Sri Lanka’s Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Process

Popular demand for reform and dignity for all

Re-engagement with international community

Mandate for change received in 2015 elections
Institutional Arrangement

Multi-layered institutional framework in place

President leading Ministry of Integration and Reconciliation

Ministry of National Coexistence, Dialogue and Official Languages & Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Affairs supporting non-recurrence agenda

Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) Leading on reconciliation policy processes

Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanism (SCRM) established for effective coordination
Non-Recurrence Agenda: ONUR

01 Office on National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) functions as a catalyst

02 Aims for long term systematic change as well as building programmatic agendas

03 Programmatic interventions of ONUR include arts & culture, conflict transformation & interfaith dialogue, education, university engagement, livelihood and community development, psycho social support, women for reconciliation and public outreach

04 Programmes designed and implemented in a consultative and collaborative manner
Office on National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)

ONUR works with 250,000 students, 1000 community leaders, elected & public officials, 1000 religious leaders and general public.

Key achievements

- National Policy Reconciliation
- “Sahodara Paasal” or “Paadasaalai” scheme: 1000 school students participated in 5 day residential camps and 250,000 children have participated in Religious Harmony Programmes
- School Curriculum Reform
- University Programme to build Harmony + Cohesion
- Heal the Past, Build the Future: Building National Cohesion
- Arts and Culture Programme
- Psychosocial support: War affected women & Youth
- Infrastructure development Programme in the North and East
- Essay competition for school children, attracted 1283 essays in all three languages and 9060 pieces of art. Photographic exhibition on Reconciliation
- Memorialization
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Office on Missing Persons (OMP)</th>
<th>Office on Reparations</th>
<th>Truth and Reconciliation Commission</th>
<th>Accountability mechanism</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>• First transitional justice mechanism to become fully operational.</td>
<td>• Being reviewed by the Office of the Prime Minister.</td>
<td>• Under review by the office of the prime minister before being presented to the cabinet of ministers.</td>
<td>• Benefited from insights on shared by international experts.</td>
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<td>• The constitutional council will begin reviewing candidates for OMP members.</td>
<td>• Ongoing reparations work continuing REPPIA.</td>
<td>• The civil society led drafting committee drew upon international best practice while ensuring that the model proposed is unique to the Sri Lankan context.</td>
<td>• Colombian experts and Government of Japan (Judge Motoo Noguchi).</td>
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<td>• A budget and legislative framework are already in place.</td>
<td>• Working with IOM on setting groundwork for an enhanced reparations process that draws upon international best practice.</td>
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<td>• Require assistance from the ICRC, among others for training and expertise</td>
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Transitional justice in a broader context

Ambitious agenda, steady progress

Benefited from the support of many multilateral and bilateral from the technical and financial support partners:

- UNDP, OHCHR, UNICEF, UN Women, IOM, UNHCR, PBSO
- Switzerland, UK, Japan, EU, Australia, USA
Transitional justice and peace building

01 Constitutional reform
02 National Human Rights Action Plan
03 National Policy on Reconciliation
04 Broad communications strategy
05 Government capacity to implement: ONUR, SCRM
Reconciliation Budget Allocation 2018

Rs. 11,350,000,000

- 2500 Million
  Resettlement of Muslim IDP’s – provision of housing and infrastructure

- 2750 Million
  Strengthening Reconciliation focused on economic empowerment and social infrastructure development and special programme to address the needs of the differently abled women in the Northern and the Eastern provinces

- 1400 Million
  Office on Missing Persons (OMP)

- 1000 Million
  Supporting indebted people in Northern and North Central provinces through credit cooperative societies

- 1000 Million
  Supporter selected small industries in the Northern province through the producer cooperatives

- 250 Million
  Ex-Combatants and war widows
  Provide salary subsidy of around Rs. 10,000 or 50% of Salary

- 750 Million
  Construct 50,000 brick and mortar type houses in the North and East
Peacebuilding Programme

- Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) established as organising framework for peacebuilding
- Organised around 4 pillars of Transitional Justice, Reconciliation, Good Governance, and Durable Resettlement
- Serves as coordinating framework for donor alignment with national peacebuilding priorities

- Peacebuilding Board with representatives of government, civil society, development partners & UN guiding programming
- IRF allowed for rapid quick impact support (2015) to address immediate grievances of minorities including resettlement of IDPs in N&E; broad based mechanisms for inter-ethnic trust building and TA to enhance TJ capacities
- PRF allowed for flexible longer term support (2017) for TJ mechanisms, provision of psychosocial support, strengthening the building blocks of peace including engagement of youth and women.
Investing in strategic communications early in the process critical to counter extreme voices across the spectrum and make it a win-win situation.

Imperative to embed TJ capacities within government & identify champions of change to enable a joined up approach across government.

Delivering on confidence building measures imperative to retain the confidence of minorities.

PPP has emerged as a useful tool for coordination with MS/UN/CS.

Flexible funding including technical assistance from UN (PBSO) and MS critical as government takes the process forward.

Investing in tracking peacebuilding perceptions critical for a targeted strategy.

Lessons Learned
Future Priorities

01
Investing in a comprehensive communications to generate support for reforms

02
Strengthening domestic institutions beginning with on-boarding of OMP commissioners

03
Securing a long term political settlement through constitutional reforms

04
Continue strengthening national capacities on TJ, dealing with the past & truth seeking

05
TA to strengthen investigation, forensic and prosecutorial strategies

06
Continue military dialogues on TJ

07
In the N&E:
- Scaling up provision of phyco-social support
- Completing the resettlement of remaining IDPs, supporting return of refugees, return of private land to original owners
- Economic and social empowerment of FHH’s
- Job creation and inclusive growth with a specific focus on conflict affected provinces
People in the north, south, west, and centre came together [in 2015] to vote for: a change in Sri Lanka’s political culture against the politics of ethnic and religious division and extremism on all sides; against impunity; for a strong democracy; for the rule of law and good governance; for reconciliation and sustainable peace; equality; upholding promoting and protecting human rights of all and the pluralistic nature of our society; and for inclusive and equitable growth and development of the country.”

H.E. Mathripala Sirisena,
President of Sri Lanka
Vision 2025