

ABSTRACT

Sustainable peace and stability is one of the undivided aspirations of any human society or a country per se. Sri Lanka being an independent nation and a country in South Asia is of no exception to this phenomenon. South Asia has been a socially and politically volatile region from the time immemorial, and so has been Sri Lanka as a country. Even though countries are independently governed, peace and stability of most of the countries in the world is a condition dependent upon a number of internal and external factors; bilateral relations with neighboring countries are one such decisive parameter. In reviewing the stability and sustainable peace in Sri Lanka, it is amply evident that bilateral relation with India is crucial in maintaining internal peace and stability in Sri Lanka. For instance, poor diplomatic relationship between the two countries in late 1970s and early 1980s prompted India to destabilize Sri Lanka by advocating and supporting Tamil militancy which later turned out to be one of the most ruthless ethno-political conflicts in the twentieth century. In this backdrop, this research study was carried out on the theme "Indo-Lanka Relations, and their Implications on Sustainable Peace in Sri Lanka." The study was conducted with the objectives of: (a) understanding the relation between Indian and Sri Lankan governments and its significant turns from time to time under relevant local, regional and international geopolitical contexts; (b) analysing nature of Indo – Sri Lanka relations in the past, and its possible impact for the maintenance peace and stability of Sri Lanka, (c) understanding the present socio-political and security landscape of Sri Lanka in terms of sustainable peace, and its dependency on Indo – Sri Lanka relations; and (d) drawing lessons from the past, and to make recommendations for healthy relations between India and Sri Lanka with a view to maintain sustainable peace in Sri Lanka. The dissertation was conducted along the lines of qualitative methods of data analysis. Relevant primary and secondary data were collected through books, articles, policy documents and other literature on the subject with the focus to answer the research questions – How does the poor or hostile relations between India and Sri Lanka impacted on peace and stability in Sri Lanka in the past? And, how Indo-Lanka relationship would implicate on the sustainable peace in Sri Lanka? This study also reviews as to how and why the bilateral relations between India and Sri Lanka are important in laying the foundation for a sustainable peace in Sri Lanka. The answers to the research question with the support of the other subjective and objective evidence gathered were able to prove that, bilateral relations between Indian and Sri Lankan governments may depend on the relationship of the heads of the states at times, yet considerably influenced by domestic socio-political compulsions of the two countries. And, the bilateral relation between the two countries is critical for Sri Lanka, for poor or hostile bilateral relations with India will adversely affect sustainable peace in Sri Lanka. The findings and recommendations of this study will have a particular appeal to the leaders of the country both in polity as well as bureaucracy in all levels of governance, especially to those who are at policy making level. This dissertation will also provide impetus for further study in the areas of conflict, sustainable peace and international relations.