

Sri Lanka in the new Asian century: the importance of ecologically sustainable development to national security

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Abstract— *The increasing occurrence of natural disasters and extreme weather patterns will put enormous stress on agricultural production and thus food security in the future. The international competition for scarce resources amidst rapid growth in consumption patterns will affect Asia more than any other part of the world. Sri Lanka will be caught in the middle of both these trends as it becomes increasingly affected by economic issues (and opportunities) as well as environmental issues in the decades to come. These issues directly or indirectly translate into national security concerns. This paper looks at national security through an expanded lens from contemporary conflict and examines the importance of ecologically sustainable development as the guiding principle in forming a national security strategy. The paper will define national security in unconventional terms and discuss related threats to the national security of Sri Lanka.*

Open source research databases, government and multilateral organization studies and data are used to support a qualitative empirical examination of the nexus between ecologically sustainable development and security. A multi-disciplinary definition of national security using peer reviewed and Institutional studies of unrestricted warfare and environmental security will inform a normative analysis for developing a comprehensive national security strategy framework. Current news and reporting will be used to examine the global context within which a national security strategy needs to be formed and informed.

Keywords— Security, Development, Environment

I. DEFINING NATIONAL SECURITY

National security is concerned with the protection of national interests. Governments define national interests differently, but it is founded in economic ambitions, internal politics, government policy, and the dynamics of the external environment of the day. These interests are defined on the basis that they are necessary for preservation, well being of its citizens and to guarantee their rights and freedoms. Such a concept is understandably broad in its interpretation and application. So, Nation-States, define their national security in a multitude of methods. The interests it seeks to protect guide its methodology.

Sri Lanka endured multiple, complex domestic and foreign physical threats to her national security from 1970 to 2009. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) insurgency of 1970 and 1987, the Tamil militancy from 1977 to 1989, and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) separatism from 1989 – 2009 were the main threats that the country faced in the post independence era. Within each of these threats were foreign, economic, and social hazards that were designed to threaten the well being of Sri Lankans and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. The violation of Sri Lankan air-space by India in 1987 and the *hartals* or shut-downs actioned by the JVP and the LTTE are dissimilar examples of the multiple security, social, and economic layers in which Sri Lanka's national interest was eroded for coercive purposes by multiple actors. In this period, Sri Lanka endured and successfully navigated or overcame multiple hazards to her economy, social well being, territorial integrity, national boundaries, domestic politics, political system, and cultural cohesion. Terrorism was undoubtedly the main threat faced by the Sri Lankan Government within this broad classification of threats. Tamil militant groups, primarily the LTTE, from 1977 onward, generously applied terrorism as a strategy, aimed at carving a separate state. As a tactic, these groups used suicide terrorism alone 168 times between 1987 and 2000 (Shweitzer, 2000). This number is higher than the combined total of all other suicide terrorist attacks worldwide at that time (Turnbull, 2002). This statistic alone is adequate to support the perception that terrorism was used as a strategy, and not a tactic as revolutionaries and internationally celebrated freedom fighters such as Che Guevara, Mao Tse Tung, and General Vo Nguyen Giap advised in their doctrines on guerrilla warfare.

Terrorism was used to effectively force the movement of populations based on ethnicity, damage the economy, demoralize the Sri Lankan Armed Forces (SLAF), eliminate strong political leaders and moderate Tamils, silence civil society, influence the media, and control public opinion, just to name a distinct few. In addition to terrorism, subversive, illegal, and legal methods were also used to further the cause of separatism in Sri Lanka by influencing the international community, foreign governments, and the international media. A majority of the time, the response of the Sri Lankan Government was reactionary, never

having early warning or experience of these challenges. Until around 2003, Sri Lanka's experience along with Israel, was unique in scale, internationalization, political success, and in terms of the variety of threats to national security posed by terrorism.

With the onset of what the United States (US) labelled the 'Global War on Terror', Western Governments, primarily, the US and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, faced terrorism employed as a strategy by non-state actors. Since 2003, there have been determined efforts by Western military theoreticians and scholars to classify the new tactics they were facing on and off the battlefield. While terms such as hybrid warfare, compound warfare, and fourth generation warfare are all distinctly defined with some variation; they are restricted to providing a classification for military strategy and operations. These are mostly based on the experiences of their Armed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. This inability to transcend disciplines in understanding threats to national security could prove to be a severe weakness in meeting the challenge of asymmetric threats faced by any government. Especially since the rising, main competitor to US power on the international stage is showing very visible signs of employing a strategy of "unrestricted warfare".

Chinese Colonels Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui (1999) introduced the concept of unrestricted warfare in their book by the same name. It prescribes a multitude of methods both military and non-military in conflict with stronger, developed nations. Destabilizing and compromising financial, economic, political, social, and military infrastructure using technology, terrorism, and other unconventional means are the main thrust of this concept. More importantly, or disturbingly, to note is that "the first rule of unrestricted warfare is that there are no rules, nothing is forbidden" (Liang & Xiangsui, 1999). While the Chinese onslaught on the US economy and industrial espionage using state assets is no secret, less known is the constant threats to US information technology (IT) networks and systems in defence and critical infrastructure. In December of last year, a Chinese hacking group tied to the People's Liberation Army was accused of trying to hack into a decoy water management system to a US municipality (Simonite, 2013). In recent years, Iranian based hackers have been repeatedly accused of attempts to sabotage US and Israeli military and non-military IT infrastructure. The threat of cybercrime is also gaining wider attention as the number of attempts to affect US IT infrastructure increase (Simonite, 2013).

Given Sri Lanka's past experience and the trends in international competition between militarily superior States such as the US, Iran, and China, it is safe to say that variations or elements of unrestricted warfare will continue to develop as national security threats. Suitably, the Secretary to the Ministry of Defense and Urban Development, Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa, in his lecture to

the inaugural module of the Phd program at this University earlier this year, articulated that "...if comprehensive security is to be ensured, it requires the achievement of national cohesion, political and economic stability, the elimination of terrorism, the countering of extremism, and the formulation of effective responses to external challenges. The Government must make every effort to keep aware of a continually changing situation and take appropriate action in response to new developments and challenges. It is only then that the safety of a nation can be assured" (Rajapaksa, 2013). Mr Rajapaksa's statement is consistent with the advice of the father of western warfare strategy, Carl Von Clausewitz who said, "Wars in every period have independent forms and independent conditions, and therefore, every period must have its independent theory of war."

Granted that military strategy is an extension of security strategy and is being treated as the same concept here, the Sri Lankan experience has shown that both can be intertwined with deadly effectiveness. Moreover, in a future where the security environment has no restrictions and wars will be fought in every sphere of human activity be it social media, economic activity, or critical infrastructure, what is needed is a far wider strategy than a military strategy or a security strategy that is limited to meeting known conventional threats such as terrorist groups and competition in the international arena.

The Netherlands is a nation that has already set in motion processes that embrace a broad definition of security strategy into its national planning. Since 2007, the Netherlands has been using a national security strategy framework and work program that requires a 'whole of government', and 'whole of society' approach to dealing with security concerns. This has been done by using "practical mechanisms solidly anchored in regular policy priority and budgeting cycles through which governments can more quickly sense, prioritize, and plan for across ever changing security challenges" (Caudle & de Spiegeleire, 2010). This process is informed by an annual risk assessment matrix "that summarizes the best collective judgement of the entire civil service as to the relative importance of security risks" (Caudle & de Spiegeleire, 2010). The risk assessment matrix is prepared by the National Security Program that evaluates various scenarios based on their likelihood of taking place and consequences for national security.

The adaptive, proactive approach of the Netherlands is presented here as the broadest possible effort to understand and address national security by a Nation. It is still in keeping with the basis of national security interest that are its preservation, well being of its citizens, and guarantee of their rights and freedoms. This 'all hazards' approach to security threats, by design and science, include natural disasters and the effects of climate change.

II. THE NEXUS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY

“Environmental degradation imperils a nations most fundamental aspect of security by undermining the natural support systems on which all of human activity depends” (Renner, 1989).

Securitization of the environment, or making environmental problems a ‘high politics’ issue started as early as the 1970’s. From the handful of scholars studying the impacts of environmental degradation on security at the time, Lester Brown’s report for the World Watch Institute in 1977 titled “Redefining National Security” is significant. Based on the knowledge that a healthy economy was necessary for national security, he postulated that consumption and growth patterns were causing environmental degradation and resource depletion that would lead to food and energy insecurity. This insecurity would be severe enough to threaten human civilization (Brown, 1977).

It was not until 1987, when the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission) published the report “Our Common Future” that this connection was again brought to the attention of the international policy community. It led to the concept of sustainable development being adopted by the United Nations, and placed it firmly on the agenda of international policy (UNECE, 2013). This was done by the adoption of a number of international agreements on climate change, forests, bio-diversity, and sustainable development at the Rio de Janeiro “earth summit” conference in 1992 (UNCSD, 2007). International cooperation to get nations to uphold these commitments continues with much effort and fanfare. Real progress has come about from the direct adverse effects of unsustainable development and the looming threat of climate change on commercial enterprise and human security.

To put unsustainable development in context, the current rate of unsustainable consumption should be clear. According to Prof Mohan Munasinghe, an internationally renowned expert on sustainable development and climate change, “1.2 billion people in the top 20th percentile of the world’s population by income consume almost 85% of global output, or 60 times more than the poorest 20th percentile” (Munasinghe, 2010). National economic development strategies are traditionally prepared with the goal of increasing growth and raising the living standard of lower income groups. The end goal is to enable as much of the population to consume on the same level as the top 20th percentile. Clearly, this is not possible in a global environment that is already overstressed and our concept of economic development must be reformulated.

Water being the giver of life to all living things, availability and access to freshwater resources for growing populations is essential. Stresses on water resources are mainly caused by pollution, urban growth and overuse, climate change, and deforestation (Greenfacts, 2006).

Demand for water will only increase from a growing global populations demand for agriculture, industry, and household consumption. Water resource problems will be compounded by deforestation, loss of wetlands, and large-scale irrigation projects that irreversibly impact the hydrological cycle. Rigorous scientific studies conducted by the multi-agency World Water Assessment Program at the United Nations provide the necessary information for predicting water shortages. Stresses on water supply will directly impact agriculture, which uses up to 70% of the world’s freshwater. Land degradation resulting from pollution, mining, overuse, deforestation, overgrazing, desertification, and monoculture impact the availability of arable land. These two factors alone are already causing regional food shortages and food insecurity challenges for African nations.

Current high profile water based conflicts can be identified between Egypt and Ethiopia contending over plans to dam the Nile River in Ethiopia, India and Pakistan over shared water sources in the north, China and her South East Asian neighbours over water use on the Mekong River. While efforts at cooperation to resolve the related issues are prevalent, the risk that they would spiral into a violent conflict exists as demand increases and supply reduces. According to a study done by Lloyds on water scarcity, these three regions have been identified as global water resource issue hotspots (Lloyds, 2010).

Nature can be credited with bringing climate change to the fore of international policy and heightened global awareness. Increasing incidents of natural disasters, rising temperatures, and increasing extreme weather events are having an effect on people in every part of the world. The German Advisory Council on Climate Change categorizes the security risks from climate change as follows:

- Climate induced degradation of freshwater resources
- Climate induced decline in food production
- Climate induced storm and floodwaters
- Environmentally induced migration

Each of these security risks stem from the effects of climate change (WBGU, 2007). While debate still continues on the cause of climate change and how and who should be responsible, is a controversial topic between developed and developing countries. The fact that climate change is taking place is certain. Even as a low probability/high consequence event, the outcomes of climate change for security and military strategists should of considerable concern. They are of enough concern for the US Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta to remark, “The area of climate change has a dramatic impact on national security” (Simeone, 2012). There certainly is enough concern for the Department of Defence to allocate billions of dollars for the United States armed forces to be more energy efficient and design renewable technologies for equipment.

Starting from Thomas Homer-Dixon, there are a number of scholars from various disciplines that have made formidable arguments for the securitization of environmental issues by studying their relevance to national security. The effects of climate change have prompted every stable nation to appropriate significant resources to mitigating the effects of natural disasters. The sheer scale of the related plans will ensure that the militaries of those nations are involved in planning and implementation. The urgency now as Marc Levy points out in a critique of environmental security theory is “not for more new thinking, but effective solutions” (Levy, 95).

If we were to consider environmental issues here not just as threats, but also as threat generators – an adversary, it would be one that is executing a strategy of unrestricted warfare upon the well being of nations. According to private sector, government, inter-government, and scientific studies, climate change, environmental degradation, and resource scarcity is threatening the ecological services we depend on for our existence. These are discussed further in the context of Sri Lanka.

Lastly and significantly important to the risk of threats from environmental issues is that of population growth. Increasing populations act as a threat multiplier to every scenario detailed and mentioned. Increased number of people directly affects demand for resources and consumption.

III. NON-TRADITIONAL THREATS TO SRI LANKA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa, clearly summarized the present national security concerns of Sri Lanka as:

- The possible re-emergence of terrorism
- The emergence of other extremists groups
- The challenges of ethnic divisions and communal violence
- The challenges of maritime security and border control
- The growth of organized crime
- Foreign interference in domestic affairs
- Non-traditional threats through technology driven media

(Rajapaksa, 2013)

Except for technology driven media threats, these are, in Sri Lanka's context and an international context, traditional national security threats. The following environmental issues are presented as non-traditional threats to Sri Lanka's national security

A. Impacts from Climate Change

The Hazard Profiles of Sri Lanka 2012, prepared by the Ministry of Disaster Management provides a detailed

study of nine natural disasters that will potentially impact the country in the future. The report serves as a base document for further in-depth study of these vulnerabilities and for guiding disaster risk mitigation planning. Climate change is expected to increase the effects of these risks. According to the report, coastal erosion and drought are the main hazards the country faces. Coastal erosion is a main hazard due to human induced acceleration caused by activities such as uncontrolled sand mining and deforestation of catchments. Drought is identified as the most frequent natural disaster to affect the Country. All areas of the Country, including the wettest areas have a potential vulnerability to drought based on historical data. In 2012, an estimated 1.3 million people were affected by drought (IRNA, 2013). According to a recent World Bank report prepared by Germany's Postdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and Climate Analytics, Sri Lanka is expected to be worst hit by rising temperatures in the South Asian region (LBO, 2013). This projection is supported by other studies for the region (Eriyagama et al, 2010).

B. Water Insecurity

According to the 2012 World Water Development Report prepared by the United Nations, Sri Lanka's water resources were found to be at risk due to threatened eco-systems and climate change. The sector vulnerability profile prepared for the Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy identifies the availability of the quantity and quality of inland freshwater resources as being strained from increased anthropogenic activities. Over extraction, pollution, salinity intrusion, and contamination of surface and ground water resources are also identified as problems to freshwater resources.

Rice farmers in coastal areas such as Hambantota have been dealing with increased salt water intrusion in their water. Salinization coupled with increasing temperatures has caused yields to decrease and farmers to abandon traditional fields (Prasad, 2006). The Hazard Profiles for Sri Lanka 2012 identifies all agro-ecological zones in the dry zone of Sri Lanka as having high drought hazard. The agro-ecological zones in the intermediate zone of Sri Lanka are reported to have a moderate to high degree of drought hazard. These are the main agricultural and rice producing areas of the Country. Given the increasing demand for water, the impact from future drought will increase “with or without any increase in the frequency and intensity of meteorological drought”(Hazard Profile of Sri Lanka, 2012).

C. Food Insecurity

Agricultural production will be directly affected by aforementioned risk from drought, water availability, and also flooding. Changes in rainfall patterns resulting from climate change will affect harvesting patterns and in the case of some crops such as coconut and rubber, reductions

in yield (Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, 2010). Projected increases in temperature for the region will cause heat stress to certain crops. Prolonged drought periods interspaced with higher than normal rainfall is already affecting rice cultivation (Perera, 2013). Coconut production in the Chilaw, Kurunegala, and Puttalam districts are expected to fall by 20% this year (Kulathunga, 2013). New types of pests and disease are also expected to affect yields. Unpredictable extreme weather events have also begun to take its toll on the agricultural sector.

Food insecurity can also be caused by unsustainable practices that contaminate food. The issue of chemical fertilizers used in rice farming causing chronic kidney disease in the Anuradhapura district has been in the news this year. Scientific studies linked have linked toxic chemical inputs to high rates of occurrence in this region and it is suspected of affecting other rice producing districts as well (Hettiarachchi, 2013).

D. Internal Instability from Resource Degradation and Scarcity

Based on the water resources, food security, and natural disaster vulnerabilities mentioned above, Sri Lanka's agriculturally most productive areas and rural populations face the highest risk. In worst-case scenarios, affected communities will be forced to migrate or will require significant State intervention for survival. Inability to effectively mitigate the potential impacts or support affected communities will lead to the complex internal instability issues of social unrest and internal displacement.

Issues of governance and ownership of scarce resources have led to internal conflict before in the form of a terrorist campaign for a separate state. Competition for land and other basic resources such as water will also no doubt increase the risk of internal conflict in the future.

Resource degradation and scarcity issues related to arable land availability and productive eco-systems that support industries such as agriculture and fisheries will result in loss of livelihoods for affected communities. The recent events in Weliveriya related to water pollution are case in point of how resource degradation issues can easily lead to internal instability. When basic needs such as access to clean water and food are affected, people the world over have shown the tendency react violently. Skyrocketing food prices and shortages in early 2008 resulted in riots in Haiti, Egypt, Bangladesh, and Mozambique.

Scarcity issues in the region and globally can spill over into Sri Lanka as well. The constant intrusion of Indian fisherman into Sri Lankan waters is a warning that India's unsustainable practices will affect us directly.

Similarly, powerful nations from other parts of the world have shown keen interest in Sri Lanka's fisheries resources and mineral resources. Sri Lanka needs to be prepared for

the eventuality that more powerful nations may one day just take what they want and not be as diplomatic as they are about it today.

E. Economic Shocks and the International Economy

Since colonization, the Sri Lankan economy has been highly dependent on international trade. Export earnings have been critical for financial stability and imports for consumption and growth. Environmental issues that affect agriculture, especially commodities, can have a potentially severe impact on export earnings. Similarly, predicted drops in yield and productivity in other countries would result in them ensuring internal availability and supplies to larger trading partners before catering to the needs of smaller markets such as Sri Lanka. Resulting fluctuations in world market prices will have a significant impact on smaller economies such as Sri Lanka.

The rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, the recent global economic recession, and the continued economic recession in Western Europe are symptoms of greater change to come. Asia is already recognized as the new powerhouse of the world, both in terms of production and consumption. While weakened economies in the western hemisphere will affect our export and manufacturing industries, a stronger Asia will also present new opportunities. These changes in the geographical distribution of trade regimes should be carefully navigated by an economy that is so dependent on import/export markets.

IV. ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Sustainable development is "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). The concept of sustainable development requires balancing economic, social, and environmental interests. Ecologically sustainable development is an effort to extend the emphasis on the environmental component to increase the valuation of ecological services in determining economic productivity and social benefit of a particular area. It is not a new concept, but an intentionally termed "buzzword" to emphasize the importance of environmental issues as a high politics issue. It is notable that it is already used as a guiding concept of strategic planning for the Australian Government. Adopted since 1992, the Australian Government's National Strategy on Ecologically Sustainable Development (NSESD) defines it as "using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased" (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water Pollution and Communities, 2013). The NSESD is intended to provide strategic guidelines for policy and decision-making, emphasizing the long-term benefits over short-term goals.

In terms of achieving sustainable development, Prof Munasinghe's sustainomics framework provides the theory and tools required to make development more sustainable. This trans-disciplinary approach covers economics, social science, ecology, as well as other disciplines to ensure comprehensive analysis and operationality. In the sustainomics framework, "the environmental domain focuses on protection of the integrity and resilience of ecological systems" (Munasinghe, 2013).

Theories of environmental security attempt to substantiate that environmental issues are security issues. Whether or not the data support this claim, the impact of environmental issues on national security and militaries are already accepted. Some effort has been made here to draw attention to this little publicised realization. Ecologically sustainable development is introduced as a guiding principle for national security strategy because it directly addresses the mitigation of threats from environmental issues to national security. Furthermore, it is potentially promising in terms of an independent 'national unity banner', to unite Sri Lankans toward a single national objective. Sustainable development is already a process that has been included into national goals, strategies and plans starting with the 'Mahinda Chintanaya' and 'Haritha'. Sustainomics is a framework that can help operationalize these goals.

V. INFORMING A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Most recommendations made for mitigating vulnerabilities to natural disasters and risks from environmental threats are rooted in conservation of natural eco-systems and employing traditional methods to optimize use of ecological services. Natural hazards and environmental threats whose risks are increased due to anthropogenic activities can be reduced directly from utilizing ecologically sensitive approaches. This section will categorize the recommendations for reducing vulnerabilities to natural hazards and environmental threats that emphasize such an approach. The recommendations are within current expert advice based on scientific studies and government reports that have been referenced where possible. They do not increase the scope of existing national plans but must inform a national security strategy that addresses these unconventional threats.

A. Protection and Optimization of Environmental Resources and Ecological Services

The protection of environmental resources is no longer the exclusive concern of environmentalists. National studies for agriculture, water resources, climate change mitigation, the Mahinda Chintanaya, and the Haritha National Action Program all clearly detail and emphasize the importance of protecting our environmental resources.

According to the recommendations of the Hazard Profiles report (Ministry of Disaster Management, 2012), erosion hazard management should be handled on a coastal cell approach that looks at the coastal system as consisting of "very specific natural units which behave with both intra and inter dynamic relationships". (Ministry of Disaster Management, 2012).

The impacts of drought and flooding can be mitigated and managed by reforestation with indigenous species, conservation and development of water management plans that address natural ecological-systems that support the hydrological cycle. Sri Lanka is blessed with six RAMSAR sites, or wetlands of international importance (Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, 2013). Understanding the fact that, these and other wetland eco-systems and river basin systems are contiguous and inter-dependent is essential for managing our water resources. Renovation and maintenance of ancient irrigation systems in the dry zone can contribute significantly to increasing water resources and management (Eriyagama et al, 2010). This can be done at a significantly lower cost than currently planned large-scale irrigation projects in the same region (IRIN, 2013).

Landslides, threats from drought and flooding, and water scarcity, can be mitigated by land development and utilization practices that are site specific and based on accurate evaluation of ecological services and systems. A long-term view of land use must guide planning and development.

Sri Lanka's rich biodiversity is unique and important as it hosts the highest species density for flowering plants, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals in the Asian region (Ministry of Environment, Bio Diversity Secretariat, 2012), This has already been identified as a major tourism attraction and source of revenue for the country. Additionally, Sri Lanka's forests host plant species that are important for medicinal purposes and have traditionally been harvested for indigenous healthcare practices. The conservation of their habitats must take priority over short-term development projects.

B. Agriculture and Food Security

While food security and agricultural development involves a number of modern technologies and methods, indigenous traditional knowledge is a valuable source of practices that can inform climate adaptation measures (Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, 2010). The use of traditional and wild varieties of crops and livestock have been identified as supporting measures to increase production in terms of vegetables, meat, and milk. The resilient features inherent in indigenous crop varieties and livestock are important for adaptation efforts in these industries. Integrated plant nutrient systems and integrated pest management systems are important for reducing the toxic effects to eco-systems from artificial

fertilizer and pesticides. These can be informed by traditional and modern agriculture techniques that use natural and organic products (Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, 2010). Increasing indigenous capacity for adapting to climate change and increasing food security will also contribute toward less reliance on imported food items and production materials.

C. Resilience to International Shocks and Change

Food security, energy security, and economic security are the key areas in which Sri Lanka needs to develop its resilience to international shocks and change. As mentioned before, the changing nature of the global economy and the risks associated with climate change to the global economy will have a significant impact on small economies such as Sri Lanka's. The well being of her citizens is dependent on a stable, resilient, and productive economy. A domestic capacity to sustain the energy needs of the economy is vital. Strategic independence in energy security is already part of our energy policy (Ministry of Power and Energy, 2010). National initiatives on a large scale to increase renewable energy sources can be witnessed globally as individual countries prepare to face future energy crisis. Sri Lanka should not be an exception. The United Kingdom recently launched the world's largest offshore wind farm in an effort to reduce carbon emissions and increase its energy security (Shankleman, 2013). Sri Lanka could benefit by prioritizing and also providing further incentives for the development of sustainable energy sources that are both commercially viable and promote self-sufficiency.

D. National Unity and Social Cohesion

As a country whose historical agricultural and irrigation methods are renowned for their sophistication, little has been done to protect and learn from over two thousand years of experience. All of the Government and specialized institutional reports, plans, and studies cited in this research have been prepared using local expertise and knowledge. The expertise in specialized disciplines to address environmental threats and climate change exists locally. When economic models promoted by western concepts and lifestyles are clearly the source of current unsustainable development and consumption trends, it is not in our national interests to continue to follow these failed practices. However, this is not to say that Sri Lanka should not gain from foreign assistance and expertise, but engage models that compliment indigenous systems and emphasize the value of developing an indigenous development capacity.

We require our own model of development, our own national strategy that will serve to galvanize and motivate the citizens and Government of Sri Lanka toward a common national objective. Ecologically sustainable development can be the uniting banner for change. Efforts at social cohesion to achieve strategic independence will also serve as a nationally uniting force. After 30 years of ethnic

conflict, with on-going religious tensions, and a culture of apathy toward national progress, such a national policy will be invaluable for promoting internal stability and sustainable growth. As such it can directly mitigate the threat to national security from ethnic divisions.

Finally, our Armed forces are now transforming into a peacetime force. The capacity to effectively implement the said plans will require resources that cannot be provided or purchased from the private or public sectors alone. The SLAF can provide manpower, leadership in effective organization and coordination, equipment, and island wide presence on a scale greater and more efficient than any other Government institution(s). These are the very capacities that are looked to when the Armed forces are mobilized to support and lead disaster management operations.

V. CONCLUSIONS

National security threats have been broadened by the realities of the current global environment. Environmental issues stemming from environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and climate change are leading to unconventional threats to national security. They are also increasing the risk of conventional threats such as internal instability and discord between nations. Sri Lanka will be faced with issues arising from climate change, food security, and water security. Issues arising from environmental degradation and resource scarcity will increase the risk of security threats both internal and external.

Unsustainable consumption as the main cause and driver of environmental issues needs to be addressed. Population growth acts as a threat multiplier, compounding and accelerating the issues we face. Ecologically sustainable development is an approach that can serve to focus our thinking on sustainable development and make development more sustainable. As mentioned previously, we have the information, plans, tools, and current data to operationalize such a policy. These are all based on mature thinking and experience. The Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessment for Sri Lanka prepared at the start of the century "mapped out the distribution of space and resources available for development with minimum environment and disaster constraints" (ISEA, 2013). These plans are applicable to all Government institutions and require a whole of government approach for implementation. Aspects of the intra-government coordination required to implement these plans have already been identified (Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, 2010). Equitable distribution for the future can be informed and achieved provided these firm foundations are utilized.

Ecologically sustainable development should be a guiding principle for a national security strategy. It serves to focus

our attention to mitigating threats from environmental issues, which increase the risk of complex unconventional threats to national security. Making ecologically sustainable development a national objective will also serve to unite the country, increase social cohesion, and achieve strategic independence that optimizes ecological resources and indigenous knowledge. Leadership provided by the SLAF will help Sri Lanka achieve her national interests and a secure future for Sri Lankans.

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