Developments in Sri Lanka

From Conflict to Sustainable Peace
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- Having been rid from 30 years long scourge of terrorism, Sri Lanka now is geared to seize the fullest benefit from its natural strengths, and in particular, the unique calibre of its human resources. In this context, the Government has taken several incremental steps in restoring normalcy and rebuilding the lives of those who have been affected by the conflict.

- These steps amply demonstrate the determination and the political will of the Government and the resilience with which the people of Sri Lanka has responded to difficult times of the nation. The gamut of recovery that the country has recorded within a short span of little over a three-year period has no or fewer comparisons in the contemporary world. These include the resettlement of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), initiating infrastructure development projects in the former theatre of conflict, rehabilitation of ex-combatants, and initiating a domestic process to address political issues and achieve reconciliation and national unity.

1). Return and Resettlement
1.1 It may be recalled there were sweeping statements and judgements by certain media and interested parties questioning the ability of Sri Lanka to respond to the needs of the unprecedented influx of over 290,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who moved out from the last stretch of conflict stricken territory, and calling for international intervention to prevent a “humanitarian Catastrophe” and GOSL confining those IDPs into “internment camps”.

1.2 Resting all above subjective assertions, by 26 September 2012, just three years after the end of the conflict, the Government had successfully resettled almost all IDPs enabling the closing down of the Menik Farm Welfare Camp-the last IDP centre. Those who cannot return to their original places have been provided with alternate lands. This has left the Government to address the issue of those 23,398 IDP’s choosing to live with host families and those in protracted situations of displacements. While the Government has focused on the over 290,000 IDPs it received after their rescue in May 2009, it has also paid due attention to the ‘old caseload’. Accordingly a total of 430,000 persons have returned since 2009.

1.3 To aid in the process of resettlement the total number of houses constructed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces up to September 2012 from 2005 was 124,184 at a cost
of Rs. Billion 33.34. Several international donors and friendly countries have also supported in this task and EU in particular has provided Euro 12 Million in 2010-2011 for humanitarian assistance.

![New Houses built in North](image)

1.4. De-mining of conflict affected areas has been done at a pace comparable anywhere in the world.

1.5. Soon after the conflict, it was estimated that approximately 1.5 million Unexploded Ordinance (UXO) has to be removed from the conflict areas. According to the initial survey carried out by the Information Management System on Mine Action (IMSMA) it was estimated that 6,218 Km² of land area is contaminated with mines and UXOs. 2,064 Km² were confirmed as Hazard Areas (CHA) by None Technical Survey (NTS), and the rest was released as safe area. Given the difficult challenge, the areas to be demined were prioritized based on their humanitarian usage. Accordingly, demining began firstly in towns and villages. Next was in agrarian lands, and the last was to clear the forested areas. The Government has at present demined 1,943.59 Km² out of the 2,064 Km² confirmed to be contaminated with landmines. As at end March 2012, 523,797 antipersonnel and 1,459 antitank mines and 436,191 items of Unexploded Ordnance (UxO) have been recovered from these areas. The tropical weather and undulate terrain has made the challenge formidable, where the sappers of Sri Lanka Army Humanitarian Demining unit have undertaken more than 75% of the manual demining work of these contaminated areas, while several NGOs from the EU countries including Mine Action Group (MAG), HALO trust and Danish De-Mining Group (DDG) have also considerably supplemented these efforts. Equipment used in the de-mining process such as flaying machines have been imported to Sri Lanka with the support of EU member countries such as Czech Republic. According to National Mine Action Centre, out of 2064 Km² of confirmed contaminated areas, about 96 Km² remain to be cleared and decision was taken to continue the work of the National Mine Action Programme till December 2013.
1.6. On 14 August 2012, while participating in the progress review meeting of the National Mine Action Programme of Sri Lanka, the United Nation’s Resident Representative in Sri Lanka Mr. Subine Nandy said that Sri Lanka has achieved excellent results in its demining programme and country can complete demining process very soon in continuing the present institutional setup and machinery.

1.7. The resettlement has been a comprehensive activity with not only moving people physically to their original places, but also providing them with an opportunity to begin a new life, and be economically productive and independent citizens. The resettlement process has been voluntary, involving informed choice of the displaced family/person through facilitation of “go and see visits” prior to resettlement. Assistance for construction of housing and livelihood development is also being provided.

1.8. The GoSL also commenced rapid socio economic development programmes in order to provide equal opportunities to the people of the North and the East, mainly focusing on strengthening their livelihood activities. As a part of livelihood support, a self-employment loan scheme has been initiated for the people in the North and East.
Already thousands of beneficiaries have been apportioned USD 318 million. Further, beneficiaries were provided Enterprise Development Services (EDS) including creating organizations for the self-employed.

1.9. Due to GoSL efforts aimed at the revival of the provincial economy, the growth rate and the share of the contribution to the national economy by the Northern Province have grown since the end of the conflict. The province recorded an economic growth rate of 22% in 2010, and 27.1% in 2011. while Sri Lanka’s overall GDP recorded around 8% growth in 2011. The Government continues to focus on infrastructure development activities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces through significant public investment, in road construction, power generation and transmission, port development and extension of railway lines, etc. In terms of investment promotion, the Atchchuveli Industrial Zone in the Northern Province, which is being developed in a 25 acre area is expected to attract approximately 40 local and foreign investors and to generate employment to over 6,000 persons. A further 67 acres is scheduled to be added in the second stage. The Zone will enable small and medium enterprises to better tap into the post-conflict opportunities in the country. A Vocational Training Institute on par with international standards and certification is being set up in Kilinochchi to enhance the skill levels and the employment opportunities of the youth in the North. Bilateral and other assistance has been received from several countries in support of these initiatives. The reconstruction of the Northern railway line which was totally destroyed by the LTTE has now been completed up to Omanthai and the remaining 170 kms are being currently constructed under two projects. It will provide connectivity between North and South and access to markets. About 8 to 10 old bridges will be replaced with new steel bridges with the financial assistance from Belgium.
Lives returning to normalcy in the North

1.10. The IDPs who had been residing in the IDPs camps in Tamil Nadu have also started to voluntarily return to Sri Lanka since 2011. As of August 2012, a total of 5268 individuals have returned with the support of the UNHCR while a similar number of people have been provided with emergency travel documents to return to Sri Lanka.

1.11. Free movement of persons on Kandy-Jaffna A9 Highway is now possible and new road connecting the Jaffna Peninsula has also been built. Access to the North and former conflict areas are free of restrictions. It is noteworthy to mention that large number of visitors from abroad, including a considerable number of expatriates have visited the North during the last three years. From August 2010 to August 2012, more than 77,000 foreign passport holders have visited these areas. This is a clear testimony of the freedom and new opportunities available in the country and conflict ravaged areas.

2) Reconstruction and Resurgence

2.1. Alongside the demining process, reconstruction activities were expedited in cleared areas, which have not seen the light of development for the last three-decades. A Presidential Task Force was appointed to coordinate the reconstruction and Resettlement in the North and the Government launched a programme entitled “Northern Spring”, to undertake large scale development projects as was down in the Eastern Province through the “Eastern Reawakening” previously. These programmes designed to facilitate development work in the North and the East, were further accelerated to provide, inter alia, livelihoods for persons in the conflict affected areas. The Neganahira Navodaya programme for the East has resulted in expenditure totaling Rs. 142 billion (1.18 bn USD) up to 2011 with a further Rs.25 billion (200 Mn USD) estimated for 2012. The Uthuru Wasanthaya programme for the North has seen a commitment of Rs. 117 billion (975 Mn USD) up to 2011 with a further Rs 64 billion (533
Mn USD) committed for 2012. In all, investment in the Northern Province under the 4-year investment plan will total nearly Rs. 300 billion (2.5 bn USD).

2.2 Reconstruction of the A-9 road connecting the North from the rest of the island, restoration of the north railway, township development, and reconstruction of telecommunication facilities and delivery of state services, drinking water supply, hospitals and schools were among some of the main projects undertaken. In the Eastern Province, the GoSL has completed projects in agriculture & irrigation, roads, power & energy, livelihood support, fisheries and livestock development, education, civil administration, health & sanitation.

The billions spent on reconstruction of North

2.3 Simultaneously, the previously declared High Security Zones have begun to dismantle and the Military is in the process of releasing occupied private properties. For example, the Jaffna District High Security Zone (HSZ) has been released in five stages since 28th October, 2010. The security forces presence in the Jaffna peninsula and the islands, which was over 50,000 personnel at the height of the conflict, has today reduced to approximately 13,200. Efforts are also underway to explore possibilities to relocate troops in the Palaly cantonment and in other identified Government lands, in order to allow original owners to settle in their native lands. While some lands have been earmarked for use in the expansion of the Palaly airport - KKS harbour complex as part of the redevelopment of the area after almost three decades of conflict, owners of
private lands acquired would be given compensation at market rates, and additionally alternate lands in adjacent areas.

2.4. There is no intrusive military presence impacting on civilian life-in Jaffna or in the Wanni. On the contrary, the military has successfully completed a great deal of work to assist civilians return to their normal lives in the aftermath of the conflict. From May 2009 to October 2012, the Army has constructed 4,652 permanent houses, 6,171 semi-permanent houses and has renovated 7,454 houses through their own initiative and effort. It has constructed 73 schools, renovated nearly 500 old school buildings and has constructed 23 school playgrounds. The Army has made a significant contribution to the improvement of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. The Army has contributed to the socio-cultural needs of the people by building/restoring nearly 250 places of religious worship belonging to all faiths in the North and the East. Moreover, it has contributed to the repair of 11 main roads and 43 minor roads during this period. All these functions have now been taken over by a fully restored civilian administration.

3.) Rehabilitation and Re-integration

3.1 Remarkable progress has been made with regard to the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants. All 594 LTTE child soldiers have been rehabilitated and reintegrated into society. The GoSL adhered to a policy of not subjecting children to legal proceedings based on the rationale that they were victims and not perpetrators. It is to be noted that the child soldiers released were afforded the opportunity of a formal education and reintegrated into their families. 212 youth who were previously pursuing tertiary education were reinducted into the university system to follow their undergraduate studies. Elderly persons were also released without being subject to any rehabilitative or legal processes. The rehabilitation programmes are carried out with the assistance of UNICEF, IOM and some NGOs.
It may be noted that from approximately 12,000 persons, as of 15th May 2013, only 374 ex-combatants including 18 female ex-combatants are undergoing rehabilitation. Legal proceedings have been instituted against 194 ex-combatants who are under judicially mandated custody, remanded or enlarged on bail by Court. In order to expedite the cases of suspects that are in remand custody after serving indictment, the Government established 3 additional courts in Vavuniya, Mannar and Anuradhapura besides the Colombo High Court. Separate state counsels and dedicated staff including Tamil translators and typists have been allocated for this purpose. Furthermore, in order to file cases for the suspects that remain under remand custody pending indictment, a special committee has been appointed to look into their cases. The scope of this committee is to review and advice further legal proceeding of these cadres, including the possibility of release of suspects following rehabilitation.

Catching up the lost opportunities- Back to society

3.2 A ‘six plus one’ rehabilitation process model rested on six pillars, namely spiritual, religious, & cultural activities, vocational & livelihood activities, psychological & creative therapies, sports & extra-curricular activities, socio-cultural activities and education was adopted for the beneficiaries. Simultaneous public awareness programmes to sensitize the public to the needs of the beneficiaries and to be more receptive to their reintegration were done.
3.3 Also, 46 different vocational training programmes were introduced to train them in gainful employments for the first time in their lives. The Government has begun to recruit a large number of rehabilitated ex-combatants to the Civil Security Department (CSD). They are slated to take part in development activities in the North. About 100 female cadres were absorbed to the Sri Lanka Army Women’s Corp, after rehabilitation and training, may be the first ever such action by a Government. A mass marriage ceremony involving 53 couples of Ex-LTTE carders were held in June 2010, and special protective accommodation for these couples to live as families were established.

![Bringing back the childhood](image)

3.4 The Government has allocated Rs 300 million (2 million Euro) to grant loans for ex-combatants to start self-employment projects with a maximum of Rs 250,000 at only 4% interest. It has also allocated Rs.750 million (5 Million Euro) for the rehabilitation process for this year and has spent a total of Rs. 2.5 billion (16 Million Euro) on the rehabilitation of ex-LTTE cadres since May 2009.

3.6 Considering the proactive and exemplary manner in which the former child soldiers have been rehabilitated and reintegrated, the UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict delisted Sri Lanka from Annex II of the UN Security Council Resolution 1612, on Children and Armed Conflict. Further, the UNICEF Executive Board
that visited the country early this year commended Sri Lanka for making rapid strides since the end of conflict, due to the sustained efforts on behalf of children. "What was amazing to some of us was that during that civil war, the Government of Sri Lanka remained committed and made great efforts at continuing to support children…. They still sent money for vaccinations, for support to basic education and so forth, which was really a remarkable thing", stated the vice Chair of the UNICEF Executive Board, who led the visit.

3.7 The Government with the support of UNICEF has established a Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR) unit in Vavunia, to support unaccompanied and separated children to find their parents/NOKs, following the end of the conflict. The Unit maintains a data base and undertakes field visits to places such as hospitals, police, and children homes etc. to gather information. It has recorded 2,631 cases, out of which 736 are related to children, and the Unit has found 136 cases matched with available information. UNICEF Reports show that 64% of those reported missing was recruited by Tamil Tiger Terrorist Group (LTTE). The Ministry of Defense and the ICRC have also held a series of discussions on the issue of disappeared persons and continue to maintain a positive dialogue on areas of cooperation.

4.) Restitution and Reconciliation

4.1 While making every effort to put material things in place and reinvigorate the development activities, the Government was mindful of the fact that to win the peace, political processes for restoring democratic governance in the conflict-affected areas needs to be paralleled by measures to heal the hurt caused to national amity and to the sentiments and minds of the people, due to troubled and distressing times the people had to go through. Hence to achieve reconciliation and to redress the root causes of the conflict, the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) was appointed on 15 May 2010, by H.E the President under the Section II of the Commission of Inquiries Act (chapter 393).
4.2 The Commission commenced work in September 2010 and within a period of 13 months, it submitted the final report. The GOSL submitted this Report to the Parliament and made it public in December 2012. The Report has now been translated into the two official languages, Singhalese and Tamil.

4.3 An 8 member Task Force headed by the Secretary to H.E the President was appointed to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the 285 observations and recommendations made by the LLRC. In July, the Task Force produced a matrix containing the National Plan of Action to implement the LLRC recommendations and was approved by the Cabinet. The Action Plan is based on what is implementable in short, medium and long terms. The main focus areas for implementation are International Humanitarian Law Issues, Human Rights, Land Return and Resettlement, Restitution/Compensatory Relief and Reconciliation.

4.4 The Task Force has indentified a corresponding activity, an implementing agency, a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and a time frame in respect of each recommendation. Ministries and Agencies have been requested to forward their budgetary requirements to aid in the implementation of the actions within their purview, commencing with the National budgetary process for 2013. The National Plan of Action is a result of extensive and inclusive consultations done by the Task Force with all stakeholders responsible for its implementation. In the months of January, February and April 2013, GOSL has made public the continuing progress made in implementing the National Plan of Action towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), the home-grown reconciliation mechanism in Sri Lanka. In addition to the majority of the recommendations which were deemed most significant and incorporated in the National Plan of Action (NPoA) for immediate implementation by 22 key government agencies in July 2013, 91 proposals which were not incorporated into the original Plan of Action have now gone before the cabinet and will be approved by 11th of July. The 91 is a part of the original set of recommendations in Chapter 9 of the LLRC and the intention is to have these proposals implemented quickly. Once the cabinet approval is received, these would go as an addendum to the Action Plan. The Government will launch a website dedicated to share information on the LLRC.

4.5 **Theme I - International Humanitarian Law Issues:** A six-member Court of Inquiry was appointed on 2 January 2012 by virtue of powers vested in the Army Commander under the Courts of Inquiry Regulations, read with Army Disciplinary Regulations, promulgated by the Army Act and is headed by a Major General. The Report of the Court of Inquiry was handed over to Secretary Defence in February. Subjected to the Provisions of the Army Act, and following the practices of other Armies
in the World, information on the findings of the COI may be released to the public domain. As per the recommendations of LLRC, a second Army Court of Inquiry is presently investigating allegations made following the Channel 4 video footage, irrespective of its authenticity or otherwise. To date GOSL's request that Channel 4 provide the original material used by them to help the investigation process, has not been acceded to.

4.6 The Department of Census has already begun a household survey to assess the scale and circumstances of death and injuries to civilians and damage to property during the conflict. It may also be noted that the Parliament approved an Act (as Supplement to Act no 17 of 2005) to facilitate issuance of certificates of death to persons reported missing as a result of terrorist or subversive activities, or civil commotion etc. Once the death certificates are issued with the concurrence of the NOKs, they can claim monies due to them and many pending personal legal matters on inheritance would be sought out.

4.7 **Theme II- Human Rights**: While the LLRC was having its sittings, the preparation of the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) coincided and significant synergies were established between the parallel processes. By the time the NHRAP content, (which was a result of extensive consultations among Government, UN Agencies, NGO, and civil society partners), was initially approved by Cabinet in September 2011 and its implementation approved in December, several of the important issues, including in particular those related to civil and political rights and prevention of torture, had been discussed and measures agreed upon. Hence it should be viewed that both implementation of the areas related to human rights in the LLRC and the NHRAP implementation as different contributions to a collective national effort of reconciliation. Further, it is envisaged to formulate a module for inclusion in secondary school curriculum to provide human rights education to the next generation.

In relation to the killings of the 5 students in Trincomalee, investigations have been concluded and upon studying the material, the Attorney General has advised the Police to file charges against 13 suspects concerning the killing of five youths in Trincomalee. and charges would include unlawful assembly, murder and attempted murder. The investigation into the killings of the 17 ACF aid workers is continuing.

4.8 The Government has also established a mechanism to ensure the right of information of the relatives of the LTTE suspects. A centralized, comprehensive database of detainees established by the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) of the Police with units operating around the clock in Colombo, Vavuniya and Boossa enables next-of-kin (NoK) to receive details of detainees and those who are released from detention. It may
be noted that this information is only provided to NoK, as detainees have requested that such information not be released publicly due to privacy concerns. Up to now, around 3,220 inquiries have been made by the relatives to the TID alone (486 phone call inquiries, 5 email inquiries and 2,729 physical appearances). 2,729 complaints have been recorded and 1,616 investigations have been completed and 1,101 investigations were in progress as of February 2013.

4.9. With regard to the cases reported on disappearances, the Government is closely engaged with the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID), and is working to establish a cross agency national mechanism to effectively respond to such queries. In the last few years, the law enforcement authorities of Sri Lanka have been successful in tracing a considerable number of persons claimed to be disappeared or missing. A comprehensive addressing of this challenge would be greatly facilitated if countries that have received thousands of asylum seekers would cooperate with Sri Lanka by giving the names of such persons.

4.10. The Government presented its Universal Periodic Report (UPR), on 2 November 2012, and 98 countries participated in the debate and out of over 200 recommendations, the Government accepted 111 recommendations. It is in the process of working on the voluntary pledges. Also, the Government has extended an invitation to the High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Sri Lanka in 2011, and she has now agreed to undertake the visit from 25 August. 422 Community Policing Units have been established in the main Police Stations including the North and East and throughout the Country. A Training programme on Community Policing sponsored by the British Government in underway. The Armed Forces and Police continue to have ongoing human rights awareness and training programmes for their officers. This has been implemented for considerable period of time and continues even to date. The training has been provided by the Human Rights Centre of the Colombo University and the ICRC.

4.11 **Theme III- Land Return and Resettlement**: The GOSL is considering holding a Fourth Land Commission to settle the complex issue of land rights. It has also taken action to implement the Circular issued by the Commissioner General of Lands, (circular 2011/4 of 22 July 2011) Regulating the Activities Regarding Management of Lands in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, mainly to redress the land issues related to those displaced from these areas. A land use plan for North and East is expected to be developed in 36 months.

4.12 The Cabinet on 01 June, 2012 has approved a Prescription Act (special provisions) providing absentee land and property owners in the once war ravaged north and east to
reclaim ownership. Any person who has become displaced or disadvantaged at any time during the period starting May 01, 1983 and ending December 31, 2012 shall be deemed, for the purpose of the new law, to be a displaced or disadvantaged person.

4.13 Special emphasis has been given to regulating the activities regarding the management of land in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Specific Cabinet approval has been received for policy proposals relating to the matter. Directions have been given to temporarily suspend the distribution of land. Priority is to be given to those persons who have been displaced or fled from their natural locales or lost their land. An amendment to the Prescription Ordinance is being considered whereby displaced or disadvantaged owners of land will be exempted from the rules of prescription during a period of 30 years to enable them to defeat any adverse claims based on the running of time. It is proposed to set in place mediation boards in terms of Mediation (Special Provisions) Law to resolve disputes between owners who have paper titles and have been displaced and those who are in unlawful occupation, as an alternate dispute resolution mechanism.

The Government is in the process of formulating the Terms of Reference of the Fourth Land Commission. In May 2013, as per the recommendations of the LLRC, the Land Commissioner General’s Department launched a special accelerated programme to resolve issues pertaining to state land in the Northern and Eastern provinces in the post-conflict context, in collaboration with Provincial Land Commissioners, Government Agents and Divisional Secretaries,. A notice issued by the Land Commissioner in this regard has been widely circulated in all three languages in order to inform the public of this initiative. The main 3 types of requests the State receives are requests from those who are landless, requests for updating their documents and complaints with regard to private land disputes. The gathering of the system of the Land Kachcheri where people who do not have land can submit their applications and such applications are considered in a very open and a transparent process. These are been held very regularly in the North. Ministry of Lands and the Divisional Secretariats along with the District Secretariats in 2013 will have 208 Divisional days, where people with all types of requests regarding their land could come to these meetings and try to resolve their issues.

4.14 **Theme IV - Reconciliation** - The trilingual policy introduced by the government remains a cornerstone in building bridges among the communities and consolidating a sense of national unity. The implementation of the Trilingual policy is now being financially supported by the Government of Japan and JICA during the first three years. To achieve that goal, President Mahinda Rajapaksa has declared 2012 the Year of Trilingual Sri Lanka and in January launched a 10-year National Action Plan to build a trilingual society by 2020. Presidential Advisor on Reconciliation, Hon.MP Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe has made efforts to improve administrative and consultative mechanisms in
the Divisional Secretariats. As an initial step, 30,000 Public officers are undergoing language proficiency programmes presently and exchange programmes between schools in the North and the South are also encouraged. Already more than 1500 Tamil speaking police officers have been recruited to the North and East. As a means of enhancing their effectiveness, units of the Attorney-General's Department will also be established in provinces to provide procedural guidance to the police. From 2005 to 2008 recruitment of Tamil officers to the Police was 396, from 2009 to 2011 it was 393, and in the first six months of 2012 it rose to 427. The total number of Tamil speaking police officers at present is 2,582 (of whom 2,181 are deployed in the North and East). In addition, several more persons with competence in Tamil (including ex-combatants) are being inducted into the Civil Defence Force which is a localized security force comprising personnel from within the District. The Army has recruited Tamil personnel as follows: 3 officers and 86 other ranks to its regular force and 1 officer and 27 other ranks into its volunteer force. During the 2009-2012 period, 3,424 Police officers have been given Tamil language training. Similar language training has been given to the officers in the Army, Navy and the Air force.

4.15 Certain recommendations in LLRC need political and constitutional initiatives to address the root causes and provide restorative justice to those affected. In keeping with Sri Lanka’s uninterrupted democratic tradition, with the Parliament at the helm of governance representing the people, a Parliamentary Select Committee has now been appointed to achieve a national consensus for constitutional changes necessary for the sustainability of the political process. Tuesday 9th of July will be the PSC meeting.
Intransigent policies pegged to a separate Eelam land, the main Tamil political party has not yet granted concurrence to the commencement of the PSC. The Composition of the Select Committee is that the Government will only have 19 members and the opposition will have 12 members. With regard to the terms of reference of the Parliamentary Select Committee, suggestions made by the Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), have been adopted almost in Toto by the Government. The PSC process would not be exclusively on matters relating to the 13th Amendment but the mandate is wide enough to include other matters relating to Constitutional reform going beyond the specific issues relevant to the structure of the 13th Amendment. The time-frame for the PSC process is to be completed within 6 months.

4.16 It is also noteworthy that the GoSL is making its effort to strengthen the reconciliation process by reintegration of ex-combatants. One of the tasks initiated by the Ministry of Defence of Sri Lanka is to integrate some of the ex-combatants to the Civil Defence Force (CDF). According to the Director General of the CDF, by the end of July 2012, his office has received as many as 1,650 applications from former combatants expressing their willingness to join the Civil Defence Force. Civil Defence Force (CDF), originally created in order to protect villages from terrorist attacks, it now assists with a variety of peacetime activities, including reconstruction projects and farm work. These ex-combatants will be recruited to CDF in the coming months. This is in addition to the former combatants who were employed in the public sector. The Government also recruited 109 Tamil females from Killinochchi and Mullaithivu to the 6th Women Corps of Sri Lanka Army.

4.17 GoSL held fresh provincial council elections in three provincial councils on 08 September 2012, including the Eastern province. 32 out of 34 local government authorities in the North have been elected. Following the conclusion of the Census in the Northern Province and preparation of the electoral register, elections to the Northern Provincial Council is scheduled to be held in September 2013.

These rehabilitated young beneficiaries will represent Sri Lanka at International air rifle competitions (left), and a mass wedding was sponsored by Government for some others to begin new lives (right).
5.) Rebuilding and Reawakening

5.1 In Sri Lanka, the inflation remained at single digit for the third consecutive year, unemployment declined to its lowest level of 4.2% in 2011 from 4.9% in 2010. In 2011, Sri Lanka’s exports to the EU grew by 24.4% (US$ 3576 million) compared to corresponding period of 2010 (US$ 2,875 million). The country provides an environment conducive and stable for investments and as a result Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) including loans has grown by 107%, to US$ 1,066 million in 2011 over US$ 516 million in 2010.

5.2 Resettlement in all the five districts in the North, opening of the whole northern costal belt, carry out reconstruction of A32, A12, A5 roads and two railway lines, open of the eastern beaches for tourism, open the access for two most famous religious heritages at Madu Church and Thirukeshwaran Hindu Temple, after the demining of the respective areas were part of this rebuilding & reawakening process.

The Nagadeepa Buddhist Temple and the Nallur Temple in Jaffna crowded with worshipers

(above) The Madu Church rebuilt and opened for devotees (below)
5.3 Economic resurgence has been witnessed by the Northern Province, after the end of the conflict and more and more investments have been made to strengthen the economy. Industrial zones have been assigned in the select areas of the Northern Province and the Palaly airport and the Kankesanthurai (KKS) harbour - are located less than 10 kilometres from the Industrial Zones, thus providing additional logistical advantages to investors. This has contributed to the 22% growth in the Northern Province.

139 destroyed and damaged schools were reconstructed and rehabilitated while 348 schools had been reopened in the Northern Province in 2012. On 14 May 2013, the 43-kilometre Medawachchiya-Madhu segment of the 106 kilometre long Medawachchiya - Thalaimannar railway line was commissioned under the first phase of the Northern Railway Project.

5.4. The Government committed USD 2.8 billion mostly through loans, with some grant funding, in support of ongoing projects in 2011. This is in addition to the expenditure on humanitarian assistance and relief where the Government’s commitment for 2009 and 2010 alone was USD 368 million. The UN system and international and national NGOs mobilized USD 437.90 and 100.26 million respectively, for the period 2009 to mid-2012. The per capita expenditure on health in the Northern Province is 3.5 times higher than rest of the Provinces. Expenditure on education was 1.3 Billion Rs. for the 2009 to 2011 and 964 schools are functioning in the Northern Province as at August 2012.

5.5. Notwithstanding the difficult challenges of a 30 year long conflict, the Government has integrated the MDGs into the National Development Agenda. Sri Lanka is on track to reach most of the indicators. Some have already been achieved relating to equitable primary education, child mortality, no gender disparity in access to education etc.

5.6. The Government of Sri Lanka has assiduously engaged with the international community to apprise them on the developments in the country and to brief them adequately. It provided a comprehensive stocktaking on all aspects of the Human Rights matters during its second cycle of the UPR submission on 2 November this year and 98 countries made interventions at the Session acknowledging the progress made while providing useful suggestions to further improve the situation. GOSL accepted over 100 recommendations made by the peers.

5.7. One could no doubt agree that it is the Government of Sri Lanka which is best placed in evolving a home-grown solution acceptable to all the citizens of the country.
Therefore, prescriptions meted out by a part of the international community, or external interventions without the consent of the country concern do not achieve the envisaged sustainable peace, but continue to exacerbate the situation.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights has now decided to undertake a visit to Sri Lanka from 25 to 31 August 2013, in response to an invitation formally extended to her by the GOSL in April 2011. Sri Lanka considers this visit as part of its continued, transparent and proactive engagement with the High Commissioner and the OHCHR.

5.8 It is the view of the people of Sri Lanka that the best assistance that the international community could afford Sri Lanka in its nation building and achieving durable peace therefore is, to provide the required time and space to the Government in implementing the recommendations of the LLRC, which it has already embarked upon.

05 July 2013