

Peacebuilding diplomacy of Japan and hybrid peace governance in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Sri Lanka and Japan celebrate 60 years of warm bi – lateral relations in 2012. Since diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1952, both countries have enjoyed friendly, cordial relations in its 60 years of small power (Sri Lanka) – big power (Japan) relations. Founded on its Culture of Peace, the Japanese government adopted peacebuilding diplomacy in the 1970's in conducting its foreign relations in South and Southeast Asia. In this context, Japan has been the top donor to Sri Lanka for decades. Since the termination of the conflict in Sri Lanka by a military victory in 2009, Japan has continued its contribution to positive peacebuilding in Sri Lanka by funding several key development projects in the war affected area of the North and East of the country. Even at present, Japan is helping the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) to develop the infrastructure needed for positive peace and peace governance. The Japanese Government Representative for peacebuilding, rehabilitation and reconstruction in Sri Lanka, Yasushi Akashi visited Sri Lanka in August 2012 (recorded 21st visit to the island since his appointment in 2002). Sri Lanka has been working since the end of the war to establish positive peace in the country. Examining the work done so far in positive peacebuilding, it is clearly visible that Sri Lanka is following a hybrid peace governance model instead of liberal peace model that is advocated by the western powers. GoSL's reasonable success is reflected in the *Global Peace Index* where Sri Lanka has been placed as one of the top five risers in 2012. Sri Lanka is also placed ahead of other countries in South Asia, namely India, Pakistan and of course Afghanistan in the same Index. To this end, Japanese peacebuilding diplomacy towards Sri Lanka has contributed greatly.

Key words: Peacebuilding diplomacy, liberal peace, hybrid peace governance, sustainable development

1. Japan's Peace culture

Japan emerged from the destruction of World War II (WWII) vowing never to resort to violence ever again. As a nation, Japan came together determined in building a culture of peace. The new constitution promulgated on November 3, 1946 included an article which specifically renounced war. This is, article 9 of the constitution which is commonly known as the peace clause. Article 9 of the Constitution renounces wars as follows:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized (Article 9, Chapter II, The Constitution of Japan, since 1946).

The word “peace” appears frequently in the constitution and Japanese people have taken the word seriously as a peace loving nation for the past 66 years. The Japanese people are proud of the constitution, especially Article 9. Japan does not maintain Armed forces such as an Army, Navy or Air Force. Instead, a Self Defence Force (SDF) is maintained. SDF is ultra modern with all capabilities of all three military forces but restricted to serve only in Japan. SDF cannot be deployed overseas due to the above constitutional condition.

Peacebuilding in Japan together with post war reconstruction began in earnest in the aftermath of WWII. The atomic bomb devastated Hiroshima city can be taken as a case study of peacebuilding work that took place in Japan. Hiroshima reflects the

reality of peacebuilding at the end of war (Shinoda, 2008). It is apparent that peacebuilding as a national policy began at local level and national level in Japan soon after WWII. Today, Japanese people believe that peace is too important to be left to the state. Japan's peace culture is a citizen centred peace culture. Hence peace museums and monuments, and peace festivals in all forms are a very much part of people's life today. In the *Global Peace Index* (GPI) rankings, Japan occupied until recently the 3rd place behind Iceland, Denmark and New Zealand (both tied in 2nd place). Only in 2012 Japan's ranking went down to the 5th place (GPI 2012), but taking into consideration the population figures of the top countries which are very much lower than that of Japan, which is a heavily populated country, and unlike before thousands of foreigners from all over the world are also spending long durations of time in Japan, the GPI ranking for Japan is very high indeed. Japan's peace culture was successful in defining a unique feature in Japan's diplomatic relations with the world, peacebuilding diplomacy.

2. Peace Diplomacy and Peacebuilding Diplomacy

Japan is the first country in Asia that rose as a strong economic power peacefully. Highlighting Japan's Peace diplomacy as a nation committed to peace in the height of Cold War, the Japanese government issued policy document in 1975. It stated that Japan pledged itself and to the world to remain a nation committed to peace under its peace constitution. Therefore, Japan will take the basic stance that it will not use force as a means of settling international disputes, will devote itself to peaceful diplomacy and will make positive efforts for the achievement of world peace (*Japan Bluebook* 1975). Prior to this, Japanese Foreign Minister, Masayoshi Ohira (who later became the Prime Minister) discussed Japan's diplomacy for Peace in an article written to *International Affairs* (1964).

Developing on the foundations of Peace diplomacy in the 1970's, Japan formulated its unique peacebuilding diplomacy in the year 2000. Even earlier, Japan has been interested in playing a leading role in Asia where it has many cultural and linguistic ties. Articulating Japan's diplomatic relations with the Southeast Asian countries, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda wanted Japan to actively cooperate in reducing poverty and preventing conflicts in the region. Thus emerged, what later became known as the "Fukuda Doctrine" which outlined three basic principles of Japanese diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia.

The three principles enunciated by then Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda in Manila in August 1977 were:

1. Japan is committed to peace, and rejects the role of a military power;
2. Japan will do its best to consolidate the relationship of mutual confidence and trust based on "heart-to-heart" understanding with the nations of Southeast Asia;
3. Japan will cooperate positively with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) while aiming at fostering a relationship based on mutual understanding with the countries of Indochina and will thus contribute to the building of peace and prosperity throughout Southeast Asia (MOFA 1977).

In the realm of foreign relations of Japan, Fukuda achieved greater success in formulating a distinctive foreign policy contributing to peace in Southeast Asia which became popular as the Fukuda doctrine. It made an impact in Asia as the Truman doctrine did in Europe. Prime Minister Fukuda was also instrumental in concluding the 1978 treaty of peace and friendship with China. It is important to note that, as early as 1980's Japan recognized that peace and stability in Asia, a region with politically, economically and culturally diversified backgrounds, is indispensable to the peace and stability of not only Japan but also to the world (MOFA, 1986). This proved to be accurate in late 1990's.

By 2000, Japan was very specific on its style of peacebuilding, emphasizing on peace diplomacy and overseas development assistance (ODA). Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi addressing a gathering in Singapore in 2002, proposed a new role for Japan in international relations that goes beyond a one-dimensional emphasis on economics. That is cooperation with the countries of the ASEAN, to make a contribution to ensure regional stability. That is to strengthen cooperation in order to consolidate peace and nationbuilding in countries suffering from conflicts. Japan identified East Timor, Mindanao, Aceh, and Sri Lanka as the countries in South and Southeast Asia that would benefit under the new pillar of Japan's international cooperation (Peng Er 2009: 91). Thus, Prime Minister Koizumi's government introduced peacebuilding as a new pillar of Japanese diplomacy.

Few years later, in January 2008, Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura expressed Japan's determination to peacebuilding in a policy speech titled "Japan: Builder of Peace" as follows:

I would like to see my country become a focal point for the world to gather knowledge and experience in peacebuilding and to nurture peacebuilding professionals. At the United Nations, Japan is fulfilling the duties of chair of the newly established Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Japan also contributed funds amounting to twenty

million dollars to the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). ... These contributions demonstrate that Japan regards the work of the Commission as significant and essential. ... Japan is a country that does its best for peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is a job at which Japan excels (MOFA 2008).

In 2009, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) replaced the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) which was in power for 54 years. There was no change in the peacebuilding diplomacy of Japanese foreign policy. DPJ too affirmed its commitment to peacebuilding diplomacy, ensuring continuity of Japan's commitment to peacebuilding (Peng Er 2010: 51 -57).

It is easy to trace Japan's peacebuilding concept and its unique features since post WWII values of pacifism, emphasis on development aid, and ensuring of human security (Peng Er 2009: 15). Japan has been actively contributing to peacebuilding for nearly 50 years now. That Japan must play a responsible role in the international community as a "Peace Fostering Nation" to contribute to peace and prosperity of the world is what the Government of Japan, has been advocating for nearly two decades now.

3. Japan - Sri Lanka bi-lateral relations

Sri Lanka - Japan diplomatic relations were formally established in 1952 (MOFA 2011). Japan's good will towards Sri Lanka stems among other things, from the stand GoSL took at San Francisco Peace Conference articulated by J. R. Jayawardene citing the Buddhist principle of forgiveness. The present Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, His Excellency, Nobuhito Hobo in an interview with the *Sunday Observer* stated that: "The late President J.R.Jayawardene who was then Minister of Finance, in his speech at the San Francisco Peace Conference made an impassioned plea in favor of admitting Japan into the Comity of Nations quoting the words of the Lord Buddha, "Hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love." This speech deeply moved and inspired the Japanese people at a time when we were faced with immense difficulties following WWII" (*Sunday Observer*, 22 January 2012). The tranquil friendship the two countries enjoyed made it possible for both GoSL and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to easily accept Japan as a broker of peace in Sri Lanka.

In the days of maritime power, many Japanese people visited Sri Lanka en route to Europe or America. There are many instances of recorded cultural activities between Sri Lanka and Japan dating to pre and post independence period. Formally Japan has contributed to the nationbuilding program of Ceylon (country's name prior to 1972) since its independence from the former colonial power, Britain. From 1948, it was foreign aid that helped GoSL in its many development programs that resulted in recording impressive results in education and health sectors. In literacy, Sri Lanka is ranked 32 in par with most developed countries (*World Development Report* 2011). As one of the first developing countries which promoted universal free healthcare and education it was a development success story until the conflict destabilized the development projects and the economy.

From late 1970's Sri Lanka followed a program of economic liberalization. Japan was one of Sri Lanka's top donors for many development projects. Since that time and throughout the conflict period Japan has been the top donor to Sri Lanka (Goodhand, et. al. 2011: 163). In fact, the first television station to Sri Lanka is a gift from the government of Japan as well as the county's seat of government with the parliamentary complex and ultra modern hospital in Sri Jayawardenapura, Kotte.

Until early 1990, all donors to Sri Lanka dealt directly with the state in a top down delivery mode of development aid. Around the world, a new development since the end of cold war was donors promoting foreign aid as a tool for conflict reduction and post-conflict peacebuilding. Widening the scope from economic policies to promote conflict resolution, conditions were attached to foreign aid. During the conflict in Sri Lanka, especially during the period 2000 - 2005 donor policy supported what the GoSL wanted at the time, to facilitate a peace process.

Yet, the western donor policies towards GoSL are generally driven by the liberal peacebuilding model, international interests and agendas (more than) the needs and concerns of the country itself. (Goodhand, et. al. 2011: 161) This resulted in unrealistic expectations that have led the donors themselves stating that liberal peacebuilding model has failed in many regions. In the case of Sri Lanka, these donors started avoiding the state and instead channelled their aid through non-governmental organizations and their agencies in Sri Lanka.

Unlike the western donors and aid agencies, Japan did not choose to avoid the GoSL. Japan has continually provided aid in support of domestic state policy. Japan's peace diplomacy is to work with governments in its aid policy rather than outside government mechanism, thereby respecting national sovereignty. Although Japan had expressed its concerns on the conflict, Japan has in the true sense of peace diplomacy avoided getting embroiled in political matters of the Sri Lankan state.

It is Prime Minister Koizumi administration that ventured into peacebuilding in South Asia (Afghanistan since Bonn 2001 and Sri Lanka in 2002). Cabinet Secretary, Yasuo Fukuda was also very keen on facilitating Japan's role in peacebuilding in Sri Lanka. He established an advisory group led by Yasushi Akashi to examine Japan's role on peacekeeping and peacebuilding. To Sri Lanka's advantage, Fukuda was also the chairman of the Diet friendship association of Sri Lanka and visited the country many

times (Peng Er 2009: 96). When he became the Prime Minister of Japan, following his father's (Takeo Fukuda) footsteps in conducting Japan's diplomatic relations with Southeast Asia, he too insisted on Japan leading the way to create a regional mechanism that would solve territorial disputes and boost confidence among neighbors (*Economist* 28 November 2007). As Prime Minister, he initiated a program in December 2007 to invite a total of 500 young Sri Lankans of different ethnicities to visit Japan over five years to learn about local governance, build mutual confidence and promote peace (Peng Er 2009: 96).

On 25th October 2002, Japan appointed its former United Nations diplomat, Yasushi Akashi as Japanese Government representative for peacebuilding, rehabilitation and reconstruction in Sri Lanka. Akashi came to be known as the special envoy for the peace process in Sri Lanka (MOFA 2002). He was the principal advisor to the sub-committee on immediate humanitarian and rehabilitation needs in the North and East of Sri Lanka, the main theatres of the civil war. While establishing links between the two warring parties, GoSL and the LTTE, Akashi sought international support for the Sri Lanka peace process by meeting with officials in US, India, Norway and the UN. In Japan, Akashi was also appointed as chairman of the advisory group on international cooperation for peace (Peng Er 2009: 97) strengthening Japan's peacebuilding diplomacy.

Facilitating the peace negotiations for Sri Lanka, Japan hosted the sixth round of peace talks between GoSL and the LTTE in Hakone, Japan. Subsequently despite the setback in the peace process, the Tokyo donor conference (June 2003) was held. The largest pledges for peacebuilding came from the three largest donors to Sri Lanka ; Japan, Asian Development Bank, and the World Bank, each pledging US \$1 billion each and a total of US \$ 4.5 billion over a period of four years from 2003 – 2006 (Goodhand et.al. 2011: 159). In 2007, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, the first foreign minister of an industrialized country to visit conflict-torn Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka, stated that "official development assistance is indispensable to consolidating the peace process" (*Economist* 28 November 2007).

When President Mahinda Rajapakse visited Japan in December 2007, he expressed gratitude for Japan's assistance to Sri Lanka through ODA (overseas development assistance) in the past and said that he would like Japan to continue its assistance for peace and development" (Shinoda 2011:14).

When the war ended in 2009, it was victor's peace for the GoSL, the work began for positive peace in earnest. The many programs sponsored by the state commenced immediately in the North and the East to return to normalcy and for sustainable positive peace. For this purpose, Japan has provided the largest concessionary loan packages to Sri Lanka. In year 2012, at the time of writing this paper, 66 billion rupee loan has been granted, the 42nd Yen loan package to the country on highly concessionary terms (Embassy of Japan, Press release 2012). Japan, as a strong partner of the country's social and economic development has provided assistance amounting to over Rs. 1,525 billion since 1965 to 2010 in the form of grants, loans and technical cooperation (*The Sunday Observer*, 22 January 2012). Japan's assistance to Sri Lanka ranges from large scale infrastructure development to community development at the grass roots level. According to Ambassador, Nobuhito Hobo who provided the data at an interview for *The Sunday Observer* Sri Lanka, stated that "Japan believe firmly that peace and reconciliation are pre-requisites for sustainable development and prosperity." Thus Japan provided assistance to reconstruct the former conflict affected North and East by becoming a major donor in mine-clearing and providing emergency humanitarian assistance. Japan has granted an additional \$ 785,000 (approximately Rs. 86 million) aid for humanitarian de-mining in the North to expedite the de-mining to facilitate resettlement process (*The Sunday Observer* 22 January 2012). In addition to de-mining assistances, Japan has extended assistance for development in the North through projects such as improvement of central facilities of Jaffna Teaching Hospital, construction of Vavuniya-Kilinochchi Transmission Line, urgent rehabilitation of resettled communities in Jaffna and Mannar districts, digital topographic mapping, and training for public officers (*The Sunday Observer* 22 January 2012).

Japan is a trading partner for Sri Lanka too. The total bilateral trade, which stood at US\$ 493 million in 2002, has increased to US\$ 1249.03 million in 2011 (*Ceylon Today* 18 June 2012). Balance of trade with Japan is unfavorable to Sri Lanka, due to imports of high value motor vehicles loved by many in Sri Lanka. Toyota is the popular automobile brand many Sri Lankans look for. Tea has been the main item of export from Sri Lanka to Japan, which accounts for 29.8% of the total value of Sri Lanka's exports to Japan in 2010. Tea export has increased from US\$ 19 million in 2002 to US\$ 50 million in 2010 (*Ceylon Today* 18 June 2012). Other items of exports to Japan are shrimps & prawns, apparel & clothing, precious & semi-precious stones, natural rubber, machines parts and accessories, brooms, brushes, vegetables, fruits and nuts.

Imports of motor vehicles from Japan accounted for more than 50% of the value of total imports from Japan in 2010 (*Ceylon Today* 18 June 2012). Other import items from Japan include electrical machinery, self-propelled bulldozers, iron or steel, parts & accessories for motor vehicles etc. In 2009, the value of total imports from Japan to Sri Lanka recorded the lowest value since 2002. But recovery was made in 2011 due to the reduction in duty (taxes) in Sri Lanka (*Ceylon Today* 18 June 2012).

Since 1996, a number of large multinational conglomerates including NTT, Mitsui Group, Kawasho Corporation, and YKK have committed substantial investments in large infrastructure and manufacturing projects. At the same time, existing Japanese enterprises such as Noritake Lanka Porcelain, Dankotuwa Porcelain (International Ceramics Corporation of Japan), and Dainichi

Creations; in electronics, FDK Lanka Ltd (Fuji Electro Chemical) have expanded their investment in Sri Lanka. There are already 60 Japanese enterprises operating in Sri Lanka under the BOI with a total investment of US\$ 350 million, providing employment to more than 12,000 persons (*Ceylon Today* 18 June 2012).

4. Liberal Peace vs Hybrid Peace Governance

Recent research into ‘hybrid peace governance’ throws light into peacebuilding that do not necessarily follow the liberal peacebuilding model based on market economy, legitimate democratic institutions, and formal practices such as elections that provide for change of government. Liberal peace model has been targeted for much criticism as an unsuccessful model used universally irrespective of local conditions by peace scholars Roland Paris (2004), Roger Mac Ginty (2011), and Oliver Richmond (2011). These scholars have taken stock of two decades of liberal peacebuilding and come to the same conclusion that it is high time to look for alternate peacebuilding models since liberal model’s application across the world irrespective of local context has proven unsuccessful. The main reason for this failure is that while the objective has been to promote liberal values and institutions, the external actors did try to do so without attention to local voices and alternatives. Hence they failed to ensure sustainable peace with many experiencing violence again. Another reason for failure is that illiberal practices have crept in to the liberal peacebuilding model in the top down application. Good example of illiberal practices such as corruption in liberal peacebuilding is the case of Afghanistan in South Asia. The elusive peace in Afghanistan accounts for failure of liberal peacebuilding.

Introducing hybrid peace governance in a special issue on the topic in the *Journal Global Governance: review of multilateralism and international organizations (Global Governance 2012: 18: 1)* hybrid peace governance is defined and discussed extensively. Briefly, hybrid peace refers to a condition where liberal and illiberal norms, institutions, and actors coexist, interact, and even clash. The term peace governance points to the activity of governing this condition. For example it has been noted that in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, international and domestic actors enter into bargaining relationships whereby each actor attempts to promote its own values, norms and practices. The end result is a condition of hybrid peace governance, where contrary elements exist alongside (western liberal as well as domestic illiberal institutions, norms and practices) (*Global Governance 2012: 18: 1*).

This paper pays attention to hybrid peace governance in Sri Lanka. Among the many categories of hybrid peace governance, the victor’s peace is the empirically most frequent kind of setting that encourages hybrid peace governance (GoSL achieved victor’s peace over the LTTE in 2009). This is a situation where formal, liberal and democratic institutions are in place, elections are held, the individual and groups rights are recognized to some extent. It has been the case of Sri Lanka since 1948 when parliamentary democracy was established. Some illiberal elements may have come into existence during the period of conflict and war and remained after the end of conflict. There is no war because the opposition has been defeated decisively by a military victory. Thus, Sri Lanka is a prominent example of this kind of hybridity (*Global Governance 2012: 2*). It differs from liberal peace governance because hybrid peace governance combines formal practices of liberal institutions with that of informal institutions such as ethnic or traditional. In essence hybrid peace governance is coming together of liberal peace governance with some illiberal practices within in the local context.

Since the end of war in 2009, negative peace prevails in Sri Lanka. The GoSL, the civil society, and the non – government organizations moved in to build positive peace, first attempt was to normalize the conflict affected areas. The post war Sri Lanka society is characterized by absence of violence (compared to 33 years of conflict and war) and authoritarian practices which are features of hybridity (*Global Governance 2012: 18: 91*). Authoritarian practices are not new in Sri Lanka. Authoritarian rule can be traced as far as 1978 when the constitutional amendments were done to establish a Presidency with immense powers vested on the President. Since then, every President who was elected to office exercised these powers, becoming authoritarian rulers of various degrees. The incumbent President gained popularity for winning the war (a fact that strengthened the president’s power) and easily won the second term in office too. Unlike previous Presidents, Mahinda Rajapakse is a traditional leader who represents the rural masses (the base of his political party). While his popularity soared after the war, segments of authoritarianism crept in to his administration. This became clearly evident in November 2012 when an impeachment motion against the chief justice was brought in, when the judiciary took alternate view point on a new bill proposed by Minister Basil Rajapakse.

At the same time, the leader of the opposition, who portrays a western oriented image and western ideals, lost his popularity even among the members of his parliamentary group since the end of the conflict. Despite his western democratic ideals, the opposition leader too used illiberal practices to consolidate power as the leader of United National party. This shows that authoritarianism has crept in to party politics in Sri Lanka and is accepted by the people willingly or unwillingly.

Since 2009, illiberal practices associated in liberal governance have been highlighted in the division of support to Sri Lanka by international actors during last stages of the war and in the post war period. Promoted by the United States of America, the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution adopted a resolution “Promoting reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka”

at its 19th regular session. The resolution:

Reaffirming that States must ensure that any measure taken to combat terrorism complies with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law, as applicable, Taking note of the report of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission of Sri Lanka and its findings and recommendations, and acknowledging its possible contribution to the process of national reconciliation in Sri Lanka,

Welcoming the constructive recommendations contained in the Commission's report, including the need to credibly investigate widespread allegations of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, demilitarize the north of Sri Lanka, implement impartial land dispute resolution mechanisms, re-evaluate detention policies, strengthen formerly independent civil institutions, reach a political settlement on the devolution of power to the provinces, promote and protect the right of freedom of expression for all and enact rule of law reforms,

Noting with concern that the report does not adequately address serious allegations of violations of international law (A/HRC/RES/19/2),

Called upon the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the constructive recommendations made in the report of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission and to take all necessary additional steps to fulfil its relevant legal obligations and commitment to initiate credible and independent actions to ensure justice, equity, accountability and reconciliation for all Sri Lankans; and requested the Government of Sri Lanka to present, as expeditiously as possible, a comprehensive action plan detailing the steps that the Government has taken and will take to implement the recommendations made in the Commission's report, and also to address alleged violations of international law. The resolution passed with 24 votes in favour, 15 against, eight abstained (A/HRC/RES/19/2). India, Sri Lanka's giant neighbour and traditional friend voted for the resolution. Sri Lanka denounced the process as "arbitrary" (*BBC News* 22 March 2012).

In this backdrop of negative western international image, Sri Lanka has turned towards its friends in the Non-Aligned movement and other key players in the international arena such as Russia and China. They are countries who do not fully agree with western ideals of liberal peace. In Sri Lanka too, the double standards of the western ideals (comparison with US led war on terror) is challenged. Hence distancing from its former western allies and finding new friends in international relations has taken place in Sri Lanka. One solid diplomatic tie that remains intact is the one that with Japan. This friendship is very important to Sri Lankans who awaits positive peace in the country.

Therefore now more than ever, it is very important that Japan continues its peacebuilding diplomacy in peacebuilding and sustainable development programs in Sri Lanka. Japan today is also Sri Lanka's link with former close allies in the west, i. e. USA. In fact, Yasushi Akashi on his last visit to Sri Lanka, in August 2012 informed that the Japanese government's willingness to aid in repairing the relationship between Sri Lanka and the international community, he stated "I informed the Sri Lankan government that the government of Japan was willing to assist in the efforts to develop a relationship between Sri Lanka and the international community." However, he further noted that, "we will never impose ourselves on this country, only after consultation with the government and all parties involved will we try to be helpful" (*Daily Mirror* 25 August 2012).

Sri Lanka is also facing some antagonism from Tamil Nadu state of India, and strained relations with India since the end of the war. Hence Sri Lanka has moved closer to China for major development projects which reflect Sri Lanka's hybridity, foregoing the previous allies and finding new allies. Sri Lanka's friends in the Non-Aligned movement accept Sri Lanka's hybrid peace governance. It is also accepted by the public in Sri Lanka shown at the recent polls of the provincial council elections by voting for the governing party, led by President Mahinda Rajapakse.

Even in the context of hybrid peace governance, Sri Lanka is working for sustainable development towards peace. Much has been achieved in infrastructure development of the North and East, and in the resettlement of all internally displaced persons, bringing back life in the North and the East to normalcy. The work achieved was highlighted by the Defence Secretary, Gotabhaya Rajapakse at the recent International symposium of the Kotelawala Defence University (August 2012). When he visited Sri Lanka for 6 days in August 2012 Yasushi Akashi said "Japan will continue to follow very closely the developments of national reconciliation to achieve lasting peace in Sri Lanka, and always as a close partner, will support Sri Lanka's efforts towards peacebuilding." He further said that it is a great achievement that Sri Lanka has already resettled more than 90 percent of the displaced people, with the remaining to be resettled soon (*The Sunday Observer* 26 August 2012). It is also worth to note here that liberal democratic practices in Sri Lanka, adopted since independence such as elections for local, provincial and national elective bodies have been conducted on time in the country.

5. Conclusion

In the year 2012 Sri Lanka and Japan celebrate 60 years of bilateral relations, Sri Lanka is also entering a new phase with its achievements in peacebuilding. It may be not up to the standards of liberal peace model, but certainly is accepted by all ethnic communities in Sri Lanka. Hence hybrid peace governance is paving way to sustainable development and peace in the country.

Unlike Sri Lanka's foreign relations with the west which has seen up and down trends from time to time, the 60 years of diplomatic relations with Japan has always been very cordial and friendly. There has never been a tense moment between the two nations. It is due to the fact that the successive Japanese governments have always worked with successive GoSL through Japan's peacebuilding diplomacy.

Japan's vital contribution to positive peacebuilding and being a friend for Sri Lanka in international relations is very much needed and is welcomed. Japan has also recognized that Sri Lanka is working towards positive peace and sustainable development with its democratic form of government, liberal economy together with ownership of local society in a manner of authoritarianism in peacebuilding. Thus hybrid peace governance is established in Sri Lanka.

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