Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers: Conflict and Legitimacy

Shlomi Yass

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was founded in 1976, demanding the establishment of an independent state for the Tamil ethnic minority in northern and northeastern Sri Lanka. In May 2009, following over three decades of conflict, its leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed and the group was dismantled. The LTTE was established long before other well-known terror groups emerged, and yet it received little attention in comparison. An analysis of the relations between Sri Lankan governments and the Tamil Tigers from the onset of the struggle in the 1970s up to the group's final defeat in May 2009 can provide valuable lessons to other democratic states fighting terrorist organizations, including Israel.

Keywords: Sri Lanka, Tamil Tigers, terrorist organizations, Sinhalese, Tamils, legitimacy, negotiations, conflict, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel

The terrorist organization known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was founded in 1976, demanding the establishment of an independent Tamil state in northern and northeastern Sri Lanka. In May 2009, following over three decades of conflict, its leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed and the group was dismantled.

Upon its establishment, the LTTE had supported a Marxist-Leninist ideology. In addition, it called for recognition of the Hindu religion and Tamil language in the country and for appropriate representation in the universities, employment, and the public sector. These demands evolved into a separatist nationalist ideology, as the LTTE demanded an independent Tamil state.

Shlomi Yass is an intern in the Military and Strategic Affairs Program at the Institute for National Security Studies.

The profile of the Tamil Tigers differs from that of other terrorist groups. It did not seek liberation from a foreign occupier, and its ideology was secular. The LTTE operated a navy, an air force, a women's brigade, an orphaned children's brigade, an elite suicide force, and a cyberwarfare unit, long before other well-known terrorist groups employed such measures.

The last Sri Lankan president to face the LTTE, Mahinda Rajapaksa, was able to adopt a drastic policy of all-out war against the organization due to an atmosphere of ongoing violence, failed rounds of negotiations, and a heavy toll on the economy. This atmosphere, along with the general sentiment of a global war on terror created in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, facilitated extreme action such as imposing censorship on Tamil media and utilizing pro-government media in delegitimizing the LTTE, and towards the end of the conflict the government denied the UN, foreign media, and human rights organizations access to the battle zones. A sharp increase in weapons' acquisition from foreign countries, primarily Israel, provided the Sri Lankan government with the operative edge needed to completely defeat the organization in 2009.

An analysis of the relations between Sri Lankan governments and the LTTE throughout the years can serve as a valuable source of information and lessons for the international community in its fight against terror.

Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers: A History of the Conflict

Originally known as Ceylon ("the Holy Island"), Sri Lanka is located near the southeastern coast of the Indian subcontinent, in the Indian Ocean. Its population of 21 million resides in an area of about 65,600 square kilometers. The Sinhalese ("lions") are the largest ethnic group, constituting 73.8 percent of the population, while the Tamils ("tigers") constitute 12 percent, and the descendants of the Arab traders ("Moors") constitute 9 percent. The main religions are Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam, respectively.[1]

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Portuguese and Dutch controlled the island. In the eighteenth century it became a British colony, and hundreds of thousands of ethnic Tamils were brought by the British from southern India to work in the tea, coffee, and coconut plantations. The origin of the struggle between the two dominant ethnic groups, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, can be traced back to the British policy of "divide and conquer." Despite their numerical inferiority, under the British the Tamils held a disproportionate number of positions in the public service and were over-represented in government institutions.

In 1948, the island became a British Commonwealth Dominion, with independent control over foreign relations and defense. The Sinhalese majority sought to assert its religion, its language, and its culture on the entire country at the expense of the Tamil minority. The Ceylon Citizenship Act was passed, denying citizenship to the Tamil plantation workers who had come from India. As a result, the Tamils began promoting the establishment of a federal system with a Tamil autonomy.[2]

In 1956, Solomon Bandaranaike, a Sinhalese, was elected Prime Minister. The Sinhala Exclusivity Act was passed, establishing Sinhalese as the official language and limiting the number of Tamil employees in the public service.[3] In 1957 and 1965, agreements were signed discussing the status of the Tamil language and decentralization of part of the political power through its transfer to the provincial councils, but neither was honored because of Sinhalese objection within the government.

In 1972, the island received independence from Great Britain and changed its name from Ceylon to Sri Lanka. The new constitution continued the policy of discrimination, making Buddhism the dominant religion in the country and establishing restrictions on the number of Tamils attending universities.[4] As a result, many Tamil communities began migrating to the northern and northeastern parts of the country.

Although at a certain point more than forty-two official Tamil groups operated in Sri Lanka, there was no meaningful Tamil representation in the political system. This vacuum was quickly filled by armed groups. In 1976, an unknown eighteen-year-old by the name of Velupillai Prabhakara established the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). His charismatic and dictatorial leadership style allowed him to lead the organization for over three decades.

In 1981, the Sinhalese took to the streets in a violent campaign against the Tamil minority and set fire to the Tamil public library in Jaffna. The library held over 100,000 rare ancient manuscripts and was considered the main Tamil cultural institution.[5] Two years later, riots broke out in what was later termed "Black July," following the killing of thirteen Sinhalese soldiers by Tamil rebels. For several days, a retaliation campaign was carried out, during which masses of Sinhalese, with the aid of the army, raided Tamil homes, looted their property, and killed thousands. The "Black July" riots led hundreds of thousands of Tamils to flee the country and marked a watershed in the civil war between the Sinhalese and the Tamils.[6]

At the time, following pressure from its Tamil citizens in the state of Tamil Nadu, India offered support in negotiations between the rival groups.[7] It assisted in establishing training camps in Indian territory and later sent its "peace force" to oversee implementation of local ceasefire agreements. It was not long before the Indians were dragged into military involvement by Tamil rebels. The "peace force" did have some success, but it lost over 1,500 soldiers.[8] In light of these losses, criticism at home, and the elections in India and Sri Lanka, India retreated from its peace initiative in 1990.

The lack of external intervention allowed the LTTE to establish its position as the dominant Tamil organization, and the suicide attacks against military targets expanded to assassinations of politicians and civilians.[9] Upon its establishment, the LTTE formed ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in London, including training of Tamil rebels in Middle Eastern refugee camps.[10] The relationship expanded and later included Hamas, Hizbollah, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by George Habash.[11] In 1990, the Tamil Tigers attacked a Sri Lanka military base using chlorine gas, wounding more than sixty soldiers,[12] and a year later, the group carried out a naval suicide attack against a Sri Lankan supply ship.[13] In 1991, a female suicide bomber assassinated former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Premadasa on Sri Lankan soil, and in 1993, Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa was killed in a suicide attack. In 1997, the world's first cyber attack was carried out against Sri Lankan embassies around the globe, as over 800 e-mails a day flooded the embassies and paralyzed embassy networks for almost two weeks (figure 1).[14] Through the LTTE, stolen Norwegian passports made their way to al-Qaeda in 1993 and reached operatives such as Ramzi Yousef, one of the planners of the attack on the World Trade Center.[15] It is possible that Tamil rebel merchant ships were used to transfer weapons to al-Qaeda as well.[16]
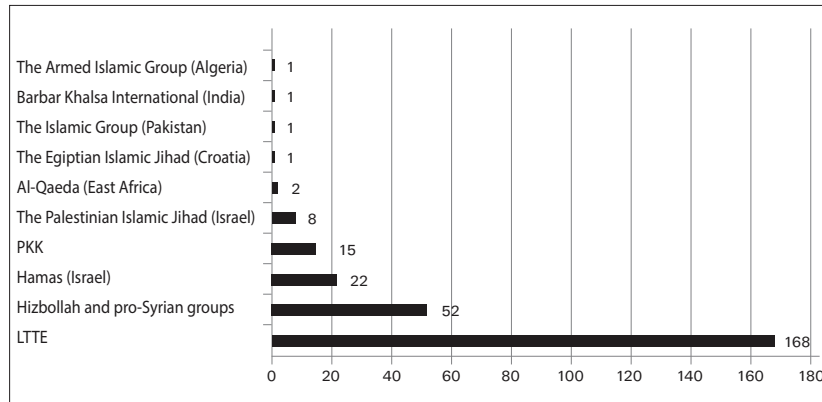
Figure 1. Suicide Attacks Carried out by Various Groups (1980-2000)
Source: Gunaratna (2000)

In 1990, the Tamil Tigers began to expel tens of thousands of Muslims from the areas under their control in northern Sri Lanka and reinforced their military and civilian control in the north, particularly the Jaffna district. Up to the year 2000, a de facto state called Tamil Eelam governed the northern provinces, with a flag and a national anthem, a court, a police force, and even a taxation system, alongside the official Sri Lankan system.[17]

In 1999, Norway—which was considered a neutral country with no colonialist past or hidden political and economic agendas—began to assist in the negotiations. Norway's involvement in negotiations for the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO had made it a favorable mediator. Two years later, the Tamil Tigers declared a unilateral ceasefire, and a short time after that, a joint memorandum of understanding was signed. Under Norwegian auspices, six meetings were held, but repeated violations on behalf of Sri Lanka led the LTTE to announce in 2003 that the talks were suspended.

The Tamil Tigers' Defeat
In 2005, Mahinda Rajapakse was elected president of Sri Lanka and continued the attempted dialogue with the LTTE. As a result of the continuing suicide attacks and military raids, in 2008 the government in Colombo abandoned its attempts to achieve a ceasefire and decided to strive towards a military strike.[18]

The operation aimed at defeating the Tamil rebels took place between January and May 2009. In January, the Tamil Tigers' capital, the city of Kilinochchi in the north of the island, was captured. The media, United Nations, and human rights organizations were denied access, and websites affiliated with the LTTE were blocked (TamilNet being the most prominent). A rebel force defending the city withdrew to the jungles along with hundreds of thousands of trapped civilians serving as human shields (figure 2). As a result of heavy pressure from the international community, the government established no-fire zones, calling upon civilians to move to these areas. Shortly after, the army bombed these areas, ignoring the UN and human rights organizations' pleas. In April, the rebels' defensive line was breached, creating a corridor through which civilians were able to flee from their rebel captors.[19] On May 16, the army gained control of the last rebel strongholds, and two days later, Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed and thirty years of civil war came to an end.

Losing Ground

November 2005   February 2007   January 2009
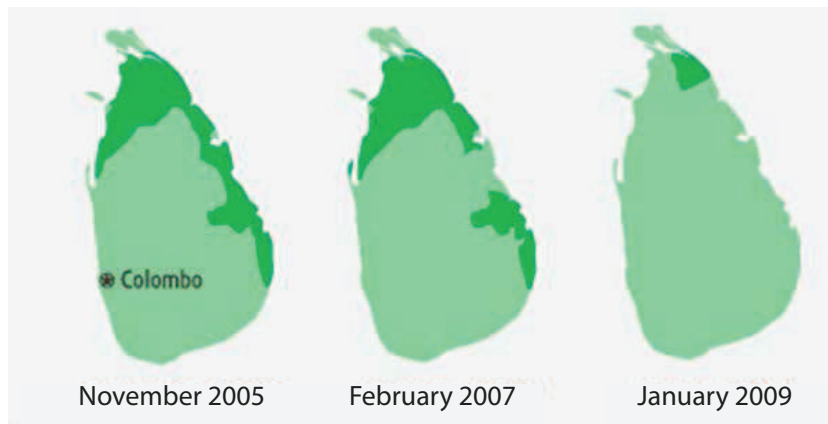
■ Approximate Tamil Tiger areas

Figure 2. Tamil Tiger-controlled areas 2005-2009
Source: Ministry of Defense, Sri Lanka

The Victims of the Conflict
Between 1972 and 2009, at least 100,000 people were killed in Sri Lanka, 40,000 of them in the last months of fighting.[20] The UN rejected claims by the government that during these last months it undertook a "humanitarian

rescue operation" with a policy of "zero civilian casualties."[21] It was the UN's recommendation to commence international investigation on account of suspected human rights violations, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

Recently, the government admitted that in the last months of fighting, 9,000 people were killed.[22] However, the Northern Provincial Council, the Tamil council in the north of Sri Lanka, announced that it does not accept this government statistic because it is "flawed," and it carried out its own investigation.[23] The fierce worldwide debate regarding both sides' conduct, especially in the last months of the fighting, is far from over and will continue for a long time.

The Issue of the Definition of Terrorism

The case of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers is a classic example of the problematic nature of the term "terrorism." Although the term is used often, it has no universally accepted definition, and in fact, there are hundreds of definitions. Not infrequently, the definitions are a result of political considerations and narrow interests rather than a true joint effort to establish a coherent definition. The lack of definition is not merely an academic issue. In practice, it interferes with setting uniform standards and leads to a blurring between areas of responsibility, preventative measures, legal aspects, and the like.[24]

Legitimacy

Every regime's stability is dependent upon its degree of legitimacy. Although many people use the term "legitimacy," few define it. Legitimacy is in the eyes of the beholder, it is a belief and a subjective mindset. As such, it includes a broad range of interpretations: moral, ethical, legal, and others. In general, one can say that legitimacy is a process by means of which an entity is able to justify its existence.[25]

The idea of legitimacy is associated with the German sociologist Max Weber, who emphasized three types of authority: traditional authority, emanating from belief or tradition and based on the laws of inheritance; charismatic authority, relying on an exceptional leader whose mission and vision are an inspiration to others; and legal-rational authority, which is based on laws and normative regulations,[26] and which is customary in democratic regimes.

Political legitimacy is the recognition of the right to govern. This is achieved through the belief that the political institutions are the most appropriate for a specific society. The regime's legitimacy relies on the populace's adherence, law enforcement, and society's accepted norms.[27] Legitimacy can also be defined by its absence. An example is the campaign to delegitimize Israel and the denial of the Jewish people's right to self-determination through the State of Israel.[28]

The events of September 11, 2001 catalyzed a global change in the attitude toward terror organizations. The real-time feed from the scene shocked the international community. As a result, the battle waged by states against terror organizations achieved greater legitimacy than in the past.

Sri Lanka was able to aptly exploit the global change in attitude towards terror, targeting the LTTE through controversial military methods, alongside an aggressive and organized media campaign to mobilize domestic and international public opinion. These vigorous, ongoing measures led to the erosion of the LTTE's legitimacy, and consequently, despite the world's condemnations and the clear evidence that both parties were carrying out war crimes and crimes against humanity, especially in the last months of the fighting in 2009, Sri Lanka was never labeled a terrorist state.

Who is a Terrorist?

If Sri Lanka was not a terrorist state, then why were the Tamil Tigers terrorists? In the September 11 aftermath, as well as the attacks in Bali in 2002, in Madrid in 2004, in London in 2005, and many others, an increasing number of countries became affected by terror, forcing them to take a stand against those who perpetrated the attacks. World public opinion was no longer in favor of the LTTE, no matter how justified its objective, as it used female fighters and recruited orphaned children. Furthermore, the organization's international network, which included fifty-four Tamil organizations and was the source of its economic, political, and propaganda capabilities, lost its power. This was accompanied by significant criticism from Tamil citizens, and certainly Sinhalese citizens in Sri Lanka itself, on account of the assassination of numerous politicians, government officials, academics, and intellectuals.

The LTTE's legitimacy in the domestic and international arena was eroded. Indeed, by 2006, no fewer than thirty-two countries had placed the Tamil

Tigers on their list of terrorist organizations, among them India, Canada, the European Union, the United States, Great Britain, and Sri Lanka.[29]

Israeli Involvement

Relations between Sri Lanka and Israel have ebbed and flowed since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries in 1956. Sri Lanka broke off relations on a number of occasions, mainly as a result of pressure from the Arab world and opposition by the country's Muslim population. Later, in light of the ongoing conflict against the Tamil rebels, it sought Israel's help in a number of areas, particularly security.[30]

Many countries have provided Sri Lanka with weapons, including the Ukraine, Iran, Russia, Pakistan, China, England, and the United States.[31] However, Israel stands out in regards to the scope of weapons provided, reaching hundreds of millions of USD (figure 3). The Sri Lankan army purchased advanced night vision and communications technology, artillery-coordination systems, and Gabriel sea-to-sea missiles. In addition, it acquired drones and ground stations, flak jackets, ammunition, thousands of Uzi submachine guns and Galil assault weapons, mortars, and 155-mm cannons.[32]

A special emphasis was placed on acquiring weapons for the Sri Lankan Navy and Air Force. As early as the 1950s, the Sri Lankan navy purchased the Israeli Miznak and Mivtach naval vessels. Later it acquired the Sa'ar, the Shaldag, the Dvora, and the Super Dvora.[33] By increasing its operational range through Israeli vessels, the Sri Lankan navy was able to effectively fight the Tamil Tigers' naval force, as the Tamils used the sea as the main channel for smuggling weapons and operatives from India, attacking the Sri Lankan navy and even sinking six Sri Lankan Dvora-class boats.[34]

As for the Sri Lankan air force, in 1995 it purchased seven Kfir Fighter Jets, and in 2000, it was reported that eight more jets had been purchased. The Israeli jets played a pivotal role: one of the Kfir squadrons logged more than 2,800 operational flight hours and released over 3,500 tons of bombs.[35] The Sri Lankan ambassador to Israel confirmed that pilots from his country had received training in Israel,[36] and a spokesman for the Sri Lankan embassy in Washington even stated that Israeli pilots had actually flown the planes.[37]

Furthermore, there were reports that Israeli submarines carried out test launches of Popeye missiles, which are capable of carrying a nuclear

warhead, near Sri Lanka's coast in the Indian Ocean.[38] Israel had record arms sales, more than any other country in the world in the past twenty years.[39] There is no doubt that the Israeli weapons and vessels provided Sri Lanka with an operative edge; the jets and boats allowed the military to strike the Tamil rebels from a greater distance, thereby challenging the Tamil forces.
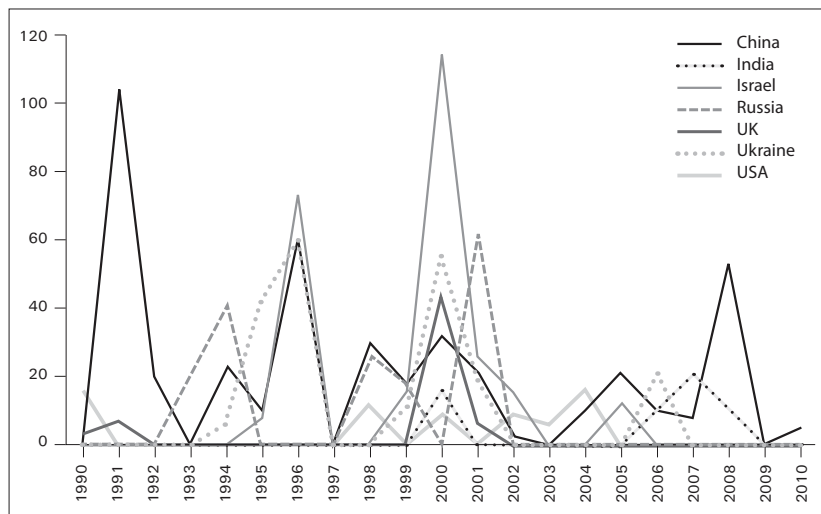

Figure 3. Supply of Weapons to Sri Lanka
Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: (SIPRI), Arms Transfers Database.

Iranian Involvement

The budding relations between Sri Lanka and Iran have put a halt to the military collaboration between Israel and Sri Lanka. During 2008, Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa and Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad held a number of meetings, during which several agreements were signed. Iran pledged 1.9 billion dollars in soft loans and grants in order to develop irrigation and hydroelectric power projects, while Sri Lanka pledged to purchase Iranian oil.[40]

Another meeting took place recently between President Rajapaksa and Iranian president Hassan Rouhani, indicating that ties between the two countries are strengthening. At the meeting, the two leaders discussed

the need to explore possibilities for increasing bilateral trade in goods and services.[41]

The new alliance and resulting danger that Israeli technology may fall in the hands of Tehran, caused Israel to freeze defense exports to Sri Lanka, despite the extension of bilateral relations in trade, agriculture, irrigation, and desalination.[42]

The Connection between the Conflict in Sri Lanka and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Though other terrorist organizations may share similar features, the LTTE differs from contemporary terrorist organizations in several ways. Similarities include the absence of negotiations, the use of suicide bombers and sources of funding.

The absence of negotiations: the negotiations between the LTTE and Sri Lanka were few and far apart, suffering from long periods of stalemate, complete lack of trust, and mutual breaches. Indian and Norwegian attempts to mediate deliberations led to a temporary cessation of the violence.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is characterized by ongoing fighting with repeated attempts to "revive" or "jumpstart" the "moribund" negotiations. This conflict also suffers from lack of trust, stalemate and breaches of agreements.

The use of suicide bombers: initially, the LTTE was in search of its own distinct niche in a field already laden with competing militant organizations. As a non-state actor fighting a globally recognized political entity, the LTTE turned to suicide bombers in order to achieve an operational edge and distinguish itself from other actors. Hamas, like the Tamil Tigers, created a distinctive niche through the use of suicide bombers.[43]

Hamas's challenge, however, was more difficult. As a latecomer to an arena that already had a well-established Palestinian liberation movement, Hamas had to distinguish itself from competing terrorist organizations, as well as the PLO.

Sources of funding: terrorist organizations require funding in order to realize their objectives. Such funding can emanate from the general public, self-financing, ostensibly legitimate businesses, illegal activities, and terror-supporting states. The events of September 11 emphasized the pivotal role of funding in maintaining a terrorist organization.

The Tamil Tigers financed their operations though fundraising and extensive criminal activity. The Tamil diaspora operated dozens of organizations around the world,[44] and at least thirty-two front companies disguised as charitable organizations. The criminal activity included maritime piracy, human, drug and weapons smuggling, threats, extortion, and passport and credit card forgery. It is estimated that the Tamil Tigers accumulated between 200 and 300 million dollars annually from legal and illegal businesses.[45]

The Palestinian terrorist organizations, like the Tamil Tigers, are funded not only by foundations and contributions from private institutions, but also state actors such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Syria.[46] A significant proportion of financial support emanates from Iran, estimated at tens of millions of dollars every month,[47] and from Hizbollah, which launders large sums of money in Lebanon. The Islamic Jihad in Palestine receives most of its funding from Iran, while Hizbollah provides training bases and logistical aid.[48]

The following are areas in which the Tamil Tigers and Palestinian terrorist organizations operating against Israel differ.

Lack of recognition: both conflicts included a territorial claim. However, the Tamil Tigers recognized Sri Lanka's independence and the Sinhalese majority's legitimacy to exist in the country, though they demanded the establishment of an independent Tamil state alongside the independent Sinhalese state. In contrast, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad are expressly anti-Western organizations that have frequently called for the destruction of the State of Israel and they continue to refuse to recognize its right to exist.

Multiple organizations: though at the onset of the struggle there were dozens of militant Tamil organizations, they very quickly dissipated. Whether due to lack of an ideological platform or because operatives moved to other organizations or were killed, as of the 1990s, the Tamil Tigers became the sole representatives of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In contrast, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there are many organizations with different and often contradictory characteristics and objectives.

Ideological flexibility: The Tamil Tigers took a forceful, unequivocal approach throughout their years of existence: an uncompromising demand for an independent state in northern Sri Lanka. Although the group's methods of operation became increasingly sophisticated over the years,

its ideological platform was conservative and its nationalist objective was very basic. In contrast, the ideological platform of some of the Palestinian organizations has shifted over time: If in the beginning, all Palestinian factions supported terror in order to obtain political rights, in recent years there has been a change, at least on the declarative level, with the PLO, the Palestinian umbrella organization, repeatedly stating that the path of terror has failed and that the rights of the Palestinian people will be restored only through the use of diplomacy.

Media coverage: The Tamil Tigers were one of the most deadly terror organizations in the modern period. However, the conflict in Sri Lanka received less media coverage than other conflicts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because of the Western tradition of "mental distance" from events taking place in Asian countries—a lack of sufficient attention, to the point of intentional disregard. In the first months of 2009, the average daily headline coverage of the two conflicts around the world was clearly unbalanced: the Sri Lankan conflict received an average of 29 headlines a day, while the Israeli-Palestinian conflict received an average of 148 a day.[49]

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conflict in Sri Lanka provides insight into the characteristics shared with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Nevertheless, there are three main issues that should be noted: time as an element of the conflict, placing terrorist groups on a list of terrorist organizations, and expanding involvement.

Time as an element of the conflict: a prolonged conflict does not exist in a vacuum. It facilitates entrenchment and a stalemate.

There is no doubt that in Sri Lanka, the lack of a true ceasefire, along with the prolonged stalemate, were harmful for both sides. As the years passed without a permanent agreement, or at least a significant respite in the fighting, an additional critical, negative dimension was added: the element of time. The feelings of hostility and alienation intensified the already common prejudices between the sides. The Tamil protest, which, like the government response, was at first mainly non-violent, deteriorated into systematic organized violence, while the government responded by killing thousands.

As for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it would be an error to assume that maintaining the status quo between Israel and the Palestinians is preferable to an agreement that includes concessions. An example of

this can be found in the evolution reflected in Hamas's appearance as a counterweight to the PLO, and years later, in the flood of extremist entities emerging as a counterweight to Hamas. Another dangerous example, which is gaining momentum, is the rise in attacks initiated by Israeli settlers against Palestinians, referred to in politically correct language as "price tag" attacks. These acts clearly demonstrate the change that has taken place in Israel over the years as a result of the failed negotiations. The U.S. State Department's latest report on global terror places settlers in the same position as terror organizations, and there is a worrying increase in the number of attacks reported in the previous year.[50] What will happen with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (and the conflict between Israel and the Arab world) if such actions spin out of control?

Placing terror groups on a list of terrorist organizations: it is extremely important to promote listing terrorist organizations as such, supporting the notion that a war over the legitimacy of a terrorist organization is preferable to a war against it on the battlefield.

Sri Lanka did a good job of damaging the legitimacy of the Tamil Tigers, inter alia, by working actively and effectively to have the group placed on the list of terrorist organizations. Not only was benefit derived from providing a counterweight to international Tamil propaganda and damage caused to the Tamil narrative, but global cooperation against the organization expanded. These aggressive actions limited the group's maneuvering capabilities in the legal arena, significantly hindering its sources of funding, and decisively contributing to damaging its legitimacy.

Israel, too, must work intensively—beyond prevention and punishment, beyond targeting sources of funding and limiting maneuvering room—to increase cooperation and to create a common fate with other countries and their agencies, institutions, and organizations. It should conduct an effective international information campaign that includes countries both near and far, make use of coordinated diplomacy, and take a clear stand against countries that support terrorist organizations, whether directly or indirectly. These all should be done with a clear intention to increase the circle of states that place Palestinian terrorist groups on a list of terrorist organizations.

Expanding involvement: Even though a partnership with additional actors in the frameworks of negotiations makes concessions necessary, when a

solution is found, such a partnership will enable a more comprehensive and stable agreement.

The Tamil Tigers were a narrow secular nationalist group in terms of ideology and territory. Nevertheless, because of the long tradition of religious tension between the Sinhalese majority, who are Buddhists, and the Tamil minority, who are Hindus, it is not inconceivable that the ethnic issue in the conflict was only one layer, perhaps a marginal one, compared to the religious issue.

As for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the two main groups, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad in Palestine, are fundamentally religious organizations. In Hamas's opinion, the "problem of Palestine" is a Muslim religious problem, and the territory of "Palestine" is Muslim holy land, and thus giving up even one inch of it is strictly prohibited.[51] The Islamic Jihad in Palestine also claims that the Palestinian problem is not national, but fundamentally Islamic, and that solving it is the key to liberating and uniting the entire Muslim nation.[52]

Since the Israeli-Palestinian conflict involves a broad religious problem, extending well beyond the narrow nationalist issue, it would be desirable to give weight to positive, moderate forces. This includes giving serious consideration to extensive involvement by the Arab states. The Arab peace initiative, with the necessary changes, could be a good starting point.

Notes

1   CIA, "Sri Lanka," April 21, 2014, *The World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ce.html.

2   "Timeline: History of the Conflict in Sri Lanka," PBS, June 27, 2006, http://www.pbs.org/pov/nomoretears/special_timeline.php.

3   V. P. Vaidik, *Ethnic Crisis in Sri Lanka: India's Options* (South Asia Books, 1986), p. 75.

4   "Sri Lanka: Country Overview," *Encyclopedia of the Nations*, 2013, http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Asia-and-the-Pacific/Sri-Lanka.html.

5   Rebecca Knuth, "Destroying a Symbol: Checkered History of Sri Lanka's Jaffna Public Library" in *72nd IFLA General Conference and Council, 20-24 August, 2006*. http://tamilnation.co/indictment/rebecca.pdf.

6   Frances Harrison, "Twenty Years On – Riots That Led to War," *BBC*, July 23, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3090111.stm.

7   Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *Sri Lanka Country Brief* 2012, http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/sri_lanka/sri_lanka_country_brief.html.

8   "Peace That the LTTE Spurned," *Sunday Times*, May 24, 2009, http://www.sundaytimes.lk/090524/News/sundaytimesnews_28.html.

9   European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, *Study on Criminal Accountability in Sri Lanka as of January 2009*, June 2010.

10   S.V.D Gamini Samarnayake, *Political Violence in Sri Lanka 1971-1987* (New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2008), p. 233.

11   Bharat Verma, *Indian Defence Review* (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 2010), p. 107.

12   John Parachini, "Putting WMD Terrorism into Perspective," *Project MUSE* (2011), http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/rdenever/PPA%20730-11/Parachini.pdf, p. 39.

13   Gunaratna, Dr Rohan. "The Threat to the Maritime Domain: How Real Is the Terrorist Threat?" *William B. Ruger Chair of National Security Economics Papers,* found at *http://www. nwc. navy. mil/nsdm/Rugerpapers. htm* (2008), p. 25.

14   "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE): Internet Black Tigers," Start, 2013, http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/terrorist_organization_profile.asp?id=4062.

15   Walter Jayawardhana, "LTTE Supplied Forged Passport to WTC Killer Ramzi Yousef," *Ministry of Defence and Urban Development*, December 30, 2010, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20070324_03.

16   "Possible Links between LTTE and al-Qaeda," *The Sunday Times*, February 4, 2007, http://www.sundaytimes.lk/070204/News/105news.html.

17   "Peace Negotiations of Sri Lankan Conflict in 2000-2006 (2007), http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:4488/FULLTEXT01.pdf, p. 17.

18   From an interview with Donald Perera, Sri Lanka's ambassador to Israel, at the ambassador's residence in Tel Aviv, September 21, 2011.

19   Jon Lee Anderson, "Death of the Tiger," Ilankai Tamil Sangam (2011), http://www.sangam.org/2011/01/Death_of_the_Tiger.pdf, p. 42.

20   "UN Seeks Foreign Probe of Sri Lanka War Crimes," *ABC*, February 16, 2014, http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-16/an-un-seeks-foreign-probe-of-sri-lanka-war-crimes/5263122.

21   "Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka," *UN,* March 31, 2011, , http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/POE_Report_Full.pdf. p. 10.

22   Charles Haviland, "Sri Lanka Government Publishes War Death Toll Statistics," BBC, February 24, 2012, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-17156686.

23   "Tamil Council to Count Sri Lanka War Casualties," *Arab News*, December 26, 2013, http://www.arabnews.com/news/498801.

24   Martha Crenshaw, "The Psychology of Terrorism: An Agenda for the 21st Century," *Political Psychology* 21, no. 2 (2000): p. 406.

25   Mark C. Suchman, "Managing Legitimacy: Strategic and Institutional Approaches," *Academy of Management Review* 20, no. 3 (1995): 572.

26 Max Weber. "The Three Types of Legitimate Rule," *Berkeley Publications in Society and Institutions* 4, no. 1 (1958): 1-11.

27 Jean-Marc Coicaud, *Legitimacy and Politics: A Contribution to the Study of Political Right and Political Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 10-14.

28 "Basic Delegitimization for Israel," *Reut Institute*, July 2, 2004, http://www.reut-institute.org/he/Publication.aspx?PublicationId=285.

29 Amit Baruah, "European Union Bans LTTE," *The Hindu*, May 31, 2006, http://www.hindu.com/2006/05/31/stories/2006053117200100.htm.

30 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Joint Communique regarding the Re-establishment of Diplomatic Ties between Israel and Sri Lanka," May 15, 2000, http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Yearbook13/Pages/108%20%20Joint%20communiqu-eacute-%20regarding%20the%20re-esta.aspx.

31 "India and Sri Lanka after the LTTE," International Crisis Group, June 23, 2011, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/206-india-and-sri-lanka-after-the-ltte.aspx.

32 Nadav Zeevi, "Defense Officials Fear Military Know-how Being Leaked to Iran," *Ma'ariv*, July 28, 2008, http://www.nrg.co.il/online/1/ART1/765/866.html.

33 "Ceylon (Sri Lanka)," Israeli Navy Veterans' Association web site, 2014.

34 "Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics," *Jane's Navy International*, March 2009, http://www.defence.lk/news/Sri_Lanka_Navy.pdf.

35 David Eshel, "IAI Looks East to Sell Updated Kfirs," *Aviation Week*, Feb 3, 2014, http://aviationweek.com/awin/iai-looks-east-sell-updated-kfirs.

36 David Regev, "Sri Lankan Ambassador: We Back Israel's War on Terror," *Ynet*, July 2, 2010, http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3923309,00.html.

37 Jeffrey Phillips, "Tamil Secession Ruled Out," *BBC*, July 21, 2000, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/844780.stm.

38 "Popeye Turbo," Federation of American Scientists, June 20, 2000, http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/israel/missile/popeye-t.htm.

39 Katharine Tengtio, "International Dimensions of the Sri Lankan Conflict," Center for Peace & Conflict Studies (2013), http://www.academia.edu/3050746/International_Dimensions_of_the_Sri_Lankan_Conflict, p. 18.

40 "Iranian President Visits Sri Lanka," *USA Today*, April 28, 2008, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-04-28-iran-srilanka_N.htm.

41 "Lanka Wants Stronger Ties with Iran," *Colombo Gazette*, May 21, 2014, http://colombogazette.com/2014/05/21/lanka-wants-stronger-ties-with-iran.

42 "Sri Lanka and Israel Expand Bilateral Relations," *Daily News*, January 9, 2014, http://www.dailynews.lk/?q=local/sri-lanka-and-israel-expand-bilateral-relations.

43 Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 135.

44   Brenda J. and James M. Lutz, *Global Terrorism* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008), p. 248.

45   Peter Mandaville and Terrence Lyons, *Politics from Afar: Transnational Diasporas and Networks* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 102.

46 Felix Frisch, "Israel: Most Hamas Funding Coming from Saudi Arabia," *Ynet*, July 3, 2003, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/1,7340,L-2710673,00.html.

47 Reuters, "Hamas: Our Relations with Iran Have Suffered; Iranians Sending Less Money," *Ynet*, June 3, 2013, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4394563,00.html.

48 Lior Ben David, "Background Document on the Issue of Terrorist Organizations Fighting Israel," Knesset Research and Information Center, September 2, 2004, http://www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/data/pdf/m01048.pdf.

49 Noah Bernstein, "A Media Eclipse: Israel-Palestine and the World's Forgotten Conflicts," *Open Democracy*, March 18, 2010, http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/noah-bernstein/media-eclipse-israel-palestine-and-worlds-forgotten-conflicts.

50 Office of the Spokesperson, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013," U.S. State Department, April 30, 2014, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/04/225406.htm.

51 "The Hamas Charter (1988)," *Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies*, March 21, 2006, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/data/pdf/PDF_06_032_2.pdf.

52 Lior Ben David, "Background Document on the Issue of Terrorist Organizations Fighting Israel," Knesset Research and Information Center, September 2, 2004, http://www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/data/pdf/m01048.pdf.