



Vision

To enhance National Security of Sri Lanka through excellence in research education and networking

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) is the premiere think tank on national security in Sri Lanka established under the Ministry of Defence

Farewell to Professor Rohan Gunaratna



Professor Rohan Gunaratna was hosted for a Hi-tea buffet by the staff of INSS on 07th of May at the Cinnamon Grand hotel on the occasion of relinquishing his duties as the Director General of the Institute of National Security Studies. The event was held in a celebrative way where several speeches were exchanged in reminiscence of the inspirational role played by Professor Gunaratna during his tenure as the Director General. He has been a mentor to everyone and has played a key role in uplifting the quality of research produced at INSS. INSS wishes him all the very best in future endeavors and will always be treasured by the staff for his prudent contribution



INSS blessed with a new Leadership

Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardane RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc of INSS has been appointed to oversee the duties of the Director General of the Institute of National Security Studies in addition to his present duties as the Director (Communications and Publications) by the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence with effect from 02nd of May 2022.

Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardana is a retired Naval officer who has been called for active service in the Regular Naval Reserve. During his Naval career spanning over 35 years, he specialized in Naval Communications and has acquired wide and varied experience at sea and ashore before retiring in April 2018. His sea career culminated in 2008 after relinquishing command of SLNS Samudura, an Offshore Patrol Vessel which was instrumental in taking an active role in the final years of the humanitarian operation in the North and the East. He has served in leadership appointments ashore such as Area Commander of North Central Naval Area, Commandant of the Naval and Maritime Academy, in Trincomalee and as Director General (Training) at Naval Headquarters. He was nominated to actively participate in several national and international conferences/seminars representing the navy and the country. He began his naval career in the third batch of the Sir John Kotelawala Defence Academy and at the same time pursued his studies graduating with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree in 1985 from the University of Colombo. Thereafter he obtained three Master's degrees from Sir John Kotelawala Defence University in 2007, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India in 2009 and National Defence University, Pakistan in 2014. In addition to medals of gallantry awarded for acts of bravery, his distinguished naval career has been recognized with awards on several occasions. Before being appointed to the INSS, he served as Additional Director General of the Civil Defence Force in Sri Lanka.



INSS holds a public lecture on “National Health Strategies for Health of Migrant and Refugee Population and Preservation of Health Security in the Country.”



INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
PUBLIC LECTURE ON

“NATIONAL HEALTH STRATEGIES FOR HEALTH OF MIGRANT AND REFUGEE POPULATION AND PRESERVATION OF HEALTH SECURITY IN THE COUNTRY”

GUEST SPEAKER
Dr. (Mrs.) H. S. R. Perera
Deputy Director General (Public Health Service) II
Ministry of Health

MODERATOR
Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardene
RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc
Director (Communications and Publications) of INSS

Date : 06th April 2022
Time : 1400h -1530h (IST)

held virtually via
zoom

INSS organized a Public Lecture titled “National Health Strategies for Health of Migrant and Refugee Population and Preservation of Health Security in the Country” on Wednesday, the 06th of April 2022 from 1400hrs to 1530hrs (IST) via Zoom. Dr. (Mrs.) H.S.R Perera, Deputy Director General (Public Health Service) II, Ministry of Health was the Guest Speaker for the event. Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardene RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc Director (Communications and Publications) moderated the event.

The Guest Speaker emphasized the importance of immigrant and refugee health for National Security. She stated that migration is an integral part of national security for development in the country. Pointing out the importance of preserving the health of migrants, she stated the importance of the local

policies showcasing commitment for the health of migrants and refugees. Dr. Perera further mentioned the global influences that shape a country's commitment towards migrants and refugees. Being migrants and refugees who are largely considered as a vulnerable group in a society, their implication to national development and the national security of the country must be well monitored. The discussion was followed by an insightful Q and A session, which generated a great interaction between the speaker and the audience. Final remarks of the Public Lecture were delivered by the moderator and Ms. Dilmini Abeyrathne, Research Assistant at INSS, delivered the vote of thanks marking the closure of the event. Mr. Madushan Senevirathna, Research Analyst was the overall coordinator of the event.

Staff of INSS participates in a workshop on 'Research Ethics'



A workshop on ‘Research Ethics’ was conducted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, on Monday 25th April from 0830hrs onwards. The research staff of INSS had the opportunity to participate at this event and broaden their knowledge in the field of research.

INSS welcomes Research Assistant, Ms. Kalpani Gunathilake

Ms. Kalpani Gunathilake has joined the research department of INSS on 18th of April 2022. She has successfully completed a BA (Hons) degree in Economics at the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka with a second-class upper division. She has worked as an Executive Research Analyst at Arithmos (Pvt) Ltd. for eight (08) months. She has published research papers in the journals of University of Sri Jayewardenepura and University of Kelaniya related to Sri Lankan self-employment and its gender differences. INSS warmly welcomes her on board.



A timely Round Table Discussion for the betterment of the country

Sri Lanka is in the midst of its greatest economic downfall. This situation has been precipitated by apparent macroeconomic imbalances coupled with slow growth, considerable fiscal deficit, a large balance of payment deficit and high external debt, which have inflamed for years. There is no alternative now, but to adopt a comprehensive economic agenda to tackle the economic crisis. In this context, the Institute of National Security Studies organized a Round Table Discussion to provide a deep evidence-based analysis of the sources of this crisis and the way forward.

This Round Table Discussion under the theme “The Current Crisis; The Role of Macro-stabilization, Trade and Investment Reforms” was held via Zoom on Tuesday, the 26th of April 2022, from 1400hrs -1530hrs (IST). The audience consisted of ministry officials, policymakers, researchers, academics and military officers representing the Sri Lankan armed forces. The discussion was moderated by Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Director General of Institute of National Security Studies.

The first speaker of the event was Dr. Nihal Pitigala, Lead Economist, WBD & InReach Global. His discussion resurfaced notably in the latest International Monetary Fund (IMF) and debt discussion, which is a structural issue involving Sri Lanka's trading framework and trade policies. He further added that the trade portal and international single window are key protocols to be followed. The importance of manufacturing



and identifying modest adjustments that could be implemented in both trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was also brought into light by Dr. Pitigala.

Dr. Ganeshan Wignaraja, Former Executive Director at Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute (LKI) began the discussion by explaining the debt and economic predicament in the country. According to him, Sri Lanka requires a comprehensive economic agenda and further mentioned the economic outlook of the country. He concluded

his presentation by drawing attention to some lessons that other countries can take from Sri Lanka's prevailing crisis.

The session was followed by an interesting and interactive Q and A session, which generated an interactive discussion between the speakers and the audience. After making his concluding remarks, the moderator, Professor Rohan Gunaratna brought the event to a closure. Ms. Gayanga Dias, Research Assistant was the overall coordinator of the event.

INSS examines into “Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing



Captain Sagara Udayanga addressed the current issues faced by Sri Lanka related to IUU fishing and how IUU fishing compromises Sri Lanka's maritime security. This was later followed by a comprehensive analysis by Admiral Ravindra Wijegunaratne (Retd.) by providing valuable insights on how to seek pragmatic solutions for the issues at hand. The discussion concluded after an interactive question and answering session; which provided valuable policy suggestions to secure Sri Lankan waters from the threat of IUU fishing and the way forward. Mr. Bodana Perera, Research Assistant was the overall coordinator of the event.

INSS organized a Closed-Door Round Table Discussion on “Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing: Jeopardizing Sri Lanka's maritime security” on Friday, 29th April 2022 from 1400hrs to 1530hrs (IST) via Zoom. The Guest Speakers for the discussion were Admiral Ravindra Wijegunaratne (Retd.) WV RWP & Bar RSP VSV USP ndc psc, former Chief of Defence Staff and Commander of the Navy and Captain Sagara Udayanga, Deputy Director of Naval Operations, Sri Lanka Navy. The discussion was moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, Director (Communications and Publications), INSS. The audience of the event comprised of representatives from the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, Intelligence Services, Sri Lanka Coast Guard, Sri Lanka Police, government and academic institutions.



INSS contributes in reviewing and finalizing the proposed National Security Policy

Institute of National Security Studies had the privilege of contributing for the reviewing and finalizing of the proposed National Security Policy (NSP) for Sri Lanka. Initially, Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, Director (Communications and Publications) of INSS was nominated on 15th March 2021 for the Board that was appointed to pursue the stalled process of formulating a National Security policy/National Defence Policy chaired by Major General Amal Karunasekera RWP RSP VSV USP ndu psc MSc, Commandant, National Defence College. Subsequently, on 28th March 2022, Ms. Charani Patabendige, Research Assistant of INSS was nominated to represent INSS for the final review and drafting of the NSP at the National Defence College with the blessings of the Secretary, Ministry of Defence. She joined a few members of military who were also nominated as a team to fulfill this task.



Dwelling upon the war in Ukraine



INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
SECURITY SALON ON

UKRAINE CRISIS: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL IMPACT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES TO NATIONAL SECURITY OF SRI LANKA



CHAIR

Major General I H M N N Herath RSP USP psc
The Commandant
Defence Services Command and Staff College



GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Harinda Vidanage
Head, Department of Strategic Studies
General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University



MODERATOR

Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena
RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc
Act. Director General
Director (Communications and Publications) of INSS

Date : 24th May 2022
Time : 1000hrs -1130hrs (IST)

held virtually via,
zoom

A “Security Salon” is a closed-door discussion with limited audience held with the aim of generating a discussion on a timely and relevant topic of interest in the region or beyond, which may have an implication to the National Security of Sri Lanka. Institute of National Security Studies organized a Security Salon on “Ukraine crisis: Global and Regional Impact and its Consequences to National Security of Sri Lanka”. This was held on Tuesday, 24th May 2022 from 1000hrs to 1130hrs (IST) via Zoom. The Chair of the event was Major General I H M N N Herath RSP USP psc, the Commandant, Defence Services Command and Staff College, who represented General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.), WW, RWP, RSP, USP, ndc, psc, MPhil the Secretary, Ministry of Defence and State Ministry of Defence. The Guest Speaker of the event was Dr. Harinda Vidanage, Head, Department of Strategic Studies, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University. The event was moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Actg. Director-General and Director (Communications and Publications)

of the Institute of National Security Studies. The audience consisted of distinguished invitees from foreign missions in Sri Lanka, ministry officials, policymakers, academicians, researchers and representatives from Sri Lankan Armed Forces and Sri Lanka Police.

The moderator explaining the root cause of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its impacts on Russia, Ukraine as well as the entire world, further classified the sanctions imposed by the international community on Russia due to their full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Subsequent to the introduction given by the moderator, the Guest Speaker Dr. Vidanage commenced his presentation. He explained traditional uncertainties, threats and vulnerabilities from the global perspective and pointed out that, COVID-19 created a huge threat to the world and it led to a breakdown of the global supply chain. Firstly, he focused on explaining American intervention in countries’ democracy and politics, the color revolution and the Russia-America relationship. He emphasized that the success of global governance

depends on how global players interact. Then, he gave a clear explanation regarding the global and regional impact of the Ukraine crisis and demonstrated the food crisis, energy crisis, debt crisis and high inflation as major effects of the crisis. On a final note, he stated that a necessity of countries’ attention in crisis management, mapping more strategies in preventing the conflicts, and importance of security for cohesion and stability.

Presenting the concluding remarks, Major General Herath highlighted the challenges that emerged to the global economy resulting from the Ukraine crisis. He pointed out the increase of inflation and reduction of exports as the main impacts of the Ukraine crisis on South Asian countries. Finally, he explicated that due to the war, food, energy, and health securities had adverse effects which are threatening the national security of this nation. Mr. Madushan Senevirathna, Research Analyst was the overall coordinator of the event.

Intern Batch of 2021/2022 presented their Individual Research



The intern batch of 2021/22 presented their individual research on 27th April 2022, at the INSS Conference room. As a mandatory requirement of their internship, which is of six (6) months duration, they are expected to engage in a research connected to National Security and come up with suitable recommendations to address these challenges. Ms. Pramodi Attygalle presented her research on 'Impact of Defence Expenditure on the Economic Growth of Sri Lanka', while Ms. Mithila Jayathilake's research was on 'Terrorist Financing in the Non-Governmental Organization Sector of Sri Lanka'. Focusing on a more eminent threat Mr. Kavindu Peiris focused on 'Significance of Ensuring National Security through the Process of LTTE Terrorist Rehabilitation in Sri Lanka'. Ms. Kamalani Herath selected 'Blue Economy and the Maritime Security issues in Sri Lankan waters; the Indian Ocean Region' as her research topic while Mr. Hirantha Wijesinghe's interest was on 'Cognitive Biases within Intelligence Analysis: An Unwitting Threat to National Security'. INSS launched yet another initiative to select the best intern commencing from this batch considering their thesis and overall performance during their tenure at INSS inclusive of discipline, team work, event organizing and representing etc. and the award was a certificate personally signed by General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc Mphil, Secretary to the Ministry of Defence. The title of 'Best Intern' was grabbed by Ms. Mithila Jayathilake and INSS wish her and all interns best of luck in their future endeavors.



Intern (Research) Mithila Jayathilake receiving her award as best Intern



Interns presenting their Individual Research

A Public Lecture on "Child Protection; An Apex Challenge to Human Security"

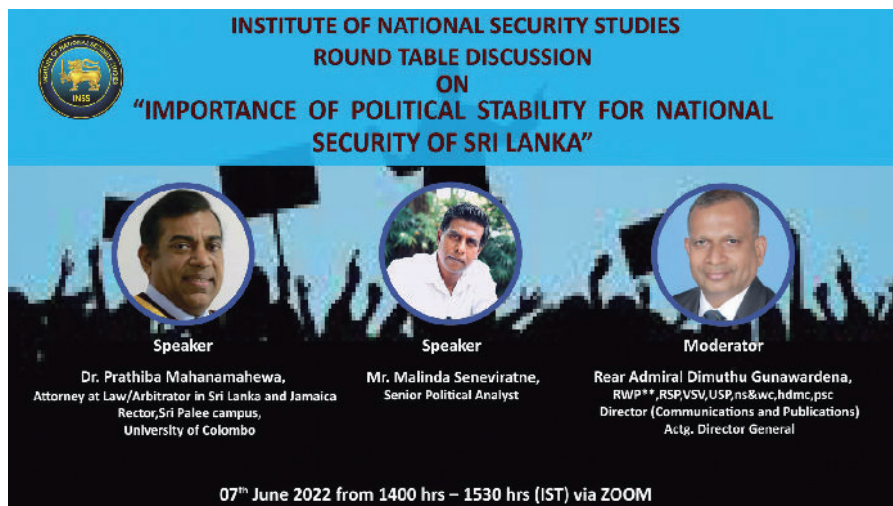
INSS organized a Public Lecture on "Child protection: An apex challenge to human security" which was held on Wednesday, 29th June 2022 from 1400hrs to 1530hrs (IST) via Zoom. The Guest Speaker of the event was Professor Clifford Perera, Senior Lecturer and Medico-Legal Specialist, Department of Forensic Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna. Rear Admiral D. C. Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications), INSS, moderated the event. The audience of the discussion comprised Ministry officials, policymakers, academics, researchers, representatives from Sri Lankan armed forces, Sri Lanka Police and Civil Security Department.

Professor Clifford Perera addressed the broader spectrums of child protection, the current state and threats to the protection of children, and how such threats could be addressed. The importance of securing the child in the present was discussed in detail. Professor Perera elaborated on multi-pronged



approaches to securing the rights of children, describing how it affects human security in Sri Lanka. The Question-and-answer session was moderated by Rear Admiral D. C. Gunawardena highlighted the discourse with the involvement of the intellectual audience, generating thought and dialogue on the topic at hand. The interactive discussion further enabled the intellectual audience to bring forth their own views on securing the children of Sri Lanka. The discussion provided valuable strategic and policy suggestions to better improve the protection of children; securing human security for a better Sri Lanka. Mr. Bodana Perera, Research Assistant was the overall coordinator of the event.

Importance of Political Stability for National Security of Sri Lanka



INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION
ON
"IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL STABILITY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY OF SRI LANKA"

Speaker
Dr. Prathiba Mahanamahewa,
 Attorney at Law/Arbitrator in Sri Lanka and Jamaica
 Rector, Sri Palee campus,
 University of Colombo

Speaker
Mr. Malinda Seneviratne,
 Senior Political Analyst

Moderator
Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena,
 RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, ns&wc, hdmc, psc
 Director (Communications and Publications)
 Actg. Director General

07th June 2022 from 1400 hrs – 1530 hrs (IST) via ZOOM

ultimately the security of both ensures national security. Mismanagement of resources, absence of timely decisions and corruption were identified as main bottlenecks for the political instability. Further he mentioned that a stable political system in a country will automatically restore the national security and suggested a new constitution will be a good hope for Sri Lanka to maintain political stability within the country, taking the current developments of the country into consideration.

Mr. Malinda Seneviratne emphasized more on the external threats that are affecting the country's political stability. This mainly included the threat emanating from the LTTE diaspora abroad and how their acts and influences could create chaos, making the country unstable. He identified the factor of discrimination based on ethnicity, religion is a vital for political instability and the country must unify in order to go in the direction of a political stability. Subsequent to the presentations, the moderator initiated a meaningful Q and A session and many participants commented and raised questions creating a productive discourse on political stability. The discussion then ended in the hope of conducting another fruitful session in the future. Commander Chandana Pawuluge, Military Research Officer was the overall coordinator of the event.

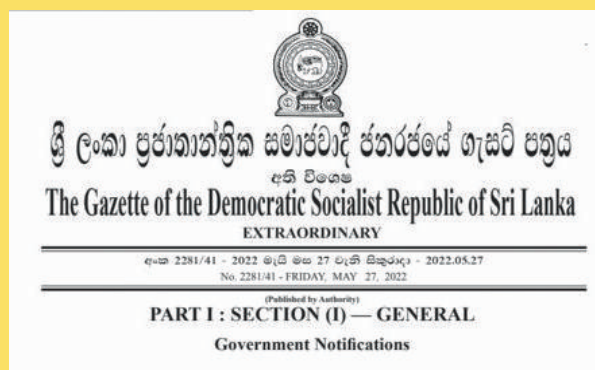
With the growing unrest due to multidimensional crisis in Sri Lanka, INSS organized a Round Table Discussion under the theme, "Importance of Political Stability for National Security of Sri Lanka" on Friday, 07th June 2022 from 1400hrs – 1530hrs (IST) via Zoom. This event was graced by two eminent speakers, Dr. Prathiba Mahanamahewa, Attorney-at-Law/Arbitrator in Sri Lanka and Jamaica, Rector Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo and Mr. Malinda Seneviratne, Senior

Political Analyst and Director/CEO, Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Training Institute. The event was moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardene, RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, ns&wc, hdmc, psc, hdmc Acting Director General and Director (Communications and Publications) at INSS.

Dr. Prathiba Mahanamahewa initiating the discourse emphasized that political stability goes hand in hand with economic security and

Change of Ministry for INSS

Institute of National Security Studies which functioned under the State Minister of Defence has been changed to function under the Minister of Defence with effect from 27th May 2022 via an extraordinary gazette issued by H.E. the President of Sri Lanka on 27th May 2022.



Staff of INSS participates at the Signature Seminar organized by the faculty of Defence and Strategic Studies of General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University titled "Sri Lanka's Defence Policy: Past, Present and Future Projections"



The department of Strategic Studies of General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University organized their signature seminar for the year 2022 on 02nd June 2022, from 0830hrs onwards at the auditorium in the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The theme of the signature seminar was 'Sri Lanka's Post Independence Defence Policy'. The staff of INSS participated at this seminar and actively engaged with the erudite discussions which lead to a meaningful discourse.

INSS identifies a looming Food security in the country.



INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
THREAT LENS
ON
"FACING THE LOOMING FOOD SECURITY THREAT IN SRI LANKA"

Chair
Major General K.A.D.A. Karunasekara
RWP RSP VSV USP ndu psc
Commandant
National Defence College

Speaker
Professor Nalika Ranathunga
Faculty of Agriculture
University of Ruhuna

Speaker
Mrs. G. G. V. Shyamali
Director
Agri Development
Ministry of Agriculture

Moderator
Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena
RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc
Acting Director General
Director (Communications & Publications)
Institute of National Security Studies

Date : 16th June 2022
From : 1400 hrs to 1530 hrs (IST)

The event was chaired by Major General K. A. D. A. Karunasekara RWP RSP VSV USP ndu psc, Commandant, National Defence College, Sri Lanka who represented General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd.), WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil Secretary, Ministry of Defence. The Guest Speakers of the event were, Professor Nalika Ranathunga, Department of Agricultural Biology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna and Mrs. G. G. V. Shyamali, Director (Agri-Development), Ministry of Agriculture. The event was moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, ns&wc, psc, hdmc, Acting Director General and Director, (Communications and Publications) of INSS. The audience comprised ministry officials, representatives from universities, think tanks, academics, tri forces, Sri Lanka Police and Civil Security Department.

Prices of most commodities have increased considerably since the end of 2021, with food prices as measured by the Colombo Consumer Price Index increasing 57.4 per cent over the year to May 2022, up from 10% for the equivalent period in September 2021. Food security is becoming an apex threat to Sri Lanka's national security. At present, the public is unable to attend to daily food necessities due to lack of products and insufficient income. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure food security through executing timely measures. In

doing that, the government as well as the general public are duty bound and have a role to play.

In this backdrop, INSS organized a Threat Lens on "Facing the Looming Food Security Threat in Sri Lanka" on Thursday, 16th June 2022 from 1400hrs to 1530hrs via Zoom. A Threat Lens is a closed-door discussion organized by INSS with the participation of a number of selected experts from the academic, diplomat, and security fields to discuss a current/impending threat/s to Sri Lanka's national security.

Prof. Nalika Ranathunga highlighted the gravity of food insecurity in Sri Lanka and the ways and measures that can be utilized to prevent and mitigate food security. Mrs. Shyamali explained the role of the government as well as the role of the community in ensuring the food security of Sri Lanka. Finally, after a meaningful Q and A session, Ms. Dulakshi Ariyaratne, Intern (Research) delivered the Vote of Thanks subsequent to the concluding remarks by the event chair. Ms. Charani Patabendige, Research Assistant was the overall coordinator of the event.

INSS organizes a discussion on "Dealing with Social Security Challenges and Crisis management in Sri Lanka"

A Threat Lens titled "Dealing with Social Security Challenges and Crisis Management in Sri Lanka" was organized by INSS on Wednesday, 22nd June 2022, from 1400hrs to 1530hrs (IST) via Zoom. Major General, Ruwan Kulatunga (Retd.) RSP ndc psc, Chief of National Intelligence, Ministry of Defence, Sri Lanka, representing General Kamal Gunaratne, (Retd.) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc, MPhil, Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, chaired the event. The Guest Speaker of the event was Mrs. M.T.R. Shamini Attanayake, Director General (Acting), Additional Director General (Academic), National Institute of Social Development (NISD). Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP** RSP VSV USP nswc psc hdmc, Acting Director-General, Director (Communications & Publications) of INSS moderated the event. The audience comprised ministry officials, academicians, researchers, representatives from think tanks, Sri Lankan armed forces, Sri Lanka Police and Civil Security Department.

Mrs. Shamini Attanayake, commenced the presentation by bringing out the essence of social security and its unique approach within the Sri Lankan community. She brought into concern that social security is a vast topic of discussion that directly connects with social welfare as well as social development, and once it is prone to unstable handling; it becomes the root cause for



INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES
THREAT LENS
ON
"DEALING WITH SOCIAL SECURITY AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN SRI LANKA"

Chair
Major General Ruwan Kulatunga (Retd.)
RSP ndc psc
Chief of National Intelligence
Ministry of Defence

Guest Speaker
Mrs. M. T. R. Shamini Attanayake
Director General (Acting)
Additional Director General (Academic)
National Institute of Social Development

Moderator
Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena
RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc
Acting Director General
Director (Communications & Publications)
Institute of National Security Studies

Date : 22nd June 2022
From : 1400 hrs to 1530 hrs (IST)

any type of a crisis within a spectrum. Moreover, the current social security schemes and programs were explained in detail aligning them with the prevailing major concerns within the society. The Challenges that the country faces in general based on social security were highlighted, while giving greater importance to the two most immediate concerns, COVID- 19 and the 2022 Crisis in Sri Lanka. In conclusion, the community-level adaptations and crisis management techniques by social workers were discussed, along with the

mentioning of the crisis intervention casework, from which the individual, groups and the entire community can contribute to addressing social security concerns. After a productive Q and A segment, concluding remarks were delivered by the chair of the event and the vote of thanks marked the closure of the event. Mr. Thusitha Bulathgama, Research Assistant was the overall coordinator of the event.

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Regulatory Pluralism in NGOs Governance: An Impending Threat to National Security.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are democratic voluntary agencies, which function independently of the government to tackle a myriad of social, economic and environmental problems and to foster social inclusion, economic integration and sustainable development. Therefore, NGOs play a vital role in socio-economic development of a state by complementing efforts of a government to provide services and assistance to vulnerable segments of the local population. However, with the decentralization of terrorist movements such as Al Qaeda, LTTE and development of localized terrorist actors, NGOs are identified as one of the popular channels exploited by terrorists to solicit monetary and non-monetary support for terrorist activities. To infiltrate the sector and misuse NGO funds and operations to cover for or support terrorist activities, terrorist organizations take advantage of characteristics of NGOs such as access to multitude of sources of funds, possession of large transitory workforce, high level of public trust, right to preserve anonymity of donors and beneficiaries and its global presence that provides a framework for national and international operations and financial transactions. Therefore, safeguarding the NGO sector from terrorist abuse is both a critical component of the global fight against terrorism and a necessary step to preserve the integrity of NGOs and underpin the confidence of its stakeholders.

Sri Lanka possesses a complex legal regime to scrutinize and facilitate operations of the NGO sector. Citizen-based groups operating cooperatively for social welfare is a deeply rooted practice in the Sri Lankan society, which can be evidenced by the existence of Temple Development Societies, Death Donation Societies and Thrift and Credit Co-operative Societies. In the late 1970, the NGO sector increasingly diversified in number and activities due to liberalization of the economy and relaxation of exchange controls and travel restrictions. Following the outbreak of the war against LTTE in 1983, political affairs, reconciliation and ethnic harmony and human rights became the dominant identity of NGOs instead of social and economic development. Owing to these historical and cultural reasons, Sri Lanka does not possess a uniform regulatory regime to promote a strong and sustainable NGO sector through good governance, transparency and accountability. There are 13 laws which institutions can avail to register as an NGO in Sri Lanka, including Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration and Monitoring) Act No. 31 of 1980, Companies Act No. 7 of 2007, Consumer Affairs Authority Act No. 09 of 2003 and Trusts Ordinance No. 17 of 1917.

Regulatory mechanisms spelled out by above-mentioned laws provide inconsistent treatments for NGOs depending on the legal form and entitlement to government support. Therefore,

regulatory framework on NGOs is complex, duplicative and imposes a significant regulatory burden on the NGO sector. As a result of this peculiar situation, NGOs are not properly regulated and monitored and they are not held accountable and transparent financially and functionally to the government. Fragmentation of responsibilities on regulation of NGOs across a range of government institutions increases the NGO sector's real exposure to terrorist financing.

Reporting is an essential tool to ensure accountability and transparency in the NGO sector. However, lead Counter Terrorist Financing Agencies in Sri Lanka have not been able to reap maximum benefits from reporting arrangements laid down by regulatory agencies such as the NGO Secretariat, the Registrar of Companies owing to its ad hoc, uncoordinated and complex nature. These reporting arrangements often focus on a particular activity of NGOs rather than providing a holistic description and key information on their finances and ongoing activities. Further, "current reporting requirements across the sector are inconsistent as there is minimal reporting for some organisations and excessive reporting for others", which is disproportionate to the level of risk posed by these entities. Lack of accurate and meaningful information concerning the whole sector is a significant vulnerability, which decreases the likelihood of success in terms of detection, investigation and law enforcement on terrorism related abuse and risk in the NGO sector.

Moreover, multiple reporting requirements, with considerable duplication of effort due to involvement of many applications and forms with subtly different criteria, impose a high regulatory burden and compliance cost on NGOs and provide opportunities for deception and escape reporting obligations. In the absence of a centralized portal of information over scale and scope of the NGO sector, lead Counter Terrorist Financing Agencies and the public face red tape in accessing information. It severely retards the effectiveness of efforts of regulatory agencies on oversight and detection of wrongdoings in the NGO sector; it limits the decision-making ability of Sri Lankan public on prudent allocation of resources among NGOs. Further, "multiplicity of laws and regulatory agencies could act as a trigger for some entities to remove them from regulatory oversight due to extra administrative burden and cost, thus increasing the number of unregulated entities who are already at greater risk of terrorist exploitation." Accordingly, it is apparent that the present regulatory mechanisms do not operate as an effective shield against terrorist infiltration and manipulation of the NGO sector, in the absence of a single regulatory agency and uniform law on registration, reporting commitments and oversight of NGOs. Inadequate regulatory scrutiny provides opportunities to imperil the sovereignty and national security of Sri Lanka through NGOs. To successfully



K. M. M. Jayathilaka
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counter this threat, the NGO Secretariat should be reformulated as the single lead authority to unite and regulate the work of entire NGO sector, which will eliminate existing regulatory complexities and will ensure better transparency and accountability through enhanced regulatory scrutiny. Regulatory functions presently spread across different government institutions should be merged into the NGO Secretariat. The NGO Secretariat should function as the single portal for registration, reporting commitments, collation and dissemination of information, monitoring compliance with reporting requirements and procedures, preventive, remedial and investigative work, educating and supporting NGOs on good governance irrespective of legal status of voluntary agencies. This effort of unification should be complemented by forming an NGO Coordination Board consisting of top executives of NGO regulatory agencies, which will be a platform to determine what organizations with different legal forms qualify as NGOs to be governed under the Voluntary Social Service Organization Act (VSSOA) and to delegate regulation of such organizations to the NGO Secretariat. Moreover, the NGO Secretariat should be armed with adequate authority and independence by amending the VSSOA to render above-mentioned task productively. To that end, the structure, powers and duties of the NGO Secretariat should be modelled on the Charity Commission of UK. Acute shortage of resources currently experienced by the NGO Secretariat render efficient processing of functions attached with 'one-stop-shop' NGO regulator arduous. Therefore, the NGO Secretariat should be resourced with sufficient financial resources and excellent information technology to employ automated systems for registration, reporting, analysis and maintenance of a database. It should be equipped with skilled human resources to scrutinize risk and instances of terrorist exploitation and to operate automated systems.

Full article can be accessed at
<https://ceylontoday.lk/2022/05/18/regulatory-pluralism-in-ngos-governance-an-impending-threat-to-national-security/>

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