

**Troublesome Peace Making: How American Views on Terrorism
Affected Norwegian Mediation in Sri Lanka, 2000-2009**

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Abstract. Weak mediators normally need to borrow leverage from more powerful players to provide efficient mediation. This situation requires strong co-operation between the weak mediator and more powerful actors or coalitions involved in a peace process. But what if this co-operation fails? This analysis demonstrates how lack of productive co-operation with the United States negatively affected Norway's nine-year long attempt to mediate in the conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam between 2000 and 2009. More specifically, it explores how the United States views on terrorism in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 limited Norway's room for diplomatic manoeuvre. Based on a unique set of classified sources from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and interviews with key actors, the analysis demonstrates how diverging perceptions of a conflict can make mediation painfully challenging.

Early in 2000, Norway's foreign minister, Knut Vollebæk, and MP Erik Solheim – soon to become chief mediator in Sri Lanka – travelled to Colombo officially to accept a Norwegian mandate as facilitator in the conflict between the government of Sri Lanka and the secessionist Liberation

Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE]. A civil war had disrupted the state since 1983: LTTE wanted a separate Tamil state in the northern and eastern parts of the island, whilst the Sri Lankan government preferred a united Sri Lanka.¹ After several failed mediation attempts in the 1980s and 1990s, the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE had decided to pursue one more attempt at negotiations, this time with Norway as third party. The selection came from the assessment of Norway as a small, harmless, and honest broker with few interests in South Asia. For both parties to the conflict, this course implied more internal control and less disturbing external interference. Norway would mediate alone but, as for all relatively weak third parties, financial and political backing from international actors with more clout was crucial for Norwegian success. Particularly important was support from Sri Lanka's regional big brother, India, as well as from the major aid donors, the European Union [EU], Japan, and the United States.² Because Washington developed a special view on how to combat terrorism after the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the United States, the American position on the conflict in Sri Lanka became especially detrimental for the development of the peace process.

The United States had looked upon the LTTE as a terrorist organisation since the mid-1990s and supported the Sri Lankan government's counterinsurgency campaigns for several years. Yet, President George W. Bush's launch of a global war on terror in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks pushed the LTTE further into the terrorist corner together with groups like Al Qaeda and the Taliban. To Bush, terrorism was detrimental to freedom and needed to be combatted globally through diplomatic pressure, economic means, and military operations. All terrorists required heavy-handed treatment. In Sri Lanka, this approach meant that the United States would not bow to a terrorist organisation's goal to attain an independent state. The

Americans could be sympathetic to the grievances of the Tamil people and did indeed support a negotiated solution, but not a solution that included a Tamil state.

The United States was never directly involved in mediation in Sri Lanka but helped establish important parts of the framework within which the peace process played out. Although there existed different views in Washington on how to deal with Sri Lanka, Bush' general approach to terrorism dominated. This attitude affected Norway's room for manoeuvre and made it difficult for the Norwegians to implement good diplomatic craftsmanship. Together with other factors, it contributed to a brutal ending of the conflict in 2009, with a relatively reliable estimate of 30,000 casualties during its last four months.³ This analysis fully acknowledges the primacy of domestic politics. There was not a sufficient constituency amongst the Sinhalese to devolve power to the Tamils in the northeast, and there was in periods too much political turbulence in Colombo to obtain the calm required to negotiate. Furthermore, the LTTE failed to understand how the United States and other important international players looked upon it and ferociously continued its violent strategies throughout the process. Nevertheless, it is striking that the negative effects of the United States approach to the conflict has not been discussed more by the Norwegian actors involved or in the academic literature about the process.⁴

But how exactly did the Bush Administration influence Norwegian mediation? And how did the Norwegians perceive the American approach to the conflict and the peace process? To obtain a better understanding of this issue, it is necessary to go beyond analyses of domestic developments in Sri Lanka and general theories of mediator capacities and incapacities. Without disparaging excellent research already conducted on the Sri Lanka peace process, this analysis offers a different angle of enquiry. By presenting the situation from the Norwegian side, it reflects upon the limits of weak mediators in peace processes and demonstrates how the Bush

Administration spoke with a forked tongue to the Norwegians about the peace process, and how the Norwegians unsuccessfully tried to convince the Americans to engage more actively. The analysis finds basis on a unique combination of classified sources from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interviews with important Norwegian key actors – Solheim, Jon Westborg, Vidar Helgesen, Jon Hanssen-Bauer, Knut Vollebæk, Jan Petersen and Arne Fjørtoft – and a selection of the American diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks in December 2010.⁵ After applying and receiving a security clearance by the Norwegian police, the author of this article was granted privileged access to the classified sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whilst working on her PhD.⁶ Obviously, conducting research on sensitive topics like this one is often challenging. Social and political status, personal history, and political conviction are all factors that influence the accounts different actors give of the war and the peace process. Informants may have a personal or political agenda and desire to influence the narrative, and one person's truth may be another person's falsehood. Therefore, a thorough comparison of all interview information has occurred against documentary evidence and the other way around.

Like other Norwegian mediation attempts, such as in Guatemala and in the negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the Norwegians made no grand design or detailed strategy for their efforts in Sri Lanka.⁷ However, the Norwegian facilitators had several important ideas about how they were going to succeed. First, they viewed themselves as unbiased and honest brokers with no significant connexions to politics, business, or culture in Sri Lanka. Second, the Norwegian mediation team knew that Norway needed international support to succeed as mediator.⁸ Ideally, a combination of Norway's soft power, its neutrality and honesty, and traditional hard power – economic and military power that, particularly, the United States had much – would be at the Norwegian mediators' disposal.⁹ If the Norwegians needed help to

convince the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers to move in certain directions or make vital concessions, they could count on support or borrow leverage from the more powerful international supporters of the process, including the United States.

The problem with this approach was that the Norwegians and the Americans, and the Indians to whom the Americans paid much attention, had different opinions about the conflict in Sri Lanka. The Indians and the Americans had designated the LTTE as a terrorist organisation in 1992 and 1997, respectively. The Norwegian government, on the other hand, had decided not to designate the Tamil Tigers as terrorists and adhered to this decision after 2000.¹⁰ The Norwegian approach was to act as an impartial third party equally close to both the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. By building up the LTTE's legitimacy, the Norwegians hoped to make the Tigers more credible to the government, making the ground fertile for negotiations. This strategy became difficult to pursue after the 11 September attacks.

Sri Lanka had rarely topped, if ever, any American foreign-policy agenda. But the Bush Administration's war on terrorism made it impossible not to interpret Sri Lanka in light of the new terrorism-oriented security doctrine.¹¹ Jeffrey Lunstead, the United States ambassador to Sri Lanka from 2003 to 2006, points out that the attention the Bush Administration placed on Sri Lanka after the 11 September attacks was out of proportion to actual American interests.¹² The United States approach became to isolate and delegitimise the LTTE and convince American allies to do the same. This policy was directly contradictory to what the Norwegians tried to do in Sri Lanka. Eventually, the dynamic that developed between the international supporters of the process contributed to diplomatic failure and the conflict ending with government forces crushing the LTTE. It is not without reason that an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* concluded, "For all those who argue that there's no military solution for terrorism, we have two words: Sri Lanka".¹³

After the attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, American interest in Norway's international peace efforts increased. Because the Norwegian government refused to operate with official terrorist lists – and Norway lay outside the EU – there were no legal constraints that hindered Norwegian diplomats and politicians from talking to individuals, organisations, or states that the United States categorised as terrorists. This situation turned Norway into an attractive partner in peace, an ally with exclusive access to key players and information that the United States could no longer acquire as easily as before. In Sri Lanka, however, this co-operation failed to prevail.¹⁴

The United States had no strong military, economic, or political interests in Sri Lanka. The Bush Administration was primarily interested in South Asia on a regional level and concentrated on its relationship with India. When Bush came to power in January 2001, Washington and New Delhi had just started to improve Indo-American relations after years of chill due to Indian nuclear weapons testing close to the Pakistani border. India's position as the dominant regional actor, a growing economic Power, and a potential counterweight to a rising China made the Bush Administration aim for good relations with New Delhi.¹⁵

After the 11 September attacks, the relationship with India became yet more important for the United States. Al Qaeda's interest in radical Islamic groups in Southeast Asia made control of the sea-lanes between the Suez Canal and Singapore strategically important to Washington. In January 2002, the Americans even sent troops to the Philippines to assist in hostage rescue and counterinsurgency operations, something widely interpreted as the opening of Southeast Asia as a second front in the war on terrorism. This development made India an attractive partner in controlling and policing the Indian Ocean.¹⁶

As regards Sri Lanka, the Indian government was tired of the conflict. India, which had a considerable Tamil population in its southern Tamil Nadu region, had already intervened three times in the 1980s and orchestrated the 1987 Indo-Lankan Accord, but neither the talks nor the accord were successful.¹⁷ New Delhi believed that peace in Sri Lanka would be good for regional development and was painfully aware that any conflict in Sri Lanka could in a worst-case scenario spill over to Tamil Nadu. Nevertheless, as long as the security situation in Sri Lanka did not deteriorate, India would not intervene. Therefore, New Delhi had no strong objections to a new attempt at mediation between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE, although it was sceptical of Norway's chances of success.¹⁸ Indian approval was important to American support of the Norwegian initiative.¹⁹ To the United States, Indian preferences came first.

Yet, the focus on India did not imply that Sri Lanka was completely out of the picture for the Americans. Prior to the 2001 Al Qaeda attacks, American military contact with Sri Lanka had been sparse but, from the early 2000s onwards, the Bush Administration began to provide government forces with modest military aid. This assistance included grants for the purchase of American military equipment and reception of excess American defence equipment such as a Coast Guard cutter. According to the Americans, this support was not intended to encourage a military solution in Sri Lanka but, rather, to strengthen the Sri Lankan military and prevent the LTTE from returning to war. Furthermore, the Bush Administration wanted to make certain that government forces were able to fight off the Tigers if they decided to attack.²⁰ The LTTE were not Islamic terrorists and had never targeted American citizens or interests. But the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States – established in November 2002 to investigate the 11 September attacks – recommended taking on terrorists from various angles to prevent the groups from expanding.²¹

A key figure for the American policy towards Sri Lanka was Richard Armitage, the deputy secretary of state from 2001 to 2005. As a former naval officer and political advisor with responsibility for Asia, Armitage had a personal interest in South Asian affairs. Together with his superior, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Armitage emerged as a moderate in the Bush Administration. Like the rest of the Administration, the deputy secretary was concerned with finding ways to combat terrorism; however, unlike many of his colleagues, he was reluctant about the use of military means. Armitage was convinced that the conflict in Sri Lanka could be resolved through consistent international pressure. If Norway, with support from other international players, could talk sense to the LTTE and make the Tigers soften their insistence on an independent Tamil state, Armitage believed that the United States should consider removing the Tigers from the State Department's terrorist list. This made Armitage well liked by the Norwegians, and it clearly illustrates that there was genuine willingness to co-operate and that the United States was not a monolithic actor with only one notion of how to handle terrorist organisations.²²

However, Armitage's view of the conflict still diverged significantly from the Norwegian position. Although believing in dialogue and mediation, Armitage continued to see the conflict in light of Bush's counter-terrorism doctrine, referred to as "Fukuyama plus force" by historian John Lewis Gaddis.²³ The political scientist, Francis Fukuyama, argued in the immediate post-Cold War period that the relatively peaceful global spread of liberal democracy and the West's free market capitalism suggested the end of humanity's sociocultural evolution – the liberal democratic-Marxist dialectic – and had become the final expression of government.²⁴ In simple terms, "Fukuyama plus force" implied aggressive democratisation and making terrorism obsolete. For Armitage and the rest of the Bush Administration, impartial dialogue with both sides in Sri Lanka was not an option. The Americans neither would nor could give this strategy a chance.²⁵

This view constituted a point where the LTTE and Sri Lankan government actually agreed. Neither of the parties wanted strong American involvement in Sri Lanka – the LTTE thought it too much of a superpower and too sympathetic toward the Sri Lankan government, whereas Colombo was not interested in a major Power as a broker for sovereignty reasons.²⁶ The American decision to provide the Sri Lankan government with military aid, however, intensified the LTTE's perception of the Americans as biased.

The 11 September attacks did not solely affect United States policy towards Sri Lanka; so, too, the Sri Lankan election of Ranil Wickremasinghe of the liberal-conservative United National Party as prime minister in December 2001 also had importance. Wickremasinghe had campaigned on a platform that emphasised peace and economic growth and was strongly influenced by ideas about “liberal peace”, an approach to conflict resolution that implied a combination of mediation facilitated by a third party and implementation of liberal market reforms. In simple terms, favourable conditions for peacebuilding would appear by creating economic growth through market sovereignty and liberal democracy. It was music to American ears.²⁷

Sri Lanka's economy was in decline after decades of war, and Wickremasinghe's plan was to sign a quick deal with the LTTE and thereafter stabilise the economy by rebuilding the country with support from Western donors. To boost the prospects of peace, the prime minister signed various agreements with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other international donors willing to work with Sri Lanka. It amounted to a clear break with the policy and peace strategy of the preceding government led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party [SLFP] and its leader and sitting president, Chandrika Kumaratunga. The SLFP was less positive about liberal economic reforms and more sceptical towards striking a quick deal with the Tamil Tigers to please Western donors. The Bush Administration, however, thought Wickremasinghe's plan sounded promising.

The plan was perfectly compatible with Bush's counter-terrorism doctrine and the basic principles of the United States' economic system. Washington therefore reacted enthusiastically and let Armitage put full American support behind Wickremasinghe. The Americans promised to increase both their financial and political support to the peace process.²⁸

To the Norwegian facilitator team this was good news, although contrary to the Americans, the Norwegians considered Wickremasinghe's approach to peace rather right wing. Still, because the Americans so strongly supported Wickremasinghe, and American support for the Norwegian role so desired, the Norwegians decided to curb their scepticism and support Wickremasinghe's peace plans. After all, the new prime minister presented a forward-looking platform. Besides, to have the international donor community on board – particularly the United States – was absolutely necessary for the Norwegian mediators. In reality, playing along with the liberal peace plan was the only Norwegian choice, as Norway's leverage was too limited to set any agenda for the peace process. Despite the initial scepticism to Wickremasinghe's peace plans, the Norwegian Embassy in Colombo reported that the Norwegian team was content. The new prime minister was making progress.²⁹ It was "remarkable", the Norwegian deputy foreign minister, Vidar Helgesen, told the *Tamil Guardian* newspaper, "how fast things [were] moving in the right direction".³⁰

The Wickremasinghe government accepted the LTTE as its equal negotiation partner and, in February 2002, the Norwegian team managed to broker a formal and wide-ranging ceasefire agreement. It stood as a major achievement. The agreement stopped most of the ongoing violence and enabled the establishment of an international, independent monitoring mechanism, the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission [SLMM], funded and staffed by diplomats from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and Finland.³¹ The Norwegian Embassy in Colombo reported enthusiastically to Oslo that the agreement was a clear sign of a mutual, genuine wish to find a political solution

and a great success.³² After signing the ceasefire agreement, Wickremasinghe even agreed that devolution, meaning an interim Tamil administration with a relatively large degree of self-government in the north and east of the island, should inform the rest of the negotiations. Shortly after this decision, the Sri Lankan government lifted its ban on the LTTE. It was historic and led to more contact amongst the LTTE, foreign states, and multilateral organisations including the United Nations. The Norwegians were exceptionally content. The process had never moved this fast forward.³³

Nevertheless, at the turn of the year 2002-2003, the situation in Sri Lanka deteriorated. The SLMM reported on numerous ceasefire violations, primarily by the LTTE, including the recruitment of child soldiers, kidnappings, illegal taxation, and blackmail. As the Norwegian Embassy in Colombo saw it, these actions were a sign of the Tigers struggling to adjust in transitioning from a military to a civil organisation, a change that the Norwegians welcomed.³⁴ For the Americans, on the other hand, the Tamil Tigers were still a terrorist organisation and not on its way to change. Because of this approach, American legal constraints prevented the Tigers from participating in an important mid-April meeting in Washington. The meeting was preliminary to a larger forthcoming donor conference at Tokyo, and all the major international donors as well as representatives from Wickremasinghe's government were present. Because of Bush Administration restrictions, however, the LTTE could not set foot on American soil. In protest, the Tigers did a U-turn and decided to withdraw indefinitely from all talks. Its leadership directed its anger at Norway, blaming the Norwegians for allowing Washington to be the venue for the meeting when they knew that any proscribed organisation would find itself prevented from visiting the United States. The Norwegian team got onto the matter immediately by trying to convince the LTTE to stay, but the Tigers would not budge and refused to participate in the upcoming Tokyo

talks. In a press release, the Tigers claimed their confidence in the peace process severely eroded,³⁵ a development that led the process into turmoil and eventually a standstill.

Obviously, the decision to plan a donor meeting in Washington with all the central actors except the Tigers was the opposite of strong co-operation and creating ideal conditions for peace negotiations. So why did the Norwegian mediators not object to the plan? The answer resides with the necessity of American support. In the eyes of the Norwegians, it was essential to arrange the meeting in Washington to spark American interest. Moreover, the Norwegian team knew its range as a mediator was limited without financial and political support from the international community. Since the United States and the other major international donors – Japan and the EU – were unwilling to stop Wickremasinghe's liberal peace strategy, the Norwegian mediators consented to the plan. Besides, many on the Sinhalese side accused Norway of favouring the Tamils, their reasoning being that the Norwegian government did not designate the LTTE as a terrorist organisation and that there was a relatively large Tamil diaspora in Norway.³⁶ Seeing no need of adding fuel to this fire, the Norwegians did not raise any questions when the international donors claimed that the Tigers were acting irrationally and irresponsibly. On the contrary, they appear to have shared both this opinion and another that preventing the meeting implied a greater risk of losing momentum than did exclusion of the Tigers. Wickremasinghe's liberal peace plans were the only ones that existed, and without continuous financial support from the donors, these plans would fall to the ground. Therefore, the Norwegians were convinced that the decision to organise the donor meetings in Washington and Tokyo without the Tigers was correct. Accordingly, the donor conference in Tokyo met in early June without the LTTE.³⁷

The Bush Administration stuck to the perception of the LTTE as unpredictable and irresponsible, its terrorist list at no point seen as part of the problem. The American Embassy in

Colombo assured the Sri Lankan government that the United States still believed in “negotiations facilitated by the Government of Norway” and was willing to “do whatever we can to assist Sri Lanka as it tries to bring an end to this ugly war”.³⁸ Despite the obvious complications, the report from the Embassy shows no reflection upon current or potential future implications of the United States anti-terrorism policy.

The Norwegian team rightly believed that the Americans were supportive, but it did not fully understand the implications of the Bush Administration’s counter-terrorism policy. On the one hand, it is possible to argue that this conviction made the Norwegians naïve and maybe even irresponsible. They could have raised concerns about the developing dynamic with the Bush Administration. If the Norwegians, for example, had managed to convince the Americans to arrange the first donor meeting outside the United States, it would have been good diplomatic statecraft. But material from the Norwegian archives shows no sign of such an opening. On the other hand, as Norway did not really possess that many options, it could never succeed as a mediator without international support. Moreover, it was important to be on good terms with Washington, particularly after September 2001. Therefore, it is not so strange to see the Norwegian team seduced by both the prevailing international enthusiasm for liberal peace and the Washington and Tokyo donor meetings.³⁹

Yet, with the damage done and the Tigers refusing to return, the Norwegians found themselves working tirelessly to convince them to come back. The Tigers received invitations to Ireland, Denmark, and Norway to speak with experts, politicians, diplomats, and the Tamil Diaspora about the possibility of a temporary administrative power-sharing structure in the north and east of Sri Lanka.⁴⁰ Finally, after six months, the LTTE surprised the Wickremasinghe government and returned to the table with a concrete proposal for an Interim Self-Governing

Authority that would ensure an effective reconstruction of the areas devastated by war and allow the LTTE to play a central role.⁴¹ Hopes for a breakthrough increased, and Helgesen could again be positive and describe the proposal as “historical”.⁴²

The LTTE’s decision to withdraw due to the American ban and the Norwegian decision to go through with the donor conference but also to endeavour to pull the Tigers back into talks illustrates the balancing act that the peace process was for the Norwegians. On the one hand, they depended completely on international support, not least from the United States. On the other, they were convinced that they needed to demonstrate independence to remain relevant to the United States. Oslo needed to “deliver the LTTE”. As Solheim, now the Norwegian special envoy to Sri Lanka, explained, “It is when we do something they cannot do that they are interested. They didn’t need us to talk to the government of Sri Lanka, they could do that just as easily as we could. They needed us to talk to the Tigers”.⁴³

Whilst it is correct that the Bush Administration needed Norway to talk with the Tigers, the Americans also knew that the Norwegians craved their support. This understanding made it attractive for Washington to co-operate with Oslo. American diplomatic correspondence leaked through WikiLeaks reveals how the Americans looked upon Solheim as an actor they could use for their own benefit:

It is ironic that despite being a minister from the far-left Socialist Left Party, Solheim (after FM [Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr] Stoere, is the cabinet member most interested in working with us. One big reason for this is that his experience working with us on Sri Lanka has been extremely positive; another is that he realizes that he can do more as a peace broker if he has the U.S. as a closer. We believe Solheim can continue to be a good partner and that we should seize opportunities to engage him in areas where we think he can

contribute, particularly given Norway's deep aid pockets. It is clear that Solheim sees himself more as someone who will push peace initiatives than run development assistance programs.⁴⁴

It was, however, easier said than done for Solheim to make the United States play the role of "closer" in Sri Lanka. At the same time that the Bush Administration wanted Solheim and the rest of the Norwegians to succeed as mediators, it put much effort into convincing its allies to follow the American example and designate the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. This two-pronged approach puzzled the Norwegians and, in the period from late 2003 until the end of the war in May 2009, became extremely challenging.

The election of Wickremasinghe in 2001 had marked the start of a fragile and problematic co-habitation between him and Sri Lanka's president, Chandrika Kumaratunga from Sri Lanka's other major party, the SLFP.⁴⁵ Kumaratunga had followed the peace process for years before Norway's involvement and Wickremasinghe's election. Now, the president was seriously irritated because the prime minister kept her on the sideline and went through with his liberal peace plans with Norwegian consent. Kumaratunga perceived Wickremasinghe as too soft on the LTTE and did not support the idea of a temporary administrative power-sharing structure in Sri Lanka's north and east – it amounted to a huge concession for the government. It would give the LTTE undeserved legitimacy and increase the Tigers' hope for an actual Tamil state, which was not in the government's interest.⁴⁶

In fact, the Sri Lankan government, the Norwegian facilitators, and the international supporters of the process all opted for a united Sri Lanka. The ideal agreement included some kind of federal arrangement with an extent of self-determination for the Tamils. However, Kumaratunga believed that Wickremasinghe was giving away too much too soon. In her opinion, the country's

security and sovereignty were at risk, thus, whilst the prime minister was visiting his friends and supporters in the United States in November 2003, she decided to take back control. The president immediately declared a state of emergency and took over the leadership of three key ministries – defence, media, and police. She then dissolved parliament and stopped any possibility of peace talks based on the LTTE's Interim Self-Governing Authority proposal. Since Kumaratunga was constitutionally head of Sri Lanka's armed forces, there was little Wickremasinghe could do about the situation. Within hours, a cold relationship between these two major political figures dipped below freezing.⁴⁷

Ever since Wickremasinghe's election, the Norwegian facilitators had been worried that a possible power struggle could create problems for the peace process. The Norwegians had advised him to include Kumaratunga in the process, but going no further than align with the role that Norway had received as facilitator. "The peace process in Sri Lanka was not a Norwegian process", the former ambassador to Sri Lanka from 1996 to 2003, Jon Westborg, reflected.⁴⁸ Norway did not have the means to play the role of a forceful or decision-making mediator. Neither was it in Norwegian interest to do so. Besides, Wickremasinghe's willingness to work for peace seemed so genuine and all the other international donors so enthusiastic that misplaced optimism carried the Norwegians away.⁴⁹ The Norwegians managed to coax the LTTE and eventually make them return to the negotiation table, but when the constitutional crisis was a fact, the Norwegians had few means at their disposal. Norway's mandate did not include meddling in Sri Lanka's domestic politics nor did it have the leverage needed to put real pressure on Wickremasinghe and Kumaratunga to make them co-operate. Instead, the Norwegians put their efforts on hold and waited until the resolution of the crisis in April 2004.⁵⁰ However, it not mean that the process was going to run smoothly. On the contrary, the president and the prime minister continued to argue

for the rest of the talks, and an internal split in the LTTE leadership further complicated the situation.⁵¹ In addition, in December 2004, an enormous tsunami struck Sri Lanka that caused 35,000 deaths and massive damage in northern and southern coastal areas. More than ever before, the Norwegians needed support from more powerful international actors.⁵²

In the aftermath of the tsunami, the first task for the Norwegian mediators was to make the parties agree on the management of post-catastrophe reconstruction. It proved difficult, so the Norwegians turned to the United States for help. The assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asian Affairs, Christina Rocca, offered assurances that the United States was “100 percent supportive of Norway’s role”.⁵³ But this was not enough for Oslo. First, the Norwegians wanted the United States to urge India to commit further to the process. India was the one player that potentially could move the parties back to the negotiating table by using its regional heavyweight status. Second, the Norwegians wanted the Americans directly to encourage the Sri Lankan parties to work together to fashion a joint mechanism for post-tsunami aid.⁵⁴

However, the Americans were not on the same page as the Norwegians. Whilst Washington claimed to support Norwegian efforts verbally and financially, its anti-terrorist doctrine animated American policy, which posited that the best strategy involved isolating, delegitimising, and forcing the Tigers into compromises. The Americans actually worked actively to “crack down on Tiger fundraising and weapons procurement”.⁵⁵ This policy was a stark contrast to the Norwegian strategy of acquainting the Tigers with international variations and examples of peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution.⁵⁶ The Norwegians took great pride in their identity as all-forgiving Scandinavians who talked to everyone, including terrorists. Solheim explained, “We talked to the Taliban, the ETA [*Euskadi Ta Askatasun*, the Basque separatist group], the Tamil Tigers, the Philippine communists, the Nepalese Maoists . . . and probably also some that I have

forgotten. We were absolutely in the world elite when it came to this”.⁵⁷ Here lay the ultimate expression of Norway’s *raison d’être* as an international player.

Although the Norwegians did not share the American view on how to deal with terrorists, they realised that the focus on terrorism kept the American interest in Sri Lanka at a certain level. Yet, when the second Bush Administration took office in January 2005, American interest decreased. New people took office, and Armitage announced his resignation as Powell resigned as secretary of state. Robert Zoellick, who had a strong engagement for the peace process in Darfur and co-operated with Norway on Sudan, succeeded him. However, Zoellick lacked equal engagement in Sudan and Sri Lanka and did not share Armitage’s personal interest in South Asia.⁵⁸ The Bush Administration, furthermore, had begun nuclear negotiations with India and was hoping for an agreement ready for signature in the near future. The Americans did not want to spoil a potential agreement by meddling too much in India’s regional domain or by pushing India on the Sri Lanka matter.⁵⁹ Together, this contributed to less interest from the United States.

In June 2005, the parties reached a Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure after long and heated discussions with Norway as a go-between.⁶⁰ This achievement gave hope in a situation of long-term standstill and increasing violence. Maybe the Norwegians were capable of mediating without support from international heavyweights. Then, in August 2005, an assumed LTTE sniper killed the Sri Lankan foreign minister, Lakshman Kadirgamar, after a morning swim at his private Colombo residence. The Norwegians despaired: had not the military wing of the LTTE understood how the world had changed after the 11 September terrorist attacks? Did they not realise the implications that an assassination would have for them and that the outside world would now have an even better reason for looking at them as a terrorist organisation? Or could the Tigers simply did not care about these things?⁶¹ After the assassination, criticism of the Norwegian

mediators mounted. Sinhalese nationalists accused Norway bias towards the LTTE, and parts of the Sri Lankan media portrayed Norway almost as a LTTE proxy.⁶² The Norwegians were painfully aware that the LTTE needed the goodwill of international society to gain legitimacy and block Sinhalese criticism. If the LTTE had no legitimacy as the “sole” representative of the Tamil people, it would be hard to continue negotiations. With increased tension between the Tigers and the government, the process moved into a phase of comfortable stalemate.⁶³

By January 2006, Sri Lanka had a new president. The election of the hardliner, Mahinda Rajapaksa, from the SLFP had an enormous impact on the developments in Sri Lanka. Rajapaksa had a more rigid attitude toward the LTTE than his predecessors and categorically rejected federalism as a solution. Neither was liberal peace anything he would accept. Rajapaksa would rather collaborate with China, Pakistan, Russia, and eventually India rather than the West.⁶⁴ Again, the Norwegians realised that they needed help from the international community, especially India and the United States, to put pressure on the new president if peace should have a chance.⁶⁵

Norway’s new special envoy, Jon Hanssen-Bauer, embarked on a series of intense diplomatic efforts to strengthen international support for the process and assist Norway in pulling the parties back to the negotiation table. Still, understandings of the conflict and the LTTE diverged too much between the key international players for this strategy to be effective. Whilst the peace process remained in suspended animation in Sri Lanka, in 2005, the EU had decided to follow the American example and impose a travel ban, along with freezing funds, respecting LTTE members. The assassination of Kadirgamar triggered this decision, whose aim was to put pressure on the Tigers and make them understand that they had to end the war. In May 2006, following extended pressure from the Sri Lankan government, the EU followed with a designation of the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. The United States, India, Canada, and the EU had now proscribed the

Tigers.⁶⁶ Norway stood alone as the only actor that did not classify the LTTE as a terrorist organisation, a situation that made their mediators' working conditions extremely demanding since they feared the ban would make the Tigers less willing to negotiate.⁶⁷

Another negative consequence of the EU ban compelled its members, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, to withdraw their observers from the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission since the LTTE objected to biased monitors. With the mission's strength drastically reduced, Norway and Iceland remained alone to run the mission with a monitoring staff of only 20 to 30 personnel. The other co-chairs – Japan, the EU, and the United States – continued to monitor the process from the side lines, but no concrete international action occurred to restore balance between the parties.⁶⁸ Japan instead suggested the need to “modify the role of Norway as facilitator” so that it would be “neutral but not impartial”, implying a wish for the Norwegians to dissociate themselves clearly from the LTTE.⁶⁹

To what degree was the EU's decision to ban the LTTE independent? A common explanation is that the Europeans succumbed to pressure from the Sri Lankan government amid the killings and violence in the war zones of the north and east of the island. However, it is certain that deep divisions existed amongst the EU member-states. According to American diplomatic cables, some European Powers, such as France and Italy, “objected to the listing on procedural grounds, because they thought they were being pushed into it by the US”, whereas the Nordic countries objected “on substantive grounds”.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the EU's external affairs commissioner, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and her French colleague, Herve Jouanjean, deputy director-general for external relations in charge of Asia and Latin America, “had pushed for a lesser action than listing – some type of targeted sanctions – but lost”.⁷¹ And shortly before the EU announced its designation, the Dutch ambassador to Sri Lanka asked that a planned co-chairs'

statement on the situation in Sri Lanka not include the word “terrorism” due to internal Union divisions. Instead, the Dutch suggested a statement that mentioned the failings of both the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE. For the Americans, this request came as a surprise and Lunstead strongly refuted it. In the final joint statement, the co-chairs therefore urged the LTTE to “renounce terrorism and violence”.⁷² Again, as with the donor meeting in Washington, the international supporters had made a decision that ended up undermining the peace process. This time, however, the Norwegian mediators voiced their concern and warned that the decision could counter their mediation efforts. But their argument was not heard.⁷³

When the EU announced its designation, Rocca said the ban reflected the international community’s strongest message that acts of terrorism by the LTTE would not be tolerated.⁷⁴ The American reaction to both the ban and the preceding discussions indicate that the Washington preferred that the Europeans proscribe the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. Most likely, whilst this attitude had an impact on the European decision, the effect of the EU ban was not positive. Sri Lanka was already on a downward spiral and on the brink of another war; the ban almost pushed it over the edge.⁷⁵ Only a month after the EU designation, the American Embassy at Colombo sent a report to Washington entitled “Norwegians running out of steam”, stating that the “Norwegians [are] more depressed than we have ever seen them”.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the Americans took no concrete action to assist in getting the process back on track. On the contrary, American interest in Sri Lanka decreased further as violence and killings escalated, so that there occurred gradual reductions in both military and humanitarian aid.⁷⁷

This development concerned Hanssen-Bauer. In a last try for peace, he turned to the United States, the EU, and Japan, which since the Tokyo donor conference had constituted the so-called co-chairs to coordinate aid efforts to the process. Hanssen-Bauer informed the co-chairs that he

was convinced that Norway was too weak to influence the parties to behave in what he called a “fairly acceptable” way, especially if full-scale war broke out.⁷⁸ A second problem for Norway was that the LTTE leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, would only talk to Solheim and not Hanssen-Bauer. The new special envoy’s contact with the LTTE’s military leadership was therefore limited. “The thin relation with the Tigers was a main weakness”, he explained. “My contact with them in Kilinochchi was only sporadic”.⁷⁹ This state of affairs made the Norwegian mediators suffer from an information deficit about the Tigers’ assessments of the situation.⁸⁰

The co-chairs understood Hanssen-Bauer’s concerns and began to meet regularly to discuss the emerging disaster and urge the parties to return to negotiations. Two times the co-chairs managed to make representatives from the LTTE and Sri Lankan government meet in Geneva, but to no avail. Violence and killings increased in the northern and eastern parts of the island, and the Rajapaksa government decided to go for a “twin track approach”. This approach implied keeping the door to talks with the LTTE open, at least rhetorically, whilst reserving the right to launch military strikes.⁸¹

In December 2006, Solheim, now the Norwegian minister of development, informed the co-chairs that a peace process no longer existed for Norway’s mediation. After this admission, neither Solheim nor Hanssen-Bauer visited Sri Lanka again.⁸² Whilst the Norwegian Embassy remained an active participant in co-chair meetings in Colombo and Hanssen-Bauer kept his formal position as special envoy and continued to lobby the international community, Norway was no longer present as a mediator in Sri Lanka. Nonetheless, Norway urged India and the United States to step up the pressure, this time to stop what was becoming a full-scale war. Again, the response from New Delhi and Washington was limited.⁸³ Finally, Norway’s new ambassador at Colombo, Tore Hattrem, articulated what the Norwegians had not really acknowledged: New

Delhi would not pressure Rajapaksa to stop his military offensive.⁸⁴ India was tired of the conflict in Sri Lanka and silently consented to the war. This attitude probably influenced the Bush Administration. If regional big brother India did not oppose a military solution or asked the international community for help to stop it, the United States would not intervene.

During 2007 and 2008, Sri Lankan government forces were surprisingly successful in their offensives, largely because of Indian intelligence and army support, in addition to Pakistani pilot and air force training.⁸⁵ Rajapaksa kept saying that he was willing to negotiate if the opportunity arose; but in January 2008, the Sri Lankan government unanimously and officially withdrew from the ceasefire agreement with the LTTE. During 2008, government forces pushed the Tigers further north and isolated them into a shrinking slice of the northeastern jungle. Thousands of internally displaced persons, primarily Tamils, found themselves trapped behind rebel lines, euphemistically called no-fire zones. The LTTE would not let them leave the zones, and the government would not stop bombing them. The Tigers fired from inside the zones, catching the civilians in a crossfire with nowhere to flee. With no humanitarian organisations allowed access to the critical areas, the humanitarian catastrophe was a fact.

On 17 May 2009, the news of the Rajapaksa government's final offensive against the LTTE reached Oslo. It was Norway's Constitution Day, and Solheim was out in the streets celebrating with his children. Whilst he waved at his little son in the public parade with one hand, he held a cell phone in the other. Solheim was talking to the Embassy at Colombo that had received a last cry for help from the head of the LTTE's peace secretariat, led by Seevaratnam Puleedevan. Puleedevan and some other LTTE leaders still alive wanted help to surrender without being killed. The Norwegians could not help. Their only advice for the Tigers was to come out of the jungle,

raise a white flag, and hope for the best. It did not work. By 18 May, all the LTTE leaders were dead.⁸⁶ So were around 30,000 civilians.⁸⁷

There is undoubtedly a danger to exaggerate the role of external actors when explaining the failure of the peace process in Sri Lanka. This analysis fully recognises the complexity of domestic politics and their negative affect on the process at key moments. At the same time, the international actors involved share the responsibility for the tragic ending of the war. The international players failed to understand Rajapaksa's political strategy and the LTTE's actual military strength⁸⁸ Furthermore, both the massive difference between the Bush Administration's counter-terrorism-oriented approach that appeared after 11 September 2001 and the Norwegian talk-to-everyone attitude had a clearly adverse impact on Norway's ability to mediate successfully. Diverging views on how to deal with terrorism, in general, and the LTTE, in particular, affected the Norwegian facilitators' ability to convince the international players to elaborate and implement sorely needed streamlined efforts.

On several occasions, the Norwegians urged the Americans to commit more to Sri Lanka and urge regional big brother India to do the same.⁸⁹ Whilst American rhetoric implied that the United States supported Norwegian efforts "one hundred percent", the policy of the Bush Administration spoke a different language. The Norwegians did not fully understand how far away from the Norwegian approach the Americans actually were. The United States' main aim was to ensure that the LTTE did not achieve its goals by means of it argued was terrorism. If this included going against the official Norwegian impartiality approach by providing one-sided military aid and eventually persuade important allies such as the EU to delegitimise the LTTE by proscribing it a terrorist organisation, then so be it. For the Americans, this approach embodied the best way to stop the war in Sri Lanka. It did not matter that this policy left Norway in a vulnerable position

with little room for manoeuvre. The experience from Sri Lanka clearly illustrates that weak third parties like Norway depend on support from players with possession of credible hard power to succeed as mediators. Verbal backing and distorted assurances are not enough. Ideally, therefore, whether this support is present should be clear at a much earlier stage than was the case in the Sri Lanka process.

Notes

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¹ Erik Solheim, *Politikk er å ville* (Oslo, 2013), 122-23; author interview with Knut Vollebæk, 10 January 2015.

² Kadrigamar to Godal, 12 February 1996, MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, Oslo] 307.30/442, (1996/01182), 19-36; Tokyo to Oslo, 30 April 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-44); Kristian Stokke and Anne Kirsti Ryntveit, "The Struggle for Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka", *Growth and Change*, 31/2(2000), 285-304; Jeffrey Lunstead, *The United States' Role in Sri Lanka's Peace Process 2002-2006* (Colombo, 2007), 23.

³ There has been uncertainty about the number of casualties during the last months of the war given the closing of the war-zone for non-governmental organisations, the press, and international observers. Accordingly, no one knows exactly the number of people trapped in the no-fire zones; but the International Crisis Group's estimate is amongst the most plausible, although it admits that

30,000 is a conservative estimate. See International Crisis Group, *War Crimes in Sri Lanka, Asia Report 191* (Brussels, 2010).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See, for example, memorandum on Tokyo Co-Chairs pre-meetings, 25 May 2006, WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <http://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/06COLOMBO872.html>; Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 5-6, 14.

⁶ Ada Nissen, "The Peace Architects. Norwegian Peace Diplomacy Since 1989" (PhD Dissertation, University of Oslo, 2015).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Jonathan Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian Peace Efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997-2009* (Oslo, 2011), 14; Øyvind Fuglerud and Shahul Hasbullah, *Peace Negotiations and Social Processes in Sri Lanka. Report to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs* (Oslo, 2007), 51; author interviews with Jon Westborg, 13 March 2015 and 16 March 2015; Mona Fixdal, ed., *Ways out of War* (NY, 2012), 98; Joseph S. Nye, "Power and Foreign Policy", *Journal of Political Power*, 4/1(2011), 20.

⁹ See for example Nye, "Power and Foreign Policy", 20.

¹⁰ "Meeting with G.L. Peiris. Minutes from talks in Sri Lanka January 1997", 18 February 1997, MFA 302.77 (1997/02601), 7; Oslo to Gaza, 27 November 1999, MFA 302.77 (1999/00768) 15; M.R. Narayan Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished* (New Delhi, 2010), xxix.

¹¹ Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 6, 17-18; United States Department of State, *2007 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Sri Lanka*: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100620.htm>.

¹² Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 11.

¹³ “Defeating terrorists”, *Wall Street Journal* (16 January 2009).

¹⁴ Kristine Höglund and Isak Svensson, “Mediating between tigers and lions: Norwegian peace diplomacy in Sri Lanka’s civil war”, *Contemporary South Asia*, 17/2(2009), 176.

¹⁵ William C. Potter, “India and the New Look of U.S. Nonproliferation Policy”, *Nonproliferation Review*, 12/2(2005), 343-44; Ashton B. Carter, “America’s New Strategic Partner?”, *Foreign Affairs*, 85/4(2006), 33-35; New Delhi to Oslo, 9 March 2005, MFA 307.3 (2005/010004-2).

¹⁶ John Gershman”, “Is Southeast Asia the Second Front?”, *Foreign Affairs*, 81/4(2002), 60-74; Amitav Acharya and Arabinda Acharya, “The Myth of the Second Front: Localizing the ‘War on Terror’ in Southeast Asia”, *Washington Quarterly*, 30/4(2007), 76.

¹⁷ The Tamil claim for independence in Sri Lanka made India fear that the Indian Tamils in its southernmost state, Tamil Nadu, would seek independence as well. The Tamils in Tamil Nadu supported the Sri Lankan Tamils in their struggle and, during the 1980s, Tamil grievances grew in both Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu. As the situation deteriorated after the outbreak of civil war in Sri Lanka in 1983, India experienced a flood of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka to Tamil Nadu. In 1987, India intervened as mediator. The Indo-Lankan Accord created a Provincial Council system and merged the northern and eastern part of Sri Lanka into an area that corresponded to the aspired Tamil Eelam. However, whilst India had negotiated on behalf of the Tamils, in the end, the LTTE refused to disarm. See for example Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 25-26; Sonia Bouffard and David Carment, “The Sri Lanka Peace Process. A Critical Review”, *Journal of South Asian Development*, 1/2(2006), 158-63.

¹⁸ Solheim, *Politikk er å ville*, 122-23; author interview with Knut Vollebæk, 10 January 2015.

¹⁹ Potter, “India and the New Look”, 343-44; Carter, “America’s New Strategic Partner?”, 33-35; New Delhi to Oslo, 9 March 2005, MFA 307.3 (2005/010004-2).

²⁰ Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 6, 17-18; State Department, *2007 Country Report*.

²¹ Höglund and Svensson, "Mediating between tigers and lions", 176; 9/11 Commission, "National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States", *The 9/11 Commission Report* (NY, 2004), 365-83

²² Mark Salter, *To End a Civil War: Norway's Peace Engagement in Sri Lanka* (London, 2015), 98.

²³ John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (Cambridge, MA, London, 2004), 90.

²⁴ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (NY, Toronto, 1992).

²⁵ Salter, *To End a Civil War*, 98; Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine", *Political Science Quarterly*, 118/3(2003), 365-88; Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 6, 17-18; State Department, *2007 Country Report*.

²⁶ "Meeting with G.L. Peiris. Minutes from talks in Sri Lanka January 1997", 18 February 1997, MFA 302. 77 (1997/02601, 1-15, 7); Oslo to Gaza, 27 November 1999, MFA 302. 77 (1999/00768) 1-15; Swamy, *Tiger Vanquished*, xxix

²⁷ Neil Devotta, "Sri Lanka's Political Decay: Analysing the October 2000 and December 2001 Parliamentary Elections", *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 41/2(2003), 131-39; Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 34-35; memorandum, 31 December 2001, MFA 307.3 (2001/00612-40); Oslo to Washington, 13 June 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-52).

²⁸ United States Embassy [Colombo], "GSL minister cautiously optimistic on direction of peace process based on meeting with Tiger spokesman", 1 August 2002, WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <https://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/02COLOMBO1422.html>; Sunil Bastian, *The Politics of Foreign Aid in Sri Lanka: Promoting and Supporting Peace* (Colombo, 2007); R. Venugopal,

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²⁹ Colombo to Oslo, 30 April 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-40); Oslo to Washington, 13 June 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-52); J. Goodhand, J. Spencer, and B. Korf, eds., *Conflict and Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka: Caught in the Peace Trap?* (London and New York, 2011), 132-49; Kristian Stokke and Jayadeva Uyangoda, eds., *Liberal Peace in Question: Politics of State and Market Reform in Sri Lanka* (London, 2011).

³⁰ Helgesen to *Tamil Guardian*, quoted in Frode Liland and Kristin Alsaker Kjerland, *På bred front* (Bergen, 2003), 104.

³¹ International Crisis Group, *Sri Lanka: The Failure of the Peace Process*, Asia Report No. 124 (2006), 5-6; Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 36-37.

³² Colombo to Oslo, 25 February 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-21).

³³ Colombo to Oslo, 6 August 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00134-66); Colombo to Oslo, 14 August 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00134-70).

³⁴ Colombo to Oslo, 31 January 2003. MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-14).

³⁵ LTTE Press Release, 21 April 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-35-51); Tokyo to Oslo, 30 April 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-44); United States Embassy [Colombo], “Tigers announce they are suspending peace talks; GSL, most observers see move as tactical”, 22 April 2003, diplomatic cables WikiLeaks: <https://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/03COLOMBO688.html>; Kristine Höglund and Isak Svensson, “Should I Stay or Should I Go? Termination as a Tactic and Norwegian Mediation in Sri Lanka”, *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, 4/1(2011), 19-20.

³⁶ Minutes from meeting between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and All Parties Solidarity Group, 1 September 1995, MFA 302. 77/442, (1995/05350), 1; Colombo to Oslo, 5 June 1996, MFA 307.30/442 (1996/01182), 37-54; Society for Peace, Unity and Human Rights in Sri Lanka to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 April 1996, MFA 307.30/442 (1996/01182), 37-54.

³⁷ Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 23; Tokyo to Oslo, 30 April, 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-44); LTTE Press, 21 April 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-35-51); Höglund and Svensson, "Should I Stay or Should I Go?", 19-20.

³⁸ US Embassy [Colombo], "Tigers announce they are suspending peace talks; GSL, most observers see move as tactical", 22 April 2004 WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <https://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/03COLOMBO688.html>.

³⁹ See for example, Tokyo to Oslo, 30 April 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-44); Colombo to Oslo, 30 April 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-40); Oslo to Washington, 13 June 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-52).

⁴⁰ Colombo to Oslo, 9 October 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-102); Colombo to Oslo, 31 October 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-120); Anton Balasingham, *War and Peace: Armed Struggle and Peace Efforts of Liberation Tigers* (Mitcham, 2004), 502-14.

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⁴⁴ United States Embassy [Oslo], "Ambassadors Call on Development Minister Erik Solheim", 23 January 2006, WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <http://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/06OSLO11111.html>.

⁴⁵ Devotta, “Sri Lanka’s Political Decay”, 131-39; Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 34-35; memorandum, 31 December 2001, MFA 307.3 (2001/00612-40); Oslo to Washington, 13 June 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-52).

⁴⁶ Colombo to Oslo, 5 November 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-128); Höglund and Svensson, “Should I Stay or Should I Go?”, 20.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Author interviews with Jon Westborg, 13 March 2015 and 16 March 2015.

⁴⁹ Memorandum, 31 December 2001, MFA 307.3 (2001/00612-40); Oslo to Washington, 13 June 2002, MFA 307.3 (2002/00136-52).

⁵⁰ Colombo to Oslo, 14 November 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-150); “Statement made by Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen”, 14 November 2003, MFA 307.3 (2003/00027-149).

⁵¹ Minutes of meeting with Kumaratunga, 22 March 2004, MFA 307.3 (2004/00007-119); Höglund and Svensson, “Should I Stay or Should I Go?”, 22.

⁵² Colombo to Oslo, 23 February 2005, MFA 307.3 (2005-00092-17).

⁵³ Minutes of meeting with Rocca, 23 February 2004, MFA 307.3 (2005/00092-16).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ “Memo on Tokyo Co-Chairs pre-meetings”, 25 May 2006. WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <http://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/06COLOMBO872.html> (March 6 2017); Lunstead, *United States’ Role*, 5-6, 14.

⁵⁶ See for example, “Memo on Tokyo Co-Chairs pre-meetings”, 25 May 2006. WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <http://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/06COLOMBO872.html>; Lunstead, *United States’ Role*, 5-6, 14.

⁵⁷ Author interview with Erik Solheim, 23 September 2014.

⁵⁸ Lunstead, *United States' Role*, 33.

⁵⁹ New Delhi to Oslo, 9 March 2005, MFA 307.3 (2005/010004-2); Potter, "India and the New Look", 343-44; Carter, "America's New Strategic Partner?", 33-35.

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⁶⁷ Memorandum, 26 August 2005, MFA 307.3 (2005/010004-22).

⁶⁸ Colombo to Oslo, 17 August 2006, MFA 307.3 (2006/00083-155).

⁶⁹ Memorandum on Tokyo Co-Chairs pre-meetings, 25 May 2006: WikiLeaks diplomatic cables: <http://aebr.home.xs4all.nl/wl/aftenposten/06COLOMBO872.html>.

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⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² “Co-chairs issue the same old warnings after three years of failure in Sri Lanka”, *Asian Tribune* (31 May 2006).

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⁷⁷ Lunstead, *United States’ Role*, 33; Co-Chairs Press Release, 3 February 2009, MFA 307.3 (2009/00028-8).

⁷⁸ Author interview with Jon Hanssen-Bauer, 28 November 2014.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 62.

⁸¹ Minutes, 4 January 2006, MFA 307.3 (2006/00083-4); Colombo to Oslo, 5 October 2006, MFA 307.3 (2006/00109-61).

⁸² “Minutes of telephone meeting between the Co-chairs”, 14 December 2006, MFA 307.3 (2006/00083-234); author interview with Jon Hanssen-Bauer, 28 November 2014..

⁸³ Author interview with Jon Hanssen-Bauer, 28 November 2014; Colombo to Oslo, 23 June 2008, MFA 307.3 (2008/00128-43).

⁸⁴ Colombo to Oslo, 23 June 23 2008, MFA 307.3 (2008/00128-43).

⁸⁵ Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 63; Swamy, *Tiger Vanquished*, 77-79; “Sri Lanka’s Scars Trace Lines of War Without End”, *NY Times* (15 June 2007); author interview with Erik Solheim, 23 September 2014; author interview with Jon Hanssen-Bauer, 28 November 2014.

⁸⁶ Colombo to Oslo, 15 May 2009, MFA 307.3 (2009/00028-26); memorandum, 15 December 2009, MFA 307.3 (2009/00107-48).

⁸⁷ See Note 3.

⁸⁸ Uyangoda, “Sri Lanka After”, 12-13; Goodhand et al., *Pawns of Peace*, 77-80.

⁸⁹ “Minutes of meeting between Solheim and Indian Foreign Secretary/Advisor Menon”, 9 January 2007, MFA 303.3 (2007/00140-4); “Minutes of telephone conference between Jonas Gahr Støre and EU commissioner Benita Ferrero Waldner”, 20 December 2006, MFA 303.3 (2007/00140-7); memorandum, 9 May 2007, MFA 307.3 (2007/00635-49); Colombo to Oslo, 9 October 2007, MFA 307.3 (2007/00635-94).