



National Peace Council of Sri Lanka

#12/14, Purana Vihara Road, Colombo 06

Tel: 2818344, 2854127, 2809348, Fax: 2819064,

E-mail :info@peace-srilanka.org

Web: www.peace-srilanka.org

**Annual Report
2014**



Vision

A peaceful and just country
in which freedom, human and democratic rights
of all people are assured.

Mission

To work in partnership with different target
groups to educate,
mobilise and advocate to build a society of
rights conscious
citizens and a political culture that enables a
political solution to the ethnic conflict and equal
opportunities for all.



Contents

About NPC	3
Board of Directors	4
Governing Council	4
Staff	5
Chairman's Message	6
General Secretary's Message	8
Directors' Report	9
Programmes and Projects	12
Finance	28
Way Forward	32
Map of Working Districts	33



About NPC

The National Peace Council (NPC) was established as an independent and non-partisan national non-government organisation on 2 February, 1995. The formation of NPC was the culmination of a process that began with a campaign against election violence in July 1994, launched by an inter religious group of individuals and organisations.

The interventions made by this group during the 1994 Presidential election campaign specifically, and for a peaceful and permanent resolution to the protracted conflict generally, led to the organisation of the first National Peace Conference the same year. The vision and mandate of NPC were formulated at this conference, leading to the establishment of NPC the following year.

In order to achieve its overall goal - that of the establishment of a long-term, viable solution to the ethnic conflict - NPC is committed to the creation of a culture of peace that upholds the values of non-violence, respect for human rights and the free expression of ideas.

Members of the Board of Directors

Mr. Joe William (Chairperson from August 2014)
Mr. Tony Senewiratne (Chairperson until August 2014)
Mr. G.V.D. Thilakasiri (General Secretary)
Dr. Jehan Perera (Executive Director)
Dr. T. Jayasingam (Treasurer)
Dr. Anita Nesiah (Director)
Prof. H.S. Hasbullah (Director)
Ven. Budiyanagama Chandrathana Thero (Director)
Prof. M.S. Mookiah (Director)
Mr. Javid Yusuf (Director)

Members of the Governing Council

Mr. John V. Thamber
Sr. Mary Barbara
Mr. Raja M.B. Senanayake
Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa
Rev. A. Iyadurai
Ms. Saroja Sivachandran
Mr. M.H.M. Niyaz
Ven. Kalupahana Piyarathana Thero
Rev. Fr. Joseph Mary
Ms. Christobel Saverimuttu (Company Secretary)

Staff Members

Dr. Jehan Perera	Executive Director
Ms. Rupika Chandani	Manager Finance
Mr. Thushara Ranasinghe	Manager Programmes (joined April 2014)
Ms. Krishni R. Sourjah	Manager Administration (until September 2014)
Ms. Chithrupa Vidanapathirana	Manager Administration (joined December 2014)
Mr. Wipula Dahanayake	Development Advisor (until April 2014)
Mr. Saman Seneviratne	Project Coordinator
Ms. Nadeeshani Perera	Project Coordinator (February to August 2014)
Ms. Lakmini Jayathilake	Project Coordinator (joined June 2014)
Mr. Thushal Dhammika	Project Coordinator (until January 2014)
Ms. Pushpa Ranjani	Project Co-Coordinator
Mr. Benet A. Samantha	IT Coordinator
Mr. Munidasa Suresh Kumar	Senior Project Officer (until July 2014)
Ms. Rasika Seneviratne	Project Coordinator
Mr. S.P.S.D. Pathirana	Project Officer (joined March 2014)
Mr. S. A. Abdul Amaan	Project Office (joined November 2014)
Ms. Mehala Sabeswaran	Project Officer (joined June 2014)
Mr. Rohitha Wickramarachchi	Graphic Designer/Admin. Coordinator
Mr. Fazeen Mohamed	Assistant Accountant
Mr. A. Francis	Driver (temporary)
Mr. Sarath Karunaratne	Driver
Mr. H. K. Sugath	Driver
Mr. P. Navaneetharan	Office Aide

Chairman's Message

2014 was yet another challenging year as were the preceding five years. Although the war ended in 2009, post war tensions and rhetoric, many imagined, remained even after five years. Despite being scarred by a bitter civil war for nearly three decades, the country failed to reap the benefits that should have accrued to all Sri Lankans in an equitable manner after the end of the war. It was under this reality that NPC worked during the year under review.

We at NPC believe that building a long term, viable peace involves establishing or re-establishing communications between former enemies, changing negative stereotypes, building positive images and perceptions of the other, and fostering mutual respect and trust. We also believe that peace building is not about the imposition of solutions from the top, it is about the creation of opportunities, and the expansion of political, economic, and social spaces, within which Sri Lankans can identify, develop and employ the resources necessary to build a peaceful, prosperous and just society.

NPC has been in existence for nearly two decades and has greater social acceptability and has goodwill and respect nationally and internationally due to its commitment to a political solution to the ethnic conflict. We have good relations with fellow NGOs and civil society organisations across the island.

During the year under review NPC focused its activities on the following four strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1: NPC will emphasise pluralism in its approach as this is a unifying concept not a divisive one. Pluralism is about respecting the right to be different and accepting diversity as the basis of reconciliation. It is not divisive in that it does not focus on the rights of any one group in opposition to another.

Strategic Priority 2: Sri Lanka is today a fragmented society. Each group operates in its own sphere. There is also a breakdown of institutions that enables trust. Any process of post war transformation requires trust building. NPC will be seeking to build trust at all levels, both within and between communities.

Strategic Priority 3: Sri Lanka has yet to progress from being a post war society to being a post conflict society. There has been no conflict

transformational process that addresses political roots of the conflict and wounds inflicted by the war. The end of any major conflict also opens up sub-conflicts that have been suppressed by the larger one, and these have the potential to further fragment society. It is necessary to pre-empt possible future conflicts by addressing them before they escalate.

Strategic Priority 4: NPC will review its existing administrative structures and introduce changes where necessary. It will also seek to strengthen its delivery capacity through enhanced training for staff on newer methods of conflict transformation and resolution.

NPC's core strength in this context was its balanced approach and its readiness to engage with all parties, but without compromising on its principles led by the Executive Director who is now a veteran in this position. He is ably supported by the members of the Board of Directors, Governing Council and staff who have helped sustain the organisation in a variety of ways. I thank them for their hard work and commitment to the cause of sustainable peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

I would like to conclude with a short story.

After I Am Gone

An old man went about planting mango saplings whenever he could. A young gardener was amused at the effort of the ageing man and one day, unable to contain his curiosity, asked, "Sir, what gives you so much energy to plant these saplings when you know that you may not even be there to see them flower or bear fruit?"

The old man replied, "These are for others to relish its fruits, just like I did all these years from trees which I have no idea who planted!"

Joe William

General Secretary's Message

During the year 2014, the main problems of the country were to ensure democratic changes to the constitution, protect human rights, give economic relief to ordinary people, build inter ethnic unity and national harmony and protect the sovereignty of the country.

There were development projects such as the Colombo Port City, Hambantota harbour, Mattala airport, highways and building roads to villages. But people had difficulty in their day-to-day lives. Media institutions, civil society groups, trade unions and professionals began reporting, writing and demonstrating against corruption, malpractice and the oppressive actions of the government.

In this critical scenario, NPC worked through our projects, as well as with other organisations, facing difficulties from the government and from various extremists groups. NPC continued to promote national reconciliation, protect human rights, uplift democratic values, advocate for better constitutional changes and monitor the election process.

The success of NPC was because the Board, Governing Council and staff worked as a single unit at this difficult time. We were able to have discussions and debates without falling prey to fatal divisions to reach our goal of peace with justice.

I believe NPC and other like-minded civil society groups will work together with the new government for reconciliation and to find a political solution to the ethnic problem through negotiations on the basis of equal rights and devolution.

I take this opportunity to thank the members of NPC, Board Members, the Governing Council, staff and District Committee members as well as our foreign friends and donors who have understood the needs of our society.

G. V. D. Tilakasiri

Directors' Report

Sri Lanka is a country in transition from post war to sustainable peace. The ethos that prevailed during the war continued to the end of 2014. This led to a continuing trend of centralising of power and use of the security forces to ensure national security, which was privileged above human security. Several NGO programmes were violently disrupted. NPC coped with the continuous shrinking in the civil society space that was one of the consequences of the militarised mindset of the government.

During the past year we identified women as a powerful and untapped constituency capable of making a change. Currently women are grossly underrepresented in the political process with less than 6 per cent representation in elected political assemblies. In working with women NPC used the experiences it had garnered in its work with the district level inter religious committees it had set up. The government was prepared to give religious clergy more space to engage with the community than it gave to other forms of civil society, especially to NGOs. NPC supported the inter religious committees to bring people from different ethnic and religious communities together. The underlying rationale of our work with women was the need to bring in more women's participation into the discussion and debate on the way forward for Sri Lanka, and thereby contribute to greater women's participation in governance.

It is NPC's contention that the greater participation of women will contribute to the national reconciliation process. Our intervention seeks to fill the gap by mobilising grassroots level women to participate in community level healing. NPC provided training and education to war affected women on the transitional justice framework to help them understand the core elements of a conflict transformation process. They were also given training on the role of women and the need for women's voices in a post war scenario. This work was done within the framework of reconciliation in which participants were encouraged to share their own perspectives and to find a common platform in which truth and justice lead to pluralism, coexistence and national reconciliation.

Another NPC intervention was to build on its participation at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Colombo the previous year in 2013, which linked civil society with the government. It joined a group of NGOs that had participated in that event to dialogue with the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence. This was done to discuss the implications of the government circular restricting the space given to NGOs to engage with the media and to issue media releases and to urge a more positive interaction between the government and civil society. There was concern



that the government would pass new legislation further restricting civil society space. The government did not take further action in this regard.

The main projects that NPC implemented in the year under review were the Reconciling Inter Religious and Inter Ethnic Differences project, Women in Healing project, Promoting Accountability and Preventing Torture by Strengthening Survivors of Torture in Asia project and Write to Reconcile project. NPC also continued with its workshops, seminars, conferences, exchange visits and advocacy through the issuance of media releases, commentaries and interviews to the national and international media. This had impacts on increasing the general public's knowledge of pluralistic values, good governance and human rights, providing information on ground reality to opinion formers and decision makers, providing linkage between the religious and ethnic communities through structured interactions, reassuring ethnic and religious minorities about support for their just causes, upholding consistent stance on issues of inter ethnic justice and reconciliation and keeping alive an alternative discourse on minority rights issues.

In addition, NPC brought in international experts through expansion of its partner network during the year, strengthened its relationship with likeminded organisations in the Asian region, specifically Asia Plateau in India, Asia Justice and Rights in Indonesia and Relief International in Myanmar, shared NPC's experiences and lessons with the international community, for example, high level delegations from Thailand and Myanmar who visited NPC received training in transitional justice from our partners in Indonesia and provided an opportunity for Tamil diaspora to be involved in activities through the Write to Reconcile project.

We express our appreciation of the support given by our members, Governing Council, Board of Directors and donors who help us to sustain this work. Even when the macro political environment was threatening and unsafe, they accompanied us in our work, which is what solidarity is about.

Jehan Perera
Executive Director





**PROGRAMMES
AND
PROJECTS**

Addressing Rising Religious Tensions



Inter community relations continued to deteriorate after the end of the war. Anti-Muslim propaganda was on the rise and there were attacks on Muslims by a section of the Buddhist clergy and their followers. The unwillingness of the state to speak up was one indication of the failure of post-war reconciliation.

In order to address the rising tensions, NPC began a new project in late 2013 with support from SPICE/USAID entitled Reconciling Inter religious and Inter ethnic Differences (RIID), which was completed in October 2014.

Under a previous EU-funded project, NPC had set up 12 District Inter Religious Committees (DIRCs) that have been functioning for three years. Some members underwent training on conflict resolution, conflict sensitivity and prioritisation of humanitarian needs. Through these activities, people are able to understand one another and their religions. They realised the nature of the political problems that separates the ethnic communities and makes their political leaders see each other as opponents instead of as partners.

The new project strengthened the work of DIRCs in Jaffna, Mannar, Puttalam, Galle, Batticaloa and Ampara while setting up new ones in Kandy and Nuwara Eliya. NPC worked with partner organisations, who collaborated with DIRCs at the district level. The funding enabled NPC to strengthen the effectiveness of



the existing DIRCs and build partner capacity so that they served as a district-level mechanism to prevent localised conflicts.

One of the significant results of RIID was an increased level of trust developed between members of DIRCs and a significant improvement in their ability to work together as a multi religious and multi ethnic group.

The DIRCs were revitalized to work towards reducing religious and ethnic tension and contribute to reconciliation, peace and justice at district and national level.

DIRCs intervened in a number of incidents that had potential to flare up into full scale hostilities between religions, and resolved the matters in an amicable manner. A total of 26 such incidents were addressed and dealt with in a manner that promoted healing of relationships, and the relevant DIRC is continuing to monitor them to avoid incidents of reoccurrence.

A register documenting different issues and the preventive measures used has been maintained at the district level by the DIRCs and this will facilitate and act as an early warning tool that could be used to identify issues that can flare up in the future.

The issues faced during the course of the project included people's perception of NGOs working in the peace sector, government regulations and their limitations, lack of capacity amongst partner organisations to carry out religion sensitive training and the inadequacy in available resources to address, solve and monitor issues identified by the DIRCs from start to end, are some of the main issues. A total of 45 issues capable of creating inter religious and inter ethnic tension was identified from different districts where a revamped DIRC was in place.

These issues were recorded in Issue Registers maintained at the DIRCs to facilitate future reference. Of the issues recorded, 26 community level issues were addressed by the DIRCs. Some issues were fully addressed while certain issues were mitigated to avoid immediate flareups.

This project was already past its halfway point when tension in the South between Buddhists and Muslims boiled over. The NPC was able to address this in several ways through the Galle DIRC and through NPC's own media unit. A media release was issued by the Governing Council of the NPC condemning the issue, at the national level and at the district level, the of its members, a Galle DIRC sent two Buddhist monk and a affected areas to speak communities and urge settlement. Although resistance at first predominantly Islamic community were still able to reason that be the answer. In project was designed brewing dissent communities and an dissent was witnessed the war nearly five

“As a peace worker, I know that there are many things that need to be done to bring about peace. We face many challenges at present. There are many factors contributing to cause conflict among the communities and different religions. It is also important to promote women’s contribution towards building peace. Each one of us can contribute towards creating and maintaining a sustainable peaceful environment for ourselves and the nation.”
Ms. P. Vijayarathy
Teacher

district level, the of its members, a Maulavi to the to the for a peaceful they faced from the community, they out with the violence could not addition, this as there was between escalation of this in the aftermath of years ago.

The second phase of the project, which began in November, is being implemented in three stages with the participation of district level partner organisations.

In stage one, the DIRC network will function as a community watch group at district level through an enhanced relationship with the media to report issues and interventions and enhanced knowledge on pluralism; there will be an improved DIRC membership network together with links established with provincial and national bodies and recognised religious leaders and there will be a greater reach in the media through coverage of inter religious activities.

In stage two, DIRCs will maintain an issue register and document interventions that mitigate religious tension and will address issues at the district level that remain unsolved. In stage three, success stories will be collated, learning and experiences will be shared through a national symposium, the National Inter Religious Council will be revamped and a Facebook page will be created.

Success Stories From DIRCs

- A tense situation developed between Buddhists and Muslims in the Galle District when a Maulavi made an incorrect interpretation of Buddhism via a loudspeaker during an event at the neighbourhood mosque in 2013. This led to clashes between the two communities because Buddhists were unhappy about this misinterpretation.

The Galle DIRC organized a sports meet for adults and children in Samagiwattagama to rebuild relations that were destroyed as a result of clashes between the Sinhalese and Muslims in the area over the misunderstanding. During the sports meet, fighting neighbours were compelled to take part in joint activities while their children participated in events for youth and kids. By the end of the day, a greater rapport had been achieved between the two communities.

- One of the major concerns of the Jaffna DIRC was regarding the non-implementation of the National Languages Policy at the local level. A majority of official documents including letters, circulars and notices are issued by government agencies in the Sinhala language. People who were unable to understand Sinhala faced the same situation at state run hospitals, Police stations and local government offices. Therefore, people were unable to get adequate services from these institutions.

The Jaffna DIRC through NPC met Minister of National Languages and Social Integration, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, in Colombo. DIRC members submitted evidence of letters and circulars issued only in Sinhala to the Minister and requested his intervention to resolve the matter.

Strengthening Survivors of Torture



Incidents of torture are widespread and recurrent in Sri Lanka despite there being constitutional protection against it and the adoption of the International Convention against Torture. The Government of Sri Lanka's Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) report contains key provisions related to combatting torture at all levels. However, these provisions are yet to be implemented in Police stations and Army camps around the country.

NPC commenced work on an EU-funded project to strengthen survivors of torture by promoting accountability and preventing torture. Asian Justice and Rights (AJAR), an NGO based in Indonesia, selected NPC to be its partner in Sri Lanka, together with partners in Myanmar, Aceh and Timor-Leste. NPC is implementing the two-year project with selected local partners who specialize in the field of supporting torture victims.

The project's target groups include torture survivors and their families, civil society, religious-based groups, government officials and decision-makers in the security sector. The specific objectives include increasing capacities of torture survivors and their organisations to initiate and implement sustainable self-care, raising awareness and understanding among civil society with regard to victims' rights and enhancing commitment to accountability and prevention of torture among key government agencies, human rights bodies and security sector institutions.

Among the key activities are regional trainings on international and domestic laws on torture, advocacy and rehabilitation; 'healing of memories' training of trainers;



exchange visits by survivors' groups; documentation, community-based support and advocacy; facilitation of legal aid; participatory action research to develop referrals and advocacy for reparations; a public information campaign, and a regional seminar on lessons learned from Asia on accountability, prevention, and rehabilitation.

As the first step, NPC sent a group of seven representatives (NPC and partners) for a workshop on community-based strategies for strengthening survivors of torture, held in Jakarta. This was followed by another workshop on Training Facilitators on Community-based Strategies for Strengthening Survivors of Torture and other forms of Ill-Treatment in Pursuit of Accountability and Prevention held in Bali at the AJAR Training Centre.

Under the project, NPC supported meetings and discussions organized by its partners to raise awareness on torture. In Kandy and Ja-Ela, people's tribunals against torture were held to reflect the courage of torture survivors, strength of people, effectiveness of grass root level campaigning and the dedication of frontline workers who tirelessly pursue the cause of combatting torture.

To mark Human Rights Day on December 10, NPC supported a campaign to empower civil society to obtain a people friendly Police service and minimise incidents of Police torture in Ja-Ela while in Colombo, Janasansadaya had a meeting for victims of torture and family members, members of CSOs, legal professionals and government sector employees.

The event addressed deficiencies in the judicial system, especially in Magisterial processes that deal directly with victims of Police torture. Information was shared

with participants on correct methods when seeking reparation for torture and available mechanisms within the judicial framework for this process.

The Citizens' Committee Gampaha District launched a campaign to highlight incidents of torture and its social effects, recognise victims of torture and educate the public on the need to address torture.

A series of training workshops were held highlighting the importance of transitional justice mechanisms in a post conflict situation. The sessions included International Human Rights Law, Humanitarian Law and International Criminal Law principles, which were elucidated using examples from around the world. Also discussed were legal definitions of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, with examples and references to relevant conventions and their impact.

Workshops on trauma healing were held for women headed household members who were survivors of war. They were headed by their respective families as a result of the death, disappearance or incarceration of their husbands, sons or fathers. Many were unable to have any closure so with 'healing through remembering' they were able to say goodbye to their loved ones.

"I have not participated in any community or religious activities in my village after my husband died. I lost the will to engage socially with others. This workshop has given me the confidence and self esteem to start living my life again. It was also good to be able to share my story with others."
Participant at a healing workshop

trauma healing were headed household members who were survivors of war. They were headed by their respective families as a result of the death, incarceration of or fathers. Many any closure so with

NPC's partner in the East, Center for Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (CPPHR), held training on basic counselling to train community members to become befrienders. The goal is to create a separate unit for counselling in Trincomalee and utilise the trained group of befrienders as part of this unit to support trauma victims in the Eastern Province. A group of befrienders were also trained in the south to support victims of torture. They were given introductory training on counselling skills, active listening, understanding the grief process, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, solution focused counselling, child abuse, exploitation and trafficking as well as practical training on carrying out counselling.

NPC's partners for the project are The Human Rights Office Kandy, Citizen Committee Gampaha District, CPPHR Trincomalee and Child Development Initiative (CDI) Vavuniya.

Healing the Wounds of War



Although they make up over half of the population and live in the country that elected the world's first woman prime minister, women in Sri Lanka are poorly represented at the top of the decision making process. While often bearing the brunt of the country's 30-year civil war, they are not consulted in post conflict peace building activities.

In order to bring women's perspectives into the national reconciliation process, NPC is implementing "Post-Conflict Healing: A Women's Manifesto" with funding from FOKUS Women. FOKUS consists of 74 women's organizations from Norway that share a vision of women united to change the world, in which women's organizations form the basis for egalitarian societies free from oppression.

Through capacity building, the project aims to increase female participation in decision making at the local and grass root level. There are healing activities as well as a platform for the voice of women to be heard. The manifesto will articulate women's perspectives of transition from post-conflict to peace and translate them into action through advocacy to policy makers and authorities.

The NPC has an island wide outreach and has worked in every province in the country, gaining understanding of the issues that affected minority communities and women. The work is being carried out in the Vavuniya, Mannar, Trincomalee, Ampara Galle, Hambantota Kandy, Nuwara Eliya and Puttalam Districts. Some areas such as Vavuniya, Mannar, Amapara and Trincomalee were directly affected by the war while others such as Galle and Hambantota have a high number of



war widows. Kandy and Nuwara Eliya are home to the minority Tamil estate community while Puttalam plays host to many Internally Displaced Persons from the Tamil and Muslim communities.

The project aims to build capacity, encouraging increased participation and representation of women at local and grass root level; create post conflict healing; advocate/ perspectives on processes and train participants on women’s rights, post conflict reconciliation, the Reconciliation Council Resolution women and

*“I was very happy we got healing diaries. I will definitely write everything that happened to me truly and honestly. I will also show them to you and I want to make a book because I have that much pain in my heart. To explain this better, I have always lived my whole life with tears and worries. Now god has given us such an opportunity”
A Tamil female participant from Vavuniya*

During the first year project, nine district identified, Trainer of

publish women’s post conflict peace building; and transitional justice, role of women in society, Lessons Learnt and Commission and its and UN Security 1325 that deals with security.

of the three-year partners were Trainee workshops were conducted, orientation workshops in nine districts and follow up workshops were held. The total number of participants at these district level trainings was 243 individuals. At the follow up workshops, the participants identified issues relevant to their particular district and then devised healing activities to mitigate them.

- Vavuniya consisted of participants who were directly affected by the war. At the beginning of the workshop their grievances and anger were evident. However, by the end of the workshop all the participants were ready to accept the past and to try to move towards the future. As one Tamil participant said, “The bus is gone, what is the point of waving hands to hold back the bus? We need to look to the future and try to move on”.
- On the first day of the workshop in Trincomalee, there was tension between the Sinhalese and Tamils but at the end of the training, a Sinhalese participant said that all they want is to live united and peacefully with Tamils. The Tamil participants agreed. This showed that the different communities did not dislike each other but wanted to be heard and acknowledged by the other.
- A participant from Hambantota said that when she went home, her family noticed a positive change in her. Usually all she did was to cry thinking of the son she lost in the war but after coming for the workshop she realized she was not the only one who suffered and that she had support.

Participants were asked to mark positive and negative experiences on a sheet of paper. They were given flowers to paste for happy events and straws to paste for sad events in their lives. The number of flowers and straws indicated how their lives had been shaped by happiness and sadness. The picture looked like a tree with flowers and leaves with their life events. The aim was to have expectation with hope even though they had gone through bad moments. Most of the participants were interested in doing the exercise to look back on their lives and build a future with hope. Those who wished to do so shared their experiences. Some ended up with a flower but many with a straw, saying that although they wanted to enjoy life, they were continually experiencing sorrow. Many drawings started with flowers but ended up with straws. But all of them said that even though they are in dire situations, they wished for better lives, as they want to give their children happiness and hope.

Reconciliation Through Writing



Write to Reconcile, a fiction writing project supported by NPC in conjunction with internationally renowned Sri Lankan author Shyam Selvadurai, went into its second year after a successful first year.

The project brought together 26 emerging Sri Lankan writers, including some from the diaspora, who were interested in writing fiction, memoir or poetry in English on the issues of conflict, peace, reconciliation, memory and trauma, as they related to the civil war and the postwar period.

Over the course of two residential workshop in Kandy and Batticaloa and two online forums, these emerging writers, under the guidance of Shyam Selvadurai, honed their craft of writing and produced work that showed a diversity of cultural, ethnic and geographical points of view on the civil war and its aftermath, as well as a diversity of styles and genres.

The work produced by the writers was published in the second *Write to Reconcile Anthology*. Two thousand copies in Sinhala and Tamil of the anthology were mailed to libraries and schools across the country and a downloadable version is available as well. NPC translated the first anthology into Sinhala and Tamil to reach wider audiences.

Citizens Peace Award



NPC's Citizens Peace Award was awarded in 2014 to Father Benjamin Henry Miller, an American-born Jesuit priest who has lived in Batticaloa for over six decades.

Father Miller founded the Batticaloa Peace Committee (BPC), which began as a group of concerned citizens that gave advice on legal procedures surrounding detention and how to find those in detention. It took up the cases with the authorities, publicised the cases where it might help, and shared the information with international human rights organisations, diplomats, journalists and NGOs. In recognition of its non-partisan role, the security forces gave BPC the role of conduit to hand over released prisoners.

During the period of ceasefire in 2002 and until its breakdown, the government appointed him to be its nominee for the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission for Batticaloa. Father Miller showed himself to be a fearless human rights activist who encouraged and strengthened civil society in Batticaloa to take up the cause of the victims of human rights abuses committed by the Sri Lankan security forces and several other militant groups, including the LTTE.

During a period of over fifty years when he served as Rector of the St. Michael's College and as a teacher, Father Miller saw many opportunities to become involved in civic organisations. He helped in the formation of an inter religious organisation and civil societies to combat tuberculosis and cancer through preventive education, the establishment of a branch of the Federation of Red Cross and, as a Rotarian, he served as its President as well as on the National Rotary Council for Peace and Harmony.

Media and Advocacy

As part of its educational and advocacy work, NPC disseminated political commentaries, newsletters and press releases that were published in the mass media in three languages. The material was also uploaded on to NPC's website. Dr. Jehan Perera contributed a regular column to a national newspaper that often mentioned NPC's work.

In addition, Dr. Perera was interviewed on DeutscheWelle, Radio Australia, Vatican Radio, VOA, Associated Press, Radio France and Swiss National Radio. He lectured as a resource person at civil society functions, universities and local and international conferences. The NPC team provided briefings and country assessments to several embassies.

Excerpts from press releases:

Consider Joint Inquiry Instead Of International Inquiry

The Sri Lankan government has rejected the report submitted by the UN Human Rights Commissioner that recommends an international inquiry into alleged war crimes and human rights violations in the last phase of the country's war. The government continues to deny the allegations and asserts that it only carried out a humanitarian rescue operation during the last stages of the war due to the forcible holding of the civilian population by the LTTE and also asserts that the alleged number of persons who had died or disappeared as a gross exaggeration. It set up an inquiry but entrusted it to the military against whom the allegations are made, which does not make it an independent investigation. It is an accepted principle in law that no person can be a judge in their own cause.

February 27

The Tragedy Of Vulnerable Families Of Disappeared Persons

The arrest and detention of Balendran Jayakumari under controversial circumstances raises the question whether those who persevere to openly advocate on behalf of the victims of the war are being targeted for punitive action. The government's police spokesperson stated that a shooting incident took place in the north and they have identified a house where the suspect has been hiding and that two women are being investigated. Human rights defenders in the area report lots of checkpoints, raids, questioning, fear and surveillance. Jayakumari is

reported to have been detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for 16 days by a court order and sent to the Boosa detention centre which is at the other southern corner of the country.

March 17

Reassess Arrest Of Ruki Fernando And Fr. Praveen Mahesan And Uphold Rule Of Law And Due Process

The National Peace Council views with great concern the arrest of Ruki Fernando and Fr Praveen Mahesan, two of the leading human rights defenders in the country. Both of them are partners of NPC and have taken part in our programs. Their commitment to sustainable peace and reconciliation and promotion of humanitarian norms are unquestionable. Both of them were arrested last evening in Kilinochchi in the North where they had been seeing to the welfare of families of missing persons following the arrest and detention of one of their members Balendran Jayakumari, whose youngest son went missing after allegedly surrendering to the army at the end of the war.

March 16

Communal Violence Cannot Be Permitted

The mob attack on Muslim owned shops and homes in Aluthgama and Beruwela signifies a significant escalation in anti Muslim activities that have been taking place over the past two years. It is reported that at least 2 persons have died and more than 30 injured in clashes. Previous such incidents were on individual targets, including mosques and shops. In most of those previous incidents the responses by the police and security forces was slow or ineffective with the miscreants going free, which created a climate of impunity for the attackers.

June 16

Governance Concerns Of Ethnic Minorities Must Also Be Part Of Election Campaign

One of the major campaign themes at the forthcoming Presidential election is the issue of good governance, specifically the abolishing of the Executive Presidency and de-politicising of institutions of state. There has been a continuous erosion of the independence of the main institutions of governance over the past four decades that began with the First Republican Constitution of 1972. In recent years there has been an even greater centralization of power in the hands of the Presidency which has been justified by national security considerations.

November 25

Finance

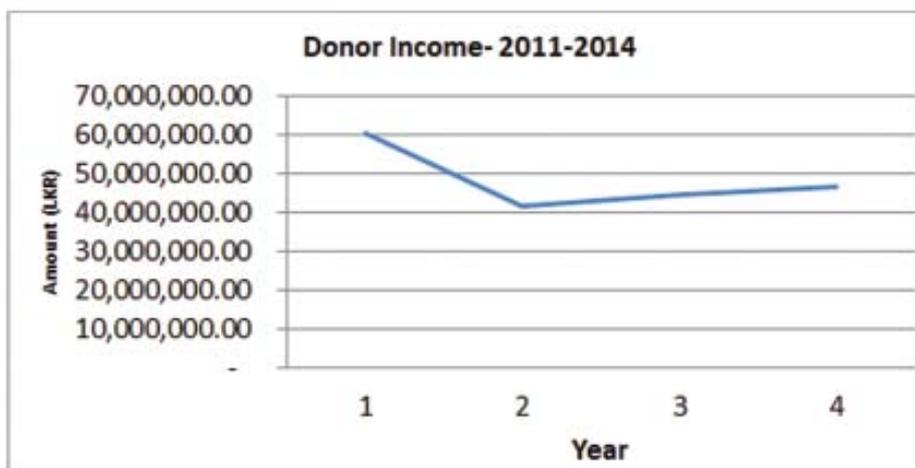
FINANCIAL REVIEW

The National Peace Council of Sri Lanka (Guarantee) Ltd is a not for profit organisation which fully depends on grants from various donor agencies to carry out various project activities.

Although there was about a 20% decrease in its income in year 2012 when compared to 2011, the donor income has gradually increased thereafter.

Donor Income

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Amount (LKR)	60,374,157.00	41,949,545.00	44,553,901.00	46,574,189.92

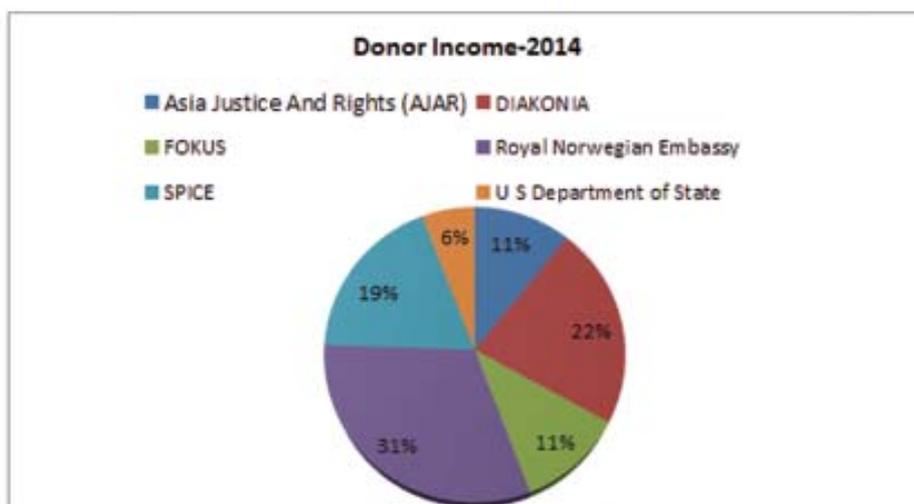


The following table shows the income we received from each donor as a % of total income for that year.

	2011	2012	2013	2014
European Union	55.88	2.49	25.44	-
DIAKONIA	32.24	81.76	46.61	22.21
Rotary Club	0.11	0.38	0.79	-
Royal Norwegian Embassy	10.75	12.88	23.43	31.35
US Department of State	1.02	2.49	3.62	5.89
SPICE	-	-	0.11	18.57
AJAR	-	-		10.82
FOKUS	-	-	-	11.16

Our Donors 2014

Donor Agency	Amount (LKR)	%
Asia Justice And Rights (AJAR)	5,040,483.00	10.82
DIAKONIA	10,342,389.54	22.21
FOKUS	5,200,000.00	11.16
Royal Norwegian Embassy	14,599,533.80	31.35
SPICE	8,650,597.00	18.57
U S Department of State	2,741,186.58	5.89
Total	46,574,189.92	100.00



Our Projects 2014

Donor Agency	Project	Amount spent as a % of total expenses
DIAKONIA	LLRC	8.21
SPICE	RIID	15.65
Royal Norwegian Embassy/ US Department of State	WTR	16.93
FOKUS	Post Conflict Healing	10.49
AJAR	Preventing Torture	7.27
DIAKONIA/RNE/ Unrestricted Fund	Institutional Support	41.3
Rotary Club		0.16

Way Forward

Making Sri Lanka a more inclusive country in which people, irrespective of ethnic or religious community, can feel a sense of belonging in a motherland of all is Sri Lanka's biggest challenge. The presidential election campaign exacerbated the fears and divisions amongst the people. Dispelling these fears is a challenge that needs to be taken up at every level, including by civil society.

In the months and years ahead there will be a need for educational programmes to heal the minds of the people and to emphasise the need for national reconciliation. A permanent solution will take time and care. The process of decision making will be slow and difficult, but the new government represents the diversity of Sri Lanka's multi ethnic and multi religious population. This is the best opportunity to work out a mutually acceptable solution.

The change of government has led to an opening for civil society to engage in peace work and reconciliation, which continues to remain of the highest relevance. The ethnic conflict still manifests itself in the dispute over post war accountability and the absence of a mutually acceptable political solution. NPC's work in the year ahead will necessarily take these challenges into account.

Community leaders and the general public will be made more fully aware of the issues arising from the past and the different options for truth, justice and reconciliation that are available internationally to address them within a larger framework in which the plural, multi ethnic and multi religious nature of society is affirmed, and in which there is peaceful coexistence. We will create awareness among the target population about the issue of dealing with the past war and the human rights violations associated with it through the lens of transitional justice.

NPC will also affirm the plural and multi religious nature of the Sri Lankan polity, and thus seek to counteract the dominant discourse of narrow ethnic and religious nationalism that was propagated during the war and immediate post war periods. We are hopeful that adequate donor support will be forthcoming to take our work to the national scale that can have a positive impact.



NPC Working Districts

