

Peace and Reconciliation Efforts in Post War Sri Lanka and the Effectiveness of Transitional Justice in Peace Building as a Reconciliation Mechanism

Ransi Karunarathna¹

Abstract

When Sri Lanka ended the 30 year long civil war in 2009, the international community expected the Sri Lankan government to introduce the reconciliation mechanisms as the war victory was replaced by the rapid development process. Parallel to that, the 2009 government made efforts in rehabilitation of ex-combatants, off the direct violence and their resettlement, but was unable to fortify a persistent mechanism to reconcile the wounded communities. Reconciliation mechanisms were stately introduced to Sri Lanka in 2015 and the transitional justice mechanism was adopted as pledged to the international community. The mechanism was based on four pillars which included Truth seeking, Criminal prosecution, Reparation, and Institutional reform. But the same ethnic tensions among the communities have continued and the minorities who left the country remain distant and they continue to have an impact on international community as the diaspora. The main objective of this study is to understand the peace and reconciliation efforts that have been undertaken in the post war Sri Lanka and further seeks to examine the effectiveness of transitional justice mechanism in peace building. This study is a desk study and data are collected through secondary sources which include review of documents, reports, journal articles and related literature. Considering the findings of the study, the paper argues that, Sri Lanka's transitional justice process has not succeeded as per the desired expectations. Further recommending that the reconciliation mechanism need to be revised and reconstructed by adopting new peace building techniques. Further, providing consistent support and investment in transitional justice, direct government involvement in guaranteeing of non-recurrence, adopting approaches that address gender hierarchies and encouraging local activists and civil society to become stakeholders in transitional justice.

Keywords: *Peace and Reconciliation, Reconciliation Mechanisms, Transitional Justice, Effectiveness*

¹ BA Honours in International Studies, University of Kelaniya
ransikarunarathna94@gmail.com