

K Q



Volume 1, Issue 1
January 2012

The Kadirgamar Quarterly

A PUBLICATION OF LAKSHMAN KADIRGAMAR INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

Messages

Hon. Prof. G.L. Peiris, M.P., Minister of External Affairs



The Kadirgamar Institute was revived in 2011, by the Ministry of External Affairs. The aim is to develop a national think tank to be a very valuable source to the Government. We hope to utilize the excellent facilities the Institute offers to enable academics and professionals to gather and discuss issues of current interest and contribute in a very vigorous and productive way to the effective formulation, implementation and evaluation of national policies with regard to a whole range of issues currently engaging the attention of the Government.

The Institute hosted the Inaugural National Reconciliation Conference, on the 24th of November 2011, during which every significant aspect of reconciliation was discussed. The objective of this conference was to create awareness and begin a conversation about the various reconciliation efforts being conducted from the top level through to the grass root level. One of the outcomes of this conference was the need for a homegrown solution.

The Institute will be holding follow up events on reconciliation, starting with a closer look at how the private sector is contributing to reconciliation on the end of January 2012.

This Institute plans to implement good governance practices, such as public participation through conducting research and holding seminars and discussion forums which would include government sector, private sector, civil society, education institutions, renowned scholars, INGOs and NGOs participation.

It is my devout hope and expectation that we will be able to achieve continuity and make a success of the objectives laid out for the Kadirgamar Institute.



Hon. Neomal Perera, Deputy Minister, Ministry of External Affairs

The achievements of the Kadirgamar Institute, since being revitalized in mid-2011, have been immense thanks to the tireless efforts by the Board of Management and the staff. I am confident that in 2012, the Institute would harness its full potential and begin to fully function as the national think tank by contributing to the advancement of post war Sri Lanka. I would like to wish everyone a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Mr. Karunatilaka Amunugama, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs



The establishment of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS) filled a long felt requirement in Sri Lanka for an institution that was solely dedicated to the research and promotion of international affairs in the country. The rejuvenation of this institution in mid-2011 will no doubt be an immense boon to academics, students, the private and public sectors and all those who focus on crucial issues relating to Sri Lanka's foreign policy and developments in the global arena.

The Board of Management of this esteemed institution has worked tirelessly in the past year to reinvigorate this institution to achieve the objectives set out in the LKIIRSS mandate. In doing so, they have also honoured the ideals espoused by the late Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar after whom this institution is so aptly named.

The Ministry of External Affairs is pleased to be associated with the LKIIRSS and will continue to extend its support to all future activities of the institution. I wish the Board of Management of the LKIIRSS every success in 2012.

Mr. Asanga Abeyagoonasekera, Executive Director, Kadirgamar Institute



I am happy to introduce to you our first bulletin, the KQ: Kadirgamar Quarterly. The Kadirgamar Institute is the only national think tank in Sri Lanka. It was set up to provide information and research for government policy formulation.

This year, we will be focusing more on our research projects and expanding our activities. In addition, we are in the process of linking with local and international think tanks, research and higher education institutions. The bulletin will publish diverse ideas of many individuals from various fields. I am certain that this short bulletin will capture the essence of great minds and in years to come it will be an asset to all of us who seek ideas on various important subjects.

I wish to thank everyone who has assisted us to make all our initiatives successful.

About Us



The Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS) is a multi-disciplinary research organisation dedicated

to analyzing Sri Lanka's strategic interests in the realm of international relations, within the contemporary domestic and global contexts. This Institute functions as a forum for the generation of research and analysis, with a view to providing an input to national policy formulation.

Our Vision

"An Institute for purpose driven researching excellence."

Our Mission

"The core objective of the proposed institute will be to generate broad policy indicators for the guidance of the Government of Sri Lanka, based on research, monitoring and analysis of domestic development as well as Sri Lanka's interface with the external world."



INAUGURAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RECONCILIATION

24TH NOVEMBER 2011

EXCERPTS FROM SPEECHES

Hon. Prof. G.L. Peiris, M.P., Minister of External Affairs



I hope that these proceedings will establish a strong foundation for a national initiative that the government is embarking upon. You are aware that, just three days ago, the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) submitted its report to President Mahinda Rajapaksa. That report is now being studied carefully by the President, whose intention is to present that report to Parliament as early as possible. In any case, this will happen during the current session of Parliament.

The recommendations made in the report, which is a very extensive document, are being studied carefully, and the President, at the time of presentation of this document to Parliament will also ensure that Parliament is informed how the government proposes to deal with the major recommendations. This is very much an ongoing effort on the part of the government.

National Trilingual Policy

In the meantime, other steps are being taken already. For example, the Cabinet of Ministers at its meeting last evening made a series of decisions with regard to the National Trilingual Policy, which the government is committed to. The year 2012 will be characterized as the “year of trilingual unity”. This is a programme to which the President is deeply committed. He has invited the former President of India, Dr. Abdul Kalam, to visit us in January to inaugurate this very timely initiative on the part of the government of Sri Lanka. My colleague, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, who is here on this occasion, is aware that there is already very considerable discussion with Shri Kapil Sibal, India’s Human Resources Minister and we have also worked closely with the government of India with regard to many aspects of this programme, which we believe to be beneficial for Sri Lanka in many respects at this time. All this work is currently being done.

International Community

I would like to sound a note of caution in this regard. I do not think that it is at all necessary or appropriate to bring pressure to bear on the government. For example, statements calling on the government to take this step or that step, or within this timeframe, measures of that kind are not useful, and we believe that they are counterproductive. The government is committed to presenting the report. It will be a public document.

I thought that it would be useful on this occasion for me to share some thoughts with you candidly. The topic that I have been asked to address you on is ‘Reconciliation and the International Community’. It is very much the desire of the government to work closely with the international community. Ours is not a policy of isolation. We want to join the international community and work with them. However, we would also like to point out that, in order to enable this to happen, there are certain attitudes on the part of the international community which would be helpful. At this moment, when we are venturing upon an initiative which has far reaching consequences for our country - and these are measures in which the international community is deeply interested - I thought that the most useful thing I could do on this occasion is to be entirely frank with you, to say we would like to work with the international community, and this is what we would expect of the international community in order to make this possible.

But, at the outset, in this same spirit of candour, which is not only useful but absolutely necessary, I think it is important that the international community listens to the government when we have something to say; when we say it in all honesty, we would expect to be listened to. That is not to say that we necessarily expect agreement or endorsement, but at the very least, the views that are expressed must be seriously reflected upon.

There was a disappointing event which occurred recently. At an important bilateral meeting which was held abroad, there was a frank discussion with the government in question. We noticed that the representative of that government had been fully briefed about the contents of the report which had been prepared by the Panel of Experts appointed by the Secretary General of the United Nations. Naturally, on that occasion, we expected him to know, as well, that there have been responses to this: very detailed documents, on the military aspects, prepared by the Defence Ministry. There was also an equally informative document on the humanitarian aspects; comprehensive documents which had been submitted to the international community.

Constructive Criticism

What we found amazing is that the representative of the government concerned was blissfully unaware of any of this. So we did say, “But all of this material was submitted to your representative in Colombo, and we expected this to be studied by your government.” But that was not the case. The meeting ended on a strange note. We decided to resubmit the whole of this documentation, which had been out there for a long time. It had not received any attention at all. In all candour, we find that disconcerting...

...to read the full speech please visit www.kadirgamarinstitute.lk



The late Honourable Lakshman Kadirgamar was a great servant of this nation, whose determined and selfless contributions to Sri Lanka were tragically cut short by an LTTE sniper in August 2005. During his life, Mr. Kadirgamar strongly believed that “People who live in Sri Lanka are first and foremost Sri Lankans”. As this country builds its future on the foundation of peace resulting from the defeat of terrorism, these are words for us all to remember.

Sri Lanka’s experience with terrorism began in the 1970s. By the time His Excellency the President Mahinda Rajapaksa assumed office in December 2005, terrorist activities in this country had continued for nearly thirty years. During these three decades, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam unleashed waves of terror that caused untold suffering for all Sri Lankans. The list of its atrocities is long. The LTTE carried out ethnic cleansing in the North and parts of the East, brutally driving out more than 100,000 Sinhalese and Muslim civilians from their homes. The LTTE attacked places of worship including the Sri Maha Bodhiya, the Temple of the Tooth, several churches, and also carried out massacres at mosques. The LTTE’s countless attacks on the vulnerable villages near areas they dominated, together with the bombs they unleashed in the rest of the country, killed approximately 9,800 civilians and grievously wounded more than 10,000.

The LTTE continually attacked vital national infrastructure in its bid to disrupt normal life and cause maximum casualties to civilians. Its attack on the Central Bank in the heart of Colombo in 1996 killed 86 and wounded more than 1,300, and it also put at risk the entire financial system, whilst badly damaging much of the financial hub. Its numerous attacks on the Kolonnawa oil refinery, as well as its attacks on the Kelanitissa and Kerawalapitiya power plants were intended to cripple the country by attacking its energy infrastructure. Its attack carried out at the International Airport in 2001 destroyed several passenger aircraft and caused untold damage to the entire tourism industry. Its attack on the Central Bus Stand in Fort killed over 100 people and injured close to 300, and its numerous attacks on train and buses all over the country killed hundreds more, spreading panic in the country at large. The LTTE was relentless in its use of suicide cadres, car bombs, truck bombs, and even light aircraft in carrying out these attacks to destabilise Sri Lankan society, and it showed sophistication and ruthlessness beyond any other terrorist group in the world in pursuing its objectives.

The LTTE’s skill at political assassinations was another defining feature of its campaign of terror. Mr. Alfred Duraiappa, the Mayor of Jaffna, was the LTTE’s first political target in 1975. Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne was killed in a bomb attack carried out in 1991. Former Deputy Minister of Defence Lalith Athulathmudali was killed in 1993. Opposition Presidential Candidate Gamini Dissanayake was killed along with Parliamentarians G. M. Premachandra, Weerasinghe Mallimarachchi, Ossie Abeyagoonasekera, and numerous others in a bombing just before the Presidential Election in 1994. Killings by the LTTE continued through to the recent past, with Ministers D. M. Dassanayake and Jeyaraj Fernandopulle being killed in 2008. The most notable assassinations carried out by the LTTE were the killing of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and the killing of serving Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993. In sum, the LTTE killed seven Cabinet Ministers, 37 Parliamentarians and more than 50 office bearing political figures during its terror campaign. Its intention was to undermine Sri Lanka’s democracy.

The overall impact of the LTTE’s terrorism was devastating. In addition to the thousands of casualties it caused, the aura of fear and uncertainty it created and had a severe impact on all Sri Lankans. In areas outside the LTTE’s control, ordinary peoples’ day-to-day lives were transformed. Parents did not travel together in the same vehicle for fear of orphaning their children by getting caught in a bomb blast. Students’ school attendance dropped every time rumours spread about impending terrorist attacks. Law and order deteriorated as terrorism fostered crime and corruption. The underworld became more powerful and its members gained access to arms and ammunition from various armed groups operating in the country at large. An entire generation grew up under a veil of fear.

In areas under LTTE dominance, matters were even worse. The LTTE did not tolerate any opposition. It assassinated democratic leaders and intellectuals in the Tamil community in order to style itself the sole representative of the Tamil people. In this effort, it killed such democratic politicians as former Opposition Leader A. Amirthalingam, Secretary General of the Tamil United Liberation Front, Mr. Y. Yogeshwaran and Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam of the same party, Mr. Sam Thambimuttu and Mr. K Pathmabanda of the EPRLF.

In addition to moderate politicians, the LTTE also assassinated the leaders of other armed groups in these areas, including C. Thanabalasingham of the TNT, K Sundaram of PLOTE and Sri Sabaratnam of TELO. On occasion, the LTTE even wiped out the entire command structure of groups it saw as opponents. By eliminating all rivals, the LTTE was able to keep the people in the areas it dominated under a virtual dictatorship. Though it pretended, at its height, to have a judicial system and a police force, these were shams constructed to disguise a territory ruled at gunpoint. No one in those areas was truly safe; no one was truly free.

Apart from all this, the simple fact that a ruthless terrorist group was operational in the country and dominated parts of its territory had a devastating impact on Sri Lanka’s prospects. The economy stagnated. Infrastructure development could not be given due priority. Large areas of fertile land were inaccessible for agriculture. Restrictions on sea movements affected the fishing industry. Bad publicity and adverse travel advisories kept tourists away. Industrialisation was virtually halted as both local and foreign investment slowed to a trickle...

...to read the full speech please visit www.kadirgamarinstitute.lk

Prof. Rohan Gunaratna, Head of International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)



“Reconciliation and Social Cohesion”

Sri Lanka must not and cannot afford to rest on its past successes. Sri Lankans, as most do, must not take peace and stability for granted. Peace and stability does not come naturally or accidentally. It requires a huge sacrifice of man hours and expenditure of resources.

Two and a half years ago, the guns fell silent. Not a single act of terrorism has occurred since then. Over ten thousand former terrorists have been rehabilitated, granted an amnesty, and released. Stability and peace has been restored throughout the country. To prevent a recurrence of the past, there is a national consensus that Sri Lanka must move towards reconciliation. There is both national recognition and international endorsement that reconciliation is the way forward for Sri Lanka. Every day, every hour, and every minute, all Sri Lankans must work constantly towards a harmonious living...

...to read the full speech please visit www.kadiringamarinstitute.lk

consensus that Sri Lanka must move towards reconciliation. There is both national recognition and international endorsement that reconciliation is the way forward for Sri Lanka. Every day, every hour, and every minute, all Sri Lankans must work constantly towards a harmonious living...

Prof. Rajiva Wijesingha, M.P.

“Had we but world enough, and time, This coyness, Lady, were no crime”

Andrew Marvell was writing about love or rather, to be blunt, sex. In talking about reconciliation, I should also be talking about love, or rather about charity, the Greek word *Caritas* – as in the enormously helpful NGO of that name – which refers to that universal loving-kindness which the Buddhist concept of *metta* also encompasses.

Caritas requires sympathy as well as understanding, and I believe we can see much of this in action. Unfortunately the theoreticians about reconciliation who seem to dominate the discourse about Sri Lanka seem often bereft of these feelings. On the contrary we see an excess of self - righteousness which takes little account of the actual suffering that must be assuaged.

Reconciliation does require healing, but the wounds that must be healed are those of deprivation rather than resentment. It is in that context that we must understand the distinction we have heard between restorative justice and retributive justice. Those who declare themselves proponents of the latter claim that punishment is required for those who did wrong, but they forget that, on the one hand, many of those guilty of the worst excesses are beyond punishment, and on the other that many of those responsible for manifold deaths were forced into actions for which they cannot be held wholly responsible.

At its simplest, there is no doubt that civilians seeking to escape were fired on and many died. It would not only be impossible, it would also be perverse to engage in protracted investigation of the many LTTE cadres who surrendered, to see if any of them had engaged in such activity. Rather, our stress should be on ensuring that all those who lost loved ones come to terms with their bereavement. This is difficult, and we see from much of the testimony before the LLRC that what concerns people is finding out what happened to their loved ones, not clarifying responsibility for any deaths. And the fact that that search extends back into the last century, the need for clarification that was not satisfied during so many years of war, make it clear what our priorities should be with regard to the past – not punishment but understanding and sympathy...

...to read the full speech please visit www.kadiringamarinstitute.lk



Mr. Mohan Peiris, P.C. / Special Advisor to the Cabinet of Ministers



We in the post-conflict phase had to encapsulate all these aspects of transitional justice into a harmonious mechanism. Whichever way we looked at the definitions, we found that the four pillars of international norms pertaining to transitional justice had to be satisfied in structuring a home grown mechanism. Those four international legal principles would be the communal ‘right to know’, ‘the right to justice and a remedy’, the ‘right to reparations’, and the ‘right to non-recurrence’.

If these four norms are incorporated, we would certainly take into account the needs, expectations and experiences of conflict participants – the perpetrators, victims, survivors and other members of society directly affected by the violence, who are intimately involved in the peace building process.

So an ideal model – the ultimate model as was perceived that incorporated all these principles – was born in the form of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission...

...to read the full speech please visit www.kadiringamarinstitute.lk

DISCUSSION FORUM ON ICT FOR MODERN DAY DIPLOMACY

15TH DECEMBER 2011



ARTICLES BY RESEARCH STAFF AT LAKSHMAN KADIRGAMAR INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

ICT for Modern Day Diplomacy by Iromi Dharmawardhane



“ICT for Modern Day Diplomacy”, a forum recently conducted on the 15th of December, 2011 by the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKIIRSS), exchanged urgently required thought on the profound impact of information communication technology (ICT) on the realm of international diplomacy, and thus the call for a revolution in the manner diplomacy is conducted by Sri Lanka as well. International diplomacy is experiencing a fundamental shift in its operations in the present ICT age, distinguished by the interconnectivity of individuals and swift dissemination of information, i.e. the information society of the 21st century. Diplomatic missions are now required to engage in ‘e-diplomacy’ (develop e-strategies for diplomacy) as a part of their public diplomacy work in foreign countries, as well as incorporate new ICTs in day-to-day diplomatic work by people and institutions at home and representatives abroad for increased speed, reach, effectiveness, as well as security of information communication.

As the Hon. Minister of External Affairs Professor G. L. Peiris aptly expressed at the start of the forum, “New skills are required, as techniques of diplomacy change from time to time”.

Professor Rohan Gunaratna, an expert in Security and Counter-terrorism Studies and a guest speaker at the forum, identified the need for a coherent communication strategy for Sri Lanka and delineated three principal aims to be prioritized as part of Sri Lankan foreign policy; 1) deploying public diplomacy campaigns targeting foreign and social media through the use of new ICTs, as the militarily defunct LTTE now has transformed primarily into a fully-fledged tech-savvy propaganda machine (to engage with the Tamil diaspora, counter reporting against the Sri Lankan State by NGOs and other institutions, and circulate positive news items of stories of reconciliation, reintegration of IDPs, rehabilitation of former terrorist combatants, and reconstruction of infrastructure in the North and East), 2) normalizing relations with Western nations as the LTTE currently enjoys a high profile with them (and that this can be achieved only with dedicated information campaigns by the Sri Lankan state as described above), and 3) establishing dedicated capabilities at the district level in the North and East of Sri Lanka for reconciliation purposes driven by ideas of moderation and tolerance (as some citizens in the North are still driven by false LTTE ideology).

Mr. Asanga Abeyagoonasekera, Executive Director of the LKIIRSS, too recognized the pressing call for a comprehensive, ‘proactive’ communication strategy for Sri Lanka. One which overpowers opposing currents through active participation and sustained engagement with foreign media and web-based social media outlets, in place of the strategy practiced at present of merely blocking ‘anti-government’ internet sites, which is not only ‘reactive’ and narrow in strategy, but will hardly work to contain the information flow in the medium to long-term as other sites carrying the blocked content will continue to mushroom and individuals, globally and in Sri Lanka, are extensively connected through social media and network sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

The speakers at the forum, eminent individuals in the ICT and other fields, delivered noteworthy presentations on how to empower diplomatic work and foreign policy initiatives through the appropriate application of ICTs. In Mr. Chanuka Wategama’s “Web 2.0 as a catalyst in creating advanced international relationships” illustrated how ‘Web 2.0’, which is distinguished by the active participation of internet users with web content, such as with social networking, blogs, internet forums, wikis, and image/ video sharing, has transformed societal structures, from our usual (political/ organizational) hierarchical structures to ‘the people’-represented flat structures. He cited the recent Arab Spring as evidence of this “clash” as it has been dubbed a ‘social media revolution’. Mr. Wategama named examples of how this social phenomenon has already extended to the world of politics and government, where the White House has a channel on YouTube, the President of Iran, Dr. Ahmadinejad is an avid blogger, renowned Indian politician and parliamentarian, Shashi Tharoor tweets, and British healthcare policy reform is debated and discussed on Policy Reform (www.policyforum.co.uk). On the other hand, Mr. Udara Soysa, described how news websites, internet forums, and social networking sites are readily used by terrorist groups such as Al Qaida, Lashkar-e-Toiba, and the Tamil Tigers to “propagate, recruit, fundraise and radicalize populations towards destructive causes”. Indeed, he explained further, state actors and other peace-making bodies can adopt the same line of attack through ICT driven communication using social media and social engineering tools to counter the efforts of such groups. Mr. Yasas Abeywickrama, in his presentation “ICT for Faster Collaboration”, spoke of “21st Century Statecraft” deployed by the United States Department of State as a tool of foreign policy, which aims to combine the use of new social networks and technologies with traditional foreign policy strategy, not only in an effort to extend its diplomatic reach but to embrace innovation through new ICTs in its aid and other programs.

Mr. Kithsiri Gunasekara had formulated 'INTEXT', a twofold ICT strategy for accomplishing our primary foreign policy objectives of "bring[ing] economic prosperity to the citizens" and "safeguard[ing] Sri Lanka's vital interests internationally" as stated by Hon. Minister of External Affairs Prof. G. L. Peiris. He proposed achieving internal ICT connectivity among Sri Lankan citizens and institutions as a means of bringing about economic development and minimizing the 'digital divide', and external connectivity enabling Sri Lankans to join the 'global village' and our foreign policy divisions to reach multiple audiences through the use of new ICTs. With Sri Lanka ranking low globally in "Technology Readiness" at no. 85, he suggested several technologies that can be adopted by government ministries and diplomatic missions such as secure email, IP telephony (integration of mobile and fixed telephony), unified communication (integration of mobile, voice mail, e-mail and fax), establishment of 'contact centres', telepresence video-conferencing, digital signage (for example, to broadcast information to all Sri Lankan diplomatic missions abroad at once), cloud computing and virtualization (allowing employees to work remotely), and content management systems. He concluded with the reminder that successful implementation of new ICTs is the integration of people, processes, and technology in the right way – each element's functionality needing the contribution of the other.

Mr. Vasana Wickremasena spoke about internet governance and security, in his presentation "Freedom, Confidentiality and Diplomacy: a Cyber-legal perspective", pertinent and grave issues with regard to the use of ICTs in government and diplomacy. There are threats to information security on the internet and computer systems, not only through groups such as Wikileaks and Anonymous (which has declared war on various governments and corporations), but with 'zombie attacks' (where one's computer is used by a third party to attack another party) and malicious programs such as viruses, worms, and spyware. Computer crime offences thus include illegal interception of data, using of illegal devices, and unauthorised disclosure of information enabling access to a service. Therefore, he stressed that "users should be up to date with different types of security threats" and that "security is everyone's responsibility". He cited the International Standards Organization (ISO) in suggesting that diplomatic missions and other government entities must "ensure that the information/data can be accessed only by those authorised" and that there are 'nonrepudiation' measures that can be adopted such as digital (electronic) signatures, which function as a unique identifier for an individual, like one's signature.

As such, ICT use and readiness of the diplomatic arm of Sri Lanka including its foreign missions seem to be lagging a few steps back. In this light, the speakers illustrated the need to connect various stakeholders involved in Sri Lankan diplomacy, i.e. the Ministry of External Affairs and its departments and other related ministries, Sri Lankan diplomatic missions abroad, foreign missions in Sri Lanka, as well as traditional media and social media and thus the global community with the use of new ICTs, for increased coordination, collaboration, and productivity. Information communication technology (ICT) has always represented a quicker, more effective means of communicating our needs and achieving our objectives with the world around us. Indeed, as new ICTs and how we use them continue to develop, the world becomes a smaller place, and our processes, social, political, and economic, become more interconnected, and more than ever, cannot be dealt with separately, each being a reflection of changes in the others.

Chinese Soft Power Rise and Implications for a Small State such as Sri Lanka by Charuni Ranaweera



Will the 21st century be the 'Asian Century'? The transformational developments in today's Asia focus mainly on a shift of power from West to East in the future. India and China appear to be the emerging giants for Asia, particularly China seems to be the strongest and the most anticipated pioneer in deciding this new world order. In this century we are yet to see the real picture of how the West-East paradigm shift will take place.

Will China shape the new world order in the new century? It has become a much debated topic in the geopolitical atmosphere for a long time. As an ancient dragon waking up from a long slumber, China is awakening and making it felt to its neighbours in the region as well as sending signs for concern to the Western hegemony.

If China is to reach its ambitions or pave way for a 'peaceful rise' what strategies could it be taking? Experts are of the view that it will be a few decades until China reinforces itself to challenge the prevailing Western hegemony through military or hard power means. Thus the concept of 'soft power' strategies gains much attention and requires consideration of policy makers. What would be the likely impact of Chinese soft power for small states in the region or how are they to formulate policies to face the future and protect their sovereign interests?

In the 1990's Joseph Nye first coined the term 'soft power', however the idea has its deep rooted philosophy in the ancient Chinese teaching over a three millennia since the time of Sun Zi (544-496 BC) and Mo Zi (470-390 BC).

China as a nation engaged in diplomatic relations since antiquity and preached regulations in dealing with the external world. Especially in *The Art of War*, the ancient military strategist says it is better to attack the enemy's mind than to attack its fortifications. The best ideas Sun Zi describes are thus currently been identified as soft power resources where people's rationality, morality, values, and aspirations are targeted and influenced. Experts are of the view that these initial characteristics have hardly changed since Sun Zi thus passed the Mao era to the present.

Nye focuses more on culture, ideology, institutions, technology and education as components that become more and more important to hard power where these elements eventually get blurred. Under this background of complex interdependence it is argued that soft power may provide new approaches in analyzing international security or claiming a solid path in the establishment of a new world order for China.

In Sri Lanka, soft power spillovers in the form of development aid, cultural donations, bilateral trade agreements and strengthening of diplomatic and political ties are extremely visible and continue to play a very influential role in the island's post civil war context.

As Nye pointed out, as the attractiveness of policies increase to others, soft power is increasing. Contrary to hard

power soft power is more difficult to yield. Its success depends on the attractiveness, the degree of acceptance and behavioural changes it weaves into other cultures.

The US decision of invading Iraq in 2003 defined the point where American unpopularity soared including in the Islamic world among others. The tarnished American reputation allowed China to enter into the vacuum and engage in image building and strengthening bilateral cooperation throughout the world.

The success of Shanghai Expo and Olympic Games further expresses the active soft power incidences serving its part in a wider global strategy and policies that have been set up for the world. During the Japanese earthquake in March 2011 China was one of the first countries to come to its neighbors' help. It was the same with the Asian Tsunami in 2004 or the flood disasters in Pakistan.

In the field of fast growing communication and information technology the Chinese television channel CCTV is expanding its coverage or leasing out telecasting hours worldwide.

Chinese products attract many Asian markets, brand names such as Haier, Lenovo, Hisense, TCL or Asus in electrical items, automobile or commodity items are abundantly consumed by its Asian neighbours. The introduction of cultural soft power strategies in the form of Chinese language, art or customs such as 'Feng Shui' have gained momentum and are increasing in popularity. In the eighteenth century France commenced spreading the language by establishing 'Alliance Francaise' as their language and culture promoting mechanism as a result became an important indicator of 'French diplomacy' and even today has become an official language in many international institutions such as the UN or EU. After World War II with the spread of American influence their language centres followed suit. Today Chinese is taught in many parts of the world, as promotion of Mandarin as lingua franca language is part of the agenda of the Chinese diplomatic stance. The long term benefits are much and as much as the Roosevelt administration believed that "America's security depended on its ability to speak to and to win the support of people in their countries" when Chinese Mandarin seeps into the already most spoken language of the world its effects are tantalizing (Kurlantzick 2007).

Currently China is vigorously involved in building a positive image. Soft power projections aim at donating cultural institutions, donations to special cultural projects such as archeological excavations, developing the arts and theatre or renovating museums to name a few. China is enhancing its image among its Asian neighbours rapidly. 'Economic interdependence' is yet again a vital aspect of soft power yielding having a larger impact in the international sphere. As China gets heavily engulfed in world trade the 'interdependence' deepens and becomes inevitable. Economic interdependence is already working as a strong determinant in global power politics.

These policy proposals reflect China's soft power bases making a global approach and gaining attention and legitimacy for the world to accept it, thus making the Chinese way of thinking, values and way of life more approachable while supporting its 'peaceful rising', or "peaceful development in creating a 'harmonious world'".

The Chinese presence in post war Sri Lanka is overwhelming. The major infrastructure development projects after the 35 year old civil war Chinese assistance had increased rapidly.

Until December 2011 the most visible Chinese cultural symbol in Colombo was the international exhibition hall, the BMICHA donation in 1967. However, the recently built performing arts theatre complex top the rest, strengthening relations between the two countries, another sign that cultural soft power is charming the Sri Lankan landscape.

In the aftermath of the Tsunami China provided US\$ 300 million worth of foreign donations. In addition, China is offering help in the rehabilitation process of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Gaining chance of the prevailing peace and political stability, China is investing heavily to the extent of exceeding the conventional donors like the WB and ADB and surpassing Japan with 1.2 billion, 54% of the total grants and foreign aid. Sri Lanka's exports to China reached US \$ 72 million for the first nine months of 2010. Compared to the same period in 2009, it is a 52 percent growth of Sri Lankan exports to China.

Development projects by China include the Southern International Airport, highways and railways. A massive investment has been undertaken with the 'Norichchakolai' coal power plant project in the Eastern part of Sri Lanka with Chinese funding.

Trade in Asia is growing lucratively for China and the timing appears to be helpful for China with regards to its future goals. The oil exploration and research for oil fields in the Western belt of Sri Lanka falls in a fine line with the Southern harbour project with China.

Asian countries provide both new markets and alternative routes to the Indian Ocean. Even though the Chinese interest in naval expansion claimed to be mainly in the South China Sea the prominence of the "String of Pearls" brainwave and open discussions about the Chinese strategy to secure sea routes supplying oil from the Middle East and to reach out to untapped energy sources in the region is presently been in much discussion among political and foreign relations circles worldwide. The Southern Harbour project in the South is a pearl in the string along with Bangladesh, Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia.

By expanding development aid and improving bilateral relations in India's immediate neighbourhood, China is at the same time exerting pressure on India and seems to be moving into position itself strategically with a long term vision on Chinese activities in the region. "The String of Pearls" harbour project as well as the inland road structure to Central Asia, China is strengthening its bases and broadening its outreach.

Are the policy makers aware of the soft power yielding and pressure that Sri Lanka is likely to undergo if India feels too threatened? As Chinese presence continues, could not the establishment of an Indian Consulate in the South be aimed to monitor China and to keep it under Indian radar?

To develop and improve economic conditions, have the tradeoffs been factored in and long term effects identified? In the long run how likely will this trend of events affect Sri Lankan political economical and social structures?

As per a small state like Sri Lanka where its unstable political situation has harmed progressive development for decades due to a civil war the need is strong among leadership and civil society for a status quo transformation. As a developing economy not only has the country been placed at a poor bargaining position in international trade, domestically the high inflation rate, unemployment, poverty as well as internally displaced people are costing the government a larger share of its budget. Equally the budget deficit and international debt and interest on loans are key areas of concern as well.

Amidst such a situation and not getting support from the Western powers Sri Lanka is pushed to rely on neighbours such as China and India. These two Asia's fastest-growing economies, are competing for overseas oil and gas reserves to meet their soaring energy demand and expand trade for their high populations. Trade with these giants for small economies such as Sri Lanka is hardly profitable. The improving technologies and skills are difficult to compete for. A strong variation of its export production and investment in higher income generating firms and improvement of its skilled labour force are alternatives for Sri Lanka.

At present, the work in many development projects entails the stationing of a large number of Chinese technicians in Sri Lanka. Such mechanisms would harness the possibilities of exchange of technological know-how in order to improve skilled labour and link modern technology. Discussions should begin to re-adjust the island's position to a win-win trade situation and minimize the negative trade balance with China.

It is therefore imperative that Sri Lanka re-adjusts its position for long term development. It is apparent that Chinese aid on development has a greater weight on western and southern parts of the country, closer to the sea routes and their future objectives. By not realizing the future political agenda of China the power politics will hinder sustainable development leading to degradation in economic and social structures of Sri Lanka. Therefore a balancing of power politics and strong vision and focus in policy implementations will contribute positively to the development of Sri Lanka in the future.

International Trade by Gihan Jayawardana, Student of Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training Institute (BIDI)

International trade is the exchange of capital, goods, and services across international borders or territories. In most countries, such trade represents a significant share of gross domestic product (GDP). While international trade has been present throughout much of history its economic, social, and political importance has been on the rise in recent centuries.

Industrialization, advanced transportation, globalization, multinational corporations and outsourcing are all having a major impact on the international trade system. Increasing international trade is crucial to the continuance of globalization. Without international trade, nations would be limited to the goods and services produced within their own borders. International trade is, in principle, not different from domestic trade as the motivation and the behaviour of parties involved in a trade do not change fundamentally regardless of whether trade is across a border or not. The main difference is that international trade is typically more costly than domestic trade. The reason is that a border typically imposes additional costs such as tariffs, time costs due to border delays and costs associated with country differences such as language, the legal system or culture.

Another difference between domestic and international trade is that factors of production such as capital and labour are typically more mobile within a country than across countries. Thus international trade is mostly restricted to trade in goods and services, and only to a lesser extent to trade in capital, labour or other factors of production. Trade in goods and services can serve as a substitute for trade in factors of production.

Instead of importing a factor of production, a country can import goods that make intensive use of that factor of production and thus embody it. An example is the import of labour-intensive goods by the United States from China. Instead of importing Chinese labour, the United States imports goods that were produced by using Chinese labour. One report in 2010 suggested that international trade was increased when a country hosted a network of immigrants, but the trade effect was weakened when the immigrants became assimilated into their new country. International trade is also a branch of economics, which, together with international finance, forms the larger branch of international economics...

...to read the full article please visit www.kadrigamarinstitute.lk

LAKSHMAN KADIRGAMAR INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

“The Lighthouse”, # 24, Horton Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

☎ (+94) 011 5363501/ 5363502 / 5363503 / 2678474 📠 (+94) 0115363504 ✉ lkiirss@gmail.com

🌐 www.kadrigamarinstitute.lk