POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION IN SRI LANKA

Prospects and Challenges

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Top left and right: The newly constructed *Oddamavadi* Bridge across *Batticaloa* lagoon in the Eastern Province on the left and the old bridge on the right. The image is by courtesy of United Nations Office for Project Services, Colombo.

Bottom: Tamil children look on at a shelter for war-displaced Tamils in Vavuniya. The image was taken from NowPublic.com (http://www.nowpublic.com/world/sri-lanka-tamil-refugees-may-end-permanent-camps-0) published by B12N on 3 July 2009 in "Sri Lanka: Tamil refugees may end up in permanent camps".

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CHAPTER 5

Japan's Peace-Building Efforts in Sri Lanka: Consolidation of Peace and Nation-Building

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Japan participated and played a larger political role in the internal and international conflicts than anytime since the post-cold war era. It marks a new development in Japanese foreign policy and its development assistance in conflict torn countries. While Norway has been a facilitator in keeping the talks going since February 2000, Japan's active involvement came after the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) of February 2002. After the peace process began, Japan became one of the most active members in the international community and has demonstrated a keen interest in establishing peace in the island (Fazil, 2008: 49-52). The basic objective of this study is to explore the peace-building efforts taken by the Japanese government in the internal ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka from 2000-09 to understand the new phase of mediatory roles and its effects. Further, this study analyses Japan's foreign policy changes to promote "consolidation of peace and nation-building" (Koizumi, 2007: 2) in Sri Lanka. Finally, this study also examines Japan's collaborative engagement in Sri Lanka with the support of international community and its effectiveness in Sri Lankan peace-building process.

A qualitative methodology has been used in this study and the analysis has been of a critical descriptive nature. The method of data collection is structured and unstructured interviews, informal discussions and a review of existing literature.

Introduction

Japan has been devoting considerable efforts to peace-building. Japan's peace and security is interlinked with international peace and stability (Fazil, 2008: 49-52). It is, therefore, in the interest of Japan's own peace and security to actively support peace-building activities in coordination with the international community that involved in mediatory roles and consolidation of peace and nation building process in Sri Lanka

Peace-building is a multi-dimensional task that requires a comprehensive and coherent approach. Japan has been promoting the approach of 'consolidation of peace' and 'nation-building' since May 2002, when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi first proposed this idea in a policy speech delivered in Sydney, Australia (Fazil, 2008: 22). "This policy has become a new pillar of Japan's international cooperation" (Lam, 2004: 3).

The targets of Japan's peace-building diplomacy include number of countries. Reinforcement of Tokyo's peace-building diplomacy is due to the fact that it had a desire to play an active political role with its status as the second largest economy in the world.

A continual image of Japan's foreign policy behaviour is its passive and reactive nature, and a focus on mercantilism and economics (Calder, 1998: 4).

> Explanations for Tokyo punching below its economic weight in international affairs include: the legacy of militarism and defeat in World War II; an allergy among its East Asian neighbors toward a more assertive Japan in the military sphere; constitutional restrictions (Article 9) on Japan exercising the use of force to settle international disputes; a pacifistic political culture among the Japanese; resistance within the ruling coalition and opposition parties to Japan playing a more active military role abroad; and the idea that Japan, being a junior partner to the US superpower, should follow the lead of Washington in foreign relations (Lam, 2004: 3).

Japan and Sri Lanka celebrated their golden jubilee of diplomatic relations in 2002. The two countries have maintained warm and friendly relations over the past 50 years. Sri Lanka is also known as a traditional friend and supporter of Japan. After World War II, Sri Lanka voluntarily waived any right to receive war reparations from Japan under the San Francisco Peace Treaty, and it was one of the countries that greatly contributed to creating an international environment favourable, both politically and economically, to the recovery and development of post-war Japan (Fazil, 2008: 49). Furthermore, since 1952, official as well as people-to-people relationships between the two countries have grown significantly through the combination of cultural and economic links between the two governments and the people. Since 2000, an active political relationship has been observed, as the Japanese government has opted to actively help the people and the government of Sri Lanka to find a solution to the ethnic disharmony and conflict among the country's Tamil minority and the Sinhalese majority.

A new optimism for a long-lasting peace emerged when the Norwegian government was officially invited in 2000 by both the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to facilitate the peace process. This was followed by Japan being officially invited in 2002 by the GOSL to support for the government's peace bid with the Tamil Tigers, which the LTTE also looked forward to. It was believed to be the most successful attempt was to transform Sri Lanka's two-decade long civil war (Fazil, 2008: 1) into something that resembles peace had commenced with the dawn of the new millennium. The signing of the cease-fire agreement in February 2002 was a significant step taken to start a new beginning to find a negotiated solution to the ongoing ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

Objectives

The basic objective of this study is to explore the peace-building initiatives undertaken by the Japanese government in the internal ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka from 2000 to until 2009.

Further, this study analyses Japan's foreign policy changes to promote 'consolidation of peace and nation-building' in Sri Lanka. Finally, it examines Japan's collaborative engagement in Sri Lanka with the support of the international community and its effectiveness in Sri Lankan peace-building process.

Methodology

This study is a new phase of the international involvement of Japan in the Sri Lankan conflict thus making it a significant area of study. Japan's mediatory role is a remarkable effort in the history of negotiating peace attempts to resolve the island's protracted ethnic conflict.

This is a qualitative study and the aims of it are to be achieved by a systematic review and analysis of written material. The literary sources can be divided into two groups: (i) peace-building theory, Japan's peace-building efforts and general peace research of particular relevance to the objectives of the study; (ii) literature and research on the Sri Lankan history of the conflict, the latest developments in the peace process—including assessment and evaluation reports, official documents, press releases, letters, speeches and press articles. The research approach is to analyse empirical findings emerging from a review of the textual material in the second group, with the help of philosophy and the theories in the first.

The study was done also from structured and unstructured interviews with key Japanese officials, and attending symposium on "Peace-Building in Sri Lanka: Current Situation and Future Prospects" organised by the Outside Europe Research Group, the Japan Foundation and the MEXT Research Grant Programme. Furthermore, email-based structured interviews of university academics in Sri Lanka, titled "University Academics Perception on the Japan's Peace-Building in the Sri Lankan Peace Process from 2000 to until now" were conducted. Informal conversations and meetings have also contributed

to this study. In addition to the above, certain critical and urgent matters have been dealt through telephone interviews.

Conceptual Framework

Keating and Knight (2004: xxxi) argue in chapter two that peace-building has been adopted by national governments, non-governmental agencies (NGOs) and regional and international intergovernmental organisations (INGOs) as a means by which the outside world can contribute to the resolution of intrastate (or societal) conflict and to the reconstruction, or construction, of a culture of peace in post-conflict situations. Japan's peace-building begins with efforts to 'consolidate peace', namely, to push forward the process of peace, bring in humanitarian aid, such as assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), restore domestic security, and realise justice and reconciliation. This phase is followed by a process of "...nation building towards a democratic and independent nation through the development of political, judicial, and administrative systems, the development of economic infrastructure, and improvement in healthcare and education" (Fazil, 2008: 22-23). Mr. Tarao, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, stated in November 2006 that peace-building support is an important policy tool to expand freedom and prosperity throughout the world (Fazil, 2008: 22-23).

Briefly we can emphasis that the basic principle and features of Japan's peace-building supports as follows;

a) Consolidation of peace and nation-building
b) Respect for local communities and their ownership, and emphasis on the perspective of 'human security'

Japan's Peace-Building Efforts in the World Stage

Japan's peace-building initiative involves the government of Japan through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, related ministries and other government organisations including the Japan International

Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) (Kawakami, 2002: 32-38). In addition to the government of Japan, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also have acted on peace-building with their own agendas.

To promote "...consolidation of peace and nation-building Japan is making efforts in many countries. Japan's desire to engage in peace-building is a reflection and an extension of its desire to play a more active role in international affairs after the 1991 Gulf War" (Lam, 2004: 5). "During the Cold War, Japan's support for United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKO) was purely financial.[1] The 1990-91 Gulf War demonstrated the immobility of the Japanese policy-making process and acted as the catalyst for a reconsideration of Japan's contribution of military personnel to UNPKO" (Hook et.al. 2005: 382). However, in September 1991 the Japanese government proposed the Law on Cooperation on UN Peace Keeping and Other Operations (Fazil, 2008: 46).

The Peace Keeping Operation Law (PKOL) facilitated the participation of Japanese personnel in a number of peace-keeping and peace-building duties (Hook et.al: 383). Since the early 1990s, Tokyo has embarked on UNPKO in places including Cambodia and East Timor, seeking a mediatory role in interstate conflict (for example, the Spratlys dispute between China and the Philippines) and also intrastate conflict in Burma and Cambodia. In Burma, Japan tried to act as a bridge between the military junta and Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi; in Cambodia, Japan successfully brokered peace between two major (Cambodian) factions after armed conflict erupted between Co-Prime Ministers Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh (Lam, 2004: 5).

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[1] Nevertheless, with the relaxation of East-West tension in the late 1980s, human (civilian) contributions by Japan to UNPKO began: twenty seven civilian were sent to Namibia in October 1989 as part of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group. Thereafter, six Japanese civilians joined UNPKO overseeing the Nicaragua and Haiti elections 1980-90 (Hook and Gilson 2005: 382).

Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme contribution to peace-building has been threefold: economic cooperation through its personnel, cooperation under the International PKOL which is mentioned above, and intellectual contribution in the international arena. Japan's ODA Charter revised in August 2003 stipulates 'peace building' as one of the main pillars in the provision of ODA, and highlights the importance of addressing various causes of conflicts and providing swift and seamless assistance in response to changing situations (MOFA website).

> The Japanese media, public opinion and Japan's East Asian neighbors (especially China and the two Koreas) are sensitive to the dispatch of Japanese troops abroad due to Japan's imperial record including World War II. Peace building diplomacy in Asia, unlike the dispatch of Japanese troops to places like Cambodia and Iraq, stirs neither controversy in domestic politics nor arouses the suspicions of Japan's neighbors. Moreover, the MOFA can also use peace building to burnish its image after being marred by a series of financial scandals (Lam, 2004: 5).

Director, International Peace Cooperation Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Mr. Kawakami had stated in his opinion speech:

> Japan's role in PKO was preceded by considerable public debate, particularly over the issue of whether Self-Defense Forces (SDF) should be used. This was appropriate as it reflected a division in national opinion—a division that continues to exist. Fortunately for us, recent surveys indicate between 70% and 80% of the population today support PKO, but there are still individuals and political parties opposed to or undecided about Japan's PKO participation. This has not happened with peacebuilding. Certainly there are individuals who single out specific shortcomings, but there has been no real public debate or attempt at consensus building regarding Japan's involvement in peace building (2002: 32-38).

The Japanese state of mind is peace-friendly because of their painful experiences of World War II. Therefore, the public mentality of Japan does not support military personnel involvement in international and intrastate conflicts as peacekeepers, but peace-building is mostly a post-war activity with a basic expectation of ceasefire. Therefore, Japanese government prefers committing itself to the peace-building initiatives rather than peace-keeping thanks to their policies in terms of peace-building.

In order to avoid a one-dimensional dependence on the US-Japan Alliance, Tokyo has sought to supplement (not supplant) the coalition with multilateral approaches such as involvement in APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation), ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum), and ASEAN Plus Three; supporting UNPKO; looking for free trade agreements and more recently, peace-building in Asia. Japan's role as a peacemaker also balances domestic and regional perceptions that the country is embarking on a bigger military role as a supporter of the US-led war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Moreover, Tokyo's diplomatic success in Asia including Sri Lanka would counter-balance the view that China stole a march on Japan when it offered a China-ASEAN Free Trade Area proposal to the Southeast Asian countries in 2001. If its efforts at consolidating peace in Asia are successful, Japan could even strengthen its case for earning a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. Against this backdrop, Japan is spending billions of dollars for international peace and security or international development without a proper title of identification. In fact, role of Japan in Asia and the rest of the world generated strong output in terms of economic development. Furthermore, regionally, Japan is facing a real challenge to national security because of the recent North Korean atomic test. In the long-term, Japan should be strengthening its economy to compete with the rapid economic development of its neighbours China and South Korea, Japan needs proper identity to act as a peaceful international

force with its economic power. Japan's contribution to economic development and peace-making around the world might make it a permanent member of the UN Security Council, with it being the second largest contributor to the UN's regular budget except the United States.

Japan's Role in Sri Lanka

Since its independence in 1948, Sri Lanka has maintained its political system as a democratic country and has also promoted economic liberalisation and structural reform at an earliest stage among South Asian countries. Japan-Sri Lanka diplomatic relations go back to 1952, and Japan continue to support and maintain that relationship with Sri Lanka ever since.

Japan has been helping Sri Lanka's efforts for a negotiated political solution regarding the ethnic issue in the country and has extended ODA for facilitating the strengthening of peace and assisting socio-economic development in the country. Japan hopes to provide assistance in much needed rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation in the post-conflict situation in the country primarily in the north and east.

Japan's ODA policy to Sri Lanka is stipulated in Outline of Japan's ODA to Sri Lanka

> Japan's assistance for socio-economic development of Sri Lanka, which is striving for the economic liberalisation, aims to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and political stability in the whole South Asia region as well as securing safe sea lanes for the Japan's oil imports from Middle East. Japan also aims to utilize the assistance to accelerate the peace process (MOFA website).

Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Sri Lanka has grown through the past half-century. Currently, Sri Lanka is a priority

aid recipient country in Southwest Asia, and receives assistance in many forms, including grant aid, technical cooperation and loans.[2] The bulk of all external aid to Sri Lanka is given by Japan which is about 45 percent. In terms of per capita aid, Sri Lanka has received the largest amount in Asia (Chandrasekharan, 2003: 179).

In the matter of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, since the last decade Japan had been frequently motivating both conflicting parties to come together for negotiation. For easier understanding, particular statements since the year 2000 are short listed in the table below.

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[2] Japan's economic assistance to Sri Lanka, both technical and financial, also commenced under the Colombo Plan. Japan's programme of economic assistance to Sri Lanka commenced in the mid-1960s. The first such economic assistance from Japan to Sri Lanka was a Yen-loan *(enshakkan)* of US$ 5 million (1,800 million yen). It was provided as commodity aid *(shohin-enjo)* under the label of technical cooperation *(gijugsu kyoryoku)* in 1965 (Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)). The Japanese aid, which commenced in this manner, increased to $134 million or by about 27 times in 2000, making Japan the largest donor to Sri Lanka. Moreover, Sri Lanka was the eighth largest recipient of Japanese aid, in terms of both grants and loans in the last decade. Japanese grand aid, i.e. funds without any repayment obligations, also started in 1969. This initial assistance took the form of food aid: both $5 million (1,800 million yen). This type of aid also surged at an very rapid rate, raising the total volume of food aid to $37.20 million in 2000, an increase by about 74 times from 1969 (Ratnayake, 2003: 193-99).

The period 1977-2000 witnessed a dramatic surge, in general, of total ODA flows into Sri Lanka and in particular, of Japanese aid. During this period, both grant aid and loan assistance from Japan increased significantly. The cumulative volume of Japanese ODA disbursement to Sri Lanka (1997-2000) reached $3,073.94 million during this period (Ratnayake, 198-99). Between 1999 and 2002, just $ 25 million of Japanese aid reached areas in the war-affected north and east of the country, despite their growing humanitarian needs. Total aid from Japan was some $1.15 billion during the same period (Suvendrini Kakuchi, 2003).

Table. Japan's Early Encouragements of Peace in Sri Lanka

Date	Ministry Official	Statement
18 May 2000	Statement by the Press Secretary/Director-General for Press and Public Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the situation in Sri Lanka	The Government of Japan is gravely concerned about the current situation in the Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka. The Government of Japan strongly urges both the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to exert the utmost self-restraint and take reasonable steps to prevent the continued fighting from causing sufferings to the ordinary people. The Government of Japan eagerly hopes that the two parties will, through negotiations under Norway's facilitation, surmount the present crisis to take a definite step toward a peaceful solution of their ethnic conflicts.
22 February 2002	Mr. Norio Hattori, Press Secretary of MOFA	Statement released regarding the Formal Ceasefire Agreement in Sri Lanka.
15 August 2002	Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Minister for Foreign Affairs	Regarding the commencement of peace talks between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE): The Government of Japan welcomes the fact that the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), through the facilitation of the Government of Norway, have agreed to commence formal talks in order to resolve the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. Appreciating that this agreement.... The Government of Japan will continue peace-building assistance. Japan reiterates its readiness that once a durable peace is established, Japan will spare no efforts to extend cooperation toward the reconstruction and rehabilitation of those areas (North and East).

Source: MOFA Website

While Norway has been a facilitator in keeping the talks going since February 2000, Japan's active involvement dates from the post-Cease Fire Agreement in February 2002 (Lam, 2004: 8). When the peace process began, Japan became one of the most active members of the international community, which has demonstrated a keen interest in establishing peace on the island (Edirippulige, 2003, 2(2): 6-7).

In July 2002, Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Tyronne Fernando wrote to Kawaguchi seeking a role for Japan in Sri Lanka's peace process. However, Tokyo responded to that proposal only in 28 October 2002 taking more than three months to respond to Sri Lanka's request. Mediation is possible when there is a request from the conflicting parties. Bercovitch described mediation is a process of conflict management where conflicting actors or their representatives ask for assistance or accept an offered assistance, from individuals, groups, states or organisations (1992: 7). Bercovitch's view clearly explains that Japan had been invited by the Sri Lankan government to take a mediatory role in its internal conflict and also that the LTTE accepted it.[3] Therefore, the Japanese government made the following necessary arrangements and efforts.[4]

At a cabinet meeting on 25 October 2002, the government of Japan appointed Mr. Yasushi Akashi,[5] former Undersecretary General of the

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3 Japan's deepening involvement in the peace process was welcomed by the Liberation Tigers too (TamilNet, 19 March 2003).

4 Akashi's statement/speech at a donor-supported conference in Oslo on 26 November 2002: On the basis of the request made by the Sri Lankan Government, Japan will positively involve itself in reconstruction support in the north and east, while we appeal to the two parties to achieve sustainable peace, and we will do our share to contribute to the progress in process.

5 He was the first Japanese citizen to join the United Nations Secretariat in 1957 and was Under-secretary- General in various capacities in the United Nations. In 1992-93 he was chief of UNTAC in Kampuchea, chief of UNPOFOR in Yugoslavia in 1993. Since 1999 he has served as chairman of the Japan Centre for Conflict Prevention. He comes in, therefore, with considerable experience in conflict resolution.

United Nations, as a Representative of the Government of Japan, with a view to contributing to Peace-building, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction in Sri Lanka (MOFA, 2002). Mr. Akashi has made more than 19 visits to the island since then (MOFA, 2009). He had made efforts to negotiate both conflicting parties and also has urged them to take a constructive approach towards direct talks.

Most interestingly, Japan's approach towards intrastate conflicts is reflected in recent comments made by Akashi which is a drastic change that has taken place in term of Japan's policy. Akashi goes on to say that "Japan will no longer be satisfied with writing out checks. We wish to be involved in the action too" (Edirippulige, 2003).[6]

Akashi also became the prime advisor to the Sub-Committee on Immediate Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Needs in the North and East (SIHRN) established by GOSL and LTTE with the collaboration of the international community to offer tangible benefits to civilians living in those contested regions. "Besides establishing rapport with Colombo and the LTTE, he also sought international support for the Sri Lankan peace process. Akashi also visited the US, India, Norway and the United Nations for this purpose" (Lam, 2004: 10). Adding weight to Akashi's diplomatic efforts, Foreign Minister Kawaguchi visited Sri Lanka in January 2003; met with government leaders and toured the war-devastated northern town of Jaffna.

Japan hosted the sixth round of peace talks between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE from 18 to 21 March 2003 in Hakone. It organised the Tokyo Donor Conference in Tokyo held on 9 and 10

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[6] The drastic change taken place in Japan's approach towards intrastate conflicts is reflected in recent comments made by Akashi, "Japan will no longer be satisfied with writing out checks. We wish to be involved in the action too." Proof for such a shift is Japan's recent involvement in conflicts, apart from Sri Lanka, in Afghanistan, East Timor, Ache in Indonesia and southern Mindanao in the Philippines (Edirippulige, *Asia Times*, Hong Kong, 19 March 2003, http://www.atimes.com).

June of 2003 for the reconstruction and development of Sri Lanka. At the Conference Japan's Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi stated that Japan had been actively engaged in current efforts to build peace in Sri Lanka even before a formal peace agreement was concluded. He also pointed out that the purpose of the Tokyo Conference is in line with this initiative and that Japan will continue to make such endeavours throughout the world (US State Department Website).

Japan's Collaborative Engagement in Sri Lanka with Other International Actors

Diplomatic engagement on Sri Lanka has been characterised by almost weekly statements from some of the most powerful governments around the world, including the US, Britain, Japan and the regional power, India. Therefore, after certain early stages of the entry of Norway as the peace facilitator, it was considered important to have some major wealthy countries for a strong backing for Sri Lanka's peace initiative and strengthen their efforts in the implementation of any agreement between the two parties at conflict (Fazil, 2008: 59). In addition to that, in the second round of talks in November 2002, the GOSL and the LTTE jointly asked for international help to reconstruct the war-torn island. In April 2003, the GOSL announced that it needed US$ 1.3 billion to rebuild the country before it attended a preliminary donor conference in Washington.

The Tokyo Donors Conference on Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka was scheduled to take place in June 2003. The LTTE was excluded from taking part in the preparatory meeting of the Conference which was to be held in Washington as the United States has proscribed the group as a foreign terrorist organisation. The LTTE, rather unexpectedly, announced that it was pulling out from talks in April 2003. Although the ostensible reason was exclusion from the Washington donors' conference, this seemed more excuse than explanation. Despite this high degree of internationalisation, the peace

process has been anything but smooth, particularly after the LTTE pulled out of peace talks in April 2003, a year after the CFA was signed in February 2002 (Pirani and Kadirgamar, 2006:1789). The GOSL, Norway and Japan worked until the last minute to persuade the LTTE to send a delegation to the Conference but their efforts did not bear fruit.

This has been further accentuated by the engagement of multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU). The engagement of the international development community, led by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and many of the bilateral aid agencies, yielded pledges of 4.5 billion dollars in reconstruction and development aid at the Tokyo Donor Conference of June 2003. As time progressed towards the need of very important and tough periods of diplomacy and incentives, the Tokyo Donor Conference took shape in the form of three countries, namely the United States, Japan and Norway together with the European Union, assuming the mantle of Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference (Fazil, 2008: 59)

The tsunami reconstruction aid amounted to 2 billion dollars at the Development Forum in May 2005 (Sri Lanka Development Forum 2005) (Pirani and Kadirgamar, 1789). There was an influx of international NGOs and humanitarian organisations of the UN into Sri Lanka, initially with the peace process in 2002, and then soon after the tsunami of December 2004. This diplomatic, developmental and humanitarian engagement from international actors has led to both a high internationalisation of the Norwegian peace process as well as the political economy of Sri Lanka. The high level of investment in Sri Lanka's finances, resources and people suggests that the international community desires to make a success story out of Sri Lanka's peace process through post-conflict reconstruction and development.

The international community advocated bringing peace to Sri Lanka by pledging aid. At the same time, it has proscribed the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. Now the LTTE is listed as a foreign terrorist organisation in countries such as India, the US, UK and more recently in Canada and the EU (Shastri, 2009: 90). As a consequence, the LTTE faced severe international setbacks particularly, after 11 September 2001. As a result of the EU ban, the LTTE demanded the EU member states, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, forming the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) to leave the country. The Tamil tigers claimed that the three countries could not act neutrally towards the group when observing the ceasefire. The number of peace observers with the SLMM was reduced radically when the three EU members were forced to leave Sri Lanka on 1 September 2006.[7]

In the previous sections above, we have studied Japan's peace-making and peace-building roles in the world context and the recent peace negotiation process of Sri Lanka. Japan's involvement with the Norway has strengthened a stronger negotiation process. The Norwegian and Japan's peace initiatives helped Sri Lanka to grab international limelight, which channelled the international financial assistance into post-war reconstruction activities. However, the brokered Cease Fire Agreement is on the brink of being collapsed since the GOSL and the LTTE

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[7] Negotiations handled by the SLMM had largely broken down by the time the LTTE refused to take part in April's Oslo talks in 2003. Then in May 2003, the European Union joined the United States, the United Kingdom, India, Canada, and Australia in listing the Tigers as a terrorist organisation, in effect stopping the flow of funds from the Tamil diaspora in Europe to the militants. The LTTE retaliated by demanding EU members of the SLMM withdraw, halving the size of the body to solely Norwegian and Icelandic nationals. The SLMM has also lost ground with the Sri Lankan government, which rejected the monitors' claims that the military had a role in a massacre of Tamil aid workers in Muttur. Teresita C. Schaeffer, former U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and director of the South Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says the SLMM has become irrelevant.

prepares for a renewed civil war once again. The next section analyses the above discussed Sri Lankan conflict and peace negotiations by applying the theoretical framework to understand the effectiveness of Japan's peace-building efforts in Sri Lanka.

Effectiveness of Japan's Peace-Building

Japan's efforts in Sri Lanka pushed forward its negotiation process to a certain extent. Pushing forward is interpreted as working as a mediator between the conflicting parties with a goal to take them to the negotiation table, supporting them to make useful discussion and mainly working as a peace broker. Japan's government representative and Japan's embassy in Sri Lanka have continuously pushed the GOSL and the LTTE to cooperate and participate in a productive way. Whenever Mr. Akashi visited Sri Lanka he met the President, Prime Minister, other ministers and government officials (TamilWin 2007). He also visited to Vanni and met the LTTE leader Prabhakaran, political leaders and other high-ranking militant leaders.[8] After the visit, he shared both side's views and highlighted the Japanese government's views and assistance. Both sides respected him and especially his efforts in confidence-building among the conflicting parties when the negotiation process stood at a deadlock. The peace processes from 2002 to 2006 are to a certain extent internationalised in that at the event of any important development ambassadors/ high commissioners of developed countries in Colombo gather immediately and release statements and, at times, negotiate with the government and the LTTE (Interview).[9] In the diplomats' meetings for evaluate peace process were held in Colombo, Japan's

[8] Japanese ties with Sri Lanka have traditionally been very government focused. Thus, engagement with the LTTE was obviously a new dimension. There are no legal restrictions on the LTTE in Japan. The movement's legal status does not seem to be an issue of concern to the Japanese government and they maintained contact with Kilinochchi so long as the Sri Lankan government concurs.

[9] Interview, Officer of MOFA 2007 (Iwase, 14-03-2007).

ambassador or its officials are actively involved and try to normalise the situation. In the past, third party could facilitate engagement in the internal conflict; this has been clearly succeeded by the Japanese government and its representatives.

Moreover, the sixth round of peace talks at Hakone, Japan in March 2003 was a very important example of their efforts to negotiate with both protagonists.[10] This was the last dialogue before the LTTE suspended its continued participation in the negotiation process. Japan's new approach of diplomacy directed towards peace-building can be seen through this kind of political role of mediation in this intrastate conflict.

Since the beginning of the peace process in Sri Lanka, the government of Japan and its organisations such as JICA, JBIC and other NGOs/ NPOs have been actively contributing to fulfil humanitarian assistance and reconstruction programmes under peace-building in the war-affected North, East as well as South of Sri Lanka (Interview).[11]

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10 The Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) held the sixth session of peace talks at Hakone, Japan from 18 to 21 March 2003. The parties met amid growing security concerns following recent incidents on land and at sea. While they acknowledged that parallel progress is needed in negotiations on security, economic and political issues, the parties left no doubt that they must now give top priority to improving the security situation, in particular, at sea. The parties undertook to enforce better compliance with the Ceasefire Agreement by their personnel (Press Statement of Royal Norwegian Embassy Berlin, 2003).

11 Interview Officer of JICA (Hiroyuki, 12-10-2006). Since 2002, Japan has utilised ODA positively before a full peace agreement was signed, in order to contribute to the peace process in Sri Lanka. Also, inside and outside of Japan, JICA has strengthened the collaboration with governmental organisations and NGOs providing reconstruction assistance in Sri Lanka through periodical meetings. Utilising these successful results, community development assistance is ongoing in the northern region, where many people became internally displaced by the conflicts. At the same time, community development assistance in the southern region is being considered.

In the process, Japan is sharing her humanitarian or human security assistance with Sri Lanka and has been diplomatically encouraging both parties to come to the negotiation table. As Japanese Government Representative on the Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka describes, "Japan's interest in Sri Lankan peace, as well as development became more focused, more organized, with greater participation of various Japanese entities.... Norway is the diplomatic facilitator, Japan is the aid coordinator so to say, the US has its unquestioned military and political clout, and the European Union combines the resources of Europe" (Akashi, *South Asia Monitor*, 2007).

For Japan, aid is not a means of applying political pressure. Instead, it is a channel for bringing the 'fruits of peace'. This not only involves a peace dividend for the North and East, but for the general economic state of Sri Lanka as a whole. The Japanese argue that there are countrywide connections between peace, economic development and political stability. Economic development (with international support) will help resolve the conflict. Therefore, Japan's peace-building invests its hope on the economic development of Sri Lanka. This was also the logic behind the Tokyo Donor Conference. On 9 and 10 June 2003, Akashi stated,

> ...we sponsored a major international conference on the rehabilitation and development of Sri Lanka that was attended by 51 governments and 22 international organizations, including the UN. So Japan's interest in Sri Lankan peace and development became more focused, more organized, with greater participation of various Japanese entities (Akashi, *South Asia Monitor*, 2007).

The conference issued the 'Tokyo Declaration on Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka.' The Declaration reconfirmed the initiation of the peace process and the introduction of a federal structure within a united Sri Lanka and recognised the role of the conference itself as a donors' community for helping the reconstruction

and development of Sri Lanka as a whole including the northern and eastern regions of the country. The Declaration also underlined the immediate need to establish an interim administrative system and report the result of the conference to the LTTE. In addition, the Declaration also emphasised the concept of 'linkage' between the donor's support and the progress in the peace process in that the donors' assistance could be executed in accordance with the progress in peace-building (JICA, 2006). However, unfortunately the LTTE withdrew from the peace negotiations in April of 2003 that posed a question mark on the pledge of donors (ICG, 2006: 6-8; GOSL, 2002; Goodhand and Klem, 2005: 20).

One of the important outcomes of the Tokyo Donor Conference was the establishment of the Co-Chairs to promote the Sri Lankan peace process on 12 September 2006. The Co-Chairs, representing European Union, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom and Norway are deeply alarmed by the recent deliberate violations of the Ceasefire Agreement by the Parties. These escalated violence resulted in massive and widespread human suffering, including the abuse of human rights, the displacement of innocent citizens, a humanitarian crisis and an exodus of refugees to India. Meanwhile, representative of Japanese government who actively participated in Co-Chairs meetings and makes efforts for the resumption of peace talks between the GOSL and the LTTE. As a result of the Tokyo Donor Conference, it was pledged a large amount (4.0 billion) of aid to Sri Lanka and until July 2006 it was about 20 percent of aid distributed to Sri Lanka (Akashi's Speech, 2006).

In spite of the Japanese government's assumption that the peace process would proceed as per the aspirations of the Tokyo Declaration, the progress of initiating peace has been quite disappointing. The Japanese government expressed "deep concern over the current political crisis, in the backdrop of both Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE blatantly violating CFA, which has kept the Sri Lankan peace talks in suspension" (MOFA, 2004) and they have even

emphasised the continuation of the Tokyo Declaration. "Japan will have to carefully consider and respond to the substantial progress of the peace process," argued the Country Assistance Programme almost the year after Tokyo Conference (Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka website, 2004). However, it was observed that the actual aid disbursement of Japanese government towards Sri Lanka did not link with poor progress of the peace process.

Many projects are being continued in the war-affected North, East and rest of the country. Since 2002, the government of Japan has provided approximately US$ 95 million by way of project assistance for the development and welfare of the Northern and the Eastern areas of Sri Lanka. This includes the 'PEACE Project' for rehabilitation of irrigation facilities, the 'MANRECAP Project' for community development of conflict-affected communities, Non-project Grant Aid for Tsunami rehabilitation etc. (Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka website, 2007). Japan provides humanitarian assistance to war-affected communities[12] and victims of tsunami. In the North of Sri Lanka the Japanese government reconstructed Vavuniya District Hospital which is not only catering to the Vavuniya district but also the whole of Vanni region and a very essential humanitarian need for war-affected local community. According to the outline of 2004 Japan ODA to Sri Lanka, the following projects were completed in Sri Lanka. The construction of new highway bridge at Manampitiya (Grant Aid),[13] Mannar District

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12 The government of Japan has made a donation in kind of 3,175 tonnes of rice for the displaced people in the Northern and Eastern areas of Sri Lanka. The official handing over ceremony was held at Orugodawatte Warehouse on 27 April, 2007. This assistance in kind by the government of Japan was implemented through the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka.

13 The government of Japan has granted over 1,043 million Japanese Yen (approximately Rs. 1,000 million) towards the construction of the new highway bridge at Manampitiya, which was officially commissioned to the Sri Lankan Government on 25 October 2007. The new Manampitiya Peace Bridge is 302 meters in length and 10.4 meters wide. Parallel to the

Rehabilitation and Reconstruction through a community approach project (Technical Assistance) and Vavuniya-Kilinochchi Transmission Line Project (Yen loan) were some of them. Furthermore, the Japanese government funded the reconstruction of the Mannar Bridge and its causeway with a view to enabling the main Mannar Island to be re-connected to the mainland which is one of the most important projects in the country, was opened to the public in March 2010.[14]

The government of Japan has extended further support for humanitarian de-mining activities in Sri Lanka and has provided a grant of US$ 3.2 million (approximately Rs. 358 million) to five International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) in order to accelerate de-mining activities in the North and East in the year 2007. In addition to this grant, in the past Japan has contributed more than US$ 12 million (approximately Rs. 1,342 million) to Sri Lanka for mine clearance activities (MOFA, 2007).[15]

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construction of this new concrete bridge, the approach roads to the bridge have also been constructed to suit the geographical requirements of the bridge, thereby reducing the present traffic congestion and facilitating easy accessibility and faster mobility between North Central Province and Eastern Province. The new Manampitiya Peace Bridge, which has been constructed exclusively for vehicular traffic, will play an important role in accommodating the high volume of traffic on the A11 road, thereby contributing to the overall improvement of the infrastructure and economic growth in the country (Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka, 2007).

14 However, this project, "Reconstruction of Mannar Bridge" must be treated as one of the most important projects in this context. Approximately 40,000 people living in the Mannar Island will be directly benefited by this project by way of safe, smooth and increased inward and outward movement of people and essential commodities. It will also facilitate the resettlement of IDPs from a humanitarian aspect. In this context, the Mannar Bridge could be seen as a "Peace Bridge" which will help the restoration of livelihoods of the conflict affected people and communities in Mannar (Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka, 2007).

15 The Five INGOs are, The Danish De-mining Group (DDG), The Halo Trust, The Mines Advisory Group (MAG), The Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD). The grants were

The costal belt of Sri Lanka (especially Northern and Eastern provinces) was the hardest hit area; a result of the civil war and also the tsunami. Thus, the area was desperately in need of construction and infrastructure development. Japan's humanitarian projects were absolutely appropriate in the area in terms of the needs of the people. A number of valuable tsunami assistance project on relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction were provided by the Japanese government after the tsunami devastation in 2004 in Sri Lanka. Medical equipments, electricity and generators, bridges and causeways, water bowzers and tanks, gully suckers, school reconstruction, 5S training for school administrative system, road reconstruction, vehicles, icing plant, fishing boats and canoes were provided by the Japanese government during the recovery period. Furthermore, Japan established a friendship village in the Eastern Province which was a peculiar initiative undertaken by the Japanese government and it also undertook Kalmunai Township Redevelopment (KTR) Project in 2008 to promote the town to a greater level.

Moreover, despite the fact that the re-escalation of war since 2006 was witnessed, Japanese government tried to push-forward the Sri Lankan government to find a solution through all parties' consensus to the internal ethnic conflict of the Island via bilateral relations. In this context, President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Foreign Minster Rohitha Bogollagama visited Tokyo from 8 to 11 December 2007 and had a discussion with Mr. Fukuda, Prime Minister of Japan and its Foreign Minister Mr. Masahiko Koumura. This discussion mainly focused on the ongoing war, human rights situation, humanitarian issues, economic cooperation and cooperation in the international arena. Further Japan has provided a continuous supply of enormous aid (food aid) to address the post-war humanitarian crisis[16] and also

provided for a period of one year, for de-mining activities in several locations in Jaffna, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu (MOFA website).

16 The government of Japan has decided to extend grant aid (food aid) for vulnerable groups in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (500

implemented the community participatory peace-building projects. To top it all, economic cooperation of the Japanese government in the island is also continuing without any interruptions.

Conclusion

Actually Japan's mediatory role in Sri Lanka reached a deadlock in 2003. Some scholars also argue that Japan's mediation in Sri Lanka has failed. However, Japan's peace-building initiative still continues in Sri Lanka in terms of development assistance and reconstruction in different aspects. Despite the fact there was no prospect for peace dawning in Sri Lanka by the initiative undertaken by the Japanese government in Sri Lanka, it still plays a key role in the aid distribution coupled with other countries. Amidst an escalation of violence in the island (Sri Lankan) since 2006 to May, 2009, there was no sign of completion of the projects being undertaken by Japanese government in the island too. In the mean time, it is observed that there is strong opposition growing from different angles in Sri Lanka for Norwegian peace facilitation, especially from majority community. On the contrary to this scenario, Japan's effort is still appreciated by all Sri

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million yen, 19 December 2007). Mr. Koumura stated that Japan intends to implement economic cooperation to support the medium and long-term economic development, poverty eradication and promotion of the consolidation of peace in Sri Lanka. In this regard, Mr. Koumura explained that Japan will make a formal decision on grant aid of 1,900 million yen next week (14 December 2007). Japan has extended since October 2008 food aid of 5,250 tons of rice to civilians in the northern part of Sri Lanka through the World Food Programme (WFP). On 1 May (Fri), the Government of Japan decided to extend emergency grant aid of up to 4 million dollars (412 million yen) as assistance for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (1 May 2009). Japan intends to implement immediate assistance in cooperation with international organisations such as the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Lankans. To top it up, the healthy climate that prevailed over the last one year in the country in the aftermath of the defeat of terrorism in 2009, provided a venue for more development aids flowing from Japanese government towards Sri Lanka. The recent agreement signed by Sri Lankan government and Japanese Special Envoy Yasuki Akashi on the pledge of US$ 436.4 million for development projects in Sri Lanka by Japanese government is a solid testimony for the continued support of Japanese government in the post war situation in Sri Lanka (Sirilal, 2010). Therefore Japan has a possibility to continue its efforts as a peace broker as well as peace-building contributor.

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Speeches/Lectures

Following resource persons were delivered speech or lecture at the symposium on "Peace-Building in Sri Lanka: Current Situation and Future Prospects" organised by the Outside Europe Research Group, the Japan Foundation and the MEXT Research Grant Programme on 15-06-2006 at the Auditorium, Japan Foundation, Tokyo.

Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Representative of the Government of Japan on Peace Building, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Sri Lanka.

Dr. Jehan Perera, Executive Director, National Peace Council, Sri Lanka.

Dr. S. H. Hasbullah, Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.

Dr. T. Jayasingham, Eastern University, Sri Lanka

Name of the Interviewee

Mr. Tanaka Hiroyuki, Senior Country Officer, Southeast Asia Team, Regional Department II, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (12-10-2006).

Mr. Kiichiro Iwase, Southwest Asia Division Asian and Oceania Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan (14-03-2007).

Informal Conversation and Meeting

Mr.Yasushi Akashi, Representative of the Government of Japan on Peace Building, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Sri Lanka (15-06-2006).

Prof. N. S. Cooray, Graduate School of International Relations, International University of Japan (20-08-2006 & 09-12-2007).

Prof. Kenji Isezaki, Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, Graduate School of Area and Culture Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan (01-02-2007).

Prof. Monte Cassim, President, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan (09-12-2007).