areas. But as the ceasefire continued to get violated by both the LTTE and the army repeatedly, increasing amounts shifted away from sustaining the insurgency towards humanitarian aid (ICG 2010). As a result, even though the peace process failed and the most brutal phase of the war, Eelam War IV, was initiated by the army in May 2006, the diaspora managed to continue raising funds in order to carry forward the struggle of its kin group. The changed environment, however, led the diaspora community to give a wide berth to the LTTE.

In late 2005, the escalation of LTTE attacks on the government forces and the increase in rights abuses by both sides coincided with a massive LTTE fundraising drive among the Tamil diaspora. In Canada, the U.K. and other parts of Europe, LTTE representatives went house to house and visited Tamil-owned businesses, requesting substantial sums of money, often using intimidation, coercion and outright threats to secure pledges (Human Rights Watch Report 2006). In Toronto, individual families typically were asked to pay between CA$2500 and CA$5000, though some families were reportedly asked for as much as CA$10,000. Business owners were asked for amounts ranging from CA$25,000 to CA$100,000 (Human Rights Watch interviews, January 2005). One Hindu temple reported being asked for CA$1 million (Human Rights Watch interviews, January 2005 and November 2006). In London, many families were asked for £2,000 and businesses approached for amounts ranging from £10,000 to £100,000 (Human Rights interviews, November and December 2005). Members of the Tamil communities in France and Norway reported requests for similar sums (Human Rights Watch interview, February 2006). Individuals and business owners were sometimes told

that the money was a "loan" that would be repaid with interest. Others were asked for an outright contribution (Human Rights Watch report 2006).

- ***Increased level of heterogeneity within the diaspora community***

Generally, it was perceived – wrongly – that the entire Tamil diaspora community was united under the LTTE banner. The diaspora community is a heterogeneous community and remains divided on this issue. The peace period of 2002-2006 marked the beginning of the differences emerging within the diaspora community on the issue of giving financial support to the LTTE. Individuals held a variety of views regarding the Tamil Tigers and their decision whether or not to give financial support was based on a complex set of factors. Many were active supporters of the LTTE, and perceived the Tigers as an important and effective representative of the Tamil people and their interests. They believed in the LTTE's military struggle for independence in the North and East and willingly provided financial support for 'the cause'. Others did not necessarily support the LTTE's goals or methods, but gave money to protect or enhance their status in the Tamil community or their business interests. The LTTE's use of intimidation, harassment, extortion, and even physical violence against members of the Tamil diaspora also contributed towards the Tamil dissent regarding the ongoing LTTE approach towards the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka.

Not every diaspora Tamil donated funds to the LTTE. As a result, countless Tamils fell victim to LTTE violence. Throughout the 1980s, the LTTE waged war and conducted a campaign of assassinations and bombings against rival militants and moderate Tamils in an effort to silence dissent and consolidate support in Sri Lanka. This intolerance and violence forced many Tamils to seek refuge abroad. Many of the Tamils also supported the LTTE to satisfy their feelings of guilt for leaving their homeland behind (ICG 2010). Nevertheless, as explained by Fair, "The diaspora has been a fundamental component of the Tamil insurgency and the backbone of the LTTE's global operations" (2005: 139).

According to Wayland (2004: 418), the Tamil diaspora activities during this period can be divided into three categories:

(i) information exchange within the Tamil community via Tamil-language newspapers, radio, the Internet and ethnic organisations;

(ii) spreading awareness of the Tamil struggle through marches, conferences, and the lobbying of government officials; and

(iii) lawful as well as illegal fundraising.

Particularly the exchange of information enabled the community itself in having a strong and assertive status in the global world. Apart from this, political lobbying and fundraising contributed more strength in asserting its independent Tamil identity. According to Wayland,

> In 2004, there were ten weekly Tamil language newspapers, four Tamil language radio stations broadcast seven days a week, three cinemas showed Tamil language films, and many other outlets of Tamil expression and information exchange in Toronto. The internet also provided a very important means of communication among Tamils. Tamil websites provided access to news about Sri Lanka, often analyzing the peace process with a Tamil perspective and providing an up-to-date chronology of the round of talks held between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan state. The internet also provided space for cyber communities, chat rooms and user groups. These networks and forms of technological communication proved to be very significant in reinforcing the Tamil ethno national identity and added more credibility to their participation in the peace talks (2004: 419-421).

- *Formation of British Tamil Forum*

The British Tamil Forum (BTF) was initiated in 2006 by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the aftermath of continuous violations of the CFA by both the LTTE and the government. The BTF would establish contacts with all sections of the Sri Lankan society and try to achieve the solution to the Tamil issue in a democratic manner. The BTF came into being during the last stage of the peace period.

Through BTF, the diaspora members in the UK were mobilised and politicised on a fairly large scale. A BTF founder/activist, Senthil Kandiah claims:

> We tried to highlight the things that were going wrong in Sri Lanka. The diaspora had managed to establish its own intelligence by this time and we got the figures of the war victims right. Our activism made the British government believe in the diaspora's power. We had asked the British MP to do something to avoid the war in Sri Lanka, which we could see as the peace period was failing (Personal interview, London, 23 March 2016).

The impact of these activities on behalf of the diaspora community played a crucial role in the peace process in Sri Lanka. These efforts remained significant as they emerged as the only force to protest against the Sri Lankan state and make the world aware of the gross human rights violations carried out in the name of the 'war on terror'.

Reasons for Failure of the Peace Process

The major reason for the failure of the peace process can be said to be the negative connotation of peace that was being tried to achieve. Uyangoda (2002), a prominent Sri Lankan political scientist, defines negative peace as a pragmatic conflict management tool that characterises the absence of war from a political context.

> In negative peace, the enabling conditions of conflict remain unaddressed – and consequently available for mobilisation – whereas positive peace removes the structural underpinnings of conflict focusing on institutional reform, 'community reconciliation and peace building, democratisation, returning to normal politics, human rights, reintegration of communities and many more reconstructive measures'(2002: 5-6).

According to McGregor,

> Whereas the establishment of the end goal of positive peace justifies the state of negative peace as an interim building-block to provide the political space to enable progression through a form of stabilisation, the lack of a long-term strategy results in a suspension in a warless, peace-less political period. As the point of transition reflects a key turning point in the construction of society, the location of the peace process within a concentrated section of community threatens the legitimacy of the eventual political and societal resolution reached (2006: 47).

The main reasons for the failure of the CFA may be studied under the following categories:

- *Incomplete Participation*

For the most part, the 2002 peace process consisted of discussions in hotels abroad between small groups of men from only two of the parties to the conflict. There was little transparency and no place for other affected communities – Muslims, non-LTTE Tamils, and other Sinhalese parties. A closed process was designed to provide both parties space to develop compromises away from the constant

scrutiny of the media. A bilateral process was demanded by the LTTE (which viewed itself as the sole representative of the Tamils) and also avoided some complexity. However, the conflict was as much about tensions within the different ethnic communities as between them (Bush 2003; ICG 2006). While it was inevitable that the CFA would have to be signed between the two parties who could control the fighting, the much broader peace process was unlikely to be successful if it was conducted only as a narrow bilateral arrangement. But neither side was interested in broadening the process. The government saw an attempt at consensus building in the South as a distraction that would hinder the peace process. "All this talk of consensus", said a leading member of Wickremesinghe's team, "it leads nowhere. You have to decide what you want to do, and just do it" (ICG 2006: 13). The LTTE refused to negotiate unless it was accepted as the sole voice for the Tamil people.

The war of personalities between President Kumaratunga and her Prime Minister Wickremesinghe was another reason that impacted the peace process. The peace negotiators were aware of this fact, but did nothing to sort out this enmity in a meaningful way. According to their Western value system, the ego clash between two personalities had nothing to do with the greater national interest – peace – but their assumption was not equally true in the Sri Lankan soil. Here again, they made a mistake.

On the LTTE side, only Prabhakaran and his interlocutor decided about the course of action. The entire cadre and their consensus were ignored. The LTTE cadres were not consulted or taken into confidence before putting up the Tamil stance, leave alone consulting the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. An ex-combatant on terms of anonymity said:

> I was in the battle when one day the commander called me to stop fighting. The peace period stopped our activities. What was happening we didn't know. We all were blank at that time. Only our leadership knew and we followed the orders (Anonymous 3, Personal interview, London, 4 April 2016).

This shows that even the parties to the CFA did not make an effort to completely involve themselves in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict.

The peace process also did not involve the civil society organisations, NGOs, opposition politicians, religious communities, and business organisations in the peace process. Both the warring parties had taken the peace process as proxy war, and were preparing for the war during the ceasefire period, but the peace negotiators ignored this fact and proceeded unilaterally.

However, whatever the politics, it was also clear that no peace process could be successful in the long run unless the tensions and fractures within the Sinhalese polity were also addressed.

- *Neglect of the Root Cause of the Conflict*

The peace process focused too narrowly on elite negotiations and peace pacts, instead of paying attention to the broad and long-term transformation of grievances, forces and strategies. This implied that the process of building lasting peace was totally ignored by every party involved and only formal negotiations between the protagonists to the conflict were being arranged. But "resolution of a conflict requires a fundamental transformation of the structure as well as the dynamics of the conflict. Similarly, action towards resolution constitutes transformative politics and praxis" (Uyangoda 2005 a: 964). The CFA did provide a necessary condition for sustainable peace but that alone was not sufficient. The challenge remained to substantiate, in theory and practice, the mutual constitution of conflict resolution and conflict transformation.

Smith (2007) argues that peace could have been achieved if the following actions on behalf of the Sri Lankan state were taken as primary: (i) to provide security to the Tamils; (ii) to establish the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace; (iii) to establish the political framework of long-term peace; and (iv) to generate reconciliation and justice. However, in reality, the Sri Lankan state was more focused on the elimination of the LTTE and more obsessed with gaining entire control of the Northern part of the island as well.

- *Confined International Involvement*

Apart from India's intervention in the late 1980s, the Sri Lankan conflict has had little outside involvement. India's sensitivities about Western intrusion in its

sphere of influence have been partly responsible, as is a general sense among the Sinhalese in particular that the problem should be solved by Sri Lankans themselves. Nevertheless, the conflict was already an international issue in the 1990s, because large diaspora from both communities were making their presence felt in Europe, North America and Australia. Bans on LTTE activities under anti-terrorist legislation enacted in the US (1997), UK (2001), Canada (2006) and the EU (2006) began to put pressure on these countries to keep a low profile in the peace process as they were no more considered 'neutral' (ICG 2006: 18-19). These countries did support the peace process of 2002 but their main motive was confined to elimination of the LTTE as they perceived it as more of a terrorist organisation rather than an insurgent movement. The international community continued to give military aid to the Sri Lankan state in the name of helping the island to achieve a 'peaceful' solution to the conflict.

By the end of year 2006, the Sri Lankan Tamils had realised that there was no hope left with the so-called peace process and much difference prevailed between what they expected and what they obtained from both the warring parties. The army had begun to attack and conquer Jaffna. It was now seen as aliens and enemies trying to dominate the lives of the Tamils. The anti-LTTE sentiment was converted into anti-Tamil and the army did not leave scope for innocent Tamils who were caught in the war zones. Two very significant political developments took place in this phase: first, the Tamils in the North, who for almost a decade had fought for separation from Sri Lanka, began to identify themselves again as Sri Lankans. The army's anti-LTTE sentiment led them to believe that if they asserted their Tamil identity, then they would not live much longer.

The second development was that the Tamils in Sri Lanka realised that the bond between them and the Tamils abroad was stronger than they had ever assumed. When almost every nation-state had supported the anti-Tamil stance of the government of Sri Lanka, the only help that came for them was from their kin group living abroad. The Tamils in Sri Lanka felt that the diaspora community was their only hope as even their very close neighbour (India) remained silent when the Sri Lankan state laid strategies to finish their existence forever.

Conclusion

The peace period of 2002-2006 came into being only because both the warring parties had been war-weary. While the government was facing huge depression in its economy, the LTTE was also getting short of arms and funds to continue with the war. The CFA came as a respite to the civilians, who had been suffering the war for almost two decades. The peace process was facilitated by Norway. Under its supervision a CFA was signed between the government and the LTTE. The first thing both the parties agreed to was to respect each other's territorial control. This on one hand gave some relief to the Tamils in Sri Lanka; but on the other hand, it created huge levels of discontent among the Sinhalese nationalists, who were against of giving any kind of recognition to the LTTE. The CFA also established the SLMM, which included around 70 personnel from Scandinavian countries. They had their offices in the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka and their task was to make sure that the CFA was implemented properly.

Since the peace period was not conceived out of the mere need to have a peaceful solution but it arose out of the warring parties' need to plan and form strategies and restore their energies to attain what they wished, the peace period did not last long. There were several incidents of violations from both the sides and both continued to play the blame game. The demand for peaceful negotiations came only from the Tamils in Sri Lanka who had been the main sufferers of the war and also from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members as they were also tired of funding the war further.

After the agreement was signed, both the LTTE and the government made efforts to portray themselves as working for peace, but in reality they kept trying to attack each other in various incidents. The government had to go for negotiation in order to uplift its deteriorating economy. In order to get funds from the international community, the government agreed to give a federal setup to the Tamils. However, the government made it amply clear that the troops would be withdrawn only after the LTTE was eliminated. Similarly, the LTTE was also grappling with the decline in funding from the diaspora community. Also, the CFA was signed in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks, due to which all over the world, immigrant communities had come under tight scrutiny. This made the Sri Lankan Tamil

diaspora less active in terms of funding and contributing in the LTTE propaganda because the LTTE was proscribed by almost every country which hosted a numerous Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora.

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora had also changed its supportive attitude and practices from funding the war to highlighting the Tamil grievances and continued to resort to protest against the massive human rights violations that were being done by both the LTTE and the army. The diaspora members started questioning the LTTE as they had observed that the war had only deteriorated the condition of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Not only they made efforts to bring the LTTE to the negotiating table, but they also continued with their charity work for betterment of their kin group in their homeland.

During the peace period, the diaspora as a group had started getting divided on the issue of resolving the Tamil cause. Earlier, there were a large number of supporters of the LTTE who blindly believed whatever the LTTE told them about the ground situation. But after Eealm War III, not only the diaspora but the Tamils in Sri Lanka also started raising their voice in support of negotiating the matter peacefully than waging war. The war was destructive and the civilians had to bear its consequences. Hence, there was a gradual demand for democratic means to resolve the issue. Thus, the peace period marked the first rupture among the diaspora community on the means to resolve their homeland conflict.

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members started declining their funding to the LTTE and mobilised the international community and the LTTE for negotiating the matter in the presence of a third party. The diaspora hoped that India, being the regional power, would take the lead, but India decided to stay away, as it did not approve of the LTTE as the negotiating party. However, the diaspora continued to raise the funds for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Tamil war-torn areas in Sri Lanka. The diaspora members took the opportunity of the ceasefire to visit their families, relatives and villages and observe the ground situation so as to make a realistic assessment of what was supposed to be done next. Also, the diaspora community underwent a change in its approach to deal with the homeland conflict. Earlier it was more focused on creating a separate state for Tamils, but after seeing the country plagued by the war, it demanded regional autonomy within united Sri

Lanka. Its funding was now channelled towards reconstruction works, while being in host countries it helped several Sri Lankan Tamil refugees who had to flee their homeland because of the war.

On the other hand, the pro-LTTE diaspora continued to fund the LTTE, though the level of funding declined because any association with the LTTE would land the diaspora into trouble. Also, they came to the understanding that through the peace process the world might get a message that the LTTE was not a terrorist organisation. This made the pro-LTTE diaspora group also pressurise the LTTE to go for negotiations and stop the war. This faction of the diaspora got weaker following the Karuna split in the LTTE.

The Karuna split not only weakened the pro-LTTE diaspora group, but also gave a boost to the other faction in the diaspora who questioned the LTTE's strategies to resolve the Tamil issue. The LTTE split gave a message to the entire diaspora community that within the LTTE there was another struggle for power and it was no more focused on the issue of Tamils in Sri Lanka. This also led to a further decline in funding as the diaspora became more hesitant to contribute to an organisation which had internal issues and fights for power.

Despite all these differences and doubts, the entire diaspora community stood together in helping their homeland when the island was hit by the tsunami in December 2004. A huge amount of aid from international communities and organisations flowed into the island. The diaspora also contributed. This showed that the diaspora were never hesitant to help its kin group, but it remained divided on the issue of representation of its kin group.

One and a half years after signing the CFA, the political evolution of the diaspora revealed that it indeed had thought long and hard. Violent politics appeared to be diminishing, and democratic politics was returning on the agenda.

As to the peace treaty proposal, nothing concrete happened. Had it been successful, it would have helped the island nation to bring democracy back.

CHAPTER V

The Fourth Eelam War and the Diasporic Responses

Introduction

Eelam War IV was the last and the most brutal phase of the armed conflict between the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE. In this phase of the war, the political scenario and equations at the national and international level had changed. It commenced in mid-2006 and lasted till mid-2009. This chapter deals with the various developments that took place during this phase both in Sri Lanka and within the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora. The diaspora community was largely disappointed with the failed peace process and hoped to avoid the war. This chapter examines the different efforts of the diaspora community and its strategies to save its kin group who were trapped in the war zone.

During this phase of the war, there were various developments in the domestic as well as international politics that led to a different reaction to this phase of the war from the international community and the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora as well. In the aftermath of 9/11, this phase was marked by an immense critique of the LTTE from the Western countries as they were suspicious of any anti-state activity in any country. The international community was united on the US President's call for the so-called war on terror. The Sri Lankan state took advantage of these circumstances and declared its military attack on the Tamil areas as a part of upholding its own territorial integrity. Most of the Western states supported the Sri Lankan state when it declared its 'war for peace'.

By the time Eelam War IV started, many countries had declared the LTTE as a terrorist organisation and support to it was itself seen as an act of terrorism. Hence,

the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members were not able to support the insurgent movement. There was also the ideological factor, with a shift among the second generation of the diaspora (ICG 2010). According to Nandakumar,

> During the fourth eelam war, it was the second generation who had taken charge of the diaspora protests in a different manner. They were mainly the children of those forced to flee Sri Lanka, rather than those who chose to leave. They were children of Tamils who had endured the discrimination and violence from the Sri Lankan government (2011: 9).

This young generation Tamil diaspora has ever experienced the war, but has grown up hearing the experiences and stories in their families. They are aware of the journey their parents had to undertake in order to provide them a safe and secular life. "The first-hand accounts of the often violent discrimination their parents faced embedded into them a strong sense of nationalism from a young age. They were constantly reminded of the persecution their parents had narrowly avoided and knew others in Sri Lanka were still suffering" (Nandakumar 2011: 9).

Hence, when Eelam War IV started, there was a flood of these young Tamil diaspora members to support their countrymen and make the world realise that the Tamils residing in Sri Lanka were in deep danger. This can be observed in a statement of a young Tamil diaspora activist:

> Like other young members of the Tamil diaspora community, I used to feel that the sufferings of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka seemed so far away, and so distant. However, after attending the protests and knowing about the brutality of the war, I now believe I too have a responsibility to my suffering brothers and sisters in the national liberation struggle (TamilNet 19 April 2009).

Sri Lanka during Eelam War IV

During 2006-2009, the armed conflict was once again a dominant factor on the political scene. The MoU which was signed in 2002 was never taken seriously b any of the parties to it. Hence, soon after signing the CFA, both GoSL and the LTTE had started looking for opportunities to attack and get leverage over the other. In this regard, several incidents happened during the period of 2002-2006. The highest number of violations was recorded in the year 2005 when both the

partied had become ready to take the other militarily. "Apparently there were signs in late 2005 that indicated an escalation in the conflict." [72] (de Silva 2007: 99)

The grounds for the war to re-emerge were prepared by both the LTTE and the government during the entire span of the peace period. Both warring parties paid lip service to the CFA and never had any intention to accept its rules fully. The extent of playing blame games was such that both blamed the other for arming the Karuna faction and creating instability in the Eastern regions.

Renewed hostilities began in July 2006 when the Sri Lankan Air Force fighter jets bombed several LTTE camps around Mavil Aru. [73] The Northern and the Eastern provinces, which became scenes of open conflict, were the ones that were badly affected by the tsunami of 2004. According to de Silva,

> Even though the initial quarter of 2006 continued to receive a significant aid and remittances from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora to help their people out in recovering from the devastations of tsunami, the northern and the eastern province continued to receive only limited disaster assistance due to the government's partial treatment. This had led Prabhakaran to state that he would not mind going back to the war if the government's attitude remained the same (2007: 100).

The war took on an added dimension when the LTTE Air Tigers bombed Katunayake airbase on 26 March 2007, the first rebel air attack without external assistance in history. The following months saw increased fighting, initially in the East, which later on spread to the northern front in the Jaffna peninsula. "By October, it was clear that both sides lacked sufficient military capability to defeat the other in an armed conflict. Therefore, they agreed to meet in Geneva under the auspices of the four powers promoting peace in Sri Lanka at that time – the U.S.,

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[72] Mahinda Rajapakse's victory in the presidential election of November 2005 was widely expected to lead to a harder government line towards the LTTE and Tamils' demands of secession. He was of the opinion that talks with the LTTE would be held only on the condition of a 'unitary Sri Lankan state'. Furthermore, fears of open warfare increased when Prabhakaran stated that the tsunami of 2004 had opened the options of returning to war.

[73] "Mavil Aru" (Mother River) is a waterway that supplies water to some regions of eastern Sri Lanka. The closure by the LTTE of the sluice gates of Mavil Aru on 26 July 2006 was a crucial turning point in the civil war. With the initiation of Operation Watershed, the armed forces undertook to wipe out the LTTE. They launched air strikes with the aim of capturing the waterway and sluice gates. On 11 August 2006, the armed forces announced that they had gained full control of the sluice gates of the reservoir." (South Asia Analysis Group 2006: Paper No. 1908)

EU, Japan, and Norway" (De Silva 2007: 103). However, they failed to reach a consensus[74] and the military conflict continued.

Another major political development in Sri Lankan politics was the Supreme Court's declaration that the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces (done in 1987) was illegal (DeVotta 2007: 104). Most of the Tamil politicians of Sri Lanka alleged that this was an act of the government to rupture the foundation of the Tamil demands for separation. A month before that, there was another declaration by the Supreme Court which stated that the international treaties (including those on human rights) would not be applicable to Sri Lanka. These developments gave a clear picture of what the Sri Lankan state had been planning against the Tamils in early 2006.

The renewed fighting marked the success of the Sri Lankan military in separating the Eastern part from the Northern Province (Wickremesinghe 2008: 191). This success was essentially a result of the split within the LTTE. The military kept the Eastern province under its control till the end of 2007.

The year 2007 started with violence and resulted in the displacement of thousands in the East of the island. According to the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the number of IDPs in the Eastern province was 50,136 individuals (UNHCR Report 2007). The government, however, brushed off such allegations and remained unwilling to comply with the international requests for impartial inquiries while blaming the international community of interfering in its sovereignty. Sri Lanka's media was termed as traitors when it tried to cover the brutalities done by the army to the civilians (Wickremesinghe 2008: 194). This year was also marked by an immense increase in the military budget. Also, the political influence of Rajapaksa's family was growing by this time (ibid.: 195).

According to Wickremesinghe, in 2008,

> After declaring an end to the ceasefire, the government authorised General Sarath Fonseka to lead nearly 160,000 well equipped soldiers to crush the

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[74] "In Geneva, both sides seemed to view peace talks as an instrument to restrengthen themselves and gain an advantage over the other. The LTTE insisted on opening up the A-9 road in order to secure supplies for civilians residing under their controlled areas before it could reach the government controlled areas. On the contrary, the government insisted that supplies be sent by the sea in order to let the supplies bypass the LTTE areas. Given the impasse, the both sides failed to reach an agreement." (DeVotta 2007: 103)

10,000-odd LTTE fighters in a conventional ground offensive. On April 23, the army launched an attack on the LTTE's defences in the Northern Province, which resulted in about 185 troop fatalities. Although the human costs of this offensive were high, the army continued making clear inroads into LTTE territory and weakening the LTTE severely (Wickramasinghe 2009: 60).

This resulted in the displacement of about 450,000 Tamils from their homeland both internally as well as externally.

The year 2008 witnessed more intense level of war as there were enormous increase in number of bombing and political assassinations across the entire country, apart from the North and the East. The army continued to carry its acts of massacre in the North and the East, while the LTTE retaliated by repeatedly targeting Sinhala ministers and political leaders in the Southern areas.[75] Several hundred young Tamils had disappeared in the North and East. The government was also accused of indiscriminately bombing the LTTE-controlled areas, including those where civilians resided. Sri Lanka's increasingly dismal human rights record had by mid-2008 antagonised international human rights bodies and other countries as well. Eventually, this led Sri Lanka to lose its seat on the U.N. Human Rights Council in May 2008 (Wickremesinghe 2009: 65). The government's 'war for peace' strategy in the North and its revitalisation of the political processes in the East did show signs of tackling the LTTE insurgency but at the same time it proved its incapability in handling the root cause of the insurgency. "By claiming that terrorism was the gravest threat facing Sri Lanka, Rajapaksa's government had given itself a licence to use undemocratic, often brutal methods to govern over the minorities in the country" (ibid.)

According to Uyangoda, "Political developments in Sri Lanka in 2009 centred primarily on the end of the protracted civil war …. The final collapse of the LTTE military machine, built over 25 years of war, was the main political development in 2009" (2010: 104). While the war was at its peak, the government had assured the Tamils as well as the international community that once it was done with the task of uprooting the 'terrorist organisation' LTTE from its territory, it would

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[75] The year started with the assassination of Minister of Nation Building, D.M. Dassanayake, by a roadside bomb in the town of Jaela, 19 km north of Colombo. On 2 February 2008, 20 Buddhist pilgrims were killed in the town of Dambulla in north-central Sri Lanka by alleged, but not proven, LTTE militants (Wickremesinghe 2009: 64).

definitely address the Tamil demands in an appropriate way. A committee, the Tissa Vitharna Committee,[76] formed in 2006, was given the responsibility to bring about a political solution to the issue and create an all-party consensus for it. It was supposed to address the ethnic equation between the Sinhalese and Tamils and reform it in such a way that none could claim that injustice was done to them. The committee had proposed in 2008 the implementation of constitutional provisions to devolve power from the centre.[77] However, the government rejected these proposals and started rendering the committee irrelevant (Uyangoda 2010: 108-109; Wickremesinghe 2009: 60).

The government under the Rajapaksa regime had its own interests in not making note of the political aspects of the conflict. Rajapaksa came into power by having coalition with the hard-core Sinhalese nationalist parties and looking for political solutions for the conflict would upset them. Hence, continuous denial if existence of any ethnic problem was the main agenda of the Rajapaksa government. In this context, it continuously declared that LTTE was a terrorist outfit and any kind of power-sharing arrangement with it would propagate a wrong message to similar terroristic outfits in the world. As noted by Uyangoda,

> The Sri Lankan politics reached an unexpectedly dramatic phase in late 2009, when in November; President Rajapaksa announced the decision to hold presidential elections in January 2010, even though his official term did not end until December 2011. Clearly, he wanted to get himself re-elected to a second term with a massive majority while the memory of his government's victory over the LTTE remained fresh in the minds of the electorate. Retired General Fonseka, who headed the Sri Lankan army during the final war against

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[76] Tissa Vitharna Committee was established by President Rajapaksa in the year 2006 which was given the task of formulation a draft proposal for constitutional reform. This committee had representatives from all political parties and hence, was also known as All Party Representative Committee (APRC). Through this committee President Rajapaksa made an attempt to form a new constitution which would provide a political solution to resolve the issue in accordance with all parties consent. Based on two reports produced by this committee, in year 2007, under the chairmanship of Prof. Tissa Vitharna, a draft was presented which comprised of main features of the new constitution. Not only the draft was presented and debated among all the party representatives for two years since August 2007, it was presented to President Rajapaksa but never got implemented.

[77] The 13th amendment which was introduces in the year 1987 after India's intervention, provided for creation of provincial councils in an attempt to establish devolution of power. However, since 1990s the single provincial council for the Northern and the Eastern provinces had remained non-functional. The governments in Sri Lanka since 1987 have failed totally in implementation of the reforms mentioned in the 13th amendment. Hence, it was obvious that there was a lack of zeal on the Governments' part to establish a just society for its minority Tamil population ever in the island.

the LTTE, decided to challenge Rajapaksa as the main opposition presidential candidate. Serious differences developed in the end of 2009 between the president and his erstwhile Defence Chief, which have been continuing till date (2010: 110)

This year was also marked by a dramatic shift in Sri Lanka's foreign policy as it drifted away from the Western powers and started moving closer to other Asian countries. The main reason for such a shift was that while the Western powers linked their economic arrangements as well as relations with basic human rights and questioned Sri Lanka on war crimes, the others kept these at a distance. They did not link their economic and political ties with the 'internal issues' of Sri Lanka (ibid.: 107).

Finally, Eelam War IV ended on 18 May 2009, with the Army gaining control of the last bit of territory held by the LTTE and with the death of the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. The final few days of the war in the North saw very heavy fighting and led to Sri Lankan forces being accused of war crimes, which were denied by the government. Some 300,000 Tamil civilians who were trapped inside the war zone and prevented from escaping by the LTTE were caught in the cross-fire during the final phase of the war. As noted by Uyangoda, "The Rajapksa administration continued its aggressively defensive diplomatic policy toward the West in the latter half of 2009. On a number of occasions, it reacted angrily to U.N., EU and Canadian attempts to send envoys to Sri Lanka to report on the human rights and humanitarian conditions"[78] (2010: 108).

Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora's Response to Eelam War IV

During the final phase of the war, the army made no difference between the LTTE cadres and Tamil civilians and took the opportunity of the war to eliminate the Tamils once and for all. The LTTE on the other hand allegedly made innocent Tamils their shield against the army. Hence, the diaspora felt that its people back in Sri Lanka had nowhere to go and it was the diaspora's responsibility to save them from the alleged genocide that was being committed by the army.

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[78] For instance, in June 2009 Bob Rae, a leading Canadian politician, was deported back to Canada immediately upon arriving at the Colombo airport. Government officials also entered into a bitter public controversy with British Foreign Secretary David Miliband over humanitarian issues, and Human Rights Commissioner Navnithan Pillai was at the receiving end of repeated criticism by Sri Lankan government officials over similar matters.

In 2006, with the resumption of military confrontations between the army and the LTTE, hostilities on the island escalated. In the initial years the diaspora community continued raising its voice in favour of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In August 2006, when the army bombed an orphanage school,[79] where a number of girls were receiving first-aid training, the diaspora political activism took another turn and they became the first to raise their voice against the state (Nandakumar 2011: 7). According to Nandakumar,

> There was an outcry of grief from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community, who along with the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, held memorial events in their respective countries. This solidarity between the Tamils on the island and those abroad has remained resilient since the formation of the diaspora and has been strengthened by travel, communications and interaction during the ceasefire between 2002 and 2006. Events such as this and 'Pongu Thamil'[80] (Tamil uprising) occurred simultaneously among the Tamils in Sri Lanka and across the world, reaffirming the bond that bound the Tamil nation together despite location (ibid.)

Previous protests had seen many recent migrant youths participating but during Eelam War IV, a new generation of Tamils also joined the efforts of supporting the Tamil Eelam. As stated earlier, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora was born out of the events of 1983 primarily. Hence, by the time Eelam War IV started, these people were householders in their host countries. Many of these had also got the citizenship in their host countries by 2006. This newer generation of Tamils came forward in support of their people but in a different way than their parents and grandparents. They preferred an attempt to explore the route of negotiation with the GoSL rather than blindly supporting the armed movement of the LTTE (ICG 2010).

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[79] Known as Chencolai attack, it marked the death of 55 school girls and staff. The government claimed that they targeted an LTTE training facility, but UNICEF and SLMM confirmed that the target was an orphanage. This attack was the beginning of the steady increase in violence and aggressiveness the army executed against the Tamil people.

[80] Pongu Tamil (Tamil Uprising) is an event that is held in support of 'Tamils' right to self-determination' and 'Tamil traditional homeland'. Pongu Tamil was first organised in Jaffna in January 2001 by students of Jaffna University in response to alleged disappearances, mass graves and abuses under the government's military rule and was designed as a peaceful protest. In recent years some members of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora have also picked up on the notion and it has become an annual event in the countries they reside in. In 2008, the event was held in New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, Italy, South Africa, France, Australia, England and Canada (TamilNet 6 March 2009).

Having been brought to a new country in their early age, or being born in a Western society itself, the second generation of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has imbibed its host country's values and traditions, speak its host country's language with fluency and has been living according to its host state's lifestyle. The second generation diaspora members remain less hesitant as compared to their parents and elders. They consider themselves a native of their host country and are fully aware of their rights and duties towards their host society. However, this has not made them forget about their Tamil roots and origin. Being conscious about their Tamil identity and also connecting themselves to their host country's laws has enabled them to bring a new dynamics to the Tamil struggle all over the world. In this context, Emmanuel Jesuthasan opines, "They have sympathy but there is a disconnect between the parents and their children. Our institutions are mostly set up by the older generation and hardly any newer generation comes to the meetings held by these organisations and institutions. Our goal remains the same but the paths differ" (Personal interview, London, 19 March 2016).

Like the older generation of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, the younger generation is also heterogeneous. While a faction has been deeply influenced and convinced by the LTTE, another faction remains exclusive in its ideas of having justice on the ground. Also, there are perceptions that the younger generation is not well mobilised and focused on the Tamil issues as they are preoccupied with their own life ambitions. The older generation remained united in worrying about its struggle and its future as it agreed that it had failed to bring mobilisation among its own children to motivate them to carry forward the Tamil struggle after it. In the annual meeting of Tamils for Labour held in Portcullis House, London, on 11 April 2016 (attended by the researcher), various MPs and prominent members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community came forward to address the issue of the lesser activism of the second-generation diaspora. Keith Vaz[81] suggested at the event, "The next generation in important. Remind them about the struggle that we have been into and enable them to play a full part and remember their history and culture."

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[81] Keith Vaz is an Indian-origin British MP from the Labour Party and fully supports the Tamils in Sri Lanka. He has been among the prominent voices in the Labour Party to raise the issue of the injustice done to the Tamils in Sri Lanka by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Thus, during Eelam War IV, the Sri Lankan Tamils abroad were having dual responsibilities: (i) raising their voice in support of their kin group in their homeland; and (ii) mobilising the diaspora community itself, particularly the youth, in order to ensure the continuity of the Tamil struggle. In order to raise their voice on behalf of their ethnic kin group in Sri Lanka and bring their plight to global attention, the diaspora members did the following:

a) lobbied their host governments in order to bring about international pressure on the Sri Lankan government to stop the war against the Tamils;

b) organised protests and demonstrations to raise awareness among their host country's population about the injustice that was done to their kin group back in Sri Lanka;

c) made efforts to shape the views of their host government as well as the host country's population about matters and issues in Sri Lanka.

For ensuring the continuity of their struggle, the diaspora had a different course of actions: (i) mobilising the Tamil diaspora towards the formation of an opinion about its homeland; and (ii) investing in Sri Lanka with a view towards shaping the political structure and help justify the Tamil demand. These strategies are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

- **Lobbying the Host Governments**

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's support to the LTTE in the aftermath of 9/11 was declared illegal as most of its host countries had banned/proscribed the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. In order to prove that the diaspora were not a threat to the host country's security and to gain the identity of an 'insurgent movement', it was necessary for them to pressurise their host government to lift the ban from the LTTE as well as ask the Sri Lankan government to stop the war and save the innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka (ICG 2010).

In order to lobby their host government the diaspora members needed to assert their strong position in their host societies, which they managed to do by increasing participation in the host land's electoral politics.

The main agenda of the diaspora community focused on getting the expatriate Tamils elected to the political offices and using electoral clout and money to influence policymakers in its host societies. There was increased participation of the expatriates in the British political and social system. For instance, D. Paul Sathianesan has been serving as the Labour Councillor from East Ham in London. Janani Jananayagam emerged as a prominent independent candidate in the June 2009 European Parliamentary elections, after receiving over 50,000 votes, which was more than the combined vote for all the other independent candidates. Jananayagam is a banker and spokesperson for Tamils Against Genocide (TAG) (BBC News report 9 June 2009).

According to the ICG (2010: 15), for the past several years, Tamil diaspora organisations like the British Tamil Forum (BTF) and Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) have organised Tamil votes for parliamentary candidates sympathetic to their cause. The population of the Tamil diaspora in some countries has been so dense that it becomes almost impossible for politicians seeking election to ignore the Tamil issues in Sri Lanka. The British MPs Joan Ryan and Siobhain McDonagh have got significant support of the Tamil diaspora (Information collected during the field visit to London).

The effect of the Tamil community on British politics has been so significant that immediately after the commencement of Eelam War IV, the British government cautioned the then Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa to opt for a 'bold step for achieving peace'. The Times of India reported that the British foreign office minister Kim Howells has gone upto the extent of issuing a warning to Colombo during a special parliamentary adjournment debate requested by MPs under the peer pressure of the diasporic demonstrations and protests. They were anxious about the deteriorating situation after fighting between government troops and LTTE militants escalated in recent weeks. This move of the British government came just hours after UK MPs, members of the European Parliament and leading politicians across party lines met members of the British Tamil community to discuss the plight of their friends and relatives in the embattled north and east of Sri Lanka (*The Times of India*, 19 January 2008).

As stated by Kandiah,

> We (Tamils for Labour) lobbied the British politicians to do something about the war in Sri Lanka. It was our continuous effort that there were visits from David Miliband to Sri Lanka during the final war in the initial 2009. The visit was made to pressurise the Sri Lankan state through exercising the soft power and stop the war which was claiming a large number of Tamil lives (Personal interview, London, 23 March 2016).

As the war escalated, the Sri Lankan Tamils abroad became more and more frustrated at the perceived lack of action by the international powers. There were several protests against the resumption of hostilities all over the world but the majority of protests were carried out in the United Kingdom.

- **Raising Awareness among the Host Country's Local Population**

In the United Kingdom, there were several protests during Eelam War IV outside Downing Street, Parliament Square, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Hyde Park, attracting thousands of people. The Tamils in the UK gathered, shouted slogans and held signs, urging the British government to intervene and save innocent lives. Through the several protests[82] and demonstrations the diaspora members got an opportunity to create awareness among the local population in their host country about the atrocities that were borne by their kin group in Sri Lanka.

Various forms of protests and demonstrations were carried out at several places around the world. These protests were carried out in different forms such as processions, roadblocks, etc. These protests also witnessed a number of hunger strikes all across the globe. More extreme form of protest ended up in acts of self-immolation and other forms of suicide.

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[82] "When it was discovered that the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse was to visit the United Kingdom, just a few weeks later, a mass protest was organised. As the situation in the Tamil homeland deteriorated, the numbers attending the protests grew, with over thousands of people of all ages, from the elderly with walking sticks to babies in prams, attending the demonstration outside the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. The eight hour protest saw slogans chanted through megaphones and placards displayed with pictures of Tamil civilians that had been massacred and scenes from the war. Also a signed petition was handed over to the then Prime Minister Tony Blair." (Nandakumar 2011: 7-8)

(i) *Holding processions and roadblocks*

Many scholars have termed this way of protest as non-violent civil disobedience, as the diaspora remained calm and their main motive remained to be a peaceful protest demonstration (TamilNet 19 April 2009).

As a part of the protests the diaspora members used to rally around in major parts of the city and expressed their frustration with their host government as well as the Sri Lankan government. The evenings were marked by a greater number of protestors. They used to stay for the entire night or until some concrete actions were taken by the international community against the Sri Lankan state. Banners were held which condemned the act of the Sri Lankan government as well as appealed to the international community to not keep numb on the killing of innocent people.

These rallies and protests were also marked by the hoisting of the Tamil Eelam flag and slogans were shouted appealing for help by men, women and children. There were in some instances some clashes[83] with the authorities but these clashes could not lower the enthusiasm of the demonstrators (Nandakumar 2011: 10).

The intensity of the protests sidelined all the differences within the diaspora community itself. According to Nandakumar,

> Regardless of the differences in the political views of individuals within the Tamil diaspora, they all banded together to make a stand against the killing of civilians in Sri Lanka. They were united in their grief and outrage. The frequency of the roadblocks was increasing day by day and it had so much impact that Parliament Square in London was now being called Eelam Square by some (ibid.).

A most prominent demonstration that witnessed thousands of Sri Lankan Tamils on the streets of London started on 6 April 2009 and lasted for 73 days. The

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[83] *"For instance, in the United Kingdom, when the Tamil diaspora protested and hoisted the Tamil Eelam national flag at Parliament Square, the police considered it as illegal because under the UK Terrorism Act the Tamil Eelam flag was considered as the LTTE symbol and hence, it was banned. This drew a sharp criticism among the diaspora, who stood by the fact that it was not the symbol of the LTTE but the symbol of an independent Tamil Eelam, and by hoisting the flag they meant to support the cause of their independent Eelam. The ban on the LTTE was itself something that many protestors disagreed with and they called for the ban to be lifted. The failure of the authorities to understand the distinction between a national flag and symbol of the LTTE made these diaspora isolated and strengthened their resolve even further."* (TamilNet 21 June 2009)

demonstrators covered the entire Parliament Square and the Westminster roads. The protestors continuously expressed their outrage at the ongoing genocide by the Sri Lankan government and the silence of the international community over it. "The number of protesters varied over the 73 days from a handful to more than 15,000 as organisers called in support via text message and website posts" (BBC News 17 June 2009; The Guardian 6 April 2009). Kandiah says, "We tried to highlight things that didn't go well in Sri Lanka. The Western politics has been very receptive and they listened to us"[84] (Personal interview, London, 23 March 2016).

In Canada in March 2009 the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members formed a human chain which was approximately 7 km long. People wore armbands and held placards which had pictures of casualties in the war zones of Sri Lanka (Baser and Swain 2010: 55; Taylor 2009). Another significant demonstration in Canada was the blockage of Gardiner Expressway in May 2009, when thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil expatriates gathered and blocked the six-lane traffic for six hours. They blamed the Canadian government for not exploring its full capacity to influence the Sri Lankan state and bring the war to a halt (George 2011: 460; Ashutosh 2013: 203).

The strength and support gained by such an extensive protest worked as a catalyst for the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in various other countries to come forward and show their solidarity with the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In Norway, the Tamil Youth Organisation (TYO) organised a meeting in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and handed over a memorandum to Raymond Johansen, the Deputy Foreign Minister, and Jon Hanssen-Bauer, the special Peace Envoy to Sri Lanka.

The Swiss Tamil Forum, a confederation of 26 Tamil organisations, held a procession in Geneva and handed over a memorandum to Philip D. O'Brien, the Regional Director, UNICEF. More than 3000 people, including many schoolchildren took part in the 1.5 km long procession, which started at the Geneva Main railway station at 3.00 p.m. and ended at the UNICEF Head Office.

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[84] Senthil Kandiah is the founder of the British Tamil Forum (BTF) and currently serving as the Chair to Tamils for Labour, an important pressure group which supports the Labour Party in the British political system. He migrated from Sri Lanka in 1982 to pursue higher studies but due to the war could not return.

Sixty-one schoolgirls, wearing white blouses signifying their dead counterparts and with their mouths tied with black bands, led the procession, holding candles. Well-known human rights activists, Rev. Fr. Immanuel and C.V. Kirubaharan from the International Tamil Human Rights Organisation, handed over a memorandum and explained about the unjust situations in Sri Lanka (TamilNet 19 April 2009).

Diaspora Tamils around the world held protest marches and vigils to condemn the aerial attacks of the Sri Lankan Air Force (SLAF) that reportedly killed innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka. The participants urged the international community to intervene to stop the atrocities of the Sri Lankan armed forces and paramilitaries against Tamils in the Northeast (TamilNet 19 April 2009). According to Nandakumar,

> There were no communications between the protestors in their respective cities, but a sense of solidarity guided their actions. A decision had been made in the hearts and minds of the Tamil diaspora that injustice was being done to their people in their homeland and they needed to take action for them. The spontaneity of the protests in London mobilised the global Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora into action (Nandakumar 2011: 11).

A remarkable thing about the roadblocks organised by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members was that they were organised by the leadership of the younger generation. While the protestors appealed to the people in their host country and the host government for support, they also kept apologising for causing traffic jams and disrupting the regular routine of their host society. Eventually, they did succeed in grabbing the attention of the national as well as international media.

Another attempt where the diaspora youth came to take a lead role was when they 'took to the streets of London Saturday in a 'walking and talking' campaign, wearing prominent yellow aprons which read 'Stop Genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka' on the front side and 'Free Tamil Eelam', with the map of Tamil Eelam on the back' (TamilNet, 12 October 2008).

(ii) *Acts of self-immolation*

In the first instance of self-immolation, at least eight people in India immolated themselves, including a family man and a worker of the ruling Congress Party. In the January 2009 incident, 26-year-old K. Muthukumar doused himself in petrol

and set himself on fire as an act of protest against the Sri Lankan government and the failure of the Indian government to save the Eelam Tamils. Despite not being directly associated with any Tamil outfit, his last message to the doctors and the police was to convey to the Tamils in Sri Lanka about his sacrifice. "Muthukumar's death sparked off a series of immolations, mainly in India, but also in Malaysia" (*The Hindu* 30th January 2009; TamilNet 29 January 2009, 30 January 2009).

In Malaysia, a Tamil man of Sri Lankan origin immolated himself, calling on US President Barack Obama to stop Colombo's war. 27-year-old Raja, an Eelam Tamil, living in Malaysia for three years, set himself on fire, leaving a note in his diary saying, "I am burning myself to death resting my hopes on global Tamils to save the Eezham Tamils. I plead American President Barack Obama to bring in a ceasefire in Sri Lanka" (TamilNet 8 February 2009).

A British Tamil, Murugathasan Varnakulasingham, set himself on fire in front of a United Nations office in Geneva in March 2009. Murugathasan was a student and had gone to Switzerland to protest against the Sri Lankan military offensive against the Tamils in Sri Lanka. His suicide letter read, "I decided to sacrifice my life ... The flames over my body will be a torch to guide you through the liberation path". There were also reports of at least two more attempts outside Downing Street in London later that year, which were stopped by the local police in time (BBC News 7 May 2009).

The acts of self-immolation were done by young Tamils who had been doing well in their lives. Yet their feelings for their homeland and their people drove them to take such a drastic step. Nandakumar notes:

> The impact of these events sent shockwaves throughout the diaspora, with thousands attending Varnakulasingham's funeral. However, later on when their host governments failed to take some concrete actions despite the self-immolation acts of the diaspora, the Tamil diaspora came to realise that the people had given their lives in vain, spurring tremendous frustration among the Tamil people (Nandakumar 2011: 8-9).

(iii) *Boycott campaigns*

Tamil activists from Washington D.C. metro area and suburbs engaged in a Boycott Sri Lanka campaign. They focused their attention on the Gap and Banana

Republic stores as part of the campaign organised by the United States Tamil Political Action Committee (USTPAC) and the No To Sri Lanka teams. Many people crossed the state border to Virginia to participate in the protest. The protestors made certain that all receptive customers were given a leaflet explaining the objective of the boycott. The young age of the participants got better receptivity from the shoppers. They opted for effective ways to send their message to the big-label companies, including Gap, Banana Republic, and Nike that "ethical shoppers would not tolerate companies doing business with the governments that are gross human rights violators". The campaign group continued to target Gap and Banana Republic in different locations later on also (ICG 2010: 16; TamilNet 21 December 2011).

The 'boycott campaigns' of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, not only made the customers and clients aware of the conditions on Sri Lanka, they also encouraged them to refrain from buying anything having a tag of 'Made in Sri Lanka'. They posited that the income was going to the Sri Lankan state and was resulting in massive disruptions in the Tamil regions in the island, and hence, contributing to the sad plight of the Tamils in the region. "Many young shoppers were horrified to learn that part of the money earned from garments sale funds the military that has been committing atrocities against the Tamils in Sri Lanka" (ICG 2010: 16).

According to *TamilNet*,

> The main motive behind these efforts of the Tamil diaspora was to convey a unified message that by conducting business with Sri Lanka's apparel manufacturing industry, both the seller and the buyer indirectly funded a brutal regime that was responsible for doing possible war crimes, and was holding more than 100,000 Tamil civilians in military supervised camps with little or no freedom of movement. The response from the public was very encouraging. Garment exports to the U.S. declined by 19.5 percent, contributing to overall Sri Lanka's export earnings from garments and textiles to decline by 4.9 per cent to US dollars 241 million by the mid of 2009 (TamilNet 19 April 2009).

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community in the United Kingdom also appealed to the international community to boycott Air Lanka, the Sri Lankan airline and requested their fellow people not to choose Sri Lanka as a holiday destination. The movement was led by the British Tamil Forum (British Tamil Forum, Press Release, 15 January 2008). The campaign gained the support of different Tamil

diaspora communities from different countries, particularly Canada, Australia and India.

(iv) *Hunger strikes*

As with the protests and marches, the youth took the lead in the hunger strikes too. Many supporters compared the efforts of the hunger strikers to that of Lieutenant-Colonel Thileepan,[85] a Tamil Tiger commander, who sacrificed his life for his countrymen while fasting in 1987. The initiative was once again taken by the British Tamil community when two men began a hunger strike in London in April 2009, wowing not to take food or water until their demands were met. Sivatharsan Sivakumaraval, 20, and Prarameswaran Subramaniam, 28, sat on hunger strike demanding immediate action of their host government to stop the genocide in Sri Lanka. Soon they were joined by various Tamil and non-Tamil sympathisers and London once again witnessed a huge crowd in front of Parliament House. Their continuous agitation pressurised the British government[86] to agree to take them to the United Nations as part of special envoy of the British government and be part of talks on the Sri Lankan issue. However, both vowed to return to their fast if the meetings proved unfruitful (*The Guardian* 11 April 2009, 22 April 2009; *Independent* 9 April 2009).

David Parajasingham, a spokesman for the BTF, said that he was concerned that the hunger strike would spread. "If our demands for the cessation of the genocide in Sri Lanka are not met, I fear this protest will escalate by others joining them", he said. "In our culture, when people do this, they follow it through. They are not afraid to die" (*The Guardian* 11 April 2009). His words turned into reality soon when the Tamil diaspora all over the world eventually joined in this effort, sitting on hunger strikes to pressurise the international community and governments to open their eyes and look at the genocide that was happening in Sri Lanka.

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[85] Thileepan, a political-wing leader of Jaffna district for the LTTE began his hunger strike on 15 September 1987 demanding of the Indian government to take the Tamil issue seriously and make sure that the Tamils were not left at the mercy of the Sri Lankan state (*Tamil Guardian* 25 September 2015).

[86] Simon Hughes, a Liberal Democrat MP who has been involved in negotiations between the Tamils and the police, said that one of the men had agreed to suspend his hunger strike in order to travel to the UN in New York with Labour MP Des Browne, the government's special envoy for Sri Lanka (*The Guardian* 10 April 2009).

In Zurich, four Tamil youths undertook a fast. More than a thousand diaspora Tamils of all ages participated in the protests across the country, with many travelling to Zurich to sit with the hunger strikers. In Ottawa, six Tamils, in the age groups of 34 to 67 years, also went on a hunger strike (*Tamil Guardian,* 14 April 2009). In Paris, four Tamil youth under the age of 30 sat on fast unto death on 9 April 2009, near the Wall for Peace. They demanded immediate action on the part of the entire international community to impose ceasefire and stop the genocide of Tamils by the Sri Lankan state, immediate provisions for making the humanitarian assistance reach the people trapped in the 'safe zone', a cessation to attacks on civilians using chemical weapons by the Sri Lankan army and a lifting of the proscription of the LTTE. Day and night, thousands from the Tamil diaspora in France, including mothers, children and elderly, sat with the fasters, facing lashing rain and the biting cold. Members of the Tamil Youth Organisation (TYO) in France distributed pamphlets describing Sri Lanka government's genocide of the Tamils to the tourists who visited the Wall for Peace monument from all over the world (*Tamil Guardian,* 14 April 2009).

The hunger strikers demanded that food and medical aid should be allowed to reach the civilians immediately. The diaspora organised a ship carrying humanitarian supplies to North-East Sri Lanka. The main demand of the hunger strikers was immediate and permanent ceasefire. They demanded the UN to conduct a referendum on Tamil sovereignty if the international community had any doubts about the wish of the Eelam Tamils and that members of the Tamil diaspora, who at one point of time were forced to leave their homeland due to the military aggression carried out by the Sri Lankan state, should be given the right to vote in the referendum (ICG 2010: 21).

- **Mobilising the Tamil Diaspora for Creating Opinions about their Homeland**

The main aspect of the diaspora activities remained to keep mobilising the Tamil diaspora all around the world so as to have a firm ground against the Sri Lankan state. It was realised that until the diaspora Tamils were in a significant number, the international community would not pay heed to their demands. Hence, mobilising and encouraging the diaspora Tamils was an important undertaking.

(i)   Use of cyberspace for gathering support for an independent eelam

Cyberspace was used by the newer generation of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora as a powerful tool to gain a firm ground against the Sri Lankan state. The internet became a primary source of information and communication and provided a connection between the diaspora and the Tamils of Sri Lanka. This wave of nationalism was more evident in those Tamils who had never been to their homeland but still their connections remained as strong as the first-generation Tamil diaspora.

A website known as 'Thesamnet' was formed in 2007 to highlight the instances of oppression in Sri Lanka by the army. This site also began to function later on as a rallying point where Tamils with different political opinions could share their views on issues such as recognition of a historic Tamil homeland, the Tamil nation, etc. (Vimalarajah et al. 2011).

(ii)   Use of Facebook

"Facebook was, and still is, one of the main sources of information and ground of activity for many second-generation activists. As a social networking site with over 350 million active users, it is very popular among many of the second-generation Tamils" (Nandakumar 2011: 12). They posted news updates as they updated their status, which alerted their friends to current events. Another trend that emerged during the early phase of Eelam War IV was the use of Facebook profile photos.[87] These people adopted the photos of the civilian casualties as their main profile picture, so that anyone who visited their page would have an idea about what was going on in Sri Lanka. One hugely popular image bore the slogan 'Stop Sri Lanka's Genocide of Tamils'.[88] Facebook 'events' also played a vital

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[87] A profile photo is the main image displayed on any Facebook user's profile.

[88] The most famous member of the Tamil diaspora is the singer Mathangi 'Maya' Arulpragasam, known as M.I.A., who famously in her first album, 'Arular,' named after her father who was involved in Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka: criticized the Sri Lankan Government for shelling the Tamil areas in the northern Sri Lanka. Her song 'Like P. L. O. I don't Surrender' was also perceived as her support to the Tamil struggle against the Sri Lankan government. M.I.A. explained to her 31,000 followers on Twitter why many Tamils outside Sri Lanka wanted the struggle for a separate Tamil state to continue, writing: "The war in Sri Lanka is not against the Tigers, it's against the Tamil people! (Lynskey 2005).

role in the organisation of the diaspora's protests, increasing the turnout, which reached 200,000 participants in the UK alone in April 2009. Another crucial property of Facebook that was used was the user groups.[89] These groups were designed to 'appeal as many as possible' and hence, were named as 'Boycott Sri Lanka Now', 'Contact your MP to stop Genocide', 'Shame Sri Lanka', etc. (ibid.: 13).

- **Shaping the Views of their Host Government as well as the Host Country's Population about Matters and Issues in Sri Lanka**

(i) *Establishing political organisations*

Tamil Youth Organisation (TYO): The TYO was created by British Tamils. It focused on mobilising and raising awareness among the British population, especially those between the ages of 16 and 30, because it was easy to convince people in the younger age group since their mindset matched that of the diaspora (Sarvendra 2011: 21). The TYO worked closely with the BTF.

Tamil Information Centre (TIC): The TIC was formed way before in 1979 with a motive to initiate advocacy and public campaigns on the Tamil issue to promote just policies and procedures by governments and international institutions; disseminate information and works of creative imagination in order to increase public knowledge on Tamil history, culture and contemporary politics; provide facilities for research, consultation, advice and community activities (http://www.tamilinfo.org).

During the fourth eelam war, TIC was also involved in lobbying the Tamil Tigers to soften their stand so as to save innocent people who were trapped in the war. Varadakumar[90] says, "As part of TIC, we tried to get to the LTTE to accept a free zone near the North camp. We demanded international protection of each and everyone who was without any arms" (Personal interview, London, 24 March 2016).

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[89] Any user on Facebook can create a group and invite people. This would help their process of spreading some information among all the people they know. For anything posted on the group's page, everybody linked to it would be notified. Also the regulator could send out messages to all its members and would keep updating the members about the latest activity and information.

[90] Varadakumar is director of TIC. He migrated from Sri Lanka in the 1980s for higher studies but due to the deteriorating conditions in the country could not return.

Tamil National Council (TNC): The major work done by this organisation was after the war, in 2010, when the referendum was held. This gave the entire international community a clear message that the Tamil nation was a necessity for the Tamils and the international community ought to support them (http://www.Tamilnet.com).

Sri Lankan Democracy Forum (SLDF): The SLDF became active during Eelam War IV in the UK and 12 other countries.[91] It stands for a global network of human rights and democracy activists committed to promote democratisation and inter-ethnic coexistence in Sri Lanka. Formed in 2002, it has been continuously campaigning for a permanent political solution that would meet the aspirations of the Tamils in Sri Lanka (http://www.tamilinfo.org).

(ii)   *Organising 'Photo Exhibition' in the British Parliament*

Formed in 2006, the British Tamil Forum was an initiative of the British Tamils. It was formed with a motive to enhance political mobilisation of both the Tamil diaspora and the British political establishment, both politicians and officials. In this attempt, 16 July 2008 marked a significant development when a photo exhibition, depicting the harsh realities from Ground Zero, i.e. the war zones of Sri Lanka, was organised by the BTF with the sponsorship of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Tamils (APPGT), in the British House of Parliament. It was also a commemoration of all the civilians who laid their lives in the 1958 riots in Sri Lanka. The event was attended by MPs of all political parties in the UK, Members of the House of Lords, former Cabinet Ministers, mayors, councillors, university students, and representatives of international and British organisations. Keith Vaz, who attended the event, stated that "in his 21 year career in politics, he had never seen a protest as large as that in London". Addressing the crowd, he challenged "the Indian High Commission to pressurise Colombo to give peace a chance" (TamilNet 12 October 2008).

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[91] At present there are people connected to the network in the following countries: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, UK, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sri Lanka, and the United States.

- **Investing in Sri Lanka with a View to Shaping the Political Structure and Help Justify the Tamil Demand**

There have been organisations focusing on the development and welfare needs of the Tamils in Sri Lanka since the time the diaspora community was formed. Many groups have engaged themselves in various ways such as by running their own orphanages, or by funding hospitals or organisations in Sri Lanka that engage in local humanitarian or development work (Berghof Peace Report 2011).

White Pigeon. White Pigeon is one of the largest and best known organisations for welfare and reconstruction work. "Initially set up to fund the provision of artificial limbs for those affected by the conflict, the organisation was also engaged in fundraising for humanitarian needs that led them to have a say in the policymaking process and in raising awareness about the humanitarian needs of the Tamil people among the non-Tamil population" (TamilNet 21 December 2010).

The Medical Institute of Tamils. MIOT was formed as a vehicle through which Tamil medical professionals could contribute their skills in their homeland during Eelam War IV.

The Tamil Health Organisation. THO was set up to develop the medical infrastructure of the Tamil areas but since May 2009 it has ceased its activities and is now focusing on the immediate humanitarian needs rather than long-term development (Berghof Peace Report 2011).

Impact of the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora Activities

During Eelam War IV, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora were highly mobilised and active in terms of raising awareness about the ground situation in the war zones of Sri Lanka. Their activities not only led the international community to get well informed about the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, but also highlighted the immense strength the diaspora as a distinct community had. Despite the fact that the diaspora's actions did manage to raise alarm in their host societies about the alleged genocide carried out by the Sri Lankan state, they could not succeed to stop the war. A leading activist from a Tamil organisation group in London claims:

During the 2009 protests on the streets of London, the pressure on the British government to pacify and assure the British Tamils was so high that the British Parliament was shut down for a week. However, this event is not talked about much due to fear of losing reputation and also due to a fear of possible 'Asian uprising' (Personal interview, London, 22 March 2016)

It was due to the large number of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members on the streets of Canada, United Kingdom, Switzerland, etc. that the West had to take a tough stand against the Sri Lankan government. The British Parliament witnessed several meetings and debates that were focused on how to deal with the Sri Lankan crisis. The British MPs were constantly pressurised by the pressure groups of the Tamil expatriates and their increased activism. In this context, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband had to make a visit to Sri Lanka in the final phase of the war just to ensure that the Sri Lankan President was pressurised to stop the war (*The Telegraph,* 29 April 2009). During this visit a serious attempt was made to look into the possibilities of making peace and ensuring safety for the Tamils who were trapped in the war zones. It was reported by *The Telegraph* on 30 April 2009 that Miliband had an altercation with the then Defence Secretary of Sri Lanka, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, in this regard.

Another powerful impact of the diaspora's activism was observed when President Mahindra Rajapaksa was forced to cancel a keynote speech in the City of London in June 2012, after concerns about the threat of large demonstrations by Tamil rights groups (*The Guardian* 6 June 2012). The effort of the Sri Lankan President to present his image as a successful leader thereby did not fructify. Rajapaksa's visit was aimed at giving a message to his enemies – especially the influential Tamil diaspora in the UK – that his way of dealing with the insurgency in Sri Lanka was justified and was acceptable to the international community. Being a strong leader might have given confidence to the President about the way the war would end (Vimalarajah et al. 2011: 21; Orjuela 2006: 442; *The Guardian* 6 June 2012).

It was the impact of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's continuous and rigorous agitation against the Sri Lankan state that despite having no media in the war zone in Sri Lanka, the actual ground situation was still made to reach the international community. The diaspora members had their own intelligence and their reports

about the war victims were correct, which made the international community realise that the war was not against terrorism but against Tamils in Sri Lanka. Also, the rallies and demonstrations around the globe enabled the second-generation diaspora to take charge of the Tamil movement.

From 2006 till mid-2009, the diaspora members had continuously raised their voices in support of their kin group in Sri Lanka but their attempts were not responded to well in time and eventually the Sri Lankan Army continued with the war until it led to the LTTE's demise in mid-2009. The war not only marked the LTTE's end but also resulted in numerous civilian casualties and displacements. The diaspora members strived to save their kin back home from the brutalities of the war, but they failed. Nonetheless, the diaspora's message left clear marks in terms of their host countries' tough attitude towards the Sri Lankan state in the aftermath of the war.

International Community's Reactions to Eelam War IV

During the onset of Eelam War IV, the international community stood in support of the Sri Lankan state on the bandwagon of the so-called war on terror, with most of these countries having already proscribed the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. However, they had their apprehensions over the way the war would proceed and whether there would be a resolution of the Tamil issue in the island. According to Uyangoda,

> India and the U.S. appeared to be reluctantly willing to back the Sri Lankan state's war against the LTTE at that time. Japan and the EU were less enthusiastic, even though each upheld the view that the LTTE had to be controlled in light of its unwillingness to explore a negotiated settlement. In contrast, China, Pakistan and Iran were more unequivocal in their economic, military and political support for the Sri Lankan government and its efforts against the LTTE (2010: 105).

But as time passed, the dominance of the Sri Lankan army was evident to all of them. Hence, gradually the support started coming from the international community to Sri Lanka in carrying out the military operation against a banned 'terrorist organisation'.

While on the one hand the international community continued to support the government's military operation, on the other hand, it kept pressurising the

government to immediately begin devolving powers in order to ensure minority rights so that such a deadly event would not recur. There were continuous attempts by various government officials of the Western states to convince the Rajapaksa administration to address the root cause of the conflict and give the Tamils their due share in the political and social space in the island. For example, within four days of the war ending, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton personally appealed to Rajapaksa over a telephonic call for 'political reconciliation' and 'speedy resettlement of nearly 300,000 displaced Tamil civilians'. Clinton also emphasised the need for 'post-conflict power sharing' with Tamils (*Tamil News Network* 21 May 2009). Similarly, the Indian Minister of External Affairs, S.M. Krishna, called on the government of Sri Lanka to look for methods to resolve the conflict in such a way as to ensure devolution of powers to all communities.[92] In the same week, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Sri Lanka to stress the urgent need for early resettlement of internally displaced Tamil civilians who were still in detention camps (Amnesty International report 2009). According to Uyangoda, the main focus of the international community immediately after the end of the war was:

  i.   To ensure early settlement of the displaced Tamil civilians.

  ii.   To bring the post-conflict restructuring process (e.g. distribution of aid and remittances received from the international community by the Sri Lankan state) under the preview of international organisations (such as the United Nations, World Bank or IMF) in order to ensure justice for all.

  iii. To ensure that such a war would not re-emerge by ensuring that proper measures were taken by the government to devolve powers to the provinces. (Uyangoda 2010: 105-106)

These concerns for the Tamil civilians emerged in almost every other country but the Sri Lankan state had a different focus at this time. It refused to consider that there was any ethnic issue left as the group raising trouble over the issue of ethnicity and demanding rights was finished and hence, along with it the demand also met its end. This was not acceptable to the international community. As a result, tensions began to develop between the Sri Lankan government and key international players, including the US, EU and the UN over allegations of human rights violations and war crimes.

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[92] S.M. Krishna called on the government to 'now address the root cause of the problem of Tamils that will include devolution of powers to all communities' (*Daily Mirror* 11 August 2010).

The Sri Lankan state faced severe criticism by the international community of having committed war crimes against innocent Tamil civilians. Amnesty International accused the LTTE also of breaking international law by using civilians as buffers against the army. A researcher for the organisation stated that there were cases where militants had forced people to stay in rebel-held areas to hamper army operations. The United Nations reported that more than 20,000 civilians were killed in this recent war (UNHCR Report 2011).

In this context, there was a call for war crimes investigation by the US Ambassador, Stephen Rapp. Considering the possibilities of grave human rights violations, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) of the United Nations called for an independent, international investigation of possible war crimes committed during the last few months of the war in Sri Lanka.

A special session of the U.N. human Rights Council (UNHRC) was also held immediately after the war was over where the Sri Lankan government was asked to reply to the criticism posed by the Western states. A group of Western states – including Britain, France, Canada, Germany and Switzerland – had called this session of the UNHRC specifically to discuss allegations of civilian killings.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre of the Norwegian Refugee Council went on to report that the government of Sri Lanka was holding nearly 300,000 displaced people in military-run internment camps under questionable humanitarian conditions (TamilNet 19 April 2009).

Thus, even though the Sri Lankan state managed to claim victory over the LTTE, the way in which the victory was achieved was questioned by the majority of the countries except China. Countries like India, USA, Canada, UK, France, Switzerland, etc. advocated organising an independent international probe into the mass human rights violations done by the Sri Lankan state in the name of fighting the LTTE.

Conclusion

Like separatist movements elsewhere in the world, the armed struggle for an independent Tamil homeland was sustained for years in large part because of support from the passionate, vocal diaspora living outside the country. For years,

these communities rallied under the flag of the Tamil Tigers. However, after three phases of war and achieving nothing substantial on the ground, the diaspora came to realise that the Sri Lankan mainstream politics was not ready to give the Tamils their full rights. Also, in the wake of the 9/11 events, their continuous support to the LTTE had come under close scrutiny. Hence, the diaspora started channelling its support for a peaceful process to resolve the Tamil grievances in its homeland.

During the peace process of 2002-2006, the diaspora had high hopes from the international community as well as from both the warring parties to come up with a solution to the conflict. However, their dreams were shattered when the war broke out again in the mid-2006. Seeing the higher level of military offensive by the Sri Lankan state as well as the LTTE, the diaspora members started raising support for their kin group by focusing on human rights violations done by both the warring parties.

During the last days of Eelam War IV, there were reports that the government of Sri Lanka, on the pretext of war, had actually been carrying out genocide of Tamils. The sense of injustice and brutality provided momentum to the Tamils abroad and they started getting mobilised to protest in their respective host societies through blocking roads and making their presence felt by the people of their host country as well as the host government. The diaspora members used their own intelligence sources to get real accounts of the war victims and civilian casualties since the Sri Lankan state did not allow any media coverage of the war zones. The apprehension over the Tamils' safety and security in Sri Lanka was the sole reason for the diaspora to agitate in its host societies.

The diaspora community organised several demonstrations and protests around the globe. As the war intensified, the diaspora movements got more strength and support from various sections of their host societies. The diaspora movements aimed at exposing the hidden agenda of the Sri Lankan state of cleansing the entire Tamil population from the island in the name of the so-called war on terror. The idea that Tamils in Sri Lanka will not have a safe life until an independent homeland is created has been driving a majority of voices within the Tamil diaspora for a long time.

The diaspora community continuously raised an alarm against the brutalities exercised by the Sri Lankan army on the Tamils. It opted for various strategies to make its presence felt within the international community. There were several events of roadblocks, processions and mass protests in London, Toronto, Zurich, etc. However, the international community took too long to take note of it and could not stop the war until it ended with the defeat of the Tamil Tigers. The diaspora took even to extreme steps in order to make sure that their host governments would take some concrete action on the human rights violations done by the Sri Lankan state. The diaspora resorted to hunger strikes and acts of self-immolation. Thousands of diaspora members travelled to Geneva to protest against the silence of the international community over the injustice done to Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Apart from demonstrations and protests, the diaspora communities lobbied their host governments in order to create international pressure on the Sri Lankan state to stop the war. It was the result of their active lobbying and advocacy process that various Western countries criticised the military offensive of the Sri Lankan state and asked for a peaceful resolution. The pressure exerted by the diaspora group was such that it led the British and French Foreign Secretaries to visit Sri Lanka and appeal for a ceasefire. Not only this, an active involvement of the diaspora groups in various international forums was seen as a result of the active movements of the community on the issue of the Sri Lankan war. The diaspora was recognised as a source of information about the Tamils in Sri Lanka by the international community as a whole, barring Sri Lanka itself.

To conclude, Eelam War IV witnessed a remarkable shift in the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora's approach to its homeland conflict from being a financial backbone of the LTTE to become a pressure group advocating for the protection of the Tamils' human rights in Sri Lanka. During this phase, there was a remarkable growth in the activism of moderate and indifferent Tamil diaspora groups, who would never have been part of anything regarding their homeland, into the mainstream of the Tamil struggle. The feeling of isolation and helplessness during the final war made their homeland nationalist sentiments even stronger.

The way the war was led, the way it ended and the LTTE's destruction have deeply affected the Tamils in Sri Lanka and the Tamil diaspora members and shattered their confidence, regardless of whether they were members, sympathisers or opponents of the LTTE. Yet, their zeal to work for their kin group in Sri Lanka is still there. Since the Tamils in Sri Lanka still face hardships, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community is bound to take a role for itself to continue with the struggle in a democratic manner. This means that the Tamil diaspora would continue to be a vital element in finding a resolution to the Sri Lankan conflict, even if the Sri Lankan state refuses to recognise this fact. The Tamil diaspora's active participation in the 2009 protests not only strengthened its identity as a united Tamil entity, it has also marked the entry of a new generation that has come forward to carry on the struggle. The post-war activism of this new generation of diaspora will be crucial in the navigation towards the resolution of the Tamil issue.

CHAPTER VI

The Transnational Role of the Diaspora in

the Post-Civil War Period

Introduction

This chapter examines the role of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in post-war Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan Tamils struggled for more than two and a half decades for their independent eelam and continuously raised their voice against the state's discriminatory policies. Despite being devoid of basic facilities and development and despite being in a minority, their struggle against the state lasted for a good 30 years before it was defeated in May 2009, when the Sri Lankan Army crushed the LTTE. A major reason for the long-lasting Tamils' struggle against the powerful state has been the support from a highly mobilised and volatile Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora who has been living in various countries around the globe. Not only did the diaspora provide funds for the armed struggle during the first two decades of the war, it also helped the Tamils in Sri Lanka to articulate their demands and provided political guidance. However, after witnessing the continuous destruction and displacement for the past 30 years, and seeing the Tamils in Sri Lanka still strive for their basic rights, the diaspora community has started shifting its approach from financing the armed struggle to campaigning for Tamil rights through democratic means. In this context, this chapter will analyse its changed approach towards the Tamil issue particularly in the post-war scenario.

The brutal war came to an end in mid-2009, when the LTTE was crushed by the Sri Lankan military. An enormously large number of civilians were killed in the name of the so-called war on terror, waged by the Government of Sri Lanka. Such ending of the war left a remarkable impact on the mindsets of the Sri Lankan

Tamils in the island as well as within the diaspora community. Since the LTTE's military defeat in May 2009, the diaspora has been in crisis, and has been continuously striving towards its re-formation and remobilisation in a much more difficult political context, yet having larger credibility at the global level.

According to the ICG (2010), the post-war era has seen that the members of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora have been in a state of anger, depression and denial[93] and have been struggling to adapt to the LTTE's defeat . The diaspora community had always been a heterogeneous community which remained divided on supporting the LTTE's war tactics. But this division became clearer during Eelam War IV, when the brutalities from both the LTTE and the Sri Lankan military were at their highest and resulted in a large number of civilian casualties. The Sri Lankan diaspora community witnessed the emergence of several factions within itself: the one supporting the LTTE, making futile attempts at reviving it; and the other faction upholding the view for a non-violent and political solution which would address the basic root of the conflict. However, the aim of all the factions within the diaspora community remained the same: their demand for Tamil rights, as most of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora still believe that the Tamil rights will never come to reality as long as there is Sinhalese rule in the island.

As of 2017, it has been eight years since the war ended, but the political issues still remain unaddressed and the insecurities among the minority Tamils of Sri Lanka persist. The Tamil diaspora has been a major force in keeping those demands alive.

In the post-war scenario, the political discourse within the diaspora community as well as in the island nation has undergone a dramatic shift. Now the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has developed a totally different agenda, which emphasises more on the current conditions of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and ways to uplift them. Despite the fact that they have been partially successful in overcoming the shock of the LTTE's demise, their activism has taken a different path and pace to achieve justice for Tamils in Sri Lanka.

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[93] Initially, a large number of the diaspora community continued to deny that the LTTE's chief Vellupillai Prabhakaran was dead. They dismissed the images of his corpse as propaganda of the Sri Lankan state. They also continued to deny that the LTTE recruited children forcibly, and targeted innocent civilians (ICG Report 2010).

The diaspora's role as advocates of human rights is becoming more prominent in their role as peace-builders. Their funding capabilities characterised the war for long, and their role in investing in rehabilitation and post-war reconstruction in the island nation cannot be ignored. An oft-quoted global analysis by the World Bank is, "diaspora activities do not increase the risk of new homeland conflicts nor lengthen their duration, but rather raise the level of living conditions in their homeland following a peace agreement" (Collier and Hoeffler 2004: 563).

Either way, this implies that diaspora activities greatly impact post-accord situations. For international organisations and agencies involved in this context, the central prerequisite remains to maintain lasting peace, the key to which is reconciliation. If peace is established through reconciliation, it would ensure that after the peace-builders leave, the population will prefer to build a life together rather than return to war. The diaspora's investments and initiatives can prove to be a good source of post-war reconstruction and redevelopment, which can contribute towards creating various opportunities for the war-affected population to get engaged with. Taken together, reconciliatory attitudes and transnational activities may be conceived of as the peace-building capability of the diaspora, and both are crucial in order to gauge the impact they have on their homeland politics (World Bank 2006).

Post-war Developments in Sri Lanka

The three decades long war came to an end in May 2009, when the Sri Lankan security forces defeated the Tamil militants. The war saw brutal violence from both the LTTE and the Sri Lankan army and claimed a large number of civilian lives as well. "Estimates range from 20,000-75,000 killed in the final assault, but a government estimate put the figure at about 9,000" (BBC News 9 January 2015). The post-war situation has been even worse for the Tamils, still captured in various internment camps, who have to survive 'appalling conditions', as mentioned by Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General in his report (Report of Secretary-General's Internal Review panel on United Nations Actions on Sri Lanka, November 2012).

The developments in Sri Lanka since May 2009 have presented new negative realities (Sahadevan 2013). Post-war Sri Lanka has been under two leaderships:

Mahinda Rajapaksa regime from 2009 till 2015 and Maithripala Sirisena regime since January 2015. While there have been several claims from the latter about being more accommodative and sensitive to the minority population in the island nation, the reality is that both have been equally apprehensive and hesitant in searching for a political solution to the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka. Political developments in Sri Lanka after the war ended have revolved around certain agendas, which are as follows:

(1) Vesting the Presidency with supreme powers

In the post-war scenario, there were two options available to the then Rajapaksa government. The first was to work on reconciliation with the Tamils; and secondly, to consolidate the regime through both parliamentary as well as presidential elections of 2010. President Rajapaksa's political agenda preferred consolidation of his regime over reconciliation with the Tamils (Sahadevan 2013; Uyangoda 2010: 131). In this context, the 18th amendment to the constitution was debated and enacted within four months of the end of the war. This amendment lifted the limitation on the number of terms of the President and vested the office with supreme powers over the legislature, executive and even judiciary. The amendment also ended the system of Provincial Police and Public Service Commission without having any debate or consultation on it with the Provincial Councils (Sultana 2010). "The dominant thinking within the regime premised on the assumption that there remained no minority issues that needed to be addressed on a politically urgent basis because the LTTE had been crushed" (Uyangoda 2010: 133).

(2) Increased militarisation of North Sri Lanka and larger displacement of the civilians

The immediate aftermath of the war has also witnessed increased displacement of the Tamil population from the war-affected areas in the name of 'de-mining' by the security forces. "The government was accused of using heavy weaponry and UN images obtained by the BBC appeared to show shelling damage in a government-designated 'safe zone' for civilians" (BBC News 9 January 2015).

(3) Denying international monitoring and humanitarian agencies involvement in humanitarian assistance

During the initial phase of rehabilitation itself in the war-affected areas, the Sri Lankan state restricted all the international humanitarian agencies and international media after they reported gross human rights abuses done by the security forces on the detainees and the people in the camps. Since the beginning of the post-war reconstruction process, the government continued to maintain that any international involvement dilutes its sovereignty and has allowed only governmental stakeholders in the process of peace-building in the island. The security forces have been given a free hand to deal with the suspect ex-LTTE combatants and others staying in various camps (Balasooriya 2012: 20). According to a Human Rights Watch report (2012),

> In May the Sri Lankan Defence Ministry held an international conference in Colombo, the capital, on defeating terrorism that gave scant attention to government abuses. In August the Defence Ministry issued its own report, conceding for the first time that government forces caused civilian deaths in the final months of the conflict, but taking no responsibility for laws of war violations and concluding peremptorily without further investigation that the deaths were the unfortunate collateral damage of war.

The government's hesitation in coming up with a political setup to meet the demands of the Tamils has continued till date, despite the fact that now it does not have to deal with the LTTE.

In 2011, a panel of experts appointed by the UN Secretary-General recommended independent international investigation to ensure that the government was implementing the recommendations of the panel in full faith. But the government continued to ignore the recommendations and never allowed any foreign investigating agency to access its war-affected areas (Human rights Watch 2013).

(4) Banning diaspora organisations

In an attempt to silence the Tamil voice in the island completely, President Rajapaksa banned the diaspora organisations on the pretext of the diaspora's connections with the LTTE. In total 16 Tamil diaspora organisations and 424 individuals were banned, including the British Tamil Forum, Canadian Tamil Congress, Global Tamil Forum, Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam, Tamil

Rehabilitation Organisation and World Tamil Movement, and Australian Tamil Congress. It was declared that any connections with these diaspora organisations would be illegal and all the properties and assets of the diaspora community or their families were frozen. Based on the recommendation of the then Defence Secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, President Mahinda Rajapaksa branded the diaspora organisations as 'foreign terrorists' and banned their entry into the island nation (Rupesinghe 2014, *Colombo Telegraph* 4 April 2014).

(5) *Continuous shrinking of liberal political space in the island nation*

The extreme supremacy of President Rajapaksa and his majoritarian party has led them to believe that reconciliation and conflict management should be managed exclusively on the terms defined by the government, and not by any external actors. This has eventually shrunken the liberal political space in the island nation. In consequence, small and ethnic minority parties, which included the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), have been weakened. "For such small parties, there remained two options: either to get absorbed by any of the two main coalitions led by UPFA and UNP respectively, or contesting the elections independently, which would in turn lead to its own shattering" (Uyangoda 2010: 131-137).

A further attempt at confining liberal space in the war-affected areas was made in the form of establishing an internal investigating committee named as "Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Committee" (LLRC) in May 2010. While the main task of this committee was to investigate the reasons for the failure of the CFA of 2002 and look into the reasons why the country had to face the war, it was also supposed to investigate the allegations put forth by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora and the international community of war crimes and human rights abuses during the final phase of the war. All it did was to clear the military of allegations that it had deliberately attacked civilians. According to Human Rights Watch,

> The government has failed to conduct credible investigations into alleged war crimes by security forces, dismissing the overwhelming body of evidence as LTTE propaganda. The … LLRC, characterised as a national accountability mechanism, is deeply flawed, does not meet international standards for such commissions, and has failed to systematically inquire into alleged abuses (2012).

(6) Attacks on freedom of expression

In 2012, the state continued with the curbing of freedom of expression and enforcing disappearances. With the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) getting re-enacted in other forms of repressive powers, the government continued to make arbitrary arrests and detentions on the pretext of 'threat to national security' (Hoglund and Orjuella 2012: 93). Any anti-government reporting is not allowed and the offices and persons doing such acts have been either killed or have disappeared. There were attacks on *Sri Lanka Mirror*, a news website, and the editor of the *Sunday Leader* (newspaper) Lasantha Wickrematunge was killed. Attacks on reporters who hail the UNHRC and denounce the government have continued. According to a report of Human Rights Watch for 2013:

> Local rights groups reported arbitrary arrests, new enforced disappearances, abductions, and killings in the north and the east in 2012. In April, nearly 220 Tamil men and women in the Trincomalee area were arrested and held for several days without charge in military detention camps. Tamils who returned to Sri Lanka, including deported asylum seekers, reported being detained and accused of having links to the LTTE or taking part in anti-government activities abroad. A number reported being tortured by the Central Intelligence Department and other security forces. On the basis of these reports, courts in the United Kingdom granted injunctions to stop the deportation of more than 30 Tamil asylum seekers.

(7) Attempts to change the demography of Northern Sri Lanka

The government has continuously deployed its military heavily in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. The Sinhalese from the South are also being induced to resettle in the Northern region. While the Tamil farmers and fishermen are stranded in various camps, their land and their houses have been occupied by the security forces and are being transferred to the Sinhalese. "The larger scheme of land occupation and the deprivation of a home and lack of basic rights have resulted in credible concerns of land grabs and changes to ethnic demographics for electoral purposes" (Centre for policy Alternatives report 2016). The IDPs and affected communities have been becoming more and more vulnerable as they are unable to return to their land.

The regime change in Sri Lanka in January 2015 gave hopes to the Tamils and the international community about bringing significant changes in the Sri Lankan

political system. But on the issue of delivering transnational justice and investigating the alleged war crimes under international supervision, the Sirisena administration has not been acting any differently from the Rajapaksa regime. It seems to be equally apprehensive of international involvement and continues to emphasise on domestic enquiry. Provisions are meant to be passed on paper but in reality the establishment of requisite institutions is awaited. For example, the legislation on the Office on Missing Persons (OMP) has been approved by Parliament in August 2016 but till date there has been no sign of this office coming into reality. Similarly, despite the government's promises to enact legislation to correspond with the Convention on Disappearances, there is nothing publicly available to indicate that there is tangible progress in this area (Centre for Policy Alternatives report 2017).

Protestors are not met with violence, but this does not imply that criticism of the government is acceptable. Instead, there seem to be other tactics used to control protests and demonstrators such as obtaining court orders preventing protests and the government attempting to limit areas where protests can take place (ibid.).

On the issue of land grabs and resettlement of IDPs, the Sirisena administration has made some progress in ensuring land releases in the North and East of Sri Lanka. "According to the Secretary of the Department of Prisons Reforms, Rehabilitation and Resettlement, V. Sivagnanasothy, 1000 acres of land from Jaffna and 500 acres from Kilinochchi have been released for resettlement" (*Daily News* 31 December 2015). Official statements indicate that more land is likely to be released, though no details are publicly available. Thousands of acres still remain occupied.

Sri Lanka seems to be standing at the same crossroads where it was three decades ago, regarding post-war peace-building and ethnic cohesion and inclusive development. According to Keerawella,

> The key issue that Sri Lanka has yet to address is how to transform the hard-fought military victory over the LTTE into a foundation for sustainable peace on the basis of democratic inclusion and justice. The end of a civil war does not necessarily mean the end of an ethno-political conflict; rather it redefines the conflict in conditions of no-war, thereby necessitating new strategies for post-civil war peace-building and reconciliation. The transition from conflict to post-conflict society is long

and a complex process which encompasses short-term priorities and long-term goals which must be decided with a clear political vision as to the direction of post-conflict society that the state should take. By redefining the conditions of the ethno-political conflict in a no-war context, the military defeat of the LTTE has opened a new historical space to find a durable solution to the ethno-political conflict (2013:7).

As proposed by Galtung (1969), mere absence of war does not imply the establishment of peace and harmony until the root causes are dealt with in detail. The Sri Lankan state has managed to end the 'war' but the 'reasons that led the conflict to turn into war' still remain to be addressed. While the political formations on the ground have willingly or unwillingly dropped the demand for an independent eelam, a minor faction among the diaspora community does have hopes that eelam would be a reality some day. Nonetheless, a major faction of the diaspora community is now focused more on demanding justice for all the atrocities that had been committed by the Sri Lankan army and they want the guilty to be punished severely.

Post-war Activities of the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora

The post-war era is marked by an ideological shift within the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community. Even the pro-Tiger elements have now realised that militancy is not an option if they have to save their ethnic kin group. Hence, their new agenda has been to get involved in political means to deal with the Sri Lankan state and continue with their struggle for justice for the Tamils and against the atrocities done by the state through peaceful means.

"It was the LTTE that coordinated most of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora activism through its umbrella organisations" (Fair 2007: 188). The remobilisation of the diaspora group is still an ongoing process, but the foundation has been laid out since the war ended, through the following major initiatives in the diaspora community: the British Tamil Forum (BTF) and the Global Tamil Forum (GTF); the referendum on the Vaddukodai Resolution of 1976; and the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE). There have been various other activities also through which the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has been able to raise its voice in support of its struggle for the Tamil people in its homeland.

According to the ICG,

> These initiatives were born out of the belief that Tamil politicians in Sri Lanka cannot express their real political views – including continued support for a separate state – and that is up to the diaspora to push the ideas they cannot safely espouse. The immediate aim has been to convince the Western governments to pressurise Colombo to negotiate a political deal with Tamils (2010: 12).

- *British Tamil Forum (BTF)*

Within the United Kingdom, it is the British Tamil Forum, with its various branches, that is continuously involved in counselling and instructing the youths as well as adults in how to deal with the problems of being Tamil in Sri Lanka and how they can be of help to their kin group back in the island who are facing such problems. Overseas Sri Lankan Tamils may not be so much motivated towards returning to their homeland, but they remain concerned for the re-creation of a democratic space in which their religious and cultural lives are embedded.

Particularly in the past five years, the BTF has emerged as one of the main organisations of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the UK, owing to its large membership, which includes Tamils as well as non-Tamils and sympathisers to the Tamil cause. "Furthermore, the BTF has built up strong links with British politicians as well as Tamils who have access to the British political establishment, especially the main political parties, endowing it with the ability to speak on behalf of the Tamils in the UK" (Vimalarajah et al. 2011: 17).

- *Global Tamil Forum (GTF)*

Soon after Eelam War IV ended in May 2009, in July 2009 the first new initiative from the diaspora community came about to show their support for the Sri Lankan Tamil community, by establishing the Global Tamil Forum (GTF). The GTF was established by a number of grassroots Tamil groups. It is the largest Tamil diaspora organisation, with members drawn from fifteen countries in five continents. GTF seeks lasting peace in Sri Lanka, based on justice, reconciliation and a negotiated political settlement (http://www.globaltamilforum.org).

Based in London, GTF aims to be a quasi-advocacy and humanitarian organisation that is supposed to draw its host governments' attention to the immediate humanitarian concerns of the Sri Lankan Tamils and establish an international, grassroots- and youth-based Tamil democratic political organisation that would generate constructive changes through Collective Global Tamils. Although the GTF has declared that its stand is essentially non-violent in nature, the Sri Lankan government has kept on arguing that it is just a cover for what used to be the LTTE. Nevertheless, at the GTF's inauguration several British MPs addressed the diaspora community, acknowledging their effort towards a non-violent method of making their demands.

- *Referenda*

"Between late 2009 and early 2010, a series of privately funded referenda were held in the Tamil diaspora communities of Norway, France, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands and the United Kingdom, in order to gauge support for an independent Tamil Eelam" (ICG 2010: 13).

Voting was done on the issue of support for the Vaddukodai Resolution of 1976, which clearly aimed at the creation of a separate nation for the Sri Lankan Tamils. These referenda were organised by independent election professionals, but were sponsored by both pro-LTTE and independent organisations (ICG 2010). For example, in Canada the poll was organised by the Coalition for Tamil Elections Canada, which is headed by Velupillai Thangavelu, the former vice president of the World Tamil Movement, and was known for financing the LTTE during the war. In Norway, the referendum was organised by the *Utrop* newspaper but conducted by independent Norwegian professionals. In France, it was organised by The House of Tamil Eelam but was conducted by French election officers coming from local government councils. In Switzerland, it was organised by a Swiss Tamil diaspora organisation but conducted by independent journalists and politicians. In Germany, it was organised by the International Human Rights Association of Bremen but conducted by independent teachers, NGO workers and politicians. In the Netherlands, it was organised by a Dutch Tamil diaspora organisation but conducted by independent election officials. In the United Kingdom, it was organised by the Tamil National Council but officiated by

independent observers, including councillors and Members of Parliament. In Denmark, it was organised by the Denmark Tamils Forum but conducted by TNS Gallup. In Italy, it was organised by the independent election commission of Eelam Tamils but conducted by the Coordination of Non-Governmental Organisations for International Development Cooperation, an Italian federation of NGOs. In Australia, it was organised by the Tamil Referendum Council Australia but officiated by CPI Strategic, an independent body. According to an ICG report,

> In a full turn out of the diaspora community, 99 per cent of votes favoured the resolution and stood by the decision of continuing the struggle of their Tamil people in their homeland. Almost the entire diaspora participated in holding the referenda and later on in other countries also it was held. This was the most significant political development in the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community since the LTTE's defeat (2010: 14).

This form of self-organised democracy received much attention from the media and the international community as well. The referenda[94] indicated that with the end of the LTTE, the idea of self-determination of the Tamils has not ended. Eventually this action paved the way for the formation of another democratic initiative – the transnational government (TGTE).

- *Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE)*

The TGTE is a political formation to win the freedom of the Tamil people on the basis of their fundamental political principles of 'Nationhood', 'Homeland' and 'Right of self-determination'.[95] Established in early 2010, the TGTE was an ambitious attempt to rebrand the LTTE as a non-violent democratic political body in the diaspora community. Strategically invoking Tamil Eelam to mobilise diaspora support, it was supposed to serve as "the highest political entity to campaign for the realization of the Tamils' right to self-determination"

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[94] "The referenda process was both inward looking, uniting and mobilizing the disparate Tamil voices, and outward looking, appealing to the international community to prevent the further erosion of the Tamil identity on the island. The tool of referenda was carefully designed and executed to give the diaspora a space to express its dissatisfaction, resistance and its political stance." (Cheran and Vimalarajah 2010: 20)

[95] Today there are 12 national TGTE branches in Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. The TGTE Secretariat is at Rue de la Servette 1, Geneva, Switzerland.

(http://Eelaminexile.com/Eelam-in-exile/govt-of-tamil-Eelam/92-a-booklet-on-the-transnational-government-of-tamil-Eelam.html).

According to an ICG report,

> Originally proposed by KP[96] before his arrest, the TGTE emerged as a government in exile with a separatist agenda, something its founders deny till date. 'The word 'government' was chosen to convey a sense of authority; and it was expected to be more than just a political or cultural organization', said an executive committee member. A January 2010 report published by its advisory committee states the TGTE 'will be formed very much like a transnational corporation or a non-governmental organisation (NGO)'. However, the same document also indicates it will be 'parallel to a government' and will establish 'ministries or legislative committees (2010: 13).

Since it is impractical for political leaders and people in Sri Lanka to participate in the TGTE, only Tamils in the diaspora are elected to the TGTE through democratic elections.[97] The TGTE aims at working hand in hand with anyone working for the well-being of the Tamil people in the island of Sri Lanka, including the political and social leaders of the people in Eelam.

There have been mixed reactions to the TGTE from both the Tamil diaspora community as well as the Tamils residing in Sri Lanka. In the diaspora community, the hardcore supporters of the LTTE, who still believe in the continuation of a military struggle against the Sri Lankan state, remain unsatisfied with the TGTE (ICG 2010). They say that it is merely a remote-controlled transnational corporation which is under the control of leaders who have betrayed the entire Sri Lankan Tamil community by adopting a belligerent attitude towards the Sri Lankan state. The Tamils residing in Sri Lanka also see the TGTE as a dangerous organisation because it remains at a distance and no Tamils from the country are part of its decision-making authority. They argue that unless they have suffered the pain of a war, they might not understand the real needs of the Tamils and might not take a just decision on their behalf.

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[96] Selverasa Pathmanathan, generally known as KP, was the LTTE's top overseas operative who got arrested in August 2009. He was the head of the LTTE's newly constituted Department of International Relations and also one of the most senior Tigers abroad. After the LTTE's chief Prabhakaran was killed, he was the one who was supposed to take charge of the organisation.

[97] Currently, New York lawyer Visvanathan Rudrakumaran is the acting head of the TGTE's executive committee.

Even the host countries of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora have maintained a distance from the TGTE as controversy and confusion have plagued it. "Frustrated by the TGTE's vacillation on separatism, one diplomat called it 'just another LTTE front and just another example of LTTE double-speak'" (ICG 2010: 13). The United States government has publicly declared that it does not recognise the TGTE despite its democratic overtures. Nobody as such within the entire Tamil community professes to understand what really the TGTE is. Even its executive and advisory committee members have expressed confusion and scepticism (ICG 2010).

However, these initiatives have now shifted their focus from the right to self-determination to the other important issue, i.e. human rights violations in Sri Lanka. There have been various activities apart from these initiatives on the part of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community to bring the real picture of the Sri Lankan Tamils in front of the whole world and get support for its demands.

- *Creating Awareness Regarding War Crimes and 'Genocide'*

Most of the activities of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members have centred on making the world aware of the various war crimes taking place in the Tamil areas of the Sri Lankan territory. Aligned with the TGTE and the GTF, the main work of the diaspora group in the post-war era has focused on collecting evidence on the war crimes and other abuses done by the Sri Lankan military officials on the Tamils even though the war is over. However, these efforts are non-violent and remain political in nature. "Their basic motive remains to propagate their feeling of 'being victimized' all around the world and gather support and demand justice for their people who are facing human rights abuses in their own country" (ICG 2010: 15).

A positive outcome of this campaign has been the various reactions of the Western countries against the Sri Lankan government. There have been initiatives in the United Nations for an investigation through an international bench over these allegations of the Tamil diaspora group. Due to this awareness there has been an immense increase in the level of support for the Sri Lankan Tamils and the world has become more concerned about their safety.

But there have been rejections also to some extent. Some countries have been claiming that the reports arranged by the Tamil diaspora groups remain biased and might lack in credibility. For instance, the TAG[98] and other Tamil activists organised a People's Permanent Tribunal, which in 2010 declared that the Sri Lankan government was guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity on the basis of various pieces of evidence that included interviews of the victims and eyewitnesses. However, the credibility of this tribunal was always questioned by the Western states, as they claimed that there was no action or evidence on the crimes done by the LTTE.

- *Political Lobbying by the Younger Generation of the Tamil Diaspora*

The younger generation of the Tamil diaspora has been immensely active in lobbying its host governments in its support for separate nationhood for its kin group back in its homeland. This participation has increased all the more after the war has been over. Raised and educated in the West and armed with advanced university degrees, these young Tamils[99] seem to possess a better understanding of the political processes. For example, "organizations like People for Equality and Relief in Lanka (PEARL), comprised of American-Tamil students from the elite universities, have been trying since 2005 to influence the U.S. policymakers by using professional advocacy techniques rather than the bullying tactics of other Tamil groups" (http://www.pearlaction.org). They have also been influential enough to bring their host governments to pressurise the Sri Lankan government to come to a ceasefire in early 2009. Further, their demonstrations and protests have also been attracting the attention of their host governments towards the closure of

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[98] The Tamils Against Genocide (TAG) was blamed for collecting over $500,000 to retain Bruce Fein, a former US Associate Deputy Attorney General in order to get a report compiled, in which the Sri Lankan state was charged with genocide, war crimes and torture. It was reported that the TAG ignored the war crimes done by the LTTE completely and the ones which were noticed were also framed against the Sri Lankan state. A US official familiar with the report said, "That (political bias) makes it (TAG) hard to take seriously" (ICG 2010).

[99] Apart from these political formations, a youth organisation called Tamil Youth Organisation (TYO) also functions transnationally through country-based organisations with a person to coordinate its transnational activities. The TYO was formed a decade ago and played a crucial role in many international capitals in the protest activities between January and May 2009. Post-May 2009, the TYO seems to function with more independence at the country levels and has maintained contacts with the IDPs in Vanni.

internment camps and demanding the right for Tamils in Sri Lanka to return to their lands.

The visits of these younger Tamils to their homeland during the ceasefire were an important element in shaping their political activism. The sufferings of their people throughout the war have made some of them reject violence while there remains a section that wishes to take revenge by continuing with the military struggle.[100] While some want to move ahead of the LTTE, there are others who see militancy as the only way forward.

- *Boycotts*

Sections of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora are also engaged in weakening the Sri Lankan economy through international boycotts of Sri Lankan goods as well as the termination of the European Union's GSP+ (Generalised System of Preferences) Plus trade concession.[101] As noted in *Tamil Guardian,* "According to apparel industry sources, the main benefactors of GSP+, the withdrawal of European Union trade benefits increased the costs and eroded their competitiveness" (23 Feb 2010). It had an impact on the industry. Over 50 percent of Sri Lankan apparel exports were directed for EU. However, due to loss of GSP they duty free access to the EU markets was denied and around 9.6 per cent import duty were charged which made the industry to bear loss.

Loss of the GSP+ benefits meant that Sri Lankan exporters lost duty-free access to EU markets and their shipments were charged an import duty of about 9.6 per cent. Many factories were forced to close, resulting in large-scale lay-offs of workers. According to data released by the Central Bank, earnings from apparel

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[100] In the closing months of the war, many young Tamils believed that if they opted for non-violent means, their democracies would be able to bring a ceasefire settlement between the LTTE and the government of Sri Lanka, thus saving thousands of Tamils' lives. However, this did not happen and it demoralised the Tamils abroad, making them lose faith in non-violence.

[101] GSP+ gives 16 developing countries access to EU markets with preferential conditions in return for implementing international conventions on human rights, labour standards, sustainable development and good governance. Sri Lanka used to gain about $150 million annually due to preferential tariffs, according to trade estimates. The island's clothing industry was the main beneficiary, using the tax breaks to sell to high street retailers in Europe. EU member states decided on 16 February 2010 to suspend trade concessions under GSP+ for Sri Lanka because of violations of human rights agreements (*Economic Times*, 17 February 2010).

exports fell 8 per cent to $343.5 million in 2009 from the year before (Bandarage 2010).

To conclude, the diaspora network has influenced the international media, academia as well as the international human rights organisations to listen to the issues involved in the Tamils' homeland politics. It has also been lobbying the international community to stop the Sri Lankan government's military offensive against the Tamils. It has continued to mount human rights violation charges against the Sri Lankan government and to demand international support to establish a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka.

Peace-building Initiatives of the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora in the UK[102]

The Tamil National Council (TNC) was the real force behind the referendum that was organised in January 2010. The TNC provided the logistics and arranged the various parties and organisations among the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community to come forward and decide for the future action of the diaspora community as a whole on the issue of the Tamil cause. Currently, TNC consists of fewer people but they are an active force. However, with no active projects undertaken by it, the TNC's activism remains somnolent, but its participation in various seminars, talks and events held by the diaspora members shows the faith of the diaspora organisations still existing in it.

It was due to the active mobilisation of the TNC that ACT NOW came into being in 2010. ACT NOW is an organization that consists of non-Tamils but connects the Tamil diaspora community to the broader UK population. Both its directors are non-Tamil. While participating in mainly Tamil events (such as mass rallies and public meetings), ACT NOW is also focused on measures targeting non-Tamils, such as mainstream music events and political rallies. ACT NOW leads the Boycott Sri Lanka campaign with the support of both Tamil and non-Tamil organisations and individuals (Vimalarajah et al. 2011: 18).

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[102] Information gathered during field visit to London Tamil Market, during March-April 2016. The market showcases various initiatives taken by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community, particularly from the UK, in different peace-building activities in their homeland.

Relief and Rehabilitation Network (RRN) came into existence after the end of the war in 2009. It works basically to coordinate between the various existing charities in the United Kingdom with the needs occurring back in the island's war-affected areas. They provide a channel to connect different war-affected people to those who wish to help them either by funding for their needs, or by adopting orphans and helping them get a brighter future, or by helping the war widows by providing them with skill training workshops.

Serendip Children's Home was established in May 2009 in response to the cry for help from orphaned and destitute children currently living in Sri Lanka, primarily in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, including the Vanni region. Serendip works towards giving orphaned children of these areas a loving and nurturing home, addressing their immediate needs of food and shelter, and their progressive needs for education, social support and eventually, work and independence.

A self-sufficiency project '*Puthiya Paathai* – New Route' to assist initially over 500 widows in becoming self-employed workers was started by Serendip that supported women-headed families in many villages in the Vavuniya, Mullaithivu, Kilinochchi, Batticaloa and Jaffna districts.

Other organisations include 'Aaropanam', 'Tamil Orphans Fund', 'vithu.com', 'Alumni Associations (AAs)', 'Home Village Associations (HVAs)', etc. Other efforts include the establishment of the 'Sri Lankan Expatriate Forum 2009', which remains focused on encouraging the diaspora groups to invest in their homeland and help towards peace-building measures.

Impact of Post-War Diaspora Activities on Homeland Politics

Having faced the brutalities of the war, the basic need of the Sri Lankan Tamils is their own survival in the island rather than a separate state. They are now fearful to take a stand on the issue of separatism. The activities of the diaspora have been losing the Tamil support from their homeland.[103] While the Sri Lankan Tamils do

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[103] Diaspora leaders who remain deeply committed to Tamil Eelam have criticised Tamils on the island who express such views as too weak to stand up for their rights or as traitors to the liberation struggle. Some argue that since "within Sri Lanka, Tamils can't articulate their views freely, but

wish for a separate state for themselves, hardly any one of them is prepared to fight for it. They are now ready to adjust with the Sinhalese conditions of negotiation so long as their lives, culture and lands are guaranteed to them and peace is maintained. As quoted by a young Tamil activist in an interview given to ICG,

> I think the Tamil people will never go back to taking up arms; no matter how much impatient they get with the government, because they have suffered so much from the war, they will never forget. The beating has been that hard, especially from this government. No matter how angry they get, they just won't have the will power for another armed campaign (ICG email interview 2010).

Sri Lanka's presidential election on 26 January 2010 gave a clear example of the emerging dissonance between the diaspora and island Tamils. With the split within the TNA,[104] the diaspora politics abruptly changed (Vimalarajah and Cheran 2010). With the emergence of TNPF, there were clear cleavages seen in the Tamil diaspora politics as well as Sri Lankan politics. Since there was no candidate on behalf of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the diaspora called for a boycott of the election on ethical and political grounds, but the sole voice of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the TNA went against this decision and supported Sarath Fonseka, who had been the head of the army under whom the massacre of the Tamils was carried out.

The TNA's break with the diaspora angered the latter all the more and they remained dissatisfied with the kind of governance the Tamil people were getting. Their demand for a separate Eelam got all the more strength because they thought that the TNA had ditched their people by surrendering to the murderers of the people who expected them to raise their voice in the island. This political development shows that there was clearly a situation where the Tamil diaspora group was not really in touch with the TNA and the Tamils in Sri Lanka as they

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outside Sri Lanka they can", it falls on the diaspora to speak in their place. To which a young Tamil activist in Jaffna replies, "Let these people come tell the Vanni IDPs that they are speaking on their behalf for a separate state. They will be physically assaulted for sure" (ICG 2010).

[104] When the TNA decided to drop some candidates who were perceived to be closer to the LTTE, there was a split within the coalition and the formation of a new alliance, Tamil National People's Front (TNPF), took place. This consisted of the Tamil Congress and the excluded former TNA parliamentarians.

continued to misunderstand their every action and reacted in a way opposite to what was expected.

Although the TNA defeated its counterpart the TNPF, given the low turnout, the ideological differences have continued to prevail in Tamil politics in the homeland as well as within the diaspora (Cheran and Vimalarajah 2010). But there is also solid ground for commonalities and similarities. The key component of this commonality in based on the political position of Tamil identity. According to the Berghof Peace Support and Centre for Just Peace and Democracy Report 2011,

> Eelam Tamil identity has emerged as an important unifying factor amidst the differences among the actors. A section of the Tamil diaspora funded the election expenses of the TNA and TNPF during the parliamentary elections held in April 2010. This also indicates that even though there are differences between the Tamils in Sri Lanka they have recognised that the diaspora is and will be an essential part of Tamil polity.

Hence, there remains the possibility of the differences being diminished in the long run, as the struggle for the Tamil cause has been acting as a binding force for them.

UNHRC Resolutions on the Sri Lankan War

In the wake of the large number of protests and demonstrations by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora against the atrocities of the Sri Lankan state, there was a special session of the UNHRC in May 2009. In this session 17 Western countries, particularly Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the Netherlands appealed for an international independent investigation into alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka. However, many countries came forward in support of the Sri Lankan state and considered that the war was its 'internal affair' and any international involvement would undermine the sovereignty of the island nation. These states comprised India, Russia, China, etc. The huge support for the Sri Lankan state led the UNHRC to pass Resolution S-11/1 on 27 May 2009, which commended the Sri Lankan government's actions, condemned the Tamil Tigers and ignored allegations of violations of human rights and humanitarian law by government forces. This resolution was passed by 29 votes to 12 votes with 6 abstentions.

The diaspora's movement to raise awareness about the gross conditions in their homeland led the United Nations to hold a special rapporteur on extrajudicial and arbitrary executions in May 2011, which called on the government to investigate 'textbook examples of extrajudicial executions' in Sri Lanka, following a review of evidence related to government execution of prisoners. The panel found 'credible allegations' that the Sri Lankan military/government killed civilians through widespread shelling; shelled hospitals and humanitarian objects; denied humanitarian assistance; violated the human rights of civilians and Tamil Tiger combatants; and it violated the human rights of those outside the conflict zone such as the media (Human Rights Watch 2012).

At the 19th regular session in March 2012, the UNHRC adopted Resolution 19/2 on promoting reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka by a vote of 24 in favour, 15 against and 8 abstentions (*Indian Express* 22 March 2012). This resolution was passed after the Sri Lankan government had received the recommendations of its Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC). The resolution showed its concern over the inadequacy of the LLRC in addressing serious allegations of violations of international law. The resolution appealed to the Sri Lankan government to initiate credible and independent actions to ensure justice, equity, accountability and reconciliation for all Sri Lankans. It requested the government to present an action plan detailing the steps that it had taken and would take to implement the recommendations made in the commission's report, and also to address alleged violations of international law. The resolution also encouraged the OHCHR to provide advice and technical assistance for implementing these steps; and requested the OHCHR to present a report on the provision of such assistance to the Human Rights Council at its 22nd session in March 2013 (*Al Jazeera* 28 March 2014; BBC News 27 March 2014). Two last-minute changes to the resolution, pressed by India, made it 'unobtrusive' in nature and 'non-judgemental' in approach (*Indian Express* 22 March 2012; *Asia Times* 24 March 2012). These amendments gave the Government of Sri Lanka veto over any future recommendations by the OHCHR. There was no reference to alleged war crimes or an international investigation, as called for by human rights groups (*Asia Times* 24 March 2012; BBC News 21 March 2013).

Further in November 2012, the UN Secretary-General submitted the panel report on the war to the President of the UNHRC and, acting on one of the report's recommendations, announced that the UN would undertake a separate inquiry into its own actions in Sri Lanka during the final months of the war. The Sri Lankan government reacted angrily to the panel's appointment, calling it 'an unwarranted and unnecessary interference with a sovereign nation'. It stated that the panel would not be allowed to enter Sri Lanka.

The failure of the Sri Lankan government to comply with Resolution 19/2 led to Resolution 22/1 being passed in March 2013 at the 22nd regular session of the UNHRC (BBC News 21 March 2013; *The Sydney Morning Herald* 22 March 2013). This resolution called on the Sri Lankan government to carry out an independent and credible investigation into alleged violations. However, the resolution failed to establish the independent international investigation that human rights groups had called for.

The Sri Lankan government ignored the resolution and as a consequence in March 2014 the 25th session of the UNHRC passed Resolution 25/1 authorising an international investigation into alleged war crimes during the 2002-09 period (*Al Jazeera* 28 March 2014; BBC News 27 March 2014).

24 September 2015 is marked by a fourth UNHRC resolution, which was supported by the Sri Lankan state after the Rajapaksa regime was replaced by the Sirisena administration. This resolution is also significant as it is the first among the four resolutions that has gained total compliance and agreement on the part of the Sri Lankan state under the new government. The support by the Sri Lankan state comes out of the fact that the resolution allows the much-demanded domestic level enquiry along with international supervision (Human Rights Watch 2016).

On 22 March 2017, at the 34th session of the UNHRC in Geneva, the Sri Lankan state was given a further two-year extension in ensuring fulfilment of commitments made in consensual Resolution 30/1 adopted in October 2015 (*Daily News* 23 March 2017; *Colombo Page* 23 March 2017).

Hence, the diaspora's demand for an international investigation remains diluted. Also, there has not been any clarity on the level to which international parties will

be allowed in the investigating mechanism, nor has the Sri Lankan state proposed any kind of welcoming attitude to such initiative (Human Rights Watch 2016).

Response to the Diaspora Activism

According to the ICG,

> There has been considerable debate over the years about whether Sri Lankan Tamils are indeed genuine refugees who have had no choice but to flee potential violence, or economic migrants who are in no personal danger but choose to leave because of financial considerations. The Sri Lankan government has been insisting that most Tamils are economic migrants and that those who wanted to flee violence in the north and east could have found refuge within the country, particularly in the capital with its large Tamil population (ICG 2010: 10).

The Sri Lankan state has always been against the diaspora's support for the LTTE's struggle for separate eelam and there have been various efforts by the government to curb these activities. Rajapaksa's administration set up embassies and consultancies in those countries where the Sri Lankan Tamils found refuge, which have been working towards countering the activities of the Tamil diaspora. The government has made efforts to assist with these efforts. The staff remains unchanged even after completion of terms. These people inform Colombo about the activities which might seem suspicious to them and keep an eye over the activism of the Tamil diaspora group.

This activity to some extent has been misused and has been identified as intended to harass the Tamil diaspora groups and families.

Even though the LTTE has been defeated, the Sri Lankan government both under Rajapaksa and Sirisena have remained vigilant to prevent any kind of re-emergence of any armed movement or any kind of voice of opposition to the majority Sinhalese. Both regimes have perceived a threat from the Tamil diaspora community more because the Tamils on the island are not in a position to raise their voice against the state. The political activism of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora is perceived as still lingering on the LTTE's separatism rather than breaking with it. In 2009, the Australian government decided to give refugee status to a group of Tamil asylum seekers, to which the Sri Lankan permanent representative to the United Nations objected by claiming that those people were

just looking for better economic opportunities in the developed countries, and hence, they should not be given refugee status.

Despite all this, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has continued to help its kin group back in the island by giving them financial help and aiding them in their resettlement. There were attempts under Rajapaksa regime to curb the help by putting the funds transfer by the diaspora under the garb of 'supporting militancy'. In this context, he had imposed a ban on several diasporic organizations and individuals and had their assests frozen in Sri Lanka. However, due to increasing recognition of the diasporic efforts at the global forums like the United Nations, the new administration in Sri Lanka under Maithripala Sirisena had to lift the ban from the diaspora organisations.

Under the Sirisena government there have been attempts to involve the diaspora community in the peace-building process. These initiatives included sponsoring the visits of hundreds of expatriate Tamils to Sri Lanka to show them the government's efforts towards improving security and resettling 300,000 displaced Tamils. The visitors, however, returned unsatisfied and sceptical about the future. The government has now realised that the post-war scenario in Sri Lanka will definitely need economic aid, for which the diaspora groups have abundant resources.

The diaspora community has been let down again and again by the entire international community. Its entire hope has also received a huge setback from the report that the Sri Lankan state presented in the Human Rights Council's 32nd session held in March 2017. In this session, it was decided to give the Sri Lankan state two more years to fulfil the task of establishing transnational justice (*Colombo Page* 23 March 2017). Suspicions against President Sirisena remain strengthened by the fact that he was Health Minister in the Rajapaksa regime and hence, is equally partner in crime responsible for more than 40,000 Tamil lives claimed during the last two weeks of the war alone.

The impact of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora activism has gone beyond the Sri Lankan government. Throughout its continuous protests and demonstrations, not only it successfully highlighted the plight of the Tamils, it also criticized the

international community's numb attitude for watching while genocide was committed during the final phase of the war. The diaspora's distrust towards the United States was basically due to the fact that America changed its position from having an international investigation to let Sri Lanka have a domestic enquiry. The diaspora community believes that the domestic enquiry would not be able to provide justice to the Tamils.

The continuous pressure on accountability from the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community intensified significantly after the release of a panel report commissioned by the UN Secretary-General in April 2011. The continuous agitation and demonstration against the Sri Lankan state in their various host societies—particularly in Britain, Canada, Australia, and the United States—led the host countries to call on Sri Lanka to investigate the allegations mentioned in the report. The European Parliament also adopted a resolution in May urging Sri Lanka to immediately investigate the allegations. It also proposed that the European Union would provide support in investigation into the allegations. Even India, which had largely stayed silent on alleged abuses in Sri Lanka, added to the pressure in May when there were incidences of self-immolation and hunger strikes by Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in its southern state of Tamil Nadu.

Several governments came forward to support an international accountability mechanism. According to a Human Rights Watch report,

> US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake said during a trip to Sri Lanka in September that unless there is a full, credible, and independent accounting, 'there will be pressure for some sort of alternative mechanism'. The UK has likewise said that it will 'support the international community in revisiting all options' unless the Sri Lankan government demonstrates progress by the end of 2011 (Human Rights Watch 2012).

It was the result of lobbying by the diaspora community that the US legislation had to restrict its military aid to Sri Lanka, subject to strict conditions regarding progress on accountability and human rights. Canadian Tamils so strongly demonstrated against the Sri Lankan state that Prime Minister Stephen Harper had to boycott the Commonwealth Heads of Government summit in Sri Lanka in 2013, on the ground of the failure of the Sri Lankan state to improve its human rights record. India too boycotted the event, citing its domestic issues.

Despite the recommendations for an international enquiry made in the Al Hussein Report, the Sri Lankan government has time and again defied this as compromise on its sovereignty. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein in his report on Sri Lanka explained the violations as "among the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole" (*Colombo Page* 23 March 2017). His report also highlighted the alleged extra-judicial killings, rape of Tamils and bombing civilians' no-fire zones by the Sri Lankan army.

Conclusion

The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has been a major factor in shaping the international policies towards its homeland and in the host land politics for the past quarter century. This has been done by its financial as well as ideological support to the militant struggle for an independent Tamil state against the Sri Lankan government. Since the LTTE's defeat, the diaspora hopes to develop a new movement again for their kin group.

The diaspora community has time and again engaged itself in such kind of political activities that make the international community get engaged in its homeland politics and claim for justice and retribution. The diaspora has managed to mobilize itself and the international community by emphasizing about the victimization of the Tamils in their own state, highlighting the fact that the Tamils in Sri Lanka are left with no representation since the demise of the LTTE, and encourages for an autonomous status for the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Recent activities, though significant, will be not much effective unless there are major shifts in the political strategies on both sides. Although these initiatives attempt to carry forward the struggle of the Sri Lankan Tamils staying in the island, the international community continues to perceive it as the continuation of the LTTE's agenda, only to hope that this time it might be without the guns (ICG 2010: 23). The release of the IDPs who had been held in closed camps even after the war, in 2010, has given some hopes to the devastated Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora members. They now expect that eventually there can be reconciliation which can be initiated by the Sri Lankan government.

The lifting of the ban from the various diaspora organisations has given some relief to diaspora groups because their activism and continued non-violent approach to demand their cause is the only way to ensure the safety and security of the Sri Lankan Tamils still living in the island.

The level of diasporic engagement in Sri Lankan politics would play a key role in defining the efficacy of the Sri Lankan government in resolving the Tamil issue. The current need in Sri Lanka is for a proper representation of the Tamils which can be fulfilled if inclusive approach is adopted by the Sri Lankan government. The diaspora community should be given its space to share its opinion and suggest for proper measures in order to bring normalcy in Tamil lives in the island. Narrow focus on political devolution might not be enough; hence, diasporic contribution remains important aspect in reconstructing and rebuilding the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka.

The future of the Sri Lankan Tamils as well the diaspora community depends on many uncertain factors. More than eight years have passed since the end of the Sri Lankan war and a major change in the stand of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora can be noticed. But it will still continue to think and work for its ethnic group in its homeland. Even though the war has ended, the ideology prevails with full strength in the diaspora's minds.

Conclusion

Diasporas have increasingly become an important factor in national as well as international politics for a variety of reasons. Their activities have led to establishing new power relations involving their homeland and host country that have profoundly changed the dynamics of the political setting in both homeland as well as host country. Not only this, the activism of the diaspora community has been significant to both domestic as well as international politics. The diasporas are not merely a source of remittances to their homeland, they also tend to provide channels of transferring their knowledge and experience in various sectors, which might contribute to development in their homeland. Their investments along with their know-how can improve the economy of their homeland.

In the case of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, the community's formation as a transnational factor in homeland politics was fuelled by political uncertainties and violence. Hence, there has been a demand for an exclusive homeland from the Sri Lankan Tamils that has got continuous support from their diaspora communities. It has resulted in various clashes and wars. The war ended in May 2009 with the defeat of the LTTE. Dismantling the LTTE itself came as a great shock to the Tamil diaspora community. So did the humanitarian disaster that followed the end of the war.

In this context, the main objective of the diaspora is to remain involved in homeland affairs. Its role has become stronger and more firm. The main reason for its political involvement has been its perception of the sufferings of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Notions of injustice, people in need, human trafficking, exposing hypocrisy and the thirst for fairness have been the main driving force for its involvement in their homeland affairs. It has mainly emphasized achieving the Tamil aspirations in its homeland and to explore possibilities of 'right to self determination' for its kin group in Sri Lanka. The nature of the diaspora's role in

homeland politics has remained focused on the safety of life of the Sri Lankan Tamil community and its strategies have been one of supporting the Eelam demand. During the war, the diaspora focused on financing the struggle of its kin group and draw international attention to the condition of the Tamils who kept fleeing the island as they feared for their life. As the level of the war intensified, the diasporic organisations also evolved their political involvement, thereby promoting the political cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Political and material support from the diaspora community, particularly during the time when the LTTE was active, was the main force that kept the Tamil militancy alive in the island nation. However, after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, support for the LTTE diminished rapidly, particularly in India, leading to a series of proscriptions on the outfit by India and later on by other Western states. Hence, the Tamil cause was pushed to the backseat and the Sri Lankan government left no opportunity of taking advantage of this situation.

The post-9/11 period has seen continuous efforts by the Sri Lankan state to curb the diasporic activities and put the Tamil cause on the back burner. There has been a continuous denial of the diaspora's role in the resolution of the conflict. Further, the government suspects the diaspora of contributing to instability in the country. This, in turn, has led to a rise in the level of discontent among the Tamil diaspora groups. Having fought for their rights through parliamentary means in the early years (before 1983) and through armed movement during 1983-2009 under the leadership of LTTE, now the Tamil struggle has entered its third phase of non-violent struggle under the leadership of the diaspora community.

The diaspora's role in its homeland politics has faced many crucial turning points. The 1977 anti-Tamil violence, the 1983 riots in Colombo and the large-scale killings of the Tamils in 2009 after the LTTE was crushed, resulted in the diaspora's intense involvement in its homeland affairs. Other incidents that prompted the diaspora to act in its homeland affairs were the opening of Eelam House in 1996 and its closing in 2001, the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) operations during 1987-1990, the signing of the CFA in 2002 and its violation in 2006.

The diaspora has been playing an important role in shaping Tamil politics in its homeland and in future will continue to do so. It has come up with initiatives which give a clear message to the international community about Tamil demands and show clear evidence of the injustice done to the Sri Lankan Tamil community. In the very first place, they held referenda in various countries and got the diaspora communities together on supporting the Vaddukodai Resolution. This referendum served two purposes:

1. It gave a sense of unity to their community itself, a point which the world speculated to be false, particularly in the aftermath of the war, when the diaspora was supposed to be divided and fractured.
2. It sent a clear message to the Sri Lankan state and the world about their stand on the Tamil cause.

Apart from this, different organisations were set up in the host countries and were given the task of lobbying the support of the Western governments in order to pressurise the Sri Lankan state to deal with the Tamil cause equitably. The TGTE, GTF and BTF were formed along similar lines and they stood together as an opposition to the atrocities committed by the Sri Lankan army during the war and by Sri Lankan state thereafter. However, till date differences remain about the ideas of future strategies and the approach to achieve them.

Another area of diaspora activities focuses on helping its kin group in having a normal life back home. During the war and till date there has been a large number of Sri Lankan Tamils who need help in overcoming the shocks and trauma of the 26-year-long brutal war. Also, their areas need different kinds of investments for rebuilding on a war footing. There have been various initiatives undertaken by the diaspora communities, which will take a few years to complete.

The diaspora community realises that merely developing the island nation would not satisfy the Tamils residing there, until their basic survival needs are delivered to them. They are insecure because, despite seven years since the war ended, Northern Sri Lanka has been under the military, with its continuing atrocities on Tamil civilians. And since the war is over but not the demand is met, the diaspora has remained active and has grown more significantly in questioning the actions of the Sri Lankan state during the last phase of the war and its aftermath. The more

the issue of war crimes is raised, the more space the diaspora community has gained in its homeland politics. This justifies the first hypothesis that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community has emerged as a dominant transnational force to empower and protect its kin group against the powerful majoritarian state because of the shrinking liberal democratic space in the homeland.

The diaspora groups have organised several demonstrations and protests which have drawn the attention of the international community to the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka. They have been striving to achieve some security for their ethnic kin group, which they hope can be achieved through lobbying the West and international forums like the United Nations.

The present role that the diaspora community has acquired revolves around the continuum of their struggle for legitimacy and visibility. The diaspora has had a long history of struggle in its host countries and today it has attained prominent positions in its host society's political as well as social sphere. Countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, and Australia have a powerful lobby of Sri Lankan Tamils and hence, they are bound to take their issues with the Sri Lankan state. This has led to major changes in the equations of the Sri Lankan state with the Western governments.

The diaspora groups have been increasing their activities in the economic sphere through raising awareness and demanding sanctions on the Sri Lankan state and boycott campaigns, besides continuing with their help to their kin group (in the form of remittances and other financial aid), in the legal sphere (collecting evidence on war crimes and human rights abuses), and on the political front (by lobbying the Western governments and the international organisations). An increased mobilisation is seen on the part of the diaspora as the Sri Lankan state refuses to address the Tamil demands. This, in turn, justifies the second hypothesis, which states that international responses to the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora mobilisation strategies have largely become positive in view of the community's growing influence in the host societies and the Sri Lankan government's refusal to pursue a credible reconciliation policy.

The post-war scenario of the diaspora's activities is marked by the emergence of a new generation among the diaspora, which stands for values like democracy and

peace. Its way of involvement in its homeland politics is focused more on the achievement of a democratic space for the Tamils in Sri Lanka rather than taking revenge on the Sinhala-dominated society. Second-generation diaspora's activism involves peaceful protests and avoidance of violent activities. Having seen the distressed condition of its brethren in its homeland, the diaspora does not want another war or conflict, nor does it want to attain anything through military means. The diaspora has been brought up in a liberal and free space, hence, it realises the importance of freedom to think and develop in a society that is marked by democracy and peace as its basic and fundamental values. The diaspora community appears to be ready to leave aside the old dichotomies and nostalgic diaspora memories and grievances and move ahead on the path of peace. It is widely recognised that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora attach significance to peace and order in the island nation.

While there exist certain differences among the various diaspora organisations regarding the approach through which they seek their objective, they remain well aware of their goals and consider that they are not divided but they consider themselves as presenting the true form of democracy, which allows them to coexist despite having different views on issues. They stand united in the fact that they are against the vague and blurred nature of the different regimes in Sri Lanka and consider themselves as an integral part of their homeland and demand incorporation in Sri Lankan affairs.

Challenges to the Diaspora

As many factors contributed to enhance the level of activism of the diaspora community, there have also been several other incidents that have led the diaspora to restrict its activities in its homeland affairs. These included the proscription of the LTTE after 9/11 by many Western countries, including those which had a big population of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora either as refugees or asylum seekers. With the LTTE's proscription as a terrorist organisation the entire Tamil diaspora community came under suspicion.

In this context, we should note the various other challenges that the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora face in playing an active role in its homeland politics:

- *Contradiction between the new ideas and the old ideas emerging within the diaspora community*

Considering that there have been changes in the situations in Sri Lanka since May 2009, the diaspora has also undergone a major shift, particularly in leadership and ideologies. Also, there has been a major shift in its approach to carry forward the Tamil struggle and, accordingly, factions have emerged within the diaspora community. While there remains a section which like earlier upholds the view of an independent eelam, a major section has been moving towards looking for democratic means to make its homeland safe and secure enough for its kin group and other minorities to live there. The change in focus has led to some altercations within the community itself even though the ultimate goal remains the same: to achieve a safe nation for the Tamils.

- *The struggle for leadership and hegemony within the diasporic movement has been an emerging issue since the LTTE movement came to an end.*

With the LTTE gone, the vacuum of representing the Tamils in Sri Lanka and becoming their voice has been shaping the diaspora's activism. While it is very clear that the liberal political space for the Tamils in Sri Lanka is continuously shrinking, the diaspora community has taken the lead role of championing for its kin group's rights. Although there remain internal differences regarding the concerns of the pro- and anti-LTTE factions, the plight of the Sri Lankan Tamils during the war and in its aftermath has been effectively brought to the notice of various international forums and communities.

- *The issue of security in the host land.*

The conflict-generated Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora has been feeling particularly persecuted for its political beliefs. Time and again, there have been attempts to curb its activities by its host governments on the pretext of national security. Diasporas are often found struggling with the concepts of 'legitimatte' and illegitimate' in their host societies. This has not only confused them, but has also increased the level of insecurity faced by them in their respective host societies.

- *Hostile attitudes of the homeland government*

The post 9/11 era has been marked by continuous efforts from the Sri Lankan government to curb the diasporic activities and put the Tamil cause at the back burner. There has been a continuous denial of any possibility of diasporic role in resolution of the conflict by the Sri Lankan government. Further, the government suspects the diaspora of contributing to instability in the island. The Sri Lankan state has also been creating trouble for the diaspora communities as the former spreads rumours about the so-called revival of the LTTE, branding its members as foreign terrorists, banning their entry into their homeland and abolishing all connections of their people back in Sri Lanka with them.

Despite these challenges, the diaspora community has managed to assert itself as one of the major stakeholders in achieving peace and justice in Sri Lanka. Its recognition worldwide has also pressurised the Sri Lankan state to some extent. That is why the new regime in Sri Lanka under the leadership of Maithripala Sirisena had to lift the ban placed on diaspora organisations and had to make approaches to include them in the process of peace and reconciliation.

Relevance of the Diaspora's Activism

The relevance of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora for Sri Lanka may be summarised as follows:

- Since it has been continuously providing financial support to families and people in its homeland, the diaspora is able to influence the events there. Yet, its capabilities still remain to be recognised by the Sri Lankan state. Space should be provided for the diaspora leaders to present their suggestions and demands related to the Tamil cause by the Sri Lankan state.
- Discrimination against the Tamils in Sri Lanka has narrowed their political space in their own country. This in turn has boosted the participation of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in its homeland affairs through both political as well as economic means.
- The high level of political activism among the diaspora community indicates that the issue of justice for Tamils and their right to self-determination will remain alive even if the main driving force, the LTTE, has become defunct.

Despite all these factors, a certain level of uncertainty exists on the part of the Sri Lankan state as it has continued to refuse the involvement of any international agency in its domestic affairs. Eight years after the war ended, the diaspora community has to struggle to assert itself and demand a place at the negotiating table along with the Sri Lankan state and Sri Lankan Tamils. Distrust and suspicions have continued on both sides.

The continued military supervision and lesser focus on demilitarising the Northern Province have heightened suspicions among the diaspora members. Adding to this fact are the hesitation of the regime and the continuous denial of the war crimes allegations, which act as a barrier to bridging the gap between the diaspora groups and the state. This has given more strength to the diaspora community as a strong and, to some extent, the only opposition to the government.

The diaspora will continue to influence its homeland politics even if the Sri Lankan government tries to ignore it. The civil war was always strongly influenced by the diaspora community all over the world. Its influence remains an essential part of any peace process in Sri Lanka.

APPENDIX

Map 3.1

Ethnic Composition inhabiting Sri Lanka
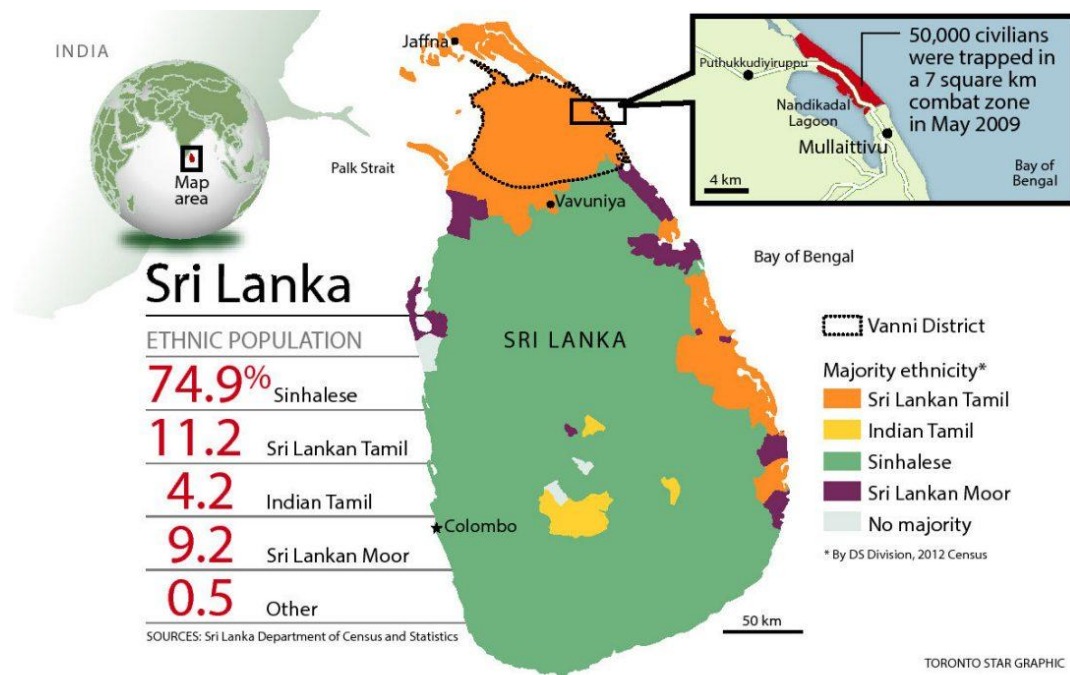
Source: The Star News, Toronto, Accessed 22 May 2017, URL:
https://www.thestar.com/content/dam/thestar/news/world/2013/11/04/sri_lankas_hidden_genocide/wwsrilankatimeline.jpg.size.custom.crop.1086x706.jpg

Map 3.2

Administrative Map of Sri Lanka

Source: Nations Online Project, Accessed 22 May 2017, URL:
http://www.nationsonline.org/maps/sri-lanka-admin-map.jpg

Map 3.3

Development Activities in Sri Lanka before the onset of eelam war I
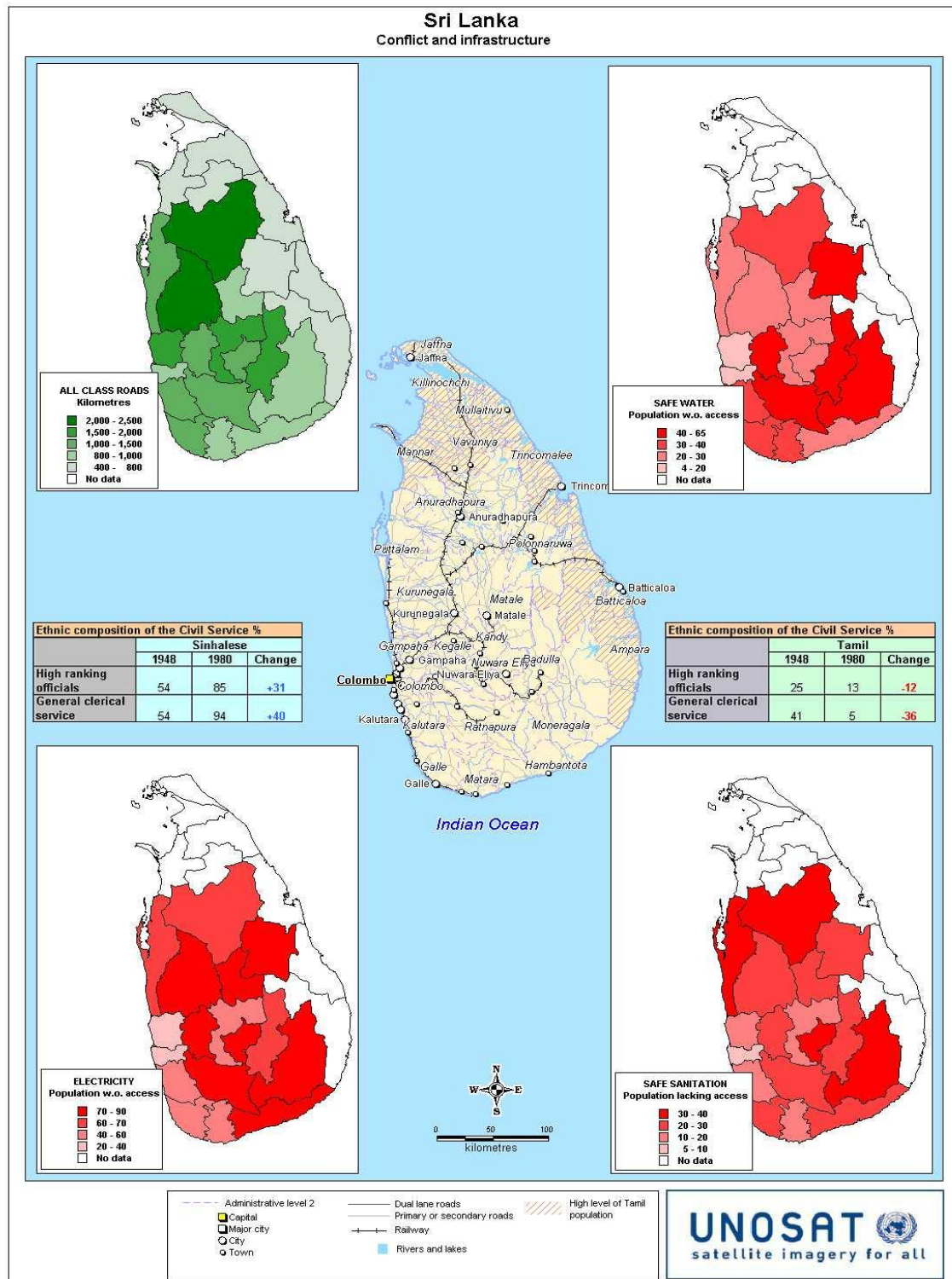
Source: United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Accessed 22 May 2017, URL: http://unosat-maps.web.cern.ch/unosat-maps/LK/sri_lanka_conflict_infrastructure_admin.jpg

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