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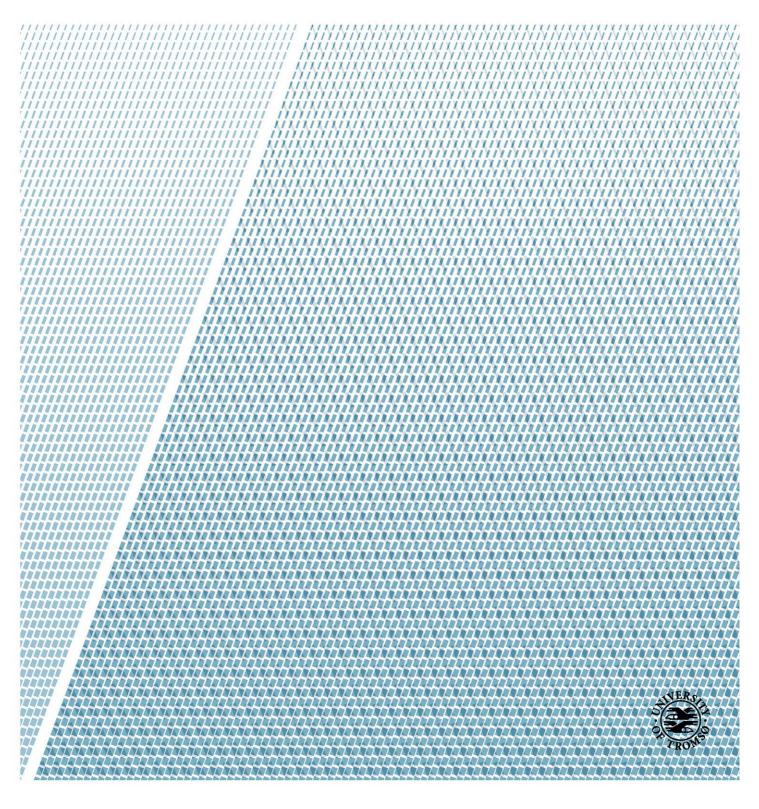
Centre for Peace Studies

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Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in the context of a total victory: elimination or evolution of the concept

The case of Sri Lanka

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I. <u>Introduction</u>

The quality of any research depends to a large extent on the professional and/or personal interest of the researcher(-s). Therefore, I believe it is necessary to start with explaining my motives for choosing the topic for the present paper. This decision was determined by several factors.

The idea to focus on demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) process was inspired by the presentation of the concept by Desmond Molloy, then a Special Research Fellow at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, at the Centre for Peace Studies, University of Tromsø. It was clearly pointed out at the presentation that the general lack of research on DDR (by 2009) was one of the biggest challenges for practitioners to implement the well-intentioned program aimed at establishing short- and/or long-term peace in the aftermath of a military conflict at any part of the world.

The geographical location was chosen partly due to Dr. Molloy's presentation, and also because there seemed to have been a relative neglect (or very limited information provided) by the media on conflict in Sri Lanka compared to information on other parts of the world. Most people in Russia and Norway I have spoken with associate Sri Lanka only with tea production and tourism. Even those who traveled there during the ongoing military conflict, returned unaware of the civil war that was going on for decades. My own lack of knowledge played its part in my choice of the topic: studying International Relations for 5 years in Russia I only got to know about the devastating situation in Sri Lanka when I accidentally met a Sri Lankan student.

This thesis project is an attempt to give a clearer perspective on the meaning of DDR in the context of a total victory (whether this term is even applicable in such a context) and the value of the Sri Lankan case for evolution of the DDR concept; and also to shed more light on the situation in a small Asian country with big challenges and aspirations.

War in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has suffered an almost a thirty-year long civil war between the state army and the resistance movement of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The war was a result of a failure of political resolution to an inter-ethnic conflict between the majority Sinhalese and dominating minority Tamil population of Sri Lanka. The conflict was transformed into a full scale war when one of the Tamil opposition political parties (LTTE)

has turned to a militant group and took up arms to fight for the cause of the Tamil population of Sri Lanka, pursuing sovereignty from the predominantly Sinhalese state. Beside enormous civilian losses, cases of abduction, disappearances and intimidation became a common practice alleged to both fighting sides.

In May 2009 the massive assault of the state army led to a complete defeat of the LTTE military forces, and the end of war was declared. However, the root causes of the conflict were not addressed; discrimination based on ethnicity still prevails, leaving space for fears of resumption of violence.

Methodology

My analysis is based, to a great extent, on the empirical data I have gathered during the fieldwork in Sri Lanka in august – september 2010. I interviewed government officials working with programs concerning ex-combatants as well as representatives of the relevant UN agencies. Among the interviewees were also representatives of the local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who were partly involved and/or had any information about situation with the ex-combatants. Besides, there were held discussions with representatives of the academia and university staff working in the Jaffna[1] in order to check overall awareness of the educated population of post-war recovery in general and DDR in particular. In total, there were conducted 17 interviews, prepared specifically for this research[2].

Besides empirical data, I used newspaper articles when there was need to fill gaps in the narrative.

DDR in Sri Lanka

One of the immediate challenges the government of Sri Lanka was facing at the end of the war was dealing with the remnants of the LTTE army. The concept of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) had been studied by the Sri Lankan authorities years before the end of the war. By the time the government forces announced total defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, it had become clear that the concept had to undergo significant

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1 Jaffna is the capital of the Northern region. The war was predominantly in the Northern and Eastern parts of the country.

2 However, I did not use all of them in the paper, as some respondents had little relevant information on the subject.

transformation fitting into the unique Sri Lankan experience. The disarmament and demobilization parts of the program seemed to lose their relevance in the context of the total victory; a special focus was placed on the R-element of DDR, its development and implementation gives Sri Lanka grounds to claim its significant input into the evolution of the DDR concept.

Structure of the paper

The thesis is divided into 9 chapters. Following the introduction, there is a brief presentation of the conventional understanding of DDR, namely, the UN approach to the concept. Next, I pose a research question of the project. In the fourth chapter, I describe the history of the conflict, and the prerequisites for DDR in its aftermath. Fifth chapter is on methodology with the detailed description of my fieldwork. Here I explain the choice of sampling procedures, data collection techniques, explain how I got access to data, and assess my researcher's status with its strengths and limitations. In the sixth chapter, I present the data collected prior, during and after the fieldwork. In the next chapter I present the theoretical basis for my thesis, where I bring in discussion on the concepts of statehood, human security and peacebuilding, and their relevance for DDR. In the eighth chapter, I analyze the presented findings, employing the given theoretical framework. In conclusion, I give the final remarks on the subject and attempt to answer the research question.

II. DDR: Introduction to the Concept

The purpose of this chapter is to give a general idea of what DDR is about, first and foremost, as it is seen through the lenses of the UN policies and activities, and establish a structure of pre-conditions for DDR, which can later be employed for presenting findings from the fieldwork.

It is hard to disagree that in any post-war environment one of the immediate goals is "to prevent armed conflicts from resuming and keep the (presumed) sources of post-conflict violence and insecurity at bay" in order to make a newly-acquired peace a long-term condition[3]. Peace-building practice of the UN has led to development of special instruments designed to work for this goal. One of such instruments is the concept of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, "a process that contributes to security and stability in a post-conflict recovery context by removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society by finding civilian livelihoods"[4]. It includes a wide spectrum of activities within "political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions"[5].

These are the elements of DDR as they were defined by the Secretary-General in his note to the General Assembly (A/C.5/59/31) in May 2005 and officially accepted by the UN, including reinsertion, the second stage of demobilization[6].

Disarmament is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of

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[3]Muggah, 2009, p.2

[4] IDDRS Framework, 1.20, p. 6

[5] Ibid, 2.10, p. 4

[6] The GoSL has confirmed acceptance of the UN given definition of the DDR presenting it in the National Framework Proposal for Reintegration of Ex-combatants into Civilian Life in Sri Lanka, 2009, p.06

demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is called reinsertion.

Reinsertion is the assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. Reinsertion is a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. While reintegration is a long-term, continuous social and economic process of development, reinsertion is short-term material and/or financial assistance to meet immediate needs, and can last up to one year.

Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance.

DDR is a quite new initiative in the sphere of peace-keeping activities of the UN. It has emerged from the practical necessity to develop new ways of maintaining peace in the post-war environments, making it a long-term possibility. The first DDR operations were sanctioned by the UN Security Council (UNSC) to be launched in parts of southern Africa and Central America around 1990. DDR was then a part of peace-support operations with the sole purpose of demilitarization of the fighting parties in order to prevent re-escalation of the conflicts. After the Cold War, DDR has lost its clear military-oriented contours overlapping with the security sector reforms (SSR)[7] objectives, strengthening of governmental and public institutions, addressing flaws in welfare and social services[8].

Conceptual expansion challenged the feasibility of DDR, especially its R-part: the multiple objectives of the long-term socio-economic development along with incoherent

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[7]SSR is defined in the UN IDDRS Framework (1.20, p. 24) as "the concept involving the design and implementation of strategy for the management of security functions in a democratically accountable, efficient and effective manner to initiate and support reform of the national security infrastructure". Further, it is elaborated in the document (6.10, pp. 1-2) with reference to the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/39) of 23.01.2008 (p. 6) that SSR is a process "led by national authorities" with a purpose to enhance "security of the State and its people without discrimination and with full respect for human rights and the rule of law".

[8] Muggah, 2009.

performance of the involved actors (the UN, regional and international organizations) compromised the very applicability of the concept as such. Furthermore, critics point out the inflexibility of DDR in the specific political and social context (as it is the case in many intervention programs)[9].

In order to address the rising challenges, a new initiative was undertaken by the UN: in 2004-2006 the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) were developed in order "to guarantee coordination and synergy in [DDR] processes among all UN actors", as well as to be responsive "to the dynamic and often volatile post-conflict environment"[10]. It is repeatedly accentuated in the document that the "ultimate aim of DDR is to prevent a return to a violent conflict, i.e., to make peace irreversible"[11]. Practically this aim is carried out through "providing ex-combatants with an alternative to the ways of making a living (livelihoods) and military support networks that they may have relied upon during the conflict, but which are no longer relevant in peacetime"[12].

Preconditions for DDR[13]

The UN IDDRS lists a number of preconditions within the political, economic, social, and security environment which should be at place to ensure that DDR becomes a feasible effort in the post-war reconstruction.

First, the *political will and commitment* of all the decision-making agencies: the national government, all the commanding personnel, civil society organizations and the hosting community, should be well present. This commitment is expressed in the ceasefire/ peace agreement signifying establishment of DDR program and providing "the legally binding political, policy, operational and legal framework for the process"[14]. Besides, such commitment signifies "trust in the peace process [and] willingness of the parties to the

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[9] Ibid.

[10] IDDRS Framework 2.10, p.1

[11] Ibid., p.4

[12] Ibid., p. 3

[13] IDDRS 2.20

[14] IDDRS 2.10, p. 3. In the previous sentence on the same page "the ending of hostilities" along with ceasefire/peace agreement is listed as a basis for establishment of DDR.

conflict to engage in DDR"[15]. In this process the UN often plays part as a mediator assists in the process of implementation of the peace agreement.

As a way to assess a *country's preparedness for DDR* the UN suggests investigating whether violence have been rejected as an option to forward the political agenda of the belligerents, and whether the conflicting parties are ready to constructively engage in peace-building through restructuring political and organizational resources at their disposal.

To create appropriate *social environment*, the UN suggests facilitating "sustainable, community-driven efforts" aimed to transform the mentality on the community and individual levels from war/ violence/ vulnerability discourse towards peace-building/ reconciliation / empowerment rhetoric. It is urgent for all the people affected by the conflict, victims and offenders[16], to learn live in peace, accept this new, for many totally unfamiliar, environment and become actively engaged in the process of the local reconciliation. The local knowledge of conflict resolution methods can be an indispensable tool not only for reversing violence but also for general social cohesion and restoring the reliance on and respect for the local traditions and customs.

When it comes to the *economic environment*, it is well expected that its post-war deteriorated condition creates a serious challenge for political and social development processes. Destroyed economic capacities and livelihoods, unemployment, lack of basic resources, infrastructure and service present the environment where ex-combatants, many accustomed to making a living by the gun, are reintegrated… It is accentuated in the IDDRS that success of the economic reintegration "is based on an assessment of local conditions and economic opportunities" followed by facilitation of "training, […] employment opportunities and […] secure environment in which entrepreneurship can flourish"[17].

The *security climate* in the immediate post-war period has a high potential for revert of violence reinforced by the presence of a large number of weapons. Besides, the post-war setting is charged with "a culture of violence" that has been well bred among ex-combatants and facilitated by malfunctioning law enforcement and judiciary structures. In this context,

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[15] Ibid., p. 1

[16] The distinction between the two categories is often vague if not completely absent, as the statuses are often overlapping, e.g. children associated with armed forces who may have committed atrocities and still fall under the 'victim of war' category.

[17] Ibid., p.4

DDR is meant "to reduce armed violence, in collaboration with other peace-building efforts, including justice and security sector reform"[18].

Overall UN approach to DDR[19] prescribes that the process should be:

- people-centred;
- flexible, accountable and transparent;
- nationally owned;
- integrated;
- well planned.

People-centred

Beneficiaries of DDR, especially the Reintegration part are listed as follows:

- male and female adult combatants;
- children associated with armed forces and groups;
- those working in non-combat roles (including women);
- ex-combatants with disabilities and chronic illnesses;
- dependents[20].

It is additionally accentuated that communities where beneficiaries return to, are as inseparable from the reintegration process as beneficiaries themselves, for 'reintegration into civil society' is not possible without including that 'civil society' into the package.

As DDR's beneficiaries belong to various types of people, depending on gender, age, roles and responsibilities within the armed forces, physical and mental health, the UN considers it essential to work out special assistance strategies for each group according to their specific needs (e.g., special reintegration package for children, special facilities for people with disabilities, etc.). Needless to say, that despite different provisions for various groups, it is obligatory to avoid discrimination and unequal treatment: people with similar needs should have equal access to the same provisions, regardless their age, gender, ethnicity, religious or political affiliations, etc.[21]

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[18] Ibid., p.5

[19] Ibid., p.2

[20] Ibid., p.7

[21] Ibid., p.8

There is a call to pay special attention to former commanders who may affect people's willingness and readiness to participate in DDR, and may act as potential 'spoilers'. As one of the ways to gain their favour, 'special packages' are suggested. However, this may be a sensitive issue in light of the principle of justice that does not allow the most vicious perpetrators go unpunished. The UN emphasizes that "DDR programmes do not operate as a reward system for the worst violators"[22]. Therefore, such cases should be negotiated on an individual basis.

The UN insists that children associated with armed forces should be immediately and unconditionally released, even outside the scope of the peace-building or DDR process.

It is repeatedly accentuated in the IDDRS that the "primary objective of DDR is to increase human security", establishing respect for international humanitarian law and human rights of all participants as the basis for a DDR initiative[23]. That principle has implication on the role of the UN in a DDR process. Proclaiming its neutral position and similar treatment to all parties in DDR, the UN reserves its right to protest against violations of human rights of the DDR participants, and act with the goal to prevent such violations[24].

Within the discourse of protection of human rights and adherence to international humanitarian law, the value of the local context is highlighted. It is important to understand the local traditions and perspectives and look at how they are related to the internationally recognized principles of human rights protection, the latter given utmost priority[25].

Flexible, accountable and transparent

As it is not possible to work out a universal pattern for each particular case where DDR is applicable, the DDR program under development should reflect on the local contexts with its specific conditions and needs. Furthermore, it should remain flexible to the changing environment of the country in transition from a volatile to a peaceful climate.

To maintain its flexibility, as well as to rationalize technical and financial support of the donors (both state and private, national and international), transparency in the process of

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[22] Ibid., pp.8,10.

[23] Ibid., p.9

[24] The UN suggests the following forms of protest against human rights violations: "advocacy, simple presence, political steps, local negotiations, [as well as] appropriate remedial action…". Ibid.

[25] Ibid., p. 10

program implementation is essential. Needless to mention that transparency is indispensable for an objective evaluation of the program, measurement and necessary adjustment of its progress.

To ensure transparency of the DDR process, accountability of the implementing agents is required on all levels: adherence of the belligerents to the peace agreement or other DDR framework as well as of all the involved UN agencies to the principles of the IDDRS; accountability of the responsible actors to all the beneficiaries of the program and commitment of all the agents and sponsors to political, technical and financial provisions for the process.

Transparency and accountability are additionally substantiated in connection to funding arrangements: in order to maintain sustainable funding process, the donors and sponsors need clear justification for their investments as well as evaluation of the outcome of the DDR process.

Nationally owned

The UN unequivocally states that "the primary responsibility for the successful outcome of DDR programmes rests with national and local actors"[26]. It implies not only existence of functional governmental institutions but engaging of a variety of state and non-state participants on different administrative levels, from national to communal, in the process of development and implementation of DDR programs. The principle of national ownership of DDR in the UN understanding also calls for empowerment of potentially marginalized groups, e.g. women's and children's advocates, representatives of minority communities, of people with disabilities, etc.

It is important to pay special attention to the role the UN sees itself playing in the context of nationally owned DDR, with an objective "to supply technical assistance, training and financial support to national authorities to establish credible, capable, representative and sustainable national institutions and programmes"[27]. However, this role is described as referring to the political context where "national capacity is usually weak in post-conflict setting", and own national institutions are under-developed to serve the purposes of the DDR program. It does not specify whether and how the UN role would change in the context of a

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[26] Ibid., p. 12

[27] Ibid., p.12

functional governance and strong determination and readiness of the authorities to face the challenges of the country's post-war recovery.

Integrated

It is well expected and understandable that the significance of integration of all activities and strategies on DDR is emphasized in the Integrated DDRS. It implies synergy of plans and actions of all the bodies involved in DDR (the UN agencies, international, state and non-state players, donors). It also means smooth embedding of the DDR into the wider post-war recovery efforts, including appropriate political reforms, restructuring of the security forces and judiciary, economic reconstruction and social reconciliation.

Well planned

Since a DDR program deals with the people who have been/ potentially are a security risk, and is often employed in a compromised security setting, as well as serving its foremost objective of providing human security, security concerns are one important reason for thorough planning of the program. Security and safety considerations refer to all personnel and participants involved in the programme as well as to local community members.

The IDDRS encourages a DDR program to be based on a meticulous study of qualitative and quantitative data on the demographics of the demobilized groups, weapons supplies, development of the conflict in the context of the overall political climate. In order to ensure accountability and transparency within the DDR process, competent assessment and evaluation mechanisms must be adopted. These mechanisms are also indispensable for flexibility of the program.

In addition, IDDRS calls to raise public awareness of the planned DDR in order to ensure public support and national ownership, as well as to encourage "behavioural change, the demilitarization of hearts and minds, and reconciliation between ex-combatants and war-affected communities"[28]. In this context, transparency of the published information should be balanced with audience-orientation when choosing the design of the conveyed messages and means of communication with the recipient public.

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[28] Ibid., p.15

Finally, in the process of DDR planning it should be taken into consideration that DDR, in essence a security and primary development provision, plays only one part (undoubtedly a very significant part!) in a broader peacebuilding and post-war recovery strategies, thus seamless exit from DDR and transition to wider development activities should be thoroughly worked out in advance.

III. Research Question

Sri Lanka presents a unique context for DDR. In most cases, the DDR has been employed by the UN (and related international organizations) in the aftermath of a civil war, upon signing the ceasefire/peace agreement between the belligerent parties. In those cases, DDR has been a part of a peacebuilding initiative in the context of the dysfunctional (or rudimentary) state capacity. Such aggravated conditions provided that the UN played the role of a dominant initiator and conductor of the DDR program. Moreover, in some cases the UN took up functions of a government in order to work on development of basic state institutions, to ensure that the war would not resume once peacebuilders have left the country.

Sri Lanka's case does not fit into these 'conventional' conditions. The state managed to sustain its capacity throughout the war and win a decisive victory over its enemy. The DDR program was initiated at the final stage of the war and focused entirely on the R-part, as the DD-components seemed irrelevant in the context of a total defeat of the adversary. Moreover, the UN and other international organizations hardly participated in implementation of the DDR in Sri Lanka, as the government declared itself to be more competent and equipped for the successful fulfilment of the DDR objectives.

The original idea of the project was to explore the nature of DDR in Sri Lanka, look at the proclaimed statements by the mastermind of the program – the relevant governmental authorities – and compare them with its implementation, relying on the data gained from other actors involved (UN agencies and other NGOs working on the field). However, during the fieldwork it has become clear that the second part of the task (connecting the statements with the facts) was almost impossible to implement, as organizations other than sanctioned by the state authorities, had no or very limited, access to factual data themselves, and had to rely heavily on the data received from the government. Such a condition has affected significantly the focus of the present research paper, shifting it from "search for the truth" to studying the existing rhetoric, and trying to place it within the DDR discourse.

Hence, the research question(-s) has been formulated as following: *Looking at the vision of what is called DDR by the major executor of the program, and considering the context of a total victory, can one still call it DDR? Has the concept of DDR merely been exploited in state's political rhetoric, or does this vision call for evolution of the concept?*

IV. Political Context: from Civil War to DDR

History of the conflict

As it was presented above, DDR originates from the peace-building sphere which for good or for worse is much politicized practically and inevitably depends on the political decision-making body in each particular case. In this chapter I describe briefly the way the conflict in Sri Lanka shaped the political conditions which in turn determined the way DDR has been framed and carried out.

As most of the political conflicts, the Sri Lankan conflict has a multi-faceted nature with the ethnic dimension being the most prominent.

Sri Lanka is a multi-national state with the population consisting of several ethnic groups, who have also remarkable language and religious distinction. The vast majority are Buddhist Sinhalese (around 74% of the population). The second major group is Hindu Tamils (around 18%). There are around 7% Muslims (defined as a separate ethnic group though it is distinct on the basis of religion). There are also around 8% Christians spread among Sinhalese and Tamils as well as other ethnic minority groups[29]. Population of Sri Lanka speaks Sinhalese and Tamil languages respective of their ethnicity. Many Sri Lankans speak only their mother tongue, using English as a link language to communicate with people of other ethnicity. However the English language is considered an elitist feature, it is not available for all, thus leaving many citizens linguistically isolated from people of other ethnicities, what contributes to sharpening distinction borders between ethnic groups on the grassroots level.

In the course of its history Sri Lanka (called Ceylon until 1972) has been colonized subsequently by the Portuguese, Dutch and British rulers. As it was often the case with imperial powers, their policy of 'divide and rule' was effectively applied in Ceylon. The British colonialists favoured a minority group of Tamils, educated them in Christian-mission schools, appointed them at high political positions and developed infrastructure in Tamil dominated regions, thus encouraging inter-ethnic division[30]. The colonialists' attempts of constitutional reforms in the first three decades of the 20th century when they offered to share political power with the Sinhalese majority have not been appreciated by neither Tamil nor Sinhalese parties and led to more turmoil. On a wave of strong moods of nationalism and self-determination in

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[29]Policy Research & Information Unit of the Presidential Secretariat of Sri Lanka, 2008

[30] LankaNewspapers.com, 2007

the post-World War II period Ceylon gained its independence from Britain in 1948. In response to what had been considered as the British favouritism of the Tamils during the colonial times, and as a result of political uncertainty, the Sinhalese nationalism flourished. It was expressed in the political decisions of the Sinhalese government undermining Tamil political and citizenship rights, what led to further intercommunal tensions. Further reforms have followed making Sinhala into the only official language in the country, thus excluding Tamil-speaking population from the realm of political decision-making, reducing their access to university education and key professional positions. Tamil protesters' riots were response to each reform, followed by outburst of civil violence directed against Tamils[31].

By the Constitution of 1972 the name of the country was changed into Sri Lanka, and the discriminatory legislation was reinforced, completing predominance of the Sinhalese rule over Tamils. Therefore, attempts to solve the impending conflict with the political means failed and in the mid-1970s several Tamil activist groups took up arms.

LTTE and the civil war in Sri Lanka

As it is often the case with the political struggle, university students were among the most active protesters against political reforms discriminating Tamils and Tamil-speaking minorities of Sri Lanka. In the early 1970s there were formed several students and youth insurgents groups who incorporated anger and bitterness of the Tamils into their foundation and put it to action. One of such groups was the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), a new political party rapidly gaining sympathy among Tamil people, especially Tamil youth[32]. TULF was among those who were no longer content with the idea of the autonomy of the Tamil regions (Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka populated predominantly by Tamils) within the state of Sri Lanka; they advocated for establishment of a separate "secular, socialist state of Tamil Eelam" making separatism into their political carcass[33]. Unlike other Tamil groups TULF did not limit themselves strictly to legal political activities. Capitalizing on feelings of resentment of the Tamil community and their fading belief in peaceful resolution of their plight, TULF was engaged in recruiting radically tuned youth willing to take up arms to fight their cause.

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[31]Rajasingham, 2001

[32]Hoffman, 2006

[33]Tamil Eelam Demand, presented at the University of London in 1992

After a few internal merges and fragmentations a separatist militant organization of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) emerged with the proclaimed ultimate goal of winning full independence for Tamils and form a separate Tamil state. Velupillai Prabhakaran (1954 – 2009) was the leader of the LTTE since its establishment. Dedicated wholeheartedly to the success of militancy for acquiring Tamil independence, he managed single-handedly to create "elite, ruthlessly efficient, and highly professional fighting force", with the stark discipline and unquestionable loyalty to the organization's leader and the Tamil cause[34].

Unlike numerous Tamil insurgent groups, the LTTE adopted among others the most radical suicide tactic directing their attacks at Sinhalese and pro-government Tamil officials and army personnel. Though their aims were pinpoint, multiple casualties were inevitable, often among civil population. Reaction to those horrifying incidents was increasing intercommunal aggression evolving into country-spread riots. In 1983 the riots have swept throughout the whole country, leaving hundreds killed and thousands injured. This was the beginning of the Sri Lankan civil war ravaging the country in the next quarter of a century.

The LTTE exploited despair of the Tamils affected by violence of the Sinhalese mobs and the army forces, offering them asylum and a chance to avenge their grief by joining the organization. This way the LTTE were gathering strength and popular support.

In 1985 the Sri Lankan government deployed Indian peace-keeping force to regain control of the LTTE-held areas, but they soon withdrew. After a series of high-profile murders[35], there were peace negotiations with the LTTE which, however, did not hinder the next outbreak of violence.

Ever since the beginning of the war there were several attempts of peace negotiations between the LTTE and the GoSL with employment of international mediation and support. The longest ceasefire[36] period in 2002 – 2005 was overshadowed by a devastating tsunami in December 2004 killing 30,000 people. Violence was resumed in 2006. In 2008 government officially stepped out of the Ceasefire agreement and initiated a massive assault in the territories for over a decade held under control of the Tigers[37].

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[34] Hoffman, 2006, p. 139

[35] Assassination of the Indian prime-minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993.

[36] Ceasefire agreement was signed in February 2002, mediated by Norway

[37] BBC News Asia, 2013

This is when the voice of the international community was raised accusing both sides of severe violation of human rights of the civilians living in the battle zone. Throughout the whole war period, the LTTE were known for recruiting women and children into their ranks, including forceful recruitment. At the last period of war when the Army forces were closing in, the Tigers were alleged of using civilians as shield to protect own cadres. According to the UN Panel Report, "Between September 2008 and 19 May 2009 […] Around 330,000 civilians were trapped into an ever decreasing area, fleeing the [large-scale and widespread] shelling [by the Sri Lanka Army] but kept hostage by the LTTE."[38] Tens of thousands died in the last 5 months of war.

Despite the manifested radically militant nature of the LTTE, it would be wrong to picture the organization as a bunch of brain-washed suicide bombers with the sole purpose of destruction and intimidation. According to one of my non-Sri Lankan informants who worked in a humanitarian organization being in close contact with the LTTE for almost the whole duration of the war, the LTTE has managed to build a functional state apparatus with its own judicial, taxation, transportation and education sectors, media and broadcasting system, as well as official international representatives abroad[39]. They established a sort of inter-state relations with the government in Colombo, when governmental officials would negotiate cases with the appointed LTTE administrators on grassroots level, for example in regard to infrastructure or logistics. By early 1990's the LTTE "also consolidated significant popular legitimacy [among Tamil population] by aggressively opposing various social ills and inequities, such as caste oppression and the subordination of women"[40].

When it comes to their military activity, the Tigers claimed that "it is not the policy of the LTTE to attack civilian targets" during their assaults[41]. However, it is hard to take their word for it, as numerous attacks took place in and around Colombo, in heavily populated areas, where civilian losses would obviously be inevitable. As time went by, it was getting clear that population support for the LTTE was no longer there. Whether it was due to their alleged brutal dictatorial rule, expulsion of non-Tamil population from the territories under their control, forceful recruitments (including women and children), or disregard for humanitarian situation

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[38] UN Panel Report On Accountability In Sri Lanka, 2011

[39] LTTE's "state-within-a-state" functioning is also mentioned in Ganguly, 2009, p. ¼, and Bose, 1994.

[40] Bose, 1994, p. 2537.

[41] Hoffman, 2006, p. 144.

in which civilians were dragged into, the result was that people did no longer see them "[as their] sole saviour, fighter, hero and representative"[42]. That, and the rising military pressure and political intolerance in Colombo gradually led to downturn of the LTTE and the seizure of the Tamil territories by the Sri Lankan military, culminating in total defeat of the Tigers and total victory of the state forces at war.

In the aftermath of war

In May 2009 the GoSL declared that "the Forces have finally defeated the LTTE militarily" and the "country has been totally freed" ready to work for the long-anticipated goal "to defend the unity and integrity of the Sri Lankan state"[43]. But the Government's victory was over-shadowed by allegations from the international community (the UN, other humanitarian organizations, and many states) of atrocities committed by the government's forces against civilians and surrendered rebels at the last months of war and in post-war period[44]. Such allegations were voiced back in 2008 when the state military initiated a massive assault in order to bring the war to an end. Already then international panel that had arrived to Sri Lanka on invitation from the GoSL for investigating human rights violations, accused the GoSL in preventing it from doing its work and left the country[45]. Ending war with "the decisive defeat of the terrorism", the GoSL was not praised as it was expecting[46]. Though many supported the idea that "the ends justifies the means" when fighting a separatist movement which threatened the very existence of the State, "intransigence, on-going securitization and local political manoeuvring of the Rajapaksa government[47] have […] transformed and anti-terror military victory into an international political fiasco"[48]. Responding to strong international criticism, the GoSL expelled the UN human rights observers, INGOs staff, international media from the

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[42] Bose, 1994, p. 2537.

[43] Daily News Editorial, 2009

[44] Ganguly, 2009

[45] BBC News Asia, 2013

[46] Molloy, 2011, p.115

[47] Mahinda Rajapaksa is the 5th and current President of Sri Lanka and Commander in Chief of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, first elected in 2005, re-elected in 2010

[48] Molloy, 2011, p. 116

country and enforced local media censorship. Now the concerns were expressed louder "about the violations of the laws of war that paved the way to victory"[49].

The war did not bring relief for all who have been affected. Over 260 thousand displaced people were sent to refugee camps, one of the reasons was to screen those involved with the LTTE and separate them from the rest of the IDPs. The infrastructure and homes destroyed in the last period of war presented more challenges for people returning home. Many pieces of land were dangerous even to step on because of mines. The international support that the GoSL asked for in view of humanitarian crisis in post-war Sri Lanka was dragged into a vicious circle, for the money had to be withheld as a sanction against GoSL unwilling to share data on and grant access to the facilities where the displaced and ex-combatants were being kept[50].

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[49] Ganguly, 2009

[50] Ibid.

V. <u>Methodology</u>

Fieldwork in Sri Lanka

The data for this paper was collected during a 7-week fieldwork in Sri Lanka in August – September 2010. According to the stated topic of the paper, my main focus during the fieldwork was on the vision of the main mastermind of DDR, the government of Sri Lanka, as well as of the UN agencies working in the country and other sources who had relevant information on the subject. The idea of the project to collect qualitative (competent) opinions defined the qualitative nature of the research and the choice of the semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection. Content analysis of the media reports and official documents is employed as a secondary methodological tool.

The choice of Sri Lanka as the study area was determined by the comparative lack of information on Sri Lanka (other than tea production and tourism) provided by the media, especially amid overwhelming number of reports from the African continent, Central Asia and Middle East. Surprisingly enough there are many highly educated people in Europe who have little (if any) idea of the civil war raging in Sri Lanka for almost 30 years. During personal encounters with the Sri Lankans abroad I had a chance to gain first-hand knowledge of the reality in the country, what added up to my academic interest in the area.

The idea to focus on DDR process came during the study programme of Peace and Conflict Transformation. It was inspired by the presentation of the concept and its application by Desmond Molloy, a practitioner expert of DDR working with the UN in different parts of the world. Further exploration of the concept in the course of the study process instigated my interest in the feasibility of DDR in Sri Lanka as the programme had just been launched by the government of Sri Lanka in the immediate post-war environment (few months before I started my study programme in August 2009). The fact that DDR was planned and carried out completely by the initiative and resources of the local authorities, with the UN only allowed to be an advisor and, in some few cases, assistant, presented a unique case in DDR practice, deserving thorough exploration.

Early in the process of research I learnt that DDR could hardly be considered a success story in most cases of its implementation. The sceptical view of the DDR applicability in Sri Lanka was overwhelming among scholars and in the media: DDR is discussed only in terms of its instrumental value to sustain the existing (authoritarian) political regime disregarding post-war restoration of social fabric. During the fieldwork I tried to combine flexibility (take any

opinion as it was) and critical thinking (approaching every opinion critically). I learnt that the above mentioned sceptical approach does not reflect the complexity of the situation and the population of Sri Lanka (depicted as being victimized in the media outside the country) does not unanimously share the idea of failed post-war recovery process in the country.

Based on the findings of the fieldwork, a research question was developed: Does DDR as a concept survive in the case of a total victory where one of the sides of the conflict becomes the mastermind of the program? Having turned into a political tool, does it still carry any value for its stated purposes of post-war recovery?

Study area

The major part of my fieldwork was conducted in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, for a number of reasons. First of all, all the head offices of the relevant governmental and the UN agencies are located there, their staff being my main informants. Secondly, as the capital was never part of the war zone (apart from several incidents), the social environment there is quite relaxed with no limitations of movement or general cautiousness towards foreigners, both tourists and non-tourists. Besides, as the capital and biggest city in the country, Colombo hosts the people of all social backgrounds, including those who fled the war in the North and East. That provided me relatively easy access to informants in order to study the general grass-roots setting for the post-war recovery of the country. One may argue, however, that it would be logical to pursue the latter goal in the area where the war took place and where DDR is actually carried out. And this was one of my objectives for going to the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. The capital had also to be my starting point because as a foreigner I needed to get a special permission to travel north, as my second major destination was the city of Jaffna, the capital of the Northern Province; the war ended in its outskirts. There I aimed at the executive branches of the Colombo authorities involved in DDR planning and activities on the field. Finally, on the way back to Colombo I stopped by the town of Vavuniya in the Vanni district, a part of the Northern Province, mostly affected in the last years of war, in order to visit a few UN field offices.

Sampling procedures

Due to nature of the research, the employed strategy of data collection is *theoretical sampling*, which according to Silverman with reference to Mason "means selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research question, your theoretical

position … and most importantly the explanation or account which you are developing"[51]. Thus, I was choosing the competent informants who had knowledge/ experience relevant to the subject of research.

Bryman with reference to Glaser and Strauss states that theoretical sampling aims at "generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects … data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges"[52]. I went to fieldwork with a general idea of the nature of DDR as a concept and its practical aims obtained from the UN position papers and Sri Lankan DDR framework. It is the data I was receiving and processing along the way that helped me define theoretical implications of my research and directed me further in data collection.

However, theoretical sampling presupposes that a researcher returns to the field to collect data on the basis of the refined hypotheses. Time and financial constraints do not allow me to apply theoretical sampling in full.

The impediment to this sampling strategy in my case was connected to limited accessibility of potential informants: I could not always approach those I targeted and had to additionally apply *snowball sampling*, wherein my initial informants assisted in establishing contacts with others on *their* assumption of relevance. Nevertheless, in several cases I managed to receive assistance in contacting those I specifically identified thus combining the two strategies.

Data collection techniques

I conducted 17 *semi-structured interviews* with individuals specifically arranged for the purpose of the research[53].

My major informants were 4 government officials and 6 of the UN staff engaged in the process of planning and/or implementing DDR in Sri Lanka. I conducted 1 interview in the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms and 2 in the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, the primary DDR executive bodies. I also interviewed one of the members of the TNA (Tamil National Alliance, a political opposition party) who was then a Member of Parliament. Among the UN personnel were representatives of the UN organizations

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[51] Silverman, 2005, pp. 130 – 131; Mason, 1996, pp. 93 - 94

[52] Bryman, 2001, p. 302; Glaser & Strauss, 1967

53 There were arranged another 3 interviews, but have not been conducted for reasons beyond my control.

engaged in planning and assisting the government with DDR, among them are: the IOM, ILO, UNDP, and UNICEF, interviewed in Colombo, Jaffna and Vavuniya. It is important to mention that due to rotation of cadres in both the governmental and the UN offices, I could not approach the people who actually started the programme, but their successors who worked on implementation. It is worth mentioning, because it is widely recognized that the vision of DDR in Sri Lanka has evolved over time and undergone some changes since it was conceived at the beginning.

The interviews were based on somewhat similar questions concerning the overall assessment of DDR in the current political setting of Sri Lanka, the achievements and challenges the government faced in connection to the programme as well as its future perspectives – in order to get an encompassing idea of the overall vision of the government on what DDR in Sri Lanka is/should be.

Among the secondary sources were an international FORUT and a local NGO, both working for community development and poverty reduction, advocating for children's rights and women empowerment[54]. Local academia and students were interviewed in order to test overall awareness (familiarity) and attitudes of the educated population towards post-war recovery in general[55].

The latter is shaped predominantly by the media reports and governmental publications. For this reason, (in addition to the primary goal of exploring government's vision of DDR) apart from interviews, I used another methodological technique, *content analysis* of the governmental documents, local and international media and researchers' reports on the topic. Bryman defines content analysis with reference to Holsti as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages"[56]. It is essential to study both pro- and anti-government discourses in order to draw a big picture, recognizing (and appreciating!) their potential for bias. However, it is important

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54 FORUT is a Norwegian-based international NGO working in Sri Lanka in 1981 – 2012. Representatives of the local NGO requested to not mention their name in my research paper.

55 Additionally, there were also a number of informal conversations with a former IDP resident and with my host family and their relatives who had gone through rehabilitation. Unfortunately their accounts, being interesting in general, do not, in my opinion, relate directly to the topic of my paper; they either repeated what had been said by the more relevant sources or talk on other topics, e.g. IDP situation, resettlement problem etc. Therefore, I did not use all of those accounts in my paper.

56 Bryman, 2001, p. 178; Holsti, 1969.

to emphasize that the purpose of using this technique is not to weigh either view by quantity of confirming texts but simply to convey a certain message recognized in a particular social environment.[57] It is representativeness (variety) of the discourses which is of the value for this research, while only few of the texts are used as sources of factual data.

Access to data and my status: strengths and limitations

As interviews were selected to be the primary sources of data for my research, access to data meant two things for me: access to actual informants and credibility of the data that they may provide. Before fieldwork I anticipated certain challenges connected to the coming trip, as I was a *foreigner* going to study a *politically sensitive topic* in an understandably *tense* political post-war *environment* of the country I was visiting *for the first time*. Therefore, I employed both academic and personal contacts in order not only to progress with the data collection but receive assistance in practical matters (accommodation, transportation, safety, etc.).

As anticipated, the phenomenon of *gate-keeping* played its role in my experience, however only at the initial stage of visa application, when the bureaucratic and time constraints forced me to compromise my official status and travel to Sri Lanka on an accessible tourist visa which by default does not presuppose research activities. Norman mentions the problem of "gaining trust of the dominant government or regime to secure [researcher's] entry into the country"[58]. She recognizes an option of "failing to accurately disclose [researcher's] intentions or entering the state illegally" but warns of "significant risk" imposed upon a researcher and the informants as well as the breach of ethical code[59]. However, she writes about conducting research that involves studying vulnerable groups in a conflict zone. In my case, vulnerable groups (e.g. former combatants and their families) were not in the sample, and the official stance of the government on the studied subject was widely publicized. Besides, the tension and insecurity of the post-war environment in Sri Lanka has been overestimated abroad, but I have not learnt it until I arrived there. Anyway, I diligently followed the advice "to keep low profile" though the document confirming my academic affiliation was always at hand, as I had no intentions to conceal the true purpose of my visit to the country.

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[57] Generally pro-government in Sri Lanka and anti-government abroad.

[58] Norman in Sriram, King, & Mertus, 2009, p. 74

[59] Ibid., p. 75

My official tourist status had immediate implications on selection of informants, the way to approach them and the choice of questions to ask. As governmental officials were my main informants, I had to carefully select the people who would not be too thorough with checking my status (before or after I interviewed them on a politically sensitive topic). This consideration left out some of the officials who could have potentially become my key informants[60]. Access to those officials I managed to interview was granted to me after a request by my contact person via a personal letter; this "personal touch" provided that I was never asked to present a documented permission for data collection. I also had to be careful asking sensitive questions (depending on professional and individual involvement of my informants in the subject under study) both for ethical considerations and to prevent suspicions concerning my status.

I had to learn how to manipulate my status without lying. Paramount is the principle of gaining the 'informed consent' of the participants when a researcher is obliged to provide full information on the topic and purpose of the research as well as his/her position. I introduced myself as a student (what provided me a great deal of respect by my informants and their willingness to share information) and always stated clearly that I collected data strictly for research purposes. This was a very big part of my efforts in building trust as Norman puts it "to assure participants that information will be used appropriately"[61].

Practically, my tourist status was a great advantage as there was no control of movement[62] and I had no difficulties obtaining permission to travel to the North, limited for foreign researchers and media.

Role of a researcher: advantages and challenges
As it had been anticipated beforehand my status of a researcher and personal identity (age, gender, and ethnicity) played an important role in the process of data collection, standing

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[60] e.g. Ministry of Defense has the most of the data I was interested in, but they also are in charge of immigration issues, so approaching them with my research inquiries was out of question for me; besides, it would have drawn unnecessary attention of the military authorities to my informants, assistants and hosts, something I did my best to avoid.

[61] Norman in Sriram, King, & Mertus, 2009, p. 77

[62] At least no control that I detected; prior to and after the fieldwork I would receive warnings of other foreign researchers who have been to Sri Lanka before that it's most likely that I would be constantly watched and followed by relevant governmental authorities.

out as a separate methodological asset. It is generally assumed that a foreign researcher faces more challenges when studying any subject within a given social setting than a local researcher would, because the position of an 'outsider' presupposes that he/she may have misconceptions of or even intolerance to certain features of social life in the area where the study takes place as well as the possibility of mistrust of the participants[63]. My experience was quite the opposite.

Analyzing my accessibility to the participants, I now recognize that my 'foreigner' status was a great advantage. Brown argues that researchers during the fieldwork often become "the object of other people's research", informants are as well interested to "collect information on us, out of professional interest or simply curiosity"[64]. Though my foreignness was obvious in appearance and behavior I never encountered any hostile or suspicious attitudes, to the contrary, friendliness, respect and hospitality were always expressed, both in homes and in the offices. Apart from general attitude, I also realized that it is indeed easier for a foreigner to study such a topic in Sri Lanka than for a local researcher. Whether it is due to colonial mentality (higher respect for a white foreigner than for its own citizens) or willingness to prove its transparency and compliance with the international community, the government seemed eager to share the information I was interested in. By contrast, the UN staff was more reluctant in sharing data because I was an 'outsider' for them too, but it could be as well for the objective reason of the precarious position of the UN in the Sri Lankan political domain.

In my success to receive trustful attitude of my local informants I should also give credit for my nationality, as Russia is a long-lasting ally of Sri Lanka not only in the political domain, but also in the economic and cultural spheres. To the contrary, I had to be careful to reveal my affiliation to a *Norwegian* university, as it is generally considered in Sri Lanka that Norway compromised trust of the Sri Lankan state with its peace-making activities during the war[65].

My gender, age and the fact that I was travelling alone also played an unexpected role in my fieldwork. Instead of anticipated disapproval and mistrust (as it contradicts the traditionally accepted behavior for a young woman in Sri Lanka), I encountered a lot of willingness to assist and absence of suspicion (as I was perceived as a no-threat person). I was

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[63] Norman in Sriram, King, & Mertus, 2009.

[64] Brown in Sriram, King, & Mertus, 2009, p. 213.

[65] Referring to the Ceasefire agreement of 2002 mediated by Norway and participation of Norwegian citizens in activities of INGOs allegedly supporting LTTE.

always treated with great dignity and respect as in the eyes of the participants my academic status overweighed my age and gender characteristics.

Language was another helpful methodological asset. All communication was in English, which is an elitist language in Sri Lanka, spoken predominantly by educated people of high social status who my informants represent. Often I got the impression that one of the reasons people were ready to speak with me was for them to exercise their knowledge of English, what also worked for my benefit. Colonial mentality again played in my favor, in combination with the curiosity of the population that Brown was writing about.

VI. Data presentation

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the fieldwork following the structure given in chapter II, and analyze it using the theoretical framework of the project[66].

After the victory had been achieved, the GoSL faced a major challenge reintegrating "approximately one million people, including those currently displaced, of the Tamil community together with approximately 12,000 former LTTE fighters", according to the ICG figures[67]. Among the burning issues that required immediate attention of the authorities was "to deal with a body of people with combat experience", facilitating their "transition […] as productive and integrated members of their communities"[68]. The post-war political situation in Sri Lanka brought in a new perspective on the meaning of DDR and subsequently its feasibility. As it has been repeatedly said above, the dominant aim of DDR is to prevent re-escalation of violence and make peace an irreversible trajectory. It is interesting to look at how the Sri Lankan government has approached this aim generally and how DDR has been employed in the context of peace-building in the country.

Framework for DDR in Sri Lanka

To begin with, it is important to identify the role of the military victory in Sri Lanka in relation to DDR. Here I would like to remind that the UN envisages the establishment of DDR through the consent between the warring parties to enter into a ceasefire/peace agreement that is meant to provide basic framework for the peace process in general and DDR in particular. That presupposes the voluntary decision on both sides to prevent further outbreaks of violence and facilitate peaceful resolution to the conflict in question. As it is widely known, in May 2009 the Sri Lankan State Forces have completely defeated the remnants of the military forces of the LTTE thus putting "complete full stop to the LTTE in Sri Lanka" and "rescuing all the civilians"[69]. Thus, the question arises on what form the framework for DDR in Sri Lanka would

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66 The original idea was to present the "raw" data in a separate chapter and then conduct analysis separately applying the given theoretical framework. However, I have found it more sufficient to combine data presentation and analysis.

67 Molloy, 2011, p.116.

68 Road Map for DRM in Sri Lanka, 2006, p. 76.

69 Interview with the Commissioner General on Rehabilitation, 2010

take in the absence of a peace agreement which is irrelevant in the context of a complete military extinction of one of the belligerent sides.

The following sub-chapters give an outlook of how the Sri Lankan government approached this question and what framework has been developed for implementation of DDR.

Road Map for Disaster Risk Management in Sri Lanka

It is necessary to mention that preparations for comprehensive DDR process in Sri Lanka started long before the war ended. Already in 2003 when the end of war was still a long way ahead, "the ILO presented a concept paper on reintegration [in particular of children associated with armed forces] to the Ministry of Employment & Labour" of Sri Lanka[70].

In 2006 when the Ceasefire agreement failed and the escalation of violence made the end of war seem a hardly achievable goal, the framework on dealing with the former LTTE cadres (though they were not 'former' at that time) was being prepared. The Road Map for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) developed by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights after the deadly tsunami of 2004 provided project proposals for dealing with the natural and human-made disasters. Among other issues, the document includes a separate project proposal on Reintegration of Ex-Combatants, with some ideas incorporated from the ILO concept paper of 2003. In the Road Map for DRM, it is stressed that "reintegration of ex-combatants is a vital step for any country attempting to step out of a conflict situation"[71]. It is made clear that the relevant authorities have 'done their homework', having studied the similar programs abroad as well as the UN (conventional) framework on DDR, as there are references (though without concrete examples) to DDR programs in other countries. They recognize that "The caveat is that any comprehensive reintegration program [as part of DDR] can be only done within the contours of a peace agreement between the protagonists"[72], and express their intention to build up DDR initiative in Sri Lanka on "the negotiation of a final peace agreement"

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[70] National Framework Proposal for Reintegration of Ex-combatants into Civilian Life in Sri Lanka, 2009, p. 02, referring to "projects aimed at preventing the recruitment of children and supporting the economic reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups in […] Sri Lanka" in ILO's "How-to" Guide On Economic Reintegration, 2010, p. 3.

[71] Road Map for DRM, 2006, p. 76

[72] Ibid., p. 77

in the future[73]. Thus, the document demonstrates willingness of the Sri Lankan authorities to adhere, in the bottom line, to the internationally recognized principles that lie behind the DDR initiatives.

Strictly speaking the document does not provide framework for DDR, rather it emphasizes the necessity for such a framework for later use. It is important however to include it in the list of the documents related to DDR, as it shows the level of awareness of the GoSL of the need to apply DDR in Sri Lanka and its vision of the future challenges and prospects related to ex-combatants.

Governmental Gazettes

According to a governmental official interviewed in the course of the fieldwork, the framework for rehabilitation of ex-combatants is presented in the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 1462/8 issued on September 12, 2006, where the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (BCGR) is established and authorized to take charge of the persons surrendered voluntarily and assigned to go through rehabilitation process before being released from the governmental custody. The same document initiates establishment of the Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers (PARCs) and provision of "appropriate vocational, technical or other training during [rehabilitees'] stay at the Centre"[74]. The period of custody is defined by not exceeding 12 months, with a possibility however, on the recommendation of the Commissioner General on Rehabilitation given to the Ministry of Defense, to extend the period for up to 12 more months.

In the period remaining until the end of war in May 2009, several more Gazettes were published on the issue of rehabilitation of the ex-combatants. In one of these Gazettes, provision is made for the Protective Child Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers separated from those for adults, and with a focus on "the protection and the best interests of [children]"[75]. The document gives quite thorough instructions on each step of the process of custody of a child and the involvement in it of the legal persons and authorities. In the Gazette 'interests of a child' are not limited to the services like health care, psychological counseling, contact with the

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[73] Ibid., p. 76

[74] Gazette, 1462/8, 2006, p. 1A

[75] Gazette 1580/5, 2008, p. 4A

family, obtainment of identification documents and necessary vocational training. It is ordered that children under custody should be "treated with courtesy, consideration and kindness"[76].

National Framework Proposal on Reintegration of Ex-Combatants into Civilian Life in Sri Lanka

When the war was close to an end, the issue of DDR in Sri Lanka was raised again and closely discussed at the highest level. At the end of March 2009 (1,5 months before the complete defeat of the enemy) the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights conducted a workshop with the purpose to initiate development of the National Framework Proposal on Reintegration of Ex-Combatants into Civilian Life in Sri Lanka (NFP), that was to be done in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO)[77]. The government's military victory was already recognized, and it was stated that "a comprehensive reintegration program is the key element that is imperative for the consolidation of peace"[78]. It is notable that at the same workshop, a UN representative, the director of the ILO emphasized the principle of the "national ownership […] of a reintegration process and added that "in Sri Lanka the process is clearly and rightly nationally driven"[79].

The document issued in July 2009 followed by the National Action Plan[80], presented the legal framework for DDR in Sri Lanka. The goals for the process were "to safeguard the human rights of ex-combatants […], increase [their] employability, [and] minimize their risk of socio-economic marginalization"[81]. The ex-combatants were to undergo the process of rehabilitation in the specialized PARCs before being released back to the communities they came from, or other place they wished to move to. The rehabilitation was running under control of the Ministry of Defense while the executive body (running the rehabilitation program) was the BCGR[82]. In the PARCs the state undertook the obligation "to ensure the need for privacy and to provide improved centerbased education, training, health services, and counselling" of

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[76] Ibid.

[77] Daily News, 2009

[78] Ibid., quoting Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights

[79] Ibid.

[80] Issued in October 2009

[81] National Framework Proposal, 2009, p.01

[82] Gazette 1462/8, 2006

ex-combatants in order to prepare them for return to the civilian life[83]. The focus was also on the receiving communities, provision of their social and economic development, as rehabilitation of ex-combatants was "to be complementary to the State's agenda for the reconstruction and development of the North and East and the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan"[84].

As it was said above[85], according to the NFP, the GoSL accepts the UN definition of DDR. However it is pointed out that "sustainability of the program will be highly contingent upon the political environment"[86], what does not oppose IDDRS, but combined with the principle of the national ownership of DDR gives firm grounds to the GoSL for keeping international observers/actors at a considerable distance.

Framework feasibility: why has legal framework not become operational?

It is also important to note that according to the representatives of the UNDP and ILO (who, among other UN agencies, were most active in facilitation of the DDR program in Sri Lanka), that neither NFP nor the subsequent National Action Plan was ever presented before the Parliament, thus the status of the evolved framework remained rather advisory, not binding, giving the GoSL an option not to incorporate it into operational DDR strategies. During the interview, the IOM representative has pointed out that even if they had access to the rehabilitation centers, it would be impossible to provide support without the functional legal framework.

Explaining the reasons for the NFP not becoming operational, the ILO representative pointed at the discrepancy created by the unclear definitions in the document (e.g. difference between 'hard-liner' and 'soft-liner' fighters), and stemming therefrom obscurity with the issue of transitional justice. He mentioned also the conflict of interest between the Ministry of Disaster Management, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Justice, all supervising implementation of DDR. He additionally pointed at the fault in the implementation of the concept, reminding that reintegration should be community- and not Centre-based. However,

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[83] Ibid., p.10

[84] Molloy, 2011, p. 116, referring to the Sri Lankan National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2011-2016.

[85] Ibid., p. 4

[86] Ibid., p. 06

the interviewee noted that the development of the NFP, "was an important achievement as it created a venue to start talking about ex-combatants". Besides, some ideas presented in the document were endorsed by some INGOs and NGOs into their working programs.

The UN Development and Recovery Advisor (UN DRA) in the interview mentioned that the unique feature of the Sri Lankan DDR different from other DDR cases is that the UN here was calling for development of the legal framework, as DDR initiated without it, according to the interviewee, was flawed a priori. In the summer 2010, the Reintegration Technical Advisory Group (RTAG) involving ILO, IOM, UNDP and UNICEF, was established ad hoc in order to assist the GoSL create a new strategy of post-release reintegration. As of the time of the fieldwork, the RTAG was holding monthly meetings with the government officials. The UN DRA and UNDP representative commented on the new document underway, that would differ from the NFP in a way that its focus would be strictly on redefining and substantiating reinsertion and reintegration. They both positively assessed the new development acknowledging the government's willingness to find workable solutions to the pressing challenges of the reintegration process.

Preconditions for DDR in Sri Lanka

Political environment

Referring to the general acknowledgement in the IDDRS that DDR is usually employed in the countries with the malfunctioning political organization in the post-war period, it is notable that when it comes to governance in Sri Lanka, all the representatives of the UN agencies interviewed in 2010 unanimously recognize that the state governance there is strong and steadfast. The democratically elected President and Members of Parliament have all the legitimate assets for political control. The victory in war solidified their recognition by the overwhelming majority of the country's population including members of the Tamil minority, due to "ordinary people's sense that their streets are simply safer than they have been for the past 30 years because of the defeat of the Tamil Tigers"[87].

Since decision-making within DDR sphere rests solely with the GoSL, it is their *political will and commitment* to the process that is being taken into consideration, following

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[87] BBC News Colombo, 2010

the structure from chapter II. Despite the absence of the peace agreement and non-obligatory character of the existing DDR framework documents, the GoSL had been vocal in expression its strong commitment to the problem of dealing with the ex-combatants, according to both government and the UN sources interviewed in Sri Lanka in 2010.

In this regard, it is important to mark that the opinions of the Government sources and the UN representatives on how this commitment is realized differ significantly.

According to the interviewees with the governmental representatives, the position of the State towards the rehabilitees was like of a father towards a prodigal son[88]. In his interview, the CGR talked a lot about understanding and support of the rehabilitees. Such labels as 'ex-combatants', 'child-soldiers', 'cadres' and other definitions associated with their previous lifestyle and activities, were deliberately removed from the dictionary of all the organizations and staff involved in the rehabilitation program. All participants were then called 'rehabilitees', children were referred to as 'victims of war'. "We have identified them, recognized them, were interested in them", "we are trying to bury history", the CGR accentuated.

The UN representatives expressed a somehow different opinion on the commitment of the State to take care of the ex-combatants. Acknowledging this commitment as a fact, they carefully associated it with the acute need of the State for a post-war security ensured through keeping an eye on all the people who might potentially present threat while providing for their immediate needs.

Within the presentation of the political climate, it is essential to note that all interviewees unanimously acknowledged that the ethnic conflict that ignited the civil war, was still present in the country as of the time of the fieldwork. In this regard, the Government sources focused more on potential for unity and "working out to reduce the differences".

The Tamil sources asserted that marginalization of the Tamils was validated through legislation and made stronger in people's minds; some spoke of the possibility of regeneration of the military confrontation. A Jaffna University professor confirmed that Tamils were very dissatisfied because their expectation of the political solution were not met. He added that this discontent was deepened by the heavy presence of Sinhalese-only military among Tamil

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[88] By no means do I intend to be skeptical bringing references to the biblical figures (from the Gospel of Luke 15: 11-32), quite to the contrary, I pay due respect to the authority of a father in the mentality of the Sri Lankans; while this authority is absolute and unquestionable, it implies duty of a father to protect and correct the child on the his/her path.

civilian population in the North; besides he mentioned the process of "settling Sinhalese in the Tamil area". There were those among the Tamil interviewees who unequivocally stated that the GoSL was deliberately giving the lost property of the Tamils to the Sinhalese settlers in order to dilute the Tamil majority. An administrator at the Jaffna University claimed that Sinhalese settlers were given 5000 LKR per person as a 'start-up' assistance from the Government; he believed that the GoSL implemented the "Sinhalese colonization" through bringing in the families of the numerous military personnel for settlement in the North, and promoting Buddhism, building temples, and allowing monks to rewrite history of the region. The above mentioned professor said, however, that if people of any ethnicity wanted to come and buy available land, there should be no hindrance to it on an ethnic basis.

All Tamil interviewees shared the opinion of a representative of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) commenting on the connection between the ethnic conflict and rehabilitation of ex-combatants that "without addressing the cause for which they became combatants, you can't start a rehabilitation program"[89].

Social environment

It is stated in the IDDRS Operational Guide (OG) that "armed conflicts causes enormous loss of human capital, and destroy societies"[90]. Sri Lankan war has not become an exception. Analysing the causes of the war, it is difficult to deny that the conflict still exists, even after the physical violence ceased. Strong ethnic segregation rooted in the colonial era and inherited by the political system of the independent Sri Lanka has exerted its devastating influence on Sri Lanka's capacity of social recovery[91]. At the interviews some Tamil informants (e.g. representative of TNA) insisted that the ethnic conflict has deteriorated as the GoSL, wearing a shining coat of a victor over terrorism, was implicitly granted the right to maintain ethnic dissociation and tighten security measures in the Tamil regions (potentially prone to return to violent separatism) in the name of human security provisions.

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[89] The IOM interviewee in Vavuniya expressed the opinion that was to some extent shared by the Tamil respondents, that if the LTTE held on to the 2002 Ceasefire agreement, stopped violence and supported current president's predecessor (who was more flexible and open towards finding political solution to the crisis), Tamils would have been in a more advantageous position now.

[90] IDDRS OG 2.20, 2010, p. 34

[91] BBC News Asia, 2013

However, there were those among the Tamil interviewees who maintained that the situation has been gradually improving for the Tamils when it comes to access to higher education and lucrative jobs. Some connected the perceived 'improvements' with the reduction of demand from the Tamil people rather than any factual progress towards ethnic equality: a professor from the Jaffna University pointed at how Tamil's demand of a separate state was reduced to request for federalism. He acknowledged the hardships that marginalization created for the Tamil minority, but also reckoned that Tamil's negative stand towards their plight in the country was counterproductive, and instead of furthering any progress, contributed to further aggravation. He further suggested that the focus should be shifted from criticism to possibilities of transformation.

The government sources were more diplomatic in answering the question about ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka; in their responses they focused more on the necessity and potential for "uniting the people" as well as on political solutions being developed to address the "pressing challenges inherited from the past"[92].

The CGR elaborated further that the social cohesion is compromised also within the Tamil communities hosting the former combatants. There was a reluctance (and even fear) to accept those, many of whom started their military "careers" (often with committing atrocities) in their home communities. The IOM working actively with ex-combatants after they are released, confirmed that trust-building within communities remained a big challenge despite the slow shift of attitude towards those who return. The need for psychosocial interventions was emphasized in the NFP, for both the ex-combatants and members of the receiving communities, in order "to create a safe, secure, vibrant, and cohesive environment for civilian life"[93].

Economic environment

It is unquestionable that the outcome of the DDR programme as of any national-scale project depends to a great extent on the economic situation in the country. The impact of an armed conflict is not limited to reduction of human capital through displacement and destruction of infrastructure in the actual conflict area. The effect extends on the national level "reducing production, consumption, wealth and livelihoods"[94].

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[92] Interview with Minister on Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms, 23.08.2010

[93] NFP, 2009, p. 21

[94] IDDRS OG 2.20, 2010, p. 35

The Sri Lankan state's military expenditures estimated at 2,6% of GDP of the country in 2006 laid a heavy burden on the already exhausted economy. The 2008-09 global financial crisis and recession added to the problem[95]. "According to a 2009 estimate by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Sri Lanka's GDP per capita is USD 2,041" placing the country on 119th place by wealth among the 180 countries[96]. This alone defined Sri Lanka as a 'poor country'. Even though the indicator was much higher than that of India (USD 1,033 GDP per capita), an economic giant of Asia and the most powerful neighbor of Sri Lanka, the poverty level in Sri Lanka was critical. According to the UN estimates, 45% of the Sri Lankan population survived on less than USD 2 a day[97]. The strike of tsunami in 2004 increased the economic instability adding to the challenge of provision of basic needs for the people.

General economic insecurity compromised successful fulfillment of reintegration of ex-combatants. Lacking proper education and having little (if any) prior experience of civilian work, they presented a threat of becoming an economic burden on their families and communities rather than an asset. "Crucial to the successful long-term reintegration of ex-combatants in Sri Lanka is the presence of meaningful economic alternatives", it is stated in the NFP[98]. It could be best achieved through increase of their employability (formal education, vocational training) as well as economic maintenance of the receiving communities (creating new work places). Signatories of the NFP agreed that the effect of such initiatives might be significantly extended if they were incorporated in the general community development programs.

Perhaps, the economic reintegration was the one sphere where the GoSL not only allowed the UN to participate but strongly urged to contribute. According to official statistics, within a year after at the end of the war, the Sri Lankan government spent LKR 100 million (over USD 750 thousand) a month for maintenance of the rehabilitees[99]. The further plan was

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[95] CIA Publications, 2010

[96] The Sunday Leader, 2010

[97] Ibid.

[98] 2009, p. 24

[99] The same figures were repeated in the interview to the Sri Lankan newspaper Sunday Observer and published in a press release from the Ministry of Defense and Urban Development in December 2010.

to allocate another USD 14 million on post-rehabilitation support of ex-combatants for the period of 2011-2013[100].

"Until now we have received zero financial contribution from the UN on rehabilitation program of ex-combatants", the CGR said, "and the money is needed"[101]. The UN response in this regard concerned the transparency of the process and accountability of the executive authorities: as the UN agencies had no access to and received no (credible) reports of any project or initiative related to the rehabilitation of ex-combatants as part of the DDR program, they did not wish to give the money without any knowledge of how it would be spent[102].

According to the interviewed UN representatives, the UN was allowed to enter the reintegration phase of DDR only upon the release of ex-combatants from rehabilitation. At this stage, collaboration between the GoSL and the UN was estimated well by both sides: the UN was assisting the government with profiling, provision of basic economic assets (e.g. providing building materials, organizing vocational training, facilitating employment), and medical attendance of the people with special needs. However, the challenge of proper financing persisted even within this sphere, despite the UN's commitment to carry out its obligations of assistance. According to the IOM representative in Colombo, Sri Lanka is generally rated as "a mid-income country, not poor enough to get enough money..."[103].

The end of the physical war has also its negative side. The IOM interviewee pointed at the reluctance of the donor community to support rehabilitees: since the armed conflict ceased, the donors decreased their support to Sri Lanka relocating funds to other places in the world where violence persisted. As one of the ILO staff put it in the interview, "Money goes with a camera" emphasizing the influence of the media's hunt after sensation (coverage of military conflicts) on distribution of donor's support[104]. The IOM staff from Vavuniya noted, in that regard, that the Government was trying to involve the UN just because "the UN brings money",

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[100] Department of Government Information, 2010

[101] interview with Minister of Rehabilitation, 23.08.2010

[102] interview with IOM in Colombo, 13.09.2010

103 Ibid

[104] He added however that lack of donor's interest was also connected to the absence of the operative legal framework providing legal clarity for the process.

however as of the time of the interview there was change in balance: "now the Government can manage without the UN economically"[105].

Security Environment

It is difficult to disagree with the statement in the IDDRS OG that "Violence in many forms [is] likely to continue in post-conflict environments"[106]. Even DDR may not guarantee that violence will not resume[107]. This concern is intertwined with the question posed in chapter II on rejection of violence as a way to promote own agenda (as one of the ways to assess country's preparedness for DDR).

Let's see how such a concern applies in Sri Lanka. On the one hand, the separatist movement has been eliminated, so theoretically there is no one left presumptuous or capable enough to pick up arms against the government forces. With the victory achieved, the government regained its 'monopoly of violence'[108] in the country. Finally, people got exhausted by war. However, despite the claims that the LTTE as a political and military organization has been completely eradicated, the interviews with the officials and other Sri Lankan sources revealed a serious concern that the GoSL had in 2010 about activities of other paramilitary groups who had not yet been fully identified nor neutralized and still presented a security threat, as well as potential revitalization of the LTTE[109]. In this regard, it is notable that the GoSL has incorporated certain paramilitary groups into its political system turning them into allies and allowing weapons possession for the purpose of protection against the Tamil extremists[110].

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[105] Interview with IOM in Vavuniya, 06.09.2010

[106] IDDRS OG 2.20, 2010, p. 36

[107] E.g. in Angola positive development of DDR programme was disrupted by the post-election violence (Porto & Parsons, 2003).

[108] Referring to Weber's distinctive characteristic of statehood

[109] According to the Government sources, the LTTE had been receiving an enormous amount of financial and lobby support from abroad, from the Tamil Diaspora and various paramilitary organizations around the world. With the extinction of the physical activists of the LTTE, the idea of the military campaign in the name of the separate state of Tamil Eelam has not been dissolved, rather entered a latent phase. It may imply that those supporters from abroad are actively working on revitalization of the struggle. This thought has been briefly mentioned during the arranged interviews with the officials and repeatedly confirmed in tête-à-tête conversations with some Tamils.

[110] The most often mentioned in the interviews was the EPDP party whose leader Douglas Devananda had been formerly accused on kidnappings and murder.

Confirming this position, there was a staggering level of the security forces presence in the North and along the way southward of Jaffna when I visited the area in 2010[111]. I spent in Jaffna several days and could walk freely pretty much anywhere. Eye-catching was the appearance of many buildings with signs of shelling, and that at every crossroad there were from one to three gunmen present. The local population didn't seem to mind, they were more interested in me, a foreigner who walks the streets and not peeps out from a shaded window of a UN vehicle. Besides, on the way back to Colombo (by bus and train) there were several check points where, surprisingly enough, the security forces cared only for my travelling documents while going very thoroughly through local people's luggage. There were several signboards on the road about de-mining work in progress; it was strongly recommended to not step over the road margins.

Analyzing the level of insecurity in Sri Lanka in 2010 when the fieldwork was conducted, counterintuitive is the tendency shown in figures of the Global Peace Index (GPI). It seems that Sri Lanka became a more dangerous place in 2010 compared to the last years of war (2007 – 2009)[112]. However, since the GPI calculation includes the level of respect for human rights (beside 22 other indicators influencing the GPI rank of a country), such a result becomes more understandable. Amnesty International lists Sri Lanka among the countries with the worst situation concerning human rights abuse. It is recognized as the failure (or reluctance?) of both the GoSL and the UN to investigate such cases[113]. While international observers are forbidden access to the rehabilitation centres (PARCs), information on human rights violations and extra-judicial detentions and executions in PARCs keeps pouring out. Official response of the GoSL to such allegations is the promise to investigate such cases and punish those responsible for breach of law[114].

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[111] My parents visited Jaffna as tourists in December 2013 – January 2014 and came with the similar impressions of the dense military presence in and around the city, as well as in other Northern regions which I did not have a chance to visit in 2010.

[112] Vision of Humanity, 2010

[113] Amnesty International, 2010

114 Molloy, 2010.

Rehabilitation Program

In his 1,5-hour long interview the Commissioner General on Rehabilitation (CGR) gave me quite a detailed account on how the rehabilitation program had been carried out as of the date of the interview. Main points of this account were confirmed in the office of the Minister of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms (RPR)[115].

As Prabhakaran's last troops were destroyed, there were around 300,000 people in the area. According to both the Minister of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms and CGR, those associated with the LTTE were urged to come out and identify themselves. They were "strongly requested" to surrender voluntarily so that they could be given amnesty and go through rehabilitation program. Otherwise, if they were to be recognized by the security forces, they were to be sent to jail[116]. After surrender and screening through the IDPs, according to the CGR, there were 11696 ex-combatants to be sent to rehabilitation camps (PARCs).

In his interview one of the leaders of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) stated that placement of the former combatants in the PARCs was not legally justified as people "were just held there, in those Centers, without any court order" to validate "detention"[117]. A representative of a local NGO in Vavuniya added that there "was no legal body to represent the detainees".

People-centered:

The categories of the beneficiaries of the Sri Lankan DDR presented in the NFP differ somewhat from the one given by the UN[118]. Here the categories are:

- ex-combatants of the LTTE who were captured and/or arrested;

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115 I find it necessary to repeat again that it was not the purpose of my study to find out the factual truth, but to look at the perspective of the main and only agent of the program, the GoSL, its executive officials, as well as at the reflections of the 'opposition' agencies (UN, NGOs, Tamil political figures) who, though having been excluded from participation, can nevertheless reflect on the general context around the rehabilitation/reintegration processes. Presentation of the data mirrors this purpose.

116 An executive from the Jaffna University in his interview gave a different account on how the surrender happened: he said the army promised to release 1 person for 10 names… no further explanation followed on his part.

117 Interview with Member of Parliament from the Tamil National Alliance, Jaffna, 03.09.2010

118 See chapter II

- members of non-LTTE paramilitary groups who have already demobilized;
- affected/host communities[119].

However, both in the document and during the interviews with the government officials it has been repeatedly pointed out that the special status and needs of the women and children associated with war, as well as of the disabled persons has been taken into consideration in the program.

- LTTE activists who surrendered prior to the conclusion of hostilities;

The following is a list of points addressing the people-centered approach of the Sri Lankan rehabilitation initiative, drawn up on the basis of data from the interviews in the Ministry of RPR and the BCGR[120] and complemented by the relevant comments of other interviewees:

1) The people-centered character of the rehabilitation program was constantly accentuated during the interviews with the executive officials. According to them, the first initiative within the program was to provide *psycho-social and socio-economic profiling* in order to study the current status of the people, their needs, education, skills and expectations; then they were accommodated in the relevant centers (separate for men, women, boys and girls).

The government officials claimed that there was free access for families and community members to the rehabilitees in the PARCs. It was confirmed by the representative of the TNA however he mentioned cases when visitors to the Centers were undergoing interrogation when coming to see their family members.

2) *Disabled rehabilitees* were placed together with the rest to avoid isolation and promote mutual support, while they were provided special facilities, and all necessary medical assistance.

3) During the program the special focus was placed on executing religious activities for representatives of the respective denominations (mostly Hindu and Catholic). The idea behind was to maintain their *personal development and self-value,* as well as show respect for the beliefs of the rehabilitees.

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[119] NFP, 2009, p. 07

[120] In essence, the information provided by the CGR replicates that from the Minister of RPR, but with more details, as the CGR is the immediate executive body of the rehabilitation program.

In line with this intention, a so-called *'mega-marriage'* was facilitated within the Centers when 53 couples were married in a mass ceremony[121]. As it is not culturally common or appreciated in Sri Lanka to live in cohabitation (together but not married), the CGR initiated legalization of relationships of the couples living together while in the LTTE[122]. The couples were not only provided everything for the ceremony (including dowries up to 25 thousand LKR), but also money on joined accounts as start-up support and a honeymoon in the Peace Village, a settlement built for temporary use.

4) The *structure of the Centers* also aimed at fulfilling people-centered approach. There were around 24 centers initially hosting about 100 rehabilitees (to avoid congestion). The Centers were not run by the military commanders, 60% of the administration staff were civilians, the rest were military volunteers. Centers for females were run entirely by women. A number of rehabilitees with administrative skills were also recruited to work in their offices.

5) The IDDRS requires that *children associated with armed conflicts* should be released unconditionally. As it has been said above, in Sri Lanka there were Centres for children associated with war. According to the CGR and the Minister on RPR, almost all the children were released as of the date of the interview, with some remaining to complete the educational program.

When describing their stay at the Centres, the CGR accentuated how under the rehabilitation program *educational needs of the children* were met through offering some of them (almost 300) resumption at the formal educational programs. In addition, there were catch-up educational project for over-age rehabilitees (not able to return to school because of age), preparing them for the exams they had not had an opportunity to take earlier. The CGR was very optimistic about their chances to get highest grades at the exams. Another 300 teenagers (aged 16 to 18) refused to go back to school and were given vocational training instead.

6) There was a substantial *variety of vocational training* types for teenagers and adults, starting from computer- using skills and English language to aesthetics. Women were offered courses in beauty culture (hair design, modeling) and art performance (singing, dancing)[123].

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[121] The ILO representative commented on the event that it was a political statement by the GoSL and 'not applauded by the UN who advocates for privacy and confidentiality'.

[122] According to the CGR, in the LTTE they did not encouraged marriages in order to avoid divergence of its members from organization's ideological and military goals.

[123] During the interview I saw presentation of such a modeling program

Men were offered courses in auto-repair, carpentry, masonry, domestic wiring and other practical activities. In addition, around 500 people had taken the higher educational courses (diploma courses) as of time of the interview[124]. Many of the rehabilitees (around 700) were brought to Colombo to get practice in their acquired skill, work they were paid for[125]. The unique experiment of giving the rehabilitees an opportunity to "learn and earn" while in the program, was given much attention to during the interview.

Upon the release, the rehabilitees were invited to participate in *job fairs* organized by the BCGR exclusively for them. They had the same chances for employment abroad as other Sri Lankan nationals (this information was confirmed by the IOM).

7) It was pointed out that there was a *high level of trust* towards the rehabilitees. There were no arm guards watching over them, the rehabilitees were given hand phones for personal use. Finally, as a unique step towards confidence building within such a rehabilitation program, some rehabilitees received permission to go home on leave; afterwards, they would come back to the Centers to continue the program[126]. Beside formal education and trainings, rehabilitation was also a goal in time of recreation. The sport games organized in the centers were meant to build trust between the staff and rehabilitees bringing them together in mixed teams.

8) Another aim of the playgrounds was to assess the "*level of radicalization*", in other words, their preparedness to be released and proceed with reinsertion into a civil community[127]. All the activities organized in the Centers – mentorship, counseling programs, sport

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[124] An interviewee from a local NGO in Vavuniya district (working to improve conditions for the socially and economically marginalized groups) claimed that there were very few who received vocational training, not more than 200 people out of more than 10000 rehabilitees. The IOM representative, on the basis of released rehabilitees' account, confirmed that vocational training took place, though some limitations were there, e.g. at the computer training class there was 1 machine per 2-3 people.

[125] The CGR brought in an example of young women in the garment industry earning around 16 thousand LKR (around 140 USD) per month during the vocational training program.

[126] This is one of the features accentuated by the CGR that puts Sri Lankan rehabilitation project on a whole new level among other such initiatives in the world.

[127] As it has been said above, the CGR has a right to extend the stay of a rehabilitee in the center upon radicalization assessment, whether an individual is suitable for further reintegration or not. The Gazzette states that such an extension is requested from the Ministry of Defense; during the interview the CGR named Ministry of Justice and Law Reforms as an extension granting body. I cannot say whether such a discrepancy matter in our discussion or not; it was just a remark.

competitions, etc., as well as observations of the daily routine – contributed to such an assessment of an individual by the respective staff.

9) The *former LTTE high rank officers* (around 1500 people) were going through the legal process of investigation carried out by the Terrorist Investigation Department and Criminal Investigation Department; some went to jail and upon release were still sent to rehabilitation with other ex-combatants for a shorter period[128]. It was pointed out that none of the rehabilitees, even those who had been to jail, had ever created any difficulty for administration nor any security threat. The people recognized a positive perspective of staying at the PARCs, where they were getting or improving their employable education and skills. Besides, at the Centers they were treated better than outside (where they're looked upon simply as criminals).

10) With an intention to *condition local communities* for accepting former rehabilitees, authorities used media and propaganda "to educate them that the history is gone and buried". While the people were still in the Centers, family and community members were invited to visit or join in common activities, meals, rituals, etc. there were also a number of the Tamil staff hired from local communities, to work in the Centers. It promoted a more successful reinsertion upon release from the Centers.

11) Another positive aspect of staying at the Centers was the time that both the rehabilitees and the community needed to embrace t*he idea of subsequent reinsertion:* "We are allowing time to heal the wound"[129]. For the rehabilitees, this period was not only about getting education, training and a certificate, legalizing themselves in the eyes of the community. Rehabilitation focused very much on psychological heeling alongside practical issues[130]. This

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[128] Information confirmed by both the Minister of RPR and the CGR

[129] Interview with CGR, 18.09.2010

130 An interesting aspect that was touched upon during the interview with FORUT, was the expected need for a psychological healing of children (and people in general) who had participated in war. The interviewee acknowledged the need for psychological evaluation and revealing potential trauma, however called to be careful in attributing this problem to the whole group of the former combatants. For many, the conditions of life under LTTE were sort of a norm. What could be considered as a traumatizing experience for one person (e.g. a Norwegian youth placed in the Sri Lankan context) was not perceived as such in case of another (a Tamil youth, born and bred there). The example was given of some of the FORUT local staff who used to be involved with the LTTE as child-soldiers before and, to the best of the interviewee's knowledge, managed their life very well afterwards without showing any symptoms of the possible traumatic experiences.

was the buffer-period rehabilitees had to learn to re-establish themselves in their own eyes and in the eyes of the people around. The CGR mentioned cases when, at the end of a mentorship program, participants would become very emotional, almost refusing to depart; further in life many would keep in close touch, reminiscing of the common experiences they had gotten during rehabilitation.

Flexible, accountable and transparent

Under this subtitle in chapter II, it was mentioned how important it is to take the local context, its specific conditions into consideration when working out a DDR program, as well as keep it flexible to the changing environment in the country. This issue was widely discussed during the interviews.

The CGR acknowledged that in preparation for the DDR program, the authorities had explored the relevant international legislation and case studies, consulted with the UN. However, their purpose was to work out their own plan that would embrace the local context: "Sri Lankan system is a unique system… it has to suit our culture, our society, Sri Lankan sentiment and people"[131]. However the critics mean that the GoSL used the semantics of context orientation and national ownership to validate its monopoly of implementing the program their way, free from any accountability for their decisions.

According to the CGR, the numerous requests of financial and technical provisions by the GoSL to the UN and various INGOs were rejected because of the alleged lack of *transparency*: since the INGOs staff had no access to the PARCs and no trust in the account of the government's reports of the Centers, they refused to provide any kind of support for the rehabilitation program[132]. The ILO representative confirmed this argument but expressed a negative attitude towards the decision of the United Nations Country Team to abstain from involvement because of the 'legal grey area', implying that such a decision damaged credibility of the UN[133]. Thus, all the provisions were made only by the GoSL and by some private

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[131] Interview with CGR, 18.09.2010

[132] According to the official, the only one who responded for the call was the IOM helping with profiling and transport. Later in the interview, answering the question on cooperation between the CGR and INGOs, he stated that his office conducted their own profiling and there was no exchange of the results with the IOM.

133 Interview with ILO, 13.09.2010

organizations at personal requests and recommendations by the CGR[134]. The UN only stepped in with their support upon release from the PARCs.

During an interview with FORUT it was stated that the GoSL allowed no NGOs (not ever ICRC) into the rehabilitation centers while advertising success of the rehabilitation program[135]. The interviewee found it 'curious' that general access of the NGOs to the war-affected areas was easier when those areas were under the LTTE authority than under the GoSL[136]: "Now the government is actually in control and should have nothing to fear. But they do"[137].

Answering the question on *allegation of human rights violations* committed against the rehabilitees within the PARCs, the CGR unequivocally stated that they're based on bogus stories made up by 'certain interested elements' with no factual evidence[138]. In this regard, the official mentioned the Tamil Diaspora and Western states pursuing own interests on the Sri Lankan land, which contradicted interests of the country's population. Meanwhile the CGR claimed that transparency was at place, since the authorities publicized the reports on the situation inside the camps and the needs of the rehabilitees[139]. He insisted that the UN and other

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[134] In particular, the expenses on the mega-marriage and initial support of the newly wedded couples were taken upon by the Oneness movement, Council for Unity and the Hindu Congress at the recommendation of the CGR.

135 However, FORUT did take part, along with the UNICEF, in providing legal assistance to a few families seeking an order from a magistrate for a child's release. The UNICEF representative confirmed during the interview that they had access to child surrendee site in Vavuniya and children's rehabilitation center in Ratmalana Hindu College (Colombo). In addition, UNICEF worked, in partnership with the ILO, on "developing sustainable solutions through strengthening governmental system". They worked closely with the social services, assisted with follow-up of the released children and reunification with the families. One of the lines of action was to prevent institutionalization of the unaccompanied children, prioritizing their placement with families.

[136] It was additionally discussed how the NGOs (especially INGOs) were turned in the media into political scapegoats blamed for cooperation with the LTTE. This however has not significantly affected public opinion in the North and East of the country where their help was most needed and welcome.

137 Interview with FORUT, 28.08.2010

[138] Although it is not the purpose of this paper to find out the factual truth of what was actually happening to ex-combatants in the PARCs, I'd like to bring it as a note that the IOM having profiled over 3300 released rehabilitees as of the time of the fieldwork, noted that "none of them complained about violation or torture" (interview with IOM in Colombo).

[139] To back up this statement, the CGR showed me several videos on how one of the vocational training program was organized, videos of a modelling presentation and the mega-marriage event.

organizations didn't trust what they saw and read in the reports but wanted to conduct their own inquiry: "they want to investigate, and not help"[140]. In this regard, the Jaffna University professor also mentioned that some NGOs "have their hidden agendas, like religious conversions and others"[141].

The interviewee from TNA, to the contrary, reckoned that the least the GoSL could do to ensure transparency was to permit an independent investigation as an adequate response to the allegations made by "credible organizations like the UN and various other bodies who have reputation"[142].

The TNA leader claimed in the interview that the authorities held no accountability whatsoever in their actions towards the Tamil population in general and former combatants in particular. The way the interviewee saw reality of rehabilitation was the people allegedly associated with the LTTE being illegally detained for an indefinite period and released on unclear criteria, empty-handed, to the places with devastated infrastructure and no perspectives of economic survival. The representative of a local NGO added to this gruesome picture that the "goal of PARCs was to demoralize and dehumanize people to discourage them from going back to war"[143].

Nationally owned

This feature is one thing where the position of the GoSL was in full concordance with the one expressed in the IDDRS. This point is very closely intertwined with the previous sub-title. The vision expressed by the governmental officials during the interviews was quite clear: GoSL did rely on the UN legislation, its previous experiences with the DDR and recommendations when working out the Sri Lankan program. However, at the presence of the functional governance and having built up the national capacity necessary for successful implementation of the Sri Lankan DDR, the GoSL welcomed financial and technical assistance from the UN, regarding further involvement of the UN in the program as an attempt to meddle in the state's domestic affairs following the interests of the dominant Western governments.

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[140] Interview with CGR, 18.09.2010.

[141] Interview with a Professor of the University of Jaffna, 03.09.2010

[142] Interview with member of TNA, 03.09.2010

[143] Interview with NGO in Vavuniya, 03.09.2010

The CGR expressed great satisfaction over the success of the DDR in Sri Lanka compared to programs anywhere else in the world. One of the reasons for success he saw in adherence to the spirit of national ownership: it is in the state's national interest to rightfully deal with the ex-combatants in order to enhance the wider post-war recovery in the country.

It states in the NFP that in the process of developing framework for DDR there were meetings with "leaders and representatives of Tamil political groups and several ex-combatants to obtain their input for the framework [in order] to make the process inclusive, meaningful, and responsive to the actual needs of the target group of beneficiaries"[144]. The TNA interviewee denied this information sating that no Tamils were invited to participate in either working out the plan or executing it[145]. He elaborated that despite the fact that it had been agreed with the GoSL that the Tamil political parties would participate in working out a resettlement plan for the returnees from IDP and rehabilitation centers, no mechanism had been set up as of the date of the interview.

Integrated and well planned

These two necessary features of the DDR program are well developed in the Sri Lankan case according to the officials. Worked out, implemented and financed almost entirely by the GoSL, the program avoided such challenges as inconsistency and discord of the plans and actions, which is more likely to happen when multiple responsible actors are involved in the process. The CGR attributed such a positive result of the Sri Lankan DDR, among other things, to the well-executed organization of the entire process.

Security concerns being at the top of the list of priorities for DDR planners, the GoSL dealt with this issue through psychological healing, re-building self-respect of the rehabilitees, confidence building between the rehabilitees and the staff of the Centers and working to enhance public support, rather than strengthening security measures with the military personnel.

The smooth incorporation of DDR into post-war recovery is represented on the stage of reinsertion where the authorities include the released rehabilitees into community development programs and instigate social reconciliation.

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[144] NFP, 2009, p. 03

[145] Here it is just to remind that the CGR in the interview mentioned the Tamil staff hired to work in the rehabilitation centers

DDR → 4Rs

Another important aspect within the DDR discourse related to the fact of the military victory of the Sri Lankan State Forces originates from the definition of Demobilization and Disarmament[146]. The CGR commented on the disarmament and demobilization, "in Sri Lanka we never had to implement these two Ds. These two Ds were completed on 19th May 2009, the Security Forces finished these two Ds". The IOM representative from Vavuniya agreed with this statement to a certain extent, pointing at the plain fact of the total defeat of the belligerent and absence of peace agreement as a conventional basis for DDR.

Since my major focus in the work is the position of the government on the issues related to DDR, I did not study the DD part elaborately. However, I find it useful to bring in a brief account on the issue.

Responding to the question on the need for disarmament in the aftermath of war, an academic executive interviewed in the Jaffna University contested the GoSL statement that there was disarmament was no more relevant. He claimed that the circulation of small arms in the country was still carried out by the army deserters. He also added that "some Tamil militant groups enter political arena"[147]. The representative of the TNA agreed with it, implying that only the LTTE has been involved in the process of disarmament bypassing pro-government paramilitary groups: "there are other groups that function with the government and some of them must disarm"[148]. The representatives of the ILO and UN DRA elaborated on this point saying that DDR had to be inclusive (include all paramilitary and military actors), while in Sri Lanka was selective, including only demilitarization of the LTTE.

Having rejected applicability of DDR concept in Sri Lanka, the CGR suggested that a _4Rs theory_ was more accurate to describe the local approach of dealing with ex-combatants. These Rs are rehabilitation, reinsertion, reintegration and reconciliation.

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[146] see chapter II.

147 Interview with a Professor at University of Jaffna, 03.09.2010

[148] The interviewee didn't name particular groups but I can quite confidently assume that he meant Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), a paramilitary Tamil organization whose leader Douglas Devananda, former LTTE militant, has become pro-government politician, infamous for various atrocities. The reason for my assumption is the animosity towards the EPDP that was expressed by the interviewee when I touched upon the issue of cooperation between Tamil political representatives.

Rehabilitation was defined as a number of initiatives carried out *within the PARCs* in order to prepare rehabilitees to civilian life; a detailed account was given above.

Reinsertion "is about bringing people back to their community"[149]. It was facilitated by the CGR with the help of the specially established administrative bodies (steering committees) and the local Security Forces. People were (re-)introduced to their new (or old) home community in small groups in order to avoid social discontent. Their (re-)integration to the respective community was as a part of the general reconciliation course.

The CGR laid out 3 factors necessary for reinsertion: livelihood, social and economic reintegration. Although the government did not provide any start-up package for released rehabilitees, they did get included in the community development assistance initiative run by the local steering committees comprised of the government agents[150] and representatives of the relevant ministries. In addition, the Minister on RPR mentioned his own initiative run by his office, the Rehabilitation Authority, through which former rehabilitees were receiving help in self-employment, compensations, assistance with house repair and mortgage.

I was told there was no *security-related follow-up* of the released rehabilitees: the fact of their release confirmed authorities' confidence that they didn't present any threat and had potential for socialization (proven by the release certificate)[151]. However, they did get registered by the local police and the steering committees. They were also free to change location at their will, but had to inform the authorities about it. The CGR said that it was done for the purpose of their consequent inclusion in the community assistance program, and for their protection. The CGR assured me that there was additionally a support service available for the released 24 hours a day in case they experienced any kind of trouble at their new home community. He added, however, that as of the time of the interview, there had not been registered any complaints.

Unlike rehabilitation program in the PARCs, the community development initiative (according to the CGR) was widely supported by such UN agencies as UNICEF and UNDP. The CGR accentuated that there was still need for more project-oriented assistance, facilitating

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[149] Ibid.

[150] Government agent is an administrative head of public services in one of the 25 districts (administrative divisions) in Sri Lanka

[151] A leader of the local NGO interviewed in Jaffna, claimed that there were cases when the released were rearrested.

microcredit and microenterprises. The IOM was also actively involved in helping former rehabilitees access private sector for employment. The ILO representative mentioned that the organization was planning economic rehabilitation support for 200 ex-combatants as well as programs for unemployed youth and women empowerment. He added that there was no exclusive ILO programs for ex-combatants, they were absorbed into regular development programs.

The Minister on RPR mentioned also the valuable assistance that the GoSL received from India and China in rebuilding infrastructure in the North where many of the rehabilitees return to[152]. This information however was contested by the interviewee from TNA who claimed that the promise of the Indian government to build 2000 homes for the returnees had not been realized as of the date of the interview, and all that people received was some food provisions from the World Food Program.

The CGR's expressed the view that "reinsertion goes hand in hand with *reintegration*": within the 3 months of reinsertion the new-comers' main goal is to reintegrate with the local population. In regard to it, the TNA interviewee commented that "before you think about reintegration you need to resolve the immediate concerns, people's shelter, food, and so on…".

Reconciliation was envisioned by the CGR as a larger scale development, sprouting out from communities to the national level. It happens when both social and economic reintegration has been completed. The TNA respondent expressed doubt on feasibility of reconciliation plan in the setting of aggravated ethnic segregation in the country: "political issue must be addressed and settled … reconciliation doesn't mean anything until you first resolve the conflict itself".

Challenges for DDR in Sri Lanka

The CGR said in the interview that the major challenge in the program was "to convince the world of the good work [his office] was doing", recognition of its obvious success by the international community and other opponents, to see its positive outcomes and acknowledge it as an example of a successfully implemented program that DDR practitioners worldwide can draw lessons from.

Remarkably, the ILO representative agreed to some extent with such an opinion, saying that many positive developments did not receive publicity. He insisted that the GoSL welcomed

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[152] The interviewee from the Norwegian Embassy commented that the GoSL clearly preferred cooperation with and support from the Asian and Middle Eastern states to cooperation with the West

cooperation with the UN[153], noting that 'the legal side remained the pressing issue' between the two counterparts. He noted that an integration and synergy was required among different agents carrying out DDR-related programs, as it was mentioned in the IDDRS. He also accentuated necessity to lobby the IDDRS principles to the GoSL, not with the purpose of establishing UN dominance in the process, but to create legal clarity on the issue of ex-combatants (as it was mentioned above, there was no functional legal framework beside the emergency regulations under supervision of the Ministry of Defense). The lack of framework leaded also to lack of interest and trust by the potential donors, the interviewee insisted.

The ILO interviewee also mentioned progress the GoSL was doing in resolving the inveterate ethnic conflict. The TNA interviewee contested such a view: "In rehabilitation program the Government needs to take into account cause of the conflict [...]. That's the biggest challenge, but they (the GoSL) are in denial…"[154].

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[153] He brought the example of cooperation between the ILO and the Ministry of Labour.

154 Interview with the TNA representative, 03.09.2010

VII. Theoretical framework

Does the theory on DDR exist?

It has been noted by many scholars what a challenging task it is to frame theoretical contour of DDR. Having been developed decades ago as one of the practical tools for post-conflict peacebuilding[155], the concept has ever since been calling for theoretical solidity. As Molloy puts it «The practice and the theory of DDR represent one of those clear scholar/practitioner gaps common in technical practices.»[156]

The UN IDDRS lists the basic ideas and principles of DDR, as well as gives general guidelines for its implementation. The works studying the first results of the implemented DDR missions have predominantly focused on increased efficiency of this practice, how to improve and prolong the positive change that DDR is meant to bring about in the post-conflict environment. However, the question remains whether those insights can be referred to as theory on DDR or they merely add to the list of practical advices; or can they be both?..

In his doctoral thesis, Molloy mentions Guy Lamb and his survey of literature on concepts of demilitarization and peacebuilding, associated inseparably with DDR. Molloy notes how Lamb «considers the strengths and weaknesses of the literature and specifically notes the empirical wealth alongside the dearth of theory in the literature» [157].

Some claim that there is no solid content that one can clearly refer to as theoretical framework for DDR. For example, Molloy mentions a conversation he had with Randolph Rhea[158] who «suggests that even a body of theory does not exist covering DDR... [as] ... 98% of the documented work on DDR is purely guidance of what works based on experience and as it is not sufficiently critically analyzed, this cannot represent «theory»»[159]. Molloy himself opposes such an opinion and claims that «this body of documented experience [...] does

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155 The concept of peacebuilding is introduced in details later in the chapter.

156 Molloy, 2013, p. 37

157 Ibid, p. 57

158 PhD candidate and the coordinator of the International Research Group on Reintegration (IRGR) at Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), University of Tromsø in Norway

159 Ibid, p. 127

represent the theory of DDR offering a range of conceptualization and is the deepest analysis of the practice area that exists»[160].

It is not the purpose in this chapter to join the debate on what can be considered as the body of theory on DDR. The findings of the fieldwork, and consequently, the changed focus of the whole project have compelled me to move away from studying the pure DDR theory (existing of which is contestable, as it was noted above). I find the broader concepts of peacebuilding and security more expedient for my project.

At the beginning I bring in the concept of statehood, not only because DDR in Sri Lanka is clearly a state-driven project, but also because this concept is inevitably intertwined with peacebuilding and security. Then, I introduce the vision of Barry Buzan on security and statehood as well as his discussion on relation between different aspects and referents of security. Further, I focus on the concept of human security, using Buzan's vision as a point of reference, and its connection to peacebuilding. I continue with the presentation of the concept of peacebuilding, with a special focus on the liberal approach. I finish the chapter with marking other types of peacebuilding.

Statehood

The concept of statehood belongs unequivocally in the discussion on DDR, as a functional state is both a prerequisite and one of the criteria to evaluate success of any DDR program[161]. In their Survey for Practitioners, Stankovic and Torjesen sum up what is unambiguously acknowledged in the DDR discourse: "Through DDR, the state attempts to acquire a full monopoly on the exercise of violence, [which is] a key marker of statehood"; at the same time "Enhanced legitimacy and authority of a government increases the probability of DDR effectiveness"[162].

In his article on disarmament in Northern Afghanistan, Mukhopadhyay points out that the project of DDR in a post-conflict environment "is a profoundly political one that stems from

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160 Ibid.

161 Criteria for successful DDR is another huge cluster in the DDR discourse giving room for intense contention among scholars and practitioners. Despite that the debate on the subject is still ongoing, the role of a functional state has been unanimously acknowledged for the success of DDR.

162 Stankovic & Torjesen, 2010, p.5

a central theoretical conception about statehood"[163]. Both Stankovic and Torjesen, and Mukhopadhyay refer the reader to Max Weber and his definition of a state as "a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory"[164]. Relying on this definition of a state, Mukhopadhyay frames instrumentality of DDR, stating that "in a post-conflict environment, it is the role of a DDR project to reduce the number of agents with coercive capacity to those that operate on behalf of the state"[165].

Security

The issue of security cannot be omitted from the discussion on DDR. Security is an integral aspect of each of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, as well as of any broader peacebuilding initiative. Both empirical and theoretical broadness of the concept is evident. Therefore, within the given context of this paper narrowing down of the concept is required. Here I study the duet of *state security / human security*; it is discussed whether these two aspects (referents) of security are in conflict with each other or they are mutually complementary.

Buzan on state and security

Security is one of the central and most debatable concepts in International Relations, a subfield of political science. The notion was elaborately studied by Barry Buzan, Professor of International Studies at the London School of Economics, a prominent scholar on national and international security. For analytical convenience he generalizes the meaning of security as "the pursuit of freedom from threat", that does not only include "survival [but also] concerns about the conditions of existence"[166].

Buzan separates an *individual* and *state* as referent objects of security, claiming that relation between individual and national (state) security is one of the major topics within the security discourse in the field of International Relations. He holds that "[t]he individual represents the irreducible basic unit to which the concept of security can be applied", as it

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163 Mukhopadhyay, 2009, p. 537.

164 Weber, 1965, p. 2

165Mukhopadhyay, 2009, p. 537.

166 Buzan, 1991, p. 19.

represents both an independent unit for analysis and a part of another unit, a state[167]. Individual security includes such aspects as "life, health, status, wealth, freedom", it also can be broken down to objective (real) and subjective (perceived) security.

Buzan discusses the interconnection between individual, state and international security. In line with Weber, he defines a state "as a form of political organization [which] has become the universal standard of political legitimacy. [It] dominates both in terms of political allegiance and authority, and in terms of its command over instruments of force"[168]. Buzan argues that "the state is a major source of both threats to and security for individuals"[169]. He discusses this duality presenting the *minimal* and *maximal* conceptions of the state.

The *minimal* conception emphasizes that the state is an entity consisting of individuals; therefore its security rests on the security of its individual citizens, and the "individual values are ... the prime referent by which state behaviour is judged"[170]. The conflict between state and individual security from this perspective is non-existent, as these two sides of security are directly proportionate.

The *maximal* concept of state views the state as an independent entity having its own interests and concerns apart from those of individuals. The fact that the state is a part of an international system connecting it to other entities of the same nature explains that the state interests, including security issues, to a great extent disregard the interests of its citizens. In this case, the discrepancy between state and individual security is inevitable. Moreover, it does not require to be resolved, as the state security is naturally given priority over individual security. However, Buzan argues, the extent of such a discrepancy is limited by the level of people's acquiescence, how much they can comply with the disregard of their personal needs. If these limits are crossed by the state, its efficiency may be challenged by internal civil disorder or loss of its international status.

Moreover, the state may present threat to its people not only through ignoring their needs, but in a more proactive way. It may be due to inefficient work of law enforcement where individuals suffer from lack of protection from criminal activity or from injudicious penalties (e.g. abductions and ungrounded arrests). Threat may also be present in a more impersonal

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167 Ibid, p. 35

168 Ibid, p. 58.

169 Ibid, p. 35.

170 Ibid, p. 39. Here Buzan refers to Reynolds, 1980, pp. 47-48.

form, practice justified by domestic laws and inscribed in institutional arrangements, such as laws discriminating against particular ethnic, religious or language groups[171]. The type of threat affecting the whole population is political disorder caused by struggle for domestic political power, in the extreme form, political terrorism, employing "politically motivated violence directed primarily against civilians", however the ultimate target may be state organization[172]. Buzan argues that "[b]y undermining trust in the state's capacity to provide domestic security, terrorists can force the state to make its security measures more obtrusive", which exposes population to all types of threats described above[173].

Finally, Buzan emphasizes that the contradiction between the state and individual security is unavoidable due to the complex nature of state-individual relations and that state security universally has a superior status over individual security. However, the state can not afford to disregard individual security of the citizens, as their conformity is crucial for the well-being of the state.

Human security

Human security is a relatively new notion in the security discourse, emerging in the post-Cold war era in response to the analytical and practical challenges of international security. The Commission on Human Security (CHS) defines it broadly as a condition aimed "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfillment"[174]. The authors refrain from further itemizing of the concept, urging to keep it dynamic, because understanding of what "vital core of life", "freedom" and "fulfillment" is subjective and varies across cultures, societies and individuals.

What Buzan refers to in his work to as "individual security" can be directly related to the concept of human security that Newman elaborately discusses in his article «A Human Security Peace-Building Agenda».

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[171] In connection to this type of threat, Buzan mentions 'structural violence', a concept introduced by Johan Galtung studying "settings within which individuals may do enormous amounts of harm to other human beings without ever intending to do so, just performing their regular duties as a job defined in the structure" (1985, p.145).

172 Griffiths, 2005, p. 800

173 Buzan, 1991, p. 47.

174 CHS, 2003, p. 4

Unlike Buzan who presents quite a decisive definition of individual security, Newman acknowledges that the concept of human security «is in itself theoretically controversial»[175]. He points out that the advocates of different approaches to the concept unanimously recognize that «the irreducible referent object of security should be individuals, rather than constructions such as territorial integrity, national security, or state sovereignty»[176].

Newman denies the presumption that human security necessarily stands in conflict with state security. From the human security perspective, in an ideal situation, the state remains the main guarantor of security of its population[177]. It is possible to connect this vision to Buzan's minimal conception of the state, accentuating that the only way the state can really strive is through enhancing security, welfare and dignity of individuals (and communities) comprising it.

According to Newman, the human security perspective does, however, acknowledge that traditional conceptions of state security – «territorial integrity, national security, or state sovereignty», mentioned above, – though necessary, but not ample for provision of human security. Furthermore, «an over-emphasis upon state security can be to the detriment of human welfare needs»[178].

It may seem that at this point one could refer back to Buzan's maximal conception of state envisioning the state and individual as two different entities pursuing each its own interests, with the state, on account of its international status, inevitably imposing its will upon its subjects and thus intimidating their personal (or collective) interests and needs. However, Newman makes it clear that the human security concept does more than just demand prioritizing security of individuals over international and state security; it does appeal to redefinition of the traditional constructions. He states that human security «challenge prevailing structures of power and power relations, and also prevailing discourses... [It] encourages us to interrogate

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175 Newman, 2011, p. 1749.

176 Newman states that disagreements in the discussion on human security arise when it touches upon the questions regarding threats that an individual needs protection from and the means of this protection.

177 This idea is not new. In the philosophical retrospective, the popular vision by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke comes to mind. They both defined the state as a sovereign body established by and for individuals to escape the chaotic condition of "a warre … of every man, against every man" and provide reasonable level of security to each member of society in exchange for some personal freedom (Macpherson, 1968, p. 185).

178 Newman, 2011, p. 1749

and problematize the values and institutions which currently exist as they relate to human welfare, and more thoroughly question the interests that are served by these institutions»[179].

When it comes to defining a «weak» or «failed state», human security does again step aside from the conventional idea of a state with malfunctional institutions of liberal governance and markets, or the one that poses threat for international security. Referring to Tadjbahksh and Chenoy, Newman defines a weak state from the perspective of human security as one that «cannot exercise its primary function of social protection and therefore fails in its duty to protect, care for and empower its citizens»[180]. The last point here, empowerment of the people, is essential for human security perspective. The individuals and communities are seen as proactive agents, willing and capable to improve their own welfare. That is taking into consideration people's own perception of their common good is vital. Seeing individual and community as the referent points of the study and policy (instead of the larger entities such as state or nation) univocally implies giving up on studying, development and implementation of (presumably) universally applicable values and ideas. The focus is rather placed on more context-specific models and ideas, based on people's own perceptions and beliefs. The same vision was expressed by the CHS, mentioned at the beginning of this sub-chapter.

Peacebuilding

In his book «At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict» Roland Paris defines peacebuilding as «action undertaken at the end of a civil conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting»[181]. The issue of peacebuilding is discussed mostly in the context of international peacebuilding missions that involve «deployment of military and civilian personnel from several international agencies, with a mandate to conduct peacebuilding in a country that is just emerging from a civil war»[182].

Describing the genesis of the project of peacebuilding, Paris refers to the history of aggravated internal violence and civil wars that raged in many parts of the world in the 1990s as the Cold war ended. The rampant conditions of internal conflicts posed both humanitarian

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179 Ibid

180 Ibid, p. 1750

181 Paris, 2004, p. 38

182 Ibid

threats (loss of lives of civilian non-combatants[183], mass refugee movement) and threats against the overall internationals stability with a number of internal conflicts spreading beyond a country's borders and undermining stability in neighboring states[184] or even affecting the countries in other parts of the world[185].

Such a volatile situation has naturally created need for the new techniques that the international community can employ as adequate response to the pressing security threats. Some of those techniques are used to mitigate humanitarian crisis of an ongoing conflict (such as peacemaking and peace enforcement[186]); others are initiated in the aftermath of war in order to prevent recurrence of violence. Peacebuilding belongs to the latter.

Newman points at the ambiguity of the definition of peacebuilding, created by dissimilar approaches to its scope and objectives. The more «modest» approach to peacebuilding «focuses upon stopping armed violence and maintaining a ceasefire within a specific timeframe»[187]. The broader, more ambitious approach accentuates the significance of making peace a «self-sustaining durable» condition, a «positive peace»[188]. Paris refers to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan who states that the purpose of peacebuilding is «to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace in war-torn societies»[189], meaning the peace that endures after the peacebuilding operation is over. Boutros Boutros-Ghali similarly presents the aims of

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183 Citing UNDP and Collier at al., Paris brings in an account of absolute majority killed in wars in different period of the last century: 90% of all killed at wars being soldiers at the beginning of the 20th century, at the end of the century 90 % of all killed were civilians.

184 Paris brings in the example of the Rwandan conflict triggering political instability in adjacent Zaire that resulted in a continuous civil war.

185 Terrorist networks activities are not bounded by geographical borders and jeopardize safety of the states located far from the regions of civil unrest. In addition, the mass refugee movement transfers humanitarian and political crises to the states who, willingly or not, host the fugitives. The current situation in Europe with refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan exemplifies this trend.

186 Peacemaking is «the attempt to resolve an ongoing conflict, either by peaceful means such as mediation and negotiation, or, if necessary, by the authorizing of an international military force». Peace enforcement is «the threat or use of nondefensive military force to impose, maintain, or restore a cease-fire» (Paris, 2004, p. 38).

187 Newman, 2009, p. 27

188 Ibid.

189 Paris, 2004, p.2

peacebuilding as «to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict»[190].

Paris describes the initial practice of peacebuilding as «nothing less than an enormous experiment in social engineering»[191]. And looking at the current debate in the scholarly domain around this complex notion, it seems like the experiment that still goes on.

Liberal Peacebuilding

Paris points out that from its emergence until today peacebuilding has been envisioned by the vast majority of the scholars and practitioners as a project promoting «liberalization» in the states emerging from civil unrest, in the belief that only this would make the peace last. He itemizes liberalization in the political and economic realms. Liberalization in politics means democratization: conducting of regular elections, limiting of the power of the government by the constitution, adherence to the principles of good governance («the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels ... in participatory, transparent and accountable» way[192]); promotion of liberal values, such as freedom of speech, conscience, assembly etc. In economy, liberalization means marketization, or developing market-oriented economic system. That implies, again, limitation of the governmental influence on the economy, improvement of opportunities for consumers, producers and private investors to realize their economic interests.

Such a faithful adherence to the idea of liberalization originates from the popular notion expressed over a hundred years ago by the US President Woodrow Wilson who stated that government that relies «not upon the armed strength of the governors, but upon the free consent of the governed.... seldom coerce their subjects», the use of force is only employed as a «last...resort»[193]. Looking further back in retrospective, one would discover that similar sentiments were expressed by the Enlightenment philosophers. John Locke and Immanuel Kant accentuated that only constitutionally limited («civil») government that enjoys popular consent

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190 Ibid, p. 3

191 Ibid, p. 4

192 World Bank citing UNDP

193 Paris, 2004, p. 40

of the population where individuals may exercise their «freedom of will based upon reason», may maintain just peace[194].

At the end of the Cold War this vision resurrected and seized dominant position in the writings of scholars and programs of the peacebuilding missions. Embracing Woodrow Wilson's «liberal peace thesis», liberalization has been depicted as panacea for all political, economic and social conflicts.

In their book on perspectives on liberal peacebuilding, Newman, Paris and Richmond acknowledge that the concept of liberal peacebuilding is highly controversial in the discourse of scholars and policy-makers, and that an unconditional faith in its benefits rightfully deserves thorough scrutiny[195]. As liberal peacebuilding is based on the premise that «democracy and a free economy encourages people to resolve and express their differences peacefully and that this is the best foundation for development and accountable government», Newman points out that this premise has been increasingly challenged by a number of analysts «suggesting that liberal economics and democracy can contribute to instability and exacerbate conflict»[196]. Both Newman and Paris draw attention to the substantial amount of research establishing the link between a liberal peacebuilding practice and recurrence of violence in countries emerging from war[197]. Newman notes that a combination of such factors as «heterogeneity, social inequality, weak state capacity and poor standards of human rights» pervert the good prospects of liberalization of the political system; instead, it exacerbates the volatile and polarized atmosphere[198].

Snyder studies closer the negative consequences that reforms aimed at establishing liberal political system may have in a state where democratic institutions are underdeveloped. He argues, for example, that «promoting unconditional freedom of public debate in newly democratizing societies [...] can create an opening for nationalist mythmakers to hijack public

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194 Ibid, p. 49

195 Newman et al., 2009, p. 3

196 Ibid, p. 39

197 They exemplify it with the findings of the Political Instability Task Force who concluded their extensive study of conflict between 1955 and 2003 with a statement that the political instability is aggravated when «deeply polarized or factionalized competition [is combined] with open contestation», as «winner-take-all, parochial approach to politics» increases opportunities of the state authority to reinforce its political control (Goldstone et al., p. 19).

198 Neyman et al., 2009, p. 40

discourse»[199]. Universal suffrage can also turn out to be counterproductive, especially in an ethnically segregated society «where integrative political parties are poorly institutionalized at the mass level, and where the religious or cultural networks of traditional society are decisive for mobilizing grassroots votes»[200].

In this regard, Paris marks the difference between the notions of liberali*sm* and liberali*zation,* the former being an already established system, the latter is a process, a transition towards establishment of a liberal political and economic model. He emphasizes that it is substitution or merging of these two distinct notions that create ambiguity in research, and in practice results in reckless, unwise initiatives.

It is essential to emphasize that neither of the above-mentioned researchers deny the benefits of a liberal political and economic system. They merely challenge the belief that the *process* of liberalization and democratization, once launched, automatically brings in peace dividends. With help of extensive evidence, they argue that the good incentive can, to the contrary, contribute to aggravation of the conflict environment, and to cementing of the non-democratic values and practices. Paris argues that before rushing to convert a war-shattered society into a liberal market democracy, it is essential to develop a «network of domestic institutions, capable of managing ... political and economic reforms», and that the process of democratization and marketization should be conducted «as a series of incremental and deliberate steps, rather than immediately unleashing political and economic competition»[201]. Chandler defines such an initiative as *state-building,* «constructing or reconstructing

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199 Snyder, pp. 268 – 269. Snyder exemplifies it with a situation in Rwanda where a well-intended policy of promoting freedom of speech has resulted in catastrophic consequences. The mass media space (in particular, radio) was flooded with anti-Tutsi hate discourse that contributed significantly to the following outbreak of interethnic violence, and genocide.

200 Ibid, p. 280. Here the author brings in the example of Sri Lanka in the 1950s when Solomon Bandananarike, a Prime Minister of Ceylon in 1956-1959, managed to consolidate his popularity among the electorate with the extensive help of the Buddhist political activists who used their organizational network on the grassroots level to promote the favored candidate.

201 Paris, 2004, p. 7. He has framed this idea is in his new peacebuilding strategy called «Institutionalization Before Liberalization».

institutions of governance capable of providing citizens with physical and economic security»[202].

Newman underlines another controversy around peacebuilding. He draws attention to the relation of the conventional peacebuilding with the local actors. As it was noted above, peacebuilding is usually an initiative of external agents (international organizations and governments) who draw up and execute the program according to their idea of the means and goals of the post-war recovery. Newman points out that the current reality of post-war recovery in countries «characterized by civil war and state failure – demand forms of peacebuilding that involve a de facto or de jure suspension of sovereignty»[203]. He mentions Bellamy and Williams who imply that «contemporary peacebuilding operations have developed a range of uncomfortable similarities with earlier structures of Western imperialism... it is usually the interests, values and priorities of the interveners, not those of the victims, that shape contemporary peace operations»[204]. Chandler supports this idea: «What appears formally to be a relationship between two contracting partners is in effect a product of the hierarchy of power»[205]. Suddenly, the liberal peacebuilding does not look as *liberal* as it claims to be. It rather resembles hegemonic neo-liberal approach to peacebuilding that will be presented below.

Newman agrees with Paris about necessity to establish functional institutions prior to launching of a liberalization project, however, he makes an important amendment stating that it should be done according to «the communitarian norm that such institutions must, and can only, come from within»[206]. And that cannot happen within the frame of a single peacebuilding project, as the development of the democratic system «may ... require deep changes in society and challenges to the status quo, a process that can attract resistance and charges of ethnocentrism»[207].

Other types of peacebuilding

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202 Chandler, 2006, p. 1. The concept of state-building is closely related to peacebuilding and included in numerous discussions on DDR, peacebuilding and post-war recovery. Originally I played with an idea to bring it into my work too, but eventually decided to leave it out due to the limited format of the paper.

203 Newman et al., 2009, p. 36

204 Ibid, p. 38

205 Chandler, 2006, p. 15

206 Newman et al., p. 37

207 Ibid, p. 42

Newman identifies other types of peacebuilding beside liberal that are distinct in scholarly debate and in practice. One of them is *realist peacebuilding* that «entails containing or repressing conflict in the interests of international peace and stability in general or particular hegemonic interests»[208]. The focus is therefore on preserving security rather than resolving the cause of the conflict and encouraging societal change. Such notions as welfare and justice are of interest only as far as they fit into the purpose of maintaining the order. Reproducing the vision of Thomas Hobbes on statehood and order, the advocates of the realist peacebuilding prioritize strengthening of the state authority as the way to end conflict and maintain stability.

Another type of peacebuilding is defined by Newman as *hegemonic neo-liberal approach* that shares the belief in political and economic liberalism. However, it «involves the top-down promotion (or imposition) of political and economic values that conform to the interests pursued by leading international actors»[209]. The main focus here is on stability of the market, thus the main beneficiaries are the global market actors rather than members of societies recovering from war.

In that, hegemonic neo-liberal peacebuilding shares more common features with the realist approach rather than liberalist. It does not prioritize human welfare and open political discourse, instead it is «a tool of global capitalism: «riot control directed against the unruly parts of the world to uphold the liberal peace»[210].

Finally, there is a *transformatory peacebuilding* that is based on «the assumption that durable peace and stability rest upon the achievement of positive peace and giving free expression to local voices, desires and forms of politics»[211]. That premise conforms with the original idea of peacebuilding expressed by both Annan and Boutros-Ghali that «peacebuilding involve[s] identifying and alleviating the underlying sources of conflict within a war-shattered state, [that requires] a thorough understanding of the local conditions»[212]. Thus, the core difference between the transformatory peacebuilding and other types (including well-intended liberal peacebuilding) is that the main actors and beneficiaries in the latter are states and international organizations; while the former brings individuals and communities into focus,

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208 Ibid, p. 48

209 Ibid, p. 49

210 Ibid; see also Pugh, 2004, p. 41

211 Newman et al., p. 47

212 Paris, 2004, p. 3

and suggests that they should be not only beneficiaries, but also agents of peacebuilding. In addition, unlike other approaches, transformatory approach to peacebuilding is oriented towards resolving, and not just containing the conflict, in belief that it is the only way to make peace self-sustaining.

It is important to note that the advocates of the transformatory peacebuilding do not reject necessity of international and domestic order and stability on the ground, that is (should be) provided by the relevant authorities; nor do they deny the obvious benefits of liberalism. However, they accentuate that in order to provide for durable peace, it is vital not to hold on to the universally accepted ideas of peacebuilding, but rather engage local knowledge, norms and customs. It is also essential to go beyond the top-bottom reforms, and allow for bottom-up community-based initiatives to contribute to the establishment of the favorable system.

Thus, transformatory peacebuilding reflects best the human security approach to peacebuilding described above. Both would strive to enhance the physical and material security of individuals and communities [...] in the belief that this will ultimately serve the cause of peace and stability»[213].

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213 Newman, 2011, p. 1749.

VIII. <u>Data Analysis</u>

Before immersing into analysis of the data collected for this project, I would like to remind that in this project I attempt to answer a research question(-s) on whether DDR in Sri Lanka is actually a DDR or is it just part of the political semantics, and whether it should be disregarded or does it call for reconsideration of the conventional understanding of the concept.

To make a coherent analysis, I replicate the structure that has been used in chapter VII (Theoretical framework).

DDR and statehood

Despite the 30-year long civil war (where the antagonists had a clearly stated purpose of splitting up the unitary state entity that is ruled by the legitimate, internationally recognized government) that challenged the state capacity to exercise its 'monopoly of violence', this capacity has not been shattered, but rather solidified. "What did not kill us, has made us stronger", - was a clear message conveyed to the national and international audience by the state officials in the country. Indeed, the state apparatus (and the policy it has been practicing for decades) has not only survived, but strengthened its validity through gaining the total victory over its enemy. The success of the GoSL in ending the exhausting, protracted conflict (at least, its active military phase) has boosted its popularity and ensured its longevity despite the fact that the conflict, caused to a great extent by the existing policy, has not been resolved.

Referring to what has been noted in chapter VII on relation between effective DDR and the functional state, the DDR in Sri Lanka has obviously been used as a tool for reinforcement of the existing political and social order[214]. And well, it is something that is quite expected. Following the Buzan's maximal conception of a state, the Sri Lankan state whose capacity has been compromised, naturally strive to regain its status, and use all means available for this purpose, giving regard to (or disregarding) the needs of its population to an extent that would ensure state's survival.

At the same time, extensive research and practice of the post-war recovery has confirmed that a functional state apparatus is an essential precondition for successful

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214 That is why peacebuilding is so closely associated with state-building in the post-war environment, and (re-) establishment of the state institutions stands first in the action plan of peacebuilders around the world.

peacebuilding and DDR[215]. That is why peacebuilding is so closely associated with state-building in the post-war environment, and (re-)establishment of the state institutions stands first in the action plans of peacebuilders around the world.

Following the discussion in chapter VII it becomes clear that politicizing of the concept of DDR, for good or for worse, does not nullify its value and applicability. It does, however, rise a number of uncomfortable questions, for example, regarding the beneficiaries of the program. It seems that, despite the people-oriented emphasis of DDR, accentuated in the framework, other program documents, and repeated in numerous official and media reports, the main beneficiary of the program remains the state, the mastermind of the initiative.

However, the similar allegations can be directed towards the executors of the DDR in other parts of the world. It has been mentioned in chapter VII that a number of researchers draw attention to politicization of any peacebuilding initiative, most of them framed by the humanist ideas of (Western) liberalism. It is not necessary to go along with the rhetoric of the Sri Lankan government in blaming the Western states (and the UN as their representative, a 'spy') who allegedly attempt to re-establish its neo-colonial influence in Sri Lanka[216]. Nevertheless, it would be naïve to deny the reality that the interests of the executors (and donors) are politically conditioned.

DDR and security

The war in Sri Lanka exhausted not only supporters of the state policy (particular stringent and discriminatory against ethnic minorities), but also its opponents. Many of those who maintained hardline opposition (and the idea of division of the country) for years, have softened their demands and lowered expectations. Many of them have turned a blind eye to the atrocities of the government against parts of its population (before, during and after war), and appreciated that the war was finally ended.

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215 I just want to remind that I am not attempting to answer the question, whether the Sri Lankan DDR can objectively be considered as a success story (because it has not been unanimously concluded by either scholars or practitioners how to evaluate success of DDR). But the role of a functional state is an unequivocally accepted precondition, as it has been discussed in chapter VII.

216 However, it is not sensible to disregard this idea entirely, as it helps to better understand government's actions (or absence of it) both on the domestic and international arenas.

However, the government of Sri Lanka should pay attention to Buzan's warning on the extent of the increased discrepancy between provisions for state security and (dis-)satisfaction of its citizens, and where such a discrepancy can lead. Despite ending the war with a decisive victory over the adversaries, taking control of their territory and all of their resources, the fear among state officials and generally in society, that the violence can resume, is still alive. So is the conviction among many representatives of the minorities to continue the struggle against the discriminatory policy of the state, implying the possibility of picking up arms again.

Such assumptions explain the prolonged militarization of the Northern parts of Sri Lanka. The government argue that it is necessary for people's own safety, and frankly speaking, they do have a point in that, if one looks back at the violence of the LTTE against Tamil and Muslim minorities during their rule. It is also possible to refer the situation in Sri Lanka to Buzan's argument that the state may be 'coerced' to take obtrusive security measures (exposing population to various threats) by the actions of political terrorists whose purpose is to compromise state's capacity to provide security.

It was mentioned that one of the stated purposes of placing ex-combatants in rehabilitation is to protect them from the general negative perceptions associated with this group

DDR and human security

The framework for DDR in Sri Lanka does replicate, for the most part, the one of the UN IDDRS. Despite the fact that in Sri Lanka it has not become operational, some aspects of it have been accomplished in practice, according to the officials. They draw attention to the *people-centered approach* of the Sri Lankan DDR, sharing details on how the state works to improve welfare of its citizens, especially those affected and victimized by war. The notion of human security has not been named during the interviews. However, it is possible to draw some conclusions in its applicability in the current DDR discourse in Sri Lanka.

The attitude of the officials toward the rehabilitees, expressed almost by all the respondents from the government side, was one 'of a father towards a prodigal son'. It demonstrates adherence to the stringent hierarchical pattern that obviously originates from the traditional perceptions of power and social order. Following this analogy, the ex-combatants are perceived rather as passive beneficiaries, victims of war, unable to transform their own lives and successfully reintegrate back to the society without the extensive (imposed!) assistance from the benevolent authorities. Interference of the state into their lives (including the alleged detention in the PARCs) was presented as the only way for them to progress in life. However,

the stated purpose of the rehabilitation program was to work on the *empowerment* of the ex-combatants – healing of psychological traumas, provision of general education and employable skills training[217], fostering their reinsertion to the receiving communities.

So, in essence, the rhetoric of the government does confirm that the *main referent* of the DDR program is an *ex-combatant and affected/host communities*, who receive assistance, so they can start their lives anew. However, the coercive character of such an assistance, its components[218] and scope give reason to question the motives of the authorities. Molloy argues in his report on DDR in Sri Lanka that it is certainly the state security that is being prioritized in Sri Lanka, while human security is completely disregarded. Even though I would never challenge Dr. Molloy's competence on the subject, in this case I would not support his vision entirely. From what I have studied, while working on this project, I'm more inclined to conclude that the elements of the human security approach are present in the Sri Lankan DDR: for example, the idea of the empowerment of the people so that they could sustain themselves and their dependents after leaving the Centers.

Moreover, I want to refer to the fact that the human security approach does not deny *provision of state security* as a foundation for provision of human security. I received the impression that the interviewed officials genuinely believed in the idea that the state security is essential for the security of its population (similarly to how welfare of the parents is essential for prosperity of the children).

In addition, the human security approach presupposes adherence to *context-specific* models and ideas. It is hard to challenge the claims of the officials that they are more competent in the knowledge of the local social and cultural environment than any external agents.

Generally, the vision of the Sri Lankan government on the implemented DDR is still very far from being confidently attributed the features of the human security approach, at least in its format as it was described in chapter VII[219]. It is possible, though, to similarly question

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217 Representatives of the UN agencies confirmed that training did take place, and some people did get jobs according to their acquired skills.

218 The human security approach suggests that people's own perception of their needs and interests is taken into consideration when planning any assistance. In the Sri Lankan case, the authorities have taken up the function of a decision-maker, implying that they know best what their people need.

219 The GoSL have quite obviously adopted their own vision on human security, that is inseparable from the state security.

any other peacebuilding initiative anywhere in the world, as it was discussed in the previous chapter.

DDR and peacebuilding

Despite the fact that peacebuilding is usually associated with the initiatives of the international actors, aimed at consolidating peace in countries undergoing post-war recovery, I find it very relevant to my study area, as the concept of DDR, employed locally in Sri Lanka, emerged from the broader notion of peacebuilding.

Considering genesis of the DDR concept, it is quite expected that the distinction between the narrow and broad approaches to peacebuilding[220] is reflected in the DDR discourse. There is no doubt that the GoSL managed to fulfill the basic goal of DDR, since the armed violence has not resumed since the war ended in 2009. Total victory over the enemy ensured speedy and successful demobilization and disarmament at the end of war. Thus, the DDR program, announced and launched right before the victory, focused entirely on the R-part.

The intention to work for establishment of a durable peace was stated in the framework for DDR, and repeated in the reports and during the interviews with the respondents from the government. The strategy they have selected for this purpose inclines towards the *realist approach* that implies preserving security rather than addressing the root cause of the conflict. It was stated that they envision the achievement of self-sustaining peace through 'burying the past'; that was also the main purpose of rehabilitation of the former combatants. On the one hand, the authorities do acknowledge the ethnic conflict that still exists in the country. On the other hand, they do not see necessity to resolve it. It is more sensible, from their perspective, to 'leave it in the past'. Thus, the societal transformation should be focused entirely on strife for the social cohesion, through genuine adherence to the well-intended policy of the legitimate government.

Sri Lanka identifies itself as a democratic country that grants its population all the rights and freedoms attributed to a mature democracy. Yet, the issue of transparency of the state's policies, including that of the DDR, is brought up often by the critics of the political regime.

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220 I want to remind what has been described in more details in chapter VII: narrow approach implies ending the armed violence and maintain ceasefire/peace agreement within a certain timeframe; the broader approach is more ambitious, focused on establishing durable, self-sustaining, 'positive' peace.

Having been denied access to the PARCs, the UN and other NGOs were offered the governmental reports as the only sources for evaluation of the process of rehabilitation of ex-combatants. Similar practice is applied in dealing with other political and social matters. The attempts of the external actors (the UN agencies, for the most part) to address the faults within the state institutions and assist in their transformation are viewed generally as unwanted interference within the domestic affairs. Even though such secrecy undermines credibility of the state's rhetoric, the authorities are confident in their position and convinced not to allow any injurious influences compromise the Sri Lankan political and social fabric. The government believes that such an interference serves the interests of the Western world who is trying to impose its own perceptions and priorities (incompatible with and detrimental to the local set of values), and re-establish its political and economic influence. Such a vision goes in line with the criticism expressed by some scholars of the ideas and means of the liberal peacebuilding discussed in chapter VII.

IX. <u>Conclusion</u>

Sri Lanka has survived a protracted civil war that was rooted in an inter-ethnic conflict aggravated by the discriminatory policy of the state towards the ethnic minorities. Unlike many other countries, who had similar gruesome experiences, Sri Lanka managed to preserve and strengthen its statehood throughout the war. One of the factors contributing to solidifying of the contemporary political regime was the achievement of a total victory by the state forces over the adversary, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

When the war was over, one of the pressing matters that required immediate attention was dealing with the remnants of the LTTE forces who surrendered at the final stage of the fighting, around 12 000 people. The state was prepared for that, having developed the project of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration before the victory was achieved. The first two components of the program were, quite predictably, completed when the state forces took control of the enemy's staff, arms and equipment. Thus, the DDR in Sri Lanka was focused entirely on its rehabilitation and reintegration component. The unique context of a total victory gives reasons to question applicability of the DDR concept as a post-war recovery strategy, and instigates reevaluation of the concept itself.

Therefore, in this thesis project I posed the following research question: *Looking at the vision of what is called DDR by the major executor of the program, and considering the context of a total victory, can one still call it DDR? Has the concept of DDR merely been exploited in the state's political rhetoric, or does this vision call for evolution of the concept?*

In order to collect the data necessary for the study, I conducted a 7-week fieldwork in Sri Lanka in autumn 2010, over a year after the end of the war. As my main purpose was to cover rhetoric of the authorities on the subject, I interviewed the officials responsible for development and implementation of the DDR. Additionally, I spoke with the representatives of the UN agencies and NGOs working in Sri Lanka on issues related to the ex-combatants. I also interviewed a number of people, mostly staff of the University of Jaffna, in order to examine general perception of the population on the government's discourse.

The findings of my research project demonstrate that the Sri Lankan DDR is indeed very different from the conventional understanding of the concept developed and applied by the UN in other countries. First of all, the context for DDR in Sri Lanka presents an unprecedented case. The armed violence was ended not through a negotiated peace agreement, but through annihilation of one of the belligerent sides. The total victory solidified the state regime that had managed to endure the trials of the war. The DDR initiative, despite being

developed on the basis of the UN IDDRS framework, took, however, a very different form in the hands of the state, the sole initiator and conductor of the program.

The context of the total victory does not, in my opinion, cancel the applicability of the DDR concept. The only practical difference from the conventional DDR process is that the demobilization and disarmament are carried out when the winner gains control over the resources of the defeated party, and is completed before the rehabilitation and reintegration phase begins. Moreover, the context of the total victory ensures speedy accomplishment of the demobilization and disarmament phases and allows to use all the resources, allocated for DDR program, for its most important R-part.

Throughout the war and in its aftermath, the government of Sri Lanka endlessly received allegations from the political opposition and international community on committing atrocities against its population, comparable with the ones carried out by the LTTE. Similar accusations were voiced in relation to the way the DDR in Sri Lanka was implemented (involuntary placement of former combatants in the PARCs, alleged cases of human rights abuses during the rehabilitation). These allegation, however, have not shattered the state's confidence in its policies, including its DDR initiative.

One more issue, related to such allegations, is one of transparency (or rather, lack of it) of the state's policy in general, including the DDR program. Acting on mistrust towards the external agents, the government is reluctant to open doors for 'independent' investigations and assessments. It denies its accountability before the international community, defending such a position with the goal to protect itself and its population from harmful influences and neo-colonial intentions of the Western world. It was demonstrated in the paper that such concerns are not entirely groundless, as the external assistance is often based on the political and economic interests of the providers.

Another accusation against the government is that DDR in Sri Lanka is employed with the only purposes to sustain security of the political regime, to maintain its 'monopoly of violence'. The findings of my study confirm the validity of this position. However, it was demonstrated in the paper that a strong, functional state is both the prerequisite and the purpose of any peacebuilding initiative. Besides, politicization of the DDR concept, as well as of peacebuilding in general, is, for better of worse, inevitable in the reality of today's post-war recovery. Numerous studies have confirmed that peacebuilding practices around the world reflect, to varying degrees, on the political vision and interests of their agents and donors.

Another issue that is widely discussed in Sri Lanka and in the international arena, is that the government has not addressed the problem of the ethnic conflict, which has entered its latent phase, however has not been resolved. On the one hand, the fear (and expectation) of resurrection of armed violence makes the population more compliant with the government's policy (however discriminatory it appears to be). On the other hand, the state does not see the need for transformation other than leaving the war in the past and work on social unanimity and cohesion.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the criticism of the DDR in Sri Lanka indeed reflects criticism of the DDR as a peacebuilding concept in general. Politicization, focus on state-security, clear inclination towards the realist approach to peacebuilding does not devalue the meaning of the DDR in Sri Lanka. Indeed, similar features can be found in many UN-led peacebuilding initiatives based on the well-intended ideas of liberalism and human security.

This, however, does not justify the lack of transparency within the Sri Lankan DDR and other post-war recovery policies, or reluctance of the authorities to resolve the conflict instead of containing it. In line with the advocates of human security approach to DDR, critics predict that, as long as the root-cause of the conflict is not addressed, and the social equality and justice are not placed as the purpose of transformation, the peace would never become self-sustaining.

I really wish that Sri Lanka's new leadership (President Maithripala Sirisena elected on 09.01.2015) would select a bolder and self-critical approach in its domestic policy, that would give it capacity to recognize those challenges and resolve them adequately.

Abbreviations

BCGR – Bureau of the Commissioner General for Rehabilitation, Sri Lanka

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency of the USA

CHS – Commission on Human Security

DDR – Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration of ex-combatants

DRM – Disaster Risk Management

GoSL – Government of Sri Lanka. Since the paper is based predominantly on the perspective of the government of Sri Lanka, the expression is used a lot in the thesis; abbreviation is merely for convenience.

ICG – International Crisis Group

ICISS – International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty

IDDRS – Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards

ILO – International Labor Organizations

INGO – international non-governmental organization

IOM – International Organization of Migration

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

LTTE – the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a military separatist organization with an agenda to liberate the Tamil minority of Sri Lanka from discriminative rule of the Sinhala government and form a separate Tamil state.

NGO – non-governmental organization

OG – IDDRS Operational Guide

PARC – Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers, places designated for locating former LTTE combatants where they undergo process of rehabilitation.

SSR – Security Sector Reforms

TNA – Tamil National Alliance

UN – the United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund (formerly United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

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Interviews

<u>Government officials:</u>

1. Minister of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms, Colombo, 23.08.2010

2. Member of Parliament from the Tamil National Alliance, Jaffna, 03.09.2010

3. Commissioner General on Rehabilitation Brigadier Sudantha Ramasinghe (and his deputy), 18.09.2010

4. Deputy of Commissioner General on Rehabilitation, 18.09.2010

<u>UN:</u>

5. IOM Colombo, 13.09.2010

6. IOM Vavuniya, 06.09.2010

7. ILO Colombo, 13.09.2010

8. UNDP Colombo, 15.09.2010

9. UNICEF Vavuniya, 06.09.2010

10. UN Development and Recovery Advisor, Colombo, 16.09.2010

<u>University staff:</u>

11. Professor, Faculty of Geography, University of Jaffna, 03.09.2010

12. Professor, Vavuniya campus of the University of Jaffna, 05.09.2010

13. Teacher of English language, University of Jaffna, 03.09.2010

14. Administrator at the University of Jaffna, 03.09.2010

<u>NGOs:</u>

International:

15. FORUT, Colombo, 27.08.2010

Local:

16. NGO in Vavuniya, 05.09.2010

17. <u>Norwegian Embassy in Colombo</u>, 17.09.2010

Arranged interviews but did not happen:

Leader of Eelam People's Democratic Party, Assistant Government Agent in Jaffna, UNDP in Jaffna, UN National Legal Consultant.