

RECONCILIATION IN POST -WAR SRI LANKA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REPORT OF LESSONS LEARNT AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

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Sri Lanka is multiethnic in character, comprising a Sinhalese majority and three substantive minorities Sri Lankan Tamils, Muslims, Indian-origin Tamils. The country had been experiencing a large scale war over 26 years due to the prolonged nature of ethnic conflict, which finally concluded in 2009 after defeating the LTTE. Soon after the military victory over the LTTE, tasks have been undertaken by national and international initiatives, either bottom up or top down, to rebuild the country thereby constructing long-lasting peace in the nation. Fostering reconciliation is one of the main focuses to bridge the divided ethnic relationships. In order to implement this endeavor, as a prime national level initiative, the government of Sri Lanka started to establish various measures. In this context, establishing structural measures and constructing institutional changes for reconciliation in Sri Lanka are highly needed. Reconciliation is understood as a way for transforming conflict, and structural approach of reconciliation is viewed as a measure that can facilitate psychological change and thereby contribute to constructing a framework for stable peace. With those considerations, this research focuses on the newly formed commission of LLRC and its report as well as recommendations for promoting reconciliation in Sri Lanka by incorporating the major structural issues, stemmed directly for reconciliation and obstacle to implementing. Though this report still considered as an important document to provide an impetus to the ongoing reconciliation process, still there has not been adequate engagement put forward effectively on implementing those respected recommendations on the ground. The objective of the research is to evaluate the reconciliation progress of implementing the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) in six key structural issues. This research is a qualitative study and aimed to evaluate the recommendations of the LLRC in six key structural issues and its implementation deficits. There is probably a large amount of literatures on reconciliation in the post-conflict society. The study results show a strong correlation between security and reconciliation, which has not been closely focused by the school of thought of reconciliation. The study also found that feeling of insecurity associated with structural elements will not engineer and guarantee a genuine reconciliation. Therefore, this study proved that imposing structural measures to ensure the feeling of security has an efficacy to achieve the task of reconciliation. The structural issues are still observed in a greater degree as a legacy of the prolonged nature of the unresolved conflict.

Keywords: Reconciliation, Post-war Sri Lanka, LLRC commission report