

# **Between Resolution and Reality:**

**A critical assessment of the impact of Resolution 1325 in  
the aftermath of the Sri Lankan Civil War between 2009  
and 2015.**

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# Abstract

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United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) is seen as a landmark resolution in reaffirming the importance of women's participation in all efforts taken to prevent war and to build peace. In recent years, there has been growing attention amongst scholars towards the implementation of this resolution and its progress. Looking at the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war as a case study, this research answers the question: *'How has the implementation of UNSCR 1325 impacted peacebuilding in Sri Lanka from the end of the civil war in 2009 until 2015?'* The four pillars initiated to track the implementation of resolution 1325, being participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery, will be used to structure the analysis of the interventions, carried out by the implementors of the resolution in Sri Lanka, in the years following the war.

The aim of this research is to demonstrate that the UN Security Council, the Sri Lankan government and Sri Lankan based civil society organisations fell short in their implementation of UNSCR 1325. Regarding the pillar of participation, underrepresentation of women at decision-making levels had been persistent and efforts taken to challenge this issue have been in vain. Furthermore, this research will demonstrate that the pillars of protection and relief and recovery are highly dependent on the pillar of prevention due to the broad human security approach, which emphasizes the multidimensionality of security and therefore supports comprehensive and preventive responses to insecurities. It is proved, however, that the Sri Lankan government, police department and Sri Lankan based civil society organisations hardly applied such a comprehensive approach to deal with issues concerning the interconnected pillars.

On the basis of research on primary sources, and supported by secondary sources, this thesis concludes that the efforts taken by the implementors of UNSCR 1325 were insufficient or too narrowly focused, which prevented from inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding in Sri Lanka after the civil war. The interventions by the UN Security Council and the Sri Lankan government, specifically, proved to be insufficient in implementing UNSCR 1325. Civil society organisations were more thorough in their implementation but were often restricted by lack of control at state level. This outcome recommends further research to the interpretation of UNSCR 1325 by the implementors in order to establish what caused the differing strategies to resolve issues in support of the resolution.

# Introduction

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## Topic and Research Question

‘The twenty-first century must be the century of women’s equality.’<sup>1</sup> A compelling end remark made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) in February of last year at The New School in New York. In his lecture on the importance of gender equality, Secretary-General António Guterres pointed out five different areas in which the presence of women in power could transform the world. The first and foremost of these five areas being conflict and violence.<sup>2</sup>

In the year 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution emphasizing the important role of women in conflict and peace. This resolution led to the initiation of the agenda on Women, Peace and Security in order for countries to promote gender equality at different levels of post-war reconstruction. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), in short, reaffirms the important role of women in all efforts taken for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, including peace negotiations, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Additionally, it acknowledges the importance of incorporating gender perspectives, known as gender mainstreaming, in UN peace and security efforts and urges all parties in conflict to protect women and girls from gender-based violence.<sup>3</sup>

The main implementors to the WPS agenda are the UN, the UN Security Council, UN Member States and civil society organisations. In order for these actors to implement UNSCR 1325, four pillars were introduced to improve the tracking of the implementation. The four pillars, being participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery, are taken up in the annual WPS reports by the UN Secretary-General since their introduction in 2010.

UNSC Resolution 1325 was a landmark effort in acknowledging the importance of the participation of women in conflict and peace as it enlarges the field in which gender equality is being pursued. In recent years, there has been a growing attention towards the implementation

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Department of Public Information, *Twenty-first Century Must Be Century of Women’s Equality, Secretary-General Says in Remarks at The New School*. SG/SM/19986, 22 February 2020, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm19986.doc.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> The other four areas, as discussed by Secretary-General António Guterres are: climate crisis, building inclusive economies, digital divide and political representation.

<sup>3</sup> Security Council resolution 1325, *Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/1325 (2000), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>.

of this resolution. According to Olsson and Gizelis in their book *Gender, Peace and Security* the debate amongst the international community arrived at two fundamental questions: ‘What is the progress of the implementation of UNSCR 1325? And, in direct relation to this, what are the consequences of trying to realize the resolution in more daily practice?’<sup>4</sup>

This thesis seeks to contribute to answering these questions by focussing on the implementation of the resolution in Sri-Lanka. A critical assessment of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war will be provided by posing the question: ‘*How has the implementation of UNSCR 1325 impacted peacebuilding in Sri Lanka from the end of the civil war in 2009 until 2015?*’

The four pillars create an accessible framework for the implementors of UNSCR 1325 to realize the aims of the WPS agenda. Despite this, women’s participation at decision-making levels, the protection of women and girls from gender-based and sexual violence and the incorporation of gender perspectives in peace and security efforts still remain a topic of high importance within the UN and the international community, as pointed out by the Secretary-General in New York.<sup>5</sup> The aim of this thesis is to prove that in the aftermath of the civil war in Sri Lanka, the impact of the implementation of resolution 1325 was insignificant. There was persistent underrepresentation of women at decision-making positions at all levels in society and the physical insecurity of women and girls lingered on.<sup>6</sup> This thesis will research the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on the basis of the four pillars to demonstrate the shortcomings of the parties involved in the efforts taken in support of the resolution.

## **Methodology and Thesis Structure**

Extensive research on primary sources will establish which actors have fallen short in their efforts to implement UNSCR 1325 in Sri Lanka, and what consequences this had for the country. However, in order to fully understand what UNSCR 1325 entails, and why Sri Lanka was in need of its implementation, the first chapter of this thesis will start by elaborating on these matters. Among others the volume edited by Olsson and Gizelis and a book by Sahla Arousi called *Women, Peace and Security* will be used to provide a general introduction to the

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<sup>4</sup> Louise Olsson and Theodora- Ismene Gizelis, *Gender, Peace and Security* (London 2015) 2.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, Department of Public Information, *Twenty-first Century Must Be Century of Women’s Equality, Secretary-General Says in Remarks at The New School*. SG/SM/19986, 22 February 2020, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm19986.doc.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Porter and Anuradha Mundkur, *Peace and Security: Implication for Women* (Brisbane 2012) 233.

history and content of the resolution. As this chapter also briefly discusses the course and aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war, and thereby elaborating specifically on the role of women in this ethnic conflict, the titles *Sri Lanka: The Impact of Militarization on Women* by Ambika Satkunanathan, and *Women, Armed Conflict and Peacemaking in Sri Lanka: Toward a Political Economy Perspective* by Asoka Bandarage will be used. This chapter will help to understand the impact that the conflict had on Sri Lankan women, as both offenders and defenders of peace, and the position that they held in society in the aftermath of the civil war.

Chapter Two will illustrate the initiatives taken to implement the pillar of participation in the years following the war. As the participation of women in peace processes is widely believed to lie at the basis of sustainable peace, and because of the significant role that women played in society after the war, this pillar is discussed prior to the other pillars.<sup>7</sup> This chapter will first elaborate on the state of women's participation after the civil war and will propose two challenges to the inclusion of women at decision-making levels, as taken up in the Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security drafted by Gender Action for Peace and Security UK (GAPS). This report by GAPS was initiated in order to identify achievements and challenges facing the WPS agenda in Sri Lanka in 2009.<sup>8</sup> Second, the chapter will demonstrate what efforts the UN Security Council, as well as state and non-state actors in Sri Lanka, have taken to pursue the resolution of the proposed challenges. The Security Council Report's Cross-Cutting Report on WPS will show to what extent the Security Council has addressed the issue in country-specific situations.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, news articles found in the archives of PeaceWomen, the department of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) that tracks the implementation of the WPS agenda, will strengthen the argumentation by showing more local interventions regarding women's participation. Lastly, the UN Women Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, which serves as a review of the implementation of the resolution after fifteen years of its existence, will be used to establish the

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<sup>7</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325* (12 October 2015) [https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy\\_EN\\_Web.pdf](https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf), 41.

<sup>8</sup> Gender Action for Peace and Security UK, *Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security* (March 2009) [https://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/WPS\\_ChecklistWPS\\_GAPS\\_2009.pdf](https://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/WPS_ChecklistWPS_GAPS_2009.pdf), 120.

<sup>9</sup> Security Council Report, *Cross-Cutting Report on Women, Peace and Security* (1 October 2010) <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/XCutting%20WPS%202010.pdf>, 1.

state of women's participation around 2015, nearly five years after the end of the Sri Lankan civil war.<sup>10</sup>

Chapter Three will demonstrate how the pillars of protection, prevention and relief and recovery were implemented in Sri Lanka between 2009 and 2015. Building on the knowledge of Porter and Mundkur, authors of the book *Peace and Security: Implications for Women*, Chapter Three will first analyze the interrelation between the pillar of protection, prevention and relief and recovery, in light of the human security approach, which will be further explained in this chapter. Then, supported by the primary sources used in Chapter Two, and a report by the World Health Organization titled Country Profile on Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka, this research will demonstrate what interventions were carried out by the Sri Lankan state and civil society organizations to protect and empower women.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, The Global Gender Gap Report 2015 by the World Economic Forum will establish the progress in the fields of the three pillars.<sup>12</sup> The aim of this chapter is to analyze the interventions and demonstrate the importance of a human security approach within the implementation of the pillars by means of comparing 'on the ground' examples of initiatives by the state and by a nongovernmental organization.

## Relevance

It is important to note that UNSCR 1325 is not drafted to make conflict safer for women, it should prevent war from happening at all.<sup>13</sup> The prevention of conflict lies at the basis of guaranteeing women's security.<sup>14</sup> The research presented in this thesis is therefore of social relevance as it exposes the shortcomings by the implementors of UNSCR 1325. As Olsson and Gizelis argue, 'Peace should not be presumed to automatically have the same "quality" for women as it does for men.'<sup>15</sup> Throughout this thesis, the importance of gender perspectives in times of conflict and peace is acknowledged. From a deeper social point of view, this thesis shows that the mere existence of resolutions such as resolution 1325, does not necessarily mean

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<sup>10</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 40.

<sup>11</sup> World Health Organization, Country Office for Sri Lanka, *Country Profile on Gender-Based Violence in Sri Lanka* (2018) <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/273193>, 17.

<sup>12</sup> World Economic Forum, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2015* (19 November 2015) <http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf>, 324.

<sup>13</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 154.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> Olsson and Gizelis, *Gender, Peace and Security*, 1.

that they are implemented coherently and revised often enough to fine-tune and change the approach when deemed ineffective in specific regions. Guterres argues that women are still excluded from peace negotiations, whilst the involvement of women leaders and decision-makers in mediation and peace processes leads to more lasting and sustainable peace.<sup>16</sup>

The scientific relevance of this thesis can be sought in the contribution to the scientific debate on the impact of the resolution 1325 on peace efforts in country specific situations. This thesis acknowledges that the aftermath of war can provide an opportunity in which pre-existing gender hierarchies can be altered, but that they are usually reconstructed with women having to take on the subordinate position again.<sup>17</sup> It is therefore scientifically relevant to expose what shortcomings cause this to happen by doing research in country specific situations in order to create a holistic and inclusive view on the efficiency of both the resolution and the efforts of the implementors. Furthermore, this thesis reveals areas of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 that should require further research and attention.

## **Chapter One: *An introduction to UNSCR 1325 and the Sri Lankan Civil War***

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This chapter will briefly explain the implications of UNSCR 1325 and will provide a short historical background of its coming into existence. The four pillars, which serve as a structure to the rest of this thesis, will be elaborated on afterwards. The second part of Chapter One will discuss the Sri Lankan civil war and its aftermath, with a specific focus on the role of women during and after the conflict. It will be established what impact the civil war had on Sri Lankan women, and what difficulties they faced in society after the war had come to an end.

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<sup>16</sup> United Nations, Department of Public Information, *Twenty-first Century Must Be Century of Women's Equality, Secretary-General Says in Remarks at The New School*. SG/SM/19986, 22 February 2020, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sgsm19986.doc.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Maria 'O Reilly, 'Gender and Peacebuilding', In: Robert Mac Ginty, *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding* (2013) 57 – 65, 57.



## **An Introduction to UNSCR 1325**

UNSCR 1325 was, considering its timing and content, not an arbitrary resolution according to Sahla.<sup>18</sup> Attention towards gender equality within the United Nations dates back to the beginning of the organisation in 1945, as the UN Charter by definition reaffirms the equal rights of men and women as one of their fundamental purposes.<sup>19</sup> In the decades that followed, several declarations and commissions were passed and adopted in line with the promotion of women's rights. It was only during the 1990s that the attention shifted towards matters of security, bringing to the table topics such as violence against women. In 1995, during the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, following the conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda, wide-scale awareness was raised about the victimization and agency of women during conflict. The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action adopted during this conference, emphasizing the scarce representation of women in decision-making positions related to conflict and conflict resolution, acted as a great inspiration for grassroots, a revival of women's peace movements and an increasing support of women's activism for peace by donor organisations.<sup>20</sup>

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000 did not follow much later, however it was not a mere product of the historical advancement as outlined in the paragraph above. According to Tryggestad in his article on the impact of the resolution on UN policies and practices, the adoption of UNSCR 1325 was dependent on the developments in the field of international relations during that time.<sup>21</sup> The changing relationship between the Security Council and international nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) played an instrumental role in the realisation of the resolution. Additionally, as mentioned in the Women Peace and Security Cross-Cutting Report in 2010, 'the efforts, determination and personal conviction of several individuals serving on the Security Council at the time; being the permanent representatives of Bangladesh, Namibia, Canada, Jamaica and Mali.'<sup>22</sup>

Resolution 1325 is more than a historical landmark, it is a political framework that shows that women and gender mainstreaming are extremely relevant to the establishing of

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<sup>18</sup> Sahla Aroussi, 'The United Nations Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security', In: *Women, Peace and Security: Repositioning Gender in Peace Agreements* (2015) 9 – 46, 20.

<sup>19</sup> Aroussi, 'The United Nations Resolutions', 16.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, 20.

<sup>21</sup> Torunn L. Tryggestad, 'Trick or Treat? The UN and Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security', *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 15 (2009) 4, 539 – 557, 542.

<sup>22</sup> Security Council Report, *Cross-Cutting Report on Women, Peace and Security*, 4.

sustainable peace.<sup>23</sup> Women's needs, and therefore views, in the enforcement of all aspects of peace processes, peace-keeping missions, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction should now taken into account. According to the Cross-Cutting Report of 2010, 'put simply, by involving and considering the views of half of society the negotiated peace was more likely to be able to be implemented by that society.'<sup>24</sup>

UNSCR 1325 is originally an eighteen-paragraph resolution, however, in several UN documents it has been summarized into the following paragraph:

'The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1325 urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts. It also calls on all parties to conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict. The resolution provides a number of important operational mandates, with implications for Member States and the entities of the United Nations system.'<sup>25</sup>

In support of resolution 1325, a series of additional resolutions was launched that each address a separate part of the resolution regarding the protection of women and girls during conflict and the importance of participation in decision-making processes. Ten years after the implementation of resolution 1325, supporting resolution 1889 was adopted that called upon the secretary general to develop a set of indicators to track the implementation of the resolution. A system of four pillars, containing a total of twenty-six indicators, was created as a result that offered 'a common basis for reporting by relevant United Nations entities, other international and regional organisations, and Member States, on the implementation of resolution 1325 in 2010 and beyond.'<sup>26</sup> The four pillars, being participation, prevention, protection and relief and recovery are related to each of the resolution's mandates and therefore help all parties to the implementation to keep track of the progress and or deficiencies of implementation. Each year,

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<sup>23</sup> Porter and Mundkur, *Peace and Security*, 36.

<sup>24</sup> Security Council Report, *Cross-Cutting Report on Women, Peace and Security*, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Security Council resolution 1325, *Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/1325 (2000), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>.

<sup>26</sup> Security Council resolution 1889, *On Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/1889 (2009), <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/4acdd8512.pdf>.

from 2010 onwards, the Secretary-General discusses, in general, successes and shortcomings in light of the four pillars in the annual report on Women, Peace and Security.

### **The Sri Lankan Civil War**

The aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war is this thesis' case study. The South-Asian island hosted one of the longest civil wars in Asia that lasted from 1983 until 2009, its ending being just before the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325. The run-up to this ethnic escalation between the Tamils and the Sinhalese has its roots in the end of British colonial rule over Sri-Lanka in 1948. As the Sinhalese hold a majority in Sri-Lanka, constituting about seventy percent of the population, the democratic system that has developed since the independence from the British has been deemed oppressive and inequitable by the Tamils, which constitute about eighteen percent of the population.<sup>27</sup> According to Samaranayake, 'the implementation of Sinhala as the official language, the introduction of ethnic quotas for public sector employment, and district based quotas for university admission', the Tamils felt deliberately marginalized.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, the Sinhalese-centred government removed provisions enacting legislation that was detrimental to minorities, which disparaged the Tamil population even further.<sup>29</sup>

After being repeatedly subjected to incidents of collective violence and after several failed attempts by Tamil political parties to negotiate with the Sri Lankan government, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) emerged in 1976. The LTTE became the strongest Tamil militant group, perpetrating great violations against human rights for decades on end including, suicide bombings, assassinations of politicians, extrajudicial killings and the use of child soldiers.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, the Sri Lankan government orchestrated state-sponsored violence against the growing youth insurrections in the South of the country. In sum, Human Rights Commissioner Ambika Satkunanathan argues that, 'both parties to the conflict stand accused of gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, particularly during the last stages of the war.'<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Cécile van de Voorde, 'Sri Lankan Terrorism: Assessing and Responding to the Threat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)', *Police Practice and Research*, 6 (2005) 2, 181 – 199, 183.

<sup>28</sup> Gamini Samaranayake, 'Political Terrorism of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 30 (2007) 1, 171-183, 173.

<sup>29</sup> Ambika Satkunanathan, 'Sri Lanka: The Impact of Militarization on Women', *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Conflict*, (2017) 1.

<sup>30</sup> Satkunanathan, 'Sri Lanka: The Impact of Militarization on Women', 2.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

The war between the LTTE and the Sri-Lankan government came to an end in May 2009 with the defeat of the LTTE, after failed attempts to negotiate peace during the ceasefire in 2006. However, Satkunanathan argues that until 2015, when Maithripala Sirisena was elected for presidency, the former government continued to obscure human rights violations behind matters of national security. Furthermore, the government prior to that of Sirisena also failed to kickstart successful reconciliation processes and address issues such as accountability, which in turn fuelled ongoing violation and the scaling-up of militarization in the North that accounted for increasing insecurity across Sri Lanka.<sup>32</sup>

As argued by Asoka Bandarage, ‘the Sri Lankan conflict is commonly perceived as a primordial ethnic conflict between a Sinhala majority and a Tamil minority.’<sup>33</sup> This perception seems to leave out the role that gender has played during this civil war. Women have been, and are, an integral part of the Sri Lankan society and have been present at various levels during the civil war. They played a key role as perpetrators, victims and peacemakers. According to Maria O’Reilly, ‘gendered discourses and practices play a key role in the legitimisation, conceptualisation and production of contemporary warfare.’<sup>34</sup> This holds true for the Sri Lankan civil war in the sense that the LTTE, as one of their legitimation strategies, already considered women as an important part of their movement at an early stage in the conflict.<sup>35</sup> According to Terpstra, in his article on the orchestration of rebel governance by the LTTE, the LTTE actively recruited, or forcibly recruited women to gain a larger fighting force. The LTTE tried to gain more legitimacy for their nationalist based terrorism by including different castes and women into their movement.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, a popular fighting mechanism used by the LTTE was that of suicide bombing. Women in particular carried out such practices. The LTTE even had a special unit of women bombers, the Black Tigresses, that carried out 30 to 50% of all suicide bombings by the LTTE.<sup>37</sup>

However, women did not just become victims of their own suicide bombings that were strategically disguised under the notion of martyrdom. Due to the imprisonments, killings, and

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<sup>32</sup> Satkunanathan, ‘Sri Lanka: The Impact of Militarization on Women’, 2.

<sup>33</sup> Asoka Bandarage, ‘Towards Peace with Justice in Sri Lanka: An Alternative Perspective’, *India Quarterly* 68 (2012) 2, 103 – 118, 104.

<sup>34</sup> O Reilly, ‘Gender and Peacebuilding’, 58.

<sup>35</sup> Terpstra, Niels, Georg Frerks, ‘Rebel Governance and Legitimacy: Understanding the Impact of Rebel Legitimation on Civilian Compliance with the LTTE Rule’, *Civil Wars*, 19 (2017) 3, 279 – 307, 297.

<sup>36</sup> Terpstra and Frerks, ‘Rebel Governance and Legitimacy’, 297.

<sup>37</sup> Julie V.G. Rajan, *Women Suicide Bombers: Narratives of Violence* (2011) 202.

disappearances of numerous Tamil men, Tamil, Muslim and Sinhala women were forced to take on leadership positions in the family that restricted their choices.<sup>38</sup> The restriction of free choices about their future marginalized and victimized women further than before. Women were also victim to all kinds of violence, they made up most of the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and were often war widowed due to the widespread assassination of Tamil men.<sup>39</sup>

Prior to resolution 1325, only very few women were in official peacekeeping positions in Sri Lanka.<sup>40</sup> Most peacekeeping was done by native Sri Lankan women on a local level but the pushing forward of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda has remained low according to the Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security published in 2009.<sup>41</sup> In the following chapters it will be sought to expose how resolution 1325 impacted peacebuilding in Sri Lanka, starting by examining the impact on the participation of women at all levels of peace processes, in decision-making positions and in the reconstruction of the war-torn country.

To conclude, the political framework that is outlined by UNSCR 1325 served as an important step towards the achieving of gender equality in the field of conflict and peace. In Sri Lanka specifically, where women played such a vital role in all areas of the war, it was crucial that they would be considered in the reconstruction of the country. Despite that, a lot of opportunities to include women in peacebuilding processes were neglected. Chapter two and three will therefore demonstrate the inadequacies, in the efforts of the implementors to UNSCR 1325, towards more sustainable and inclusive peace through in the reconstruction of the country.

## Chapter Two: *Participation*

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The second chapter examines the impact of UNSCR 1325 on the pillar of participation that tracks the inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making in the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war, between 2009 and 2015. This chapter demonstrates the shortcomings of the parties responsible for the implementation through the research on primary sources that provide

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<sup>38</sup> Rajan, *Women Suicide Bombers*, 201.

<sup>39</sup> Bandarage, 'Towards Peace with Justice in Sri Lanka', 104.

<sup>40</sup> Gender Action for Peace and Security UK, *Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security*, 122.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*.

evidence as to whether UNSCR 1325 is effectively applied by the UN Security, the Sri Lankan government and civil society organisations.

In March 2009, just before the civil war came to an end with the defeat of the LTTE, the Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security was published by GAPS. This report serves as a suitable starting point for this chapter as it presents three achievements of, and three challenges to, the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Sri Lanka since its adoption in 2000 and until the start of the post-war reconstruction.<sup>42</sup> The achievements and challenges therefore provide an impression of the role that Sri Lankan women held at the end of the war. GAPS drafted the report's findings on the basis of eleven indicators that were based on the content of UNSCR 1325 and the UK National Action Plan (NAP). NAPs are drafted by countries to improve gender equality throughout peacebuilding processes and post-war reconstruction.

A significant proportion of the mandate of UNSCR 1325 is dedicated to increasing the participation of women in decision-making positions and processes prior to, during and after conflict. Despite the adoption of the resolution about a decade before the publication of the report by GAPS, two of the three challenges taken up in the report refer to the low participation of women in Sri Lanka. Both participation of women in peace negotiations and in politics, particularly in Parliament, were extremely poor at the end of the war. For instance, during the peace negotiations between 2000 and 2004 only one woman participated, and Sri Lanka's political system did not feature a quota for women resulting in considerable underrepresentation at decision-making levels in 2009.<sup>43</sup>

Although the Security Council was facing the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325, they were not yet able to solve these challenges and translate the importance of women's participation throughout the Council's agenda. The Security Council Report, in their first Cross-Cutting Report on Women Peace and Security in 2010, concludes that: 'The council appears to have been considerably more successful in addressing the protection rather than the participation aspects of resolution 1325.'<sup>44</sup> The report also concludes that in 2010, within the Security Council, there was still a lot of scepticism towards the relevance of women's participation, for instance in peace processes. This scepticism made it difficult to take any direct

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<sup>42</sup> Gender Action for Peace and Security UK, *Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security*, 120.

<sup>43</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 42.

<sup>44</sup> Security Council Report, *Cross-Cutting Report on Women, Peace and Security*, 3.

action in country-specific situations at that time.<sup>45</sup> Based on these findings it is explicable that there was great underrepresentation of women in the Sri Lankan peace processes during the ceasefire from 2000 until 2006, which noteworthily failed.

Evidence shows, however, that women's inclusion in peace processes has many positive effects. The Global Study of UN Women on the Women Peace and Security agenda in 2015, for instance, clearly emphasizes that there is a positive relation between the participation and influence of women in peace processes, and the processes' outcome and implementation. In a research undertaken by the Graduate Institute in Geneva, it is concluded from studying forty peace processes since the Cold War, that with the participation and strong influence of women, peace agreements are almost always met.<sup>46</sup> The inclusion of women in peace processes also provides for another positive effect. Increasingly, research shows that women bring 'a particular sense of consensus building to the public debate, not necessarily on issues, but on the need to conclude talks and implement agreements.'<sup>47</sup> The lack of participation of women in peace processes can therefore prevent peace agreements from being sustainable as well as prevent agreements from being met at all.

As the decisive defeat of the LTTE in 2009 did not require another round of peace negotiations or the drafting of peace agreements, this chapter will further examine the implementation of Resolution 1325 concerning the second challenge as proposed by GAPS being, women's underrepresentation in politics, particularly in Parliament. As stressed by UNSCR 1325, the full involvement of women at all levels of decision-making in post-conflict states is of much importance. This holds true due to the different impacts war and conflict can have on gender. Men and women therefore need to be considered equal at all levels in society. The findings presented by GAPS show that women hardly took part in Sri Lanka's political system.<sup>48</sup> Even though UNSCR 1325 urges the Security Council, Member States, UN entities and civil society to guarantee the involvement of women in this field, this underrepresentation persisted in the years that followed.

Several national and international news items published in 2011 and 2012 reaffirm the low participation rate of women in Sri Lanka and its consequences for the Sri Lankan civil society. In 2011 for instance, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, hosted an interview with Dr

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<sup>45</sup> Security Council Report, *Cross-Cutting Report on Women, Peace and Security*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 41.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, 42.

<sup>48</sup> Gender Action for Peace and Security UK, *Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security*, 120.

Dharmadasa, founder of the Association of War Affected Women (AWAW), who stated that although many women voted that year, they all voted for men. According to Dharmadasa: 'People, including women, in this country like to vote for men who show their might by being violent, drive around in fancy cars and show off their wealth.'<sup>49</sup> She added to this that Sri Lanka had been subject to this moral decline for years. The AWAW is an organisations that strives to reach sustainable peace through women's participation, especially in Sri Lanka's political system.<sup>50</sup> With her Association, Dharmadasa tries to achieve this goal through setting up training programs for women with political aspirations, but who lack ties to a political party.<sup>51</sup> Although the AWAW provided hundreds of women, who were eager to engage in politics, the opportunity to be trained, these women remained politically immature and too traumatized by the war to feel comfortable enough to speak up.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, due to the absence of women's quota in Sri Lanka's Parliament, the reluctance of parties to nominate women and the enormous amount of money it costs to campaign and win enough votes, it remained extremely difficult for women to participate in politics.<sup>53</sup>

In 2012, a news article by Daily News Sri Lanka, illustrates that the situation had not changed. Several conferences and seminars had been organised to address and understand women's issues and have, just like Dharmadasa's AWAW, proposed women-centred programs to enhance the ripple-effect benefits that stem from empowering women.<sup>54</sup> The outcomes and recommendations of these conferences were to be taken to national level in order to be taken up in an action plan for the inclusion of women.<sup>55</sup> However, the article observes that even though several elections had taken place since then, hardly any difference in the number of elected female candidates could be noticed. The article further suggests that, while usually the low percentage of elected women candidates is blamed on the parties, according to statistics,

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<sup>49</sup> Radio Netherlands Worldwide, *Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka Politics in Need of More Women* (8 April 2011), <http://peacewomen.org/content/sri-lanka-sri-lanka-politics-need-more-women> (22 February 2021).

<sup>50</sup> Association of War Affected Women, *Annual Report 2013*, (2013) <http://awawsl.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2013-Annual-Report-1.pdf>, 2.

<sup>51</sup> Association of War Affected Women, *Annual Report 2013*, 7.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>53</sup> Radio Netherlands Worldwide, *Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka Politics in Need of More Women* (22 February 2021).

<sup>54</sup> Daily News Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka: Women in Politics* (18 August 2012), <http://peacewomen.org/content/sri-lanka-women-politics> (22 February 2021).

<sup>55</sup> Asian Tribune, *Conference: LIKRIIS Conference on the Role of Women in Reconciliation* (24 July 2012) <http://peacewomen.org/node/90667> (22 February 2021).



the same low percentage of women tends to be elected, regardless of the number of women candidates available.<sup>56</sup> A political quota for women therefore does not necessarily seem a solution to the problem. In the case of Sri Lanka, a deeper lying root cause of the problem of low representation of women lies in the continuing lack of their social status. At parliamentary level, generally, Sri Lankans are more likely to vote for a 'lady'. On the contrary, at a local level, hardly anyone votes for a woman. The article therefore concludes that women are not judged for their abilities but on their place in the social hierarchy.<sup>57</sup>

By 2015, women and human development had improved substantially in the fields of education for girls', the female literacy rate and women's health and fertility. Although Sri Lanka seemed to be a forerunner in the abovementioned areas, their ranking on the Global Gender Gap Index remained remarkably low.<sup>58</sup> Due to the persistent lack of women's participation in politics and poor economic participation, Sri Lanka scored 84<sup>th</sup> out of 145 countries.<sup>59</sup> Dropping five places as compared to their score in 2014, Sri Lanka's efforts to improve women's participation at all levels of decision-making had statistically deteriorated in 2015. In a speech held in the same year by Ambassador Ravinatha P. Aryasinha, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, the advocacy for a women's quota in politics and the importance of the increase in women's participation by 25% at a local, provincial and national level was emphasized once again, which confirms that one of the most important areas of the mandate of UNSCR 1325 has hardly seen any improvements since the end of the civil war.<sup>60</sup> In other words, the persistent inequality in politics prohibited from sustainable peace in Sri Lanka as over half of the population was not included in this area of peacebuilding.

To conclude, when UNSCR 1325 celebrated its fifteenth anniversary, Sri Lanka still suffered low participation of women at decision-making levels. Although UN Women observed women's participation to having a crucial role in establishing sustainable peace, the implementors of UNSCR 1325 had not been able to increase women's participation in the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war. Whereas the Security Council and the Sri Lankan

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<sup>56</sup> Daily News Sri Lanka, *Sri Lanka: Women in Politics*, (22 February 2021).

<sup>57</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>58</sup> World Economic Forum, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2015*, 324.

<sup>59</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>60</sup> Ravinatha Aryasinha, *The Role of Women in Peace-Building: A Sri Lankan Perspective*, Geneva Peace Conference (2 April 2015) <https://reliefweb.int/report/sri-lanka/role-women-peace-building-sri-lankan-perspective>, 12.

government failed to get the improvement of female participation across their agenda's, NGOs such as the AWAW advocated very extensively to increase the number of women in politics by organizing wide-scale women-centred training programs. Unfortunately, results by the Gender Gap Index from 2015 seem to demonstrate the deficiencies of the initiatives by all parties responsible. However, the deeply rooted social-hierarchy in Sri Lanka also seems to uphold the persevering underrepresentation of women at decision-making levels.

## **Chapter Three: *Protection, Prevention and Recovery***

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Chapter Three will discuss the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Sri Lanka by means of the pillars of protection, prevention and relief and recovery. Apart from the UN Security Council and UN entities, such as for instance UN Women, the UN Member States and nongovernmental organisations play a key role in realizing the exertion of the WPS agenda at a more national level. This chapter will demonstrate the shortcomings of Sri Lanka, as a Member State, and of Sri Lankan nongovernmental organisations, in their efforts to protect women and girls from violence, to prevent the root causes to gender-based violence and to empower women. Whilst the WPS agenda urges all implementors to apply a human security approach towards protection and prevention, this chapter aims to show that Sri Lanka has not effectively applied the approach and therefore has not built sustainable peace. Chapter Three will first elaborate on the human security approach and will demonstrate how this approach accounts for the interconnectedness of the pillars of protection, prevention and relief and recovery. Then, it will demonstrate how the interventions by the Sri Lankan government regarding the three pillars fall short due to the lack of a human security approach. This section will also demonstrate that Sri Lankan NGOs' initiatives do consider the human security approach, but that they are restricted by their position. Finally, a conclusion will be given that summarizes the findings of this chapter.

In the years that followed the civil war, Sri Lanka has been known to have the worst human rights record of South-Asia for a substantial amount of time.<sup>61</sup> Women and children had been subject to all kinds of violence, abuse and torture prior to, during and after the civil war. As the pillar of protection calls specifically for the protection of all women and girls from gender-based and sexual violence, UNSCR 1325 has supported several national interventions

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<sup>61</sup> Gender Action for Peace and Security UK, *Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security*, 134.

that strived to increase protection of women and girls, through the usage of the human security approach to protection.<sup>62</sup> However, according to Porter and Mundkur, it is important to define protection in order for it to be effective. They argue that this definition depends on how the concept of security is framed, which means that there needs to be a clear understanding of when human security is jeopardised in order to protect a person against it.<sup>63</sup> The human security approach to protection, which is embedded in the resolutions on WPS, emphasizes the multidimensionality of human insecurity.<sup>64</sup> According to the human security approach, insecurities can be categorized into seven categories: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political.<sup>65</sup> When these insecurities overlap, they can affect every aspect of human life. According to the Human Security Unit of the UN: ‘human security emphasizes the interconnectedness of both threats and responses when addressing insecurities.’<sup>66</sup> Threats to security are mutually reinforcing and interconnected in two ways. Firstly, threats are interlinked in a causal sequence in the sense that each threat leads to another. For instance, violent conflict can lead to poverty, which can lead to resource depletion, which can lead to political unrest. Secondly, threats within a country or specific region can spread into other regions and have negative consequences for the security in these areas. For people in crisis, acting on a single issue is not enough, and insecurities must therefore be tackled together in order to resolve the threats. Consequently, human security seeks to understand how multiple factors are interconnected. In addressing risks and root causes of insecurities human security is people-centred, comprehensive, context specific and prevention-oriented.<sup>67</sup> These characteristics strengthen the protection and empowerment of people and communities and address the root causes of insecurities.

The interconnection between the three pillars regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Sri Lanka derive from the human security approach. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, prevention-oriented solutions strengthen the protection and empowerment of

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<sup>62</sup> Security Council resolution 1325, *Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/1325 (2000), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>.

<sup>63</sup> Porter and Mundkur, *Peace and Security*, 54.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, 57.

<sup>65</sup> Lloyd Axworthy, ‘Introduction’, In: Robert Grant McRae, et. al, *Human Security and the New Diplomacy: Protecting People and Promoting Peace* (2001) 3-13, 4.

<sup>66</sup> Human Security Unit, *Human Security in Theory and Practice: Application of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security* (New York 2009) 7.

<sup>67</sup> Human Security Unit, *Human Security in Theory and Practice*, 7.

people. The pillars of protection, calling to protect all women and girls from violence, and relief and recovery, in which empowerment of women is a vital part, are therefore strongly dependent on the pillar of prevention, which urges all parties to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 to increase incorporation of gender issues at a policymaking level in order to prevent violence and war.<sup>68</sup> For example, in Sri Lanka, acting on gender-based and sexual violence alone will not necessarily prevent it from happening. Additionally, when violence is not prevented, the pillar of relief and recovery is hardly realisable due to persistent personal insecurity. As long as women face insecurities, they can never be fully empowered as they are not free from living in fear. The following paragraphs will demonstrate this to be true.

Although the broad human security approach is widely accepted by UN entities, liberal democratic governments of Member States and humanitarian aid organisations. In practice, the responses to the threats that women face seem to apply a narrower perception of security.<sup>69</sup> This discordance is noticeable in the interventions of the national actors that aim to protect women and girls from violence in Sri Lanka. The interventions of these actors usually take place when violence has already been inflicted, meaning that protection, as such, is not focussed on prevention of the root causes of the attacks but just on recovery of the victims. Threats are faced in isolation instead of in relation to other threats, resulting in the absence of a sustainable solution.

The Sri Lankan government has consistently demonstrated the lack of usage of the human security approach to protecting women and girls from gender-based and sexual violence. In the years after the war, many measures have been taken to ensure the safety of women, by pursuing the implementation of UNSCR 1325. However, these initiatives have generally failed to effectively challenge the root-causes of the violence. In the following paragraphs, interventions by the Sri Lankan government aiming to implement UNSCR 1325 will be explained and it will be demonstrated that these initiatives fall short in their solutions due to a lack of broad approach to security.

Firstly, Sri Lanka's Ministry of Women's Affairs plays a prominent role on behalf of the government in the protection of women and girls from gender-based and sexual violence and has highly prioritized this matter in the previous years. After the war in 2009, the country's human rights record was extremely low.<sup>70</sup> According to the GAPS, 'violence against women,

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<sup>68</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 206.

<sup>69</sup> Porter and Mundkur, *Peace and Security*, 59.

<sup>70</sup> Gender Action for Peace and Security UK, *Global Monitoring Checklist on Women Peace and Security*, 125.

including killing, rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, forced prostitution and trafficking has always been widespread in Sri Lanka.<sup>71</sup> In a 2006 survey of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, which was previously known as the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment, sixty percent of the (all female) respondents admitted to being victimized by domestic violence. The Ministry carried out some important changes in light of improving protection of women and girls from violence. One of the most significant measures taken by the Ministry was the setting up of women and children's units to provide protection, care and guidance and to resolve issues related to gender-based violence as well as provide psychological support for those who fell victim to violence.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, a year prior to the instalment of the units in 2015, a national helpline was created staffed by trained teams to deal with complaints on violence and to provide online responses to violence such as giving support to survivors of violence.<sup>73</sup> Finally, the establishment of temporary shelters and service points for survivors of violence were initiated by the Ministry. Although these measures have had positive influence in the short-term protection of women, these initiatives are a response to violence when it is already inflicted. None of the abovementioned interventions by the Ministry were focussed on tackling the root causes of violence, such as underlying gender norms which are for instance taught to youngsters in schools through school materials.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, unlike the human security approach, the approaches of the Ministry focussed on protection as an isolated issue, instead of in relation to other issues.

Secondly, a similar observation can be done within the responses of the police department in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan police department was part of a long and complex process that those who sought legal action against violence were to face. With the support of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the police department has improved their response to sexual and gender-based violence by establishing women and children's desks at 43 police stations.<sup>75</sup> The women and children's desks were to improve the long process of legal action against perpetrators of violence, and function as coordinating offices that collect data on violent incidents against women and children. Although the desks helped to solve more crimes against

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<sup>71</sup> Ibidem, 134.

<sup>72</sup> World Health Organization, Country Office for Sri Lanka, *Country Profile on Gender-Based Violence in Sri Lanka*, 17.

<sup>73</sup> Ibidem, 19.

<sup>74</sup> Ibidem, 2.

<sup>75</sup> Ibidem, 19.

women each year between 2013 and 2015, the conviction rate of rape amongst those cases remained tremendously low.<sup>76</sup> The establishment of the women and children's desks are again an example of initiatives that are focussed on protection of women after violence is inflicted. This collaboration by the Ministry and police force resulted in the solving of more crimes against women, but not the conviction of more perpetrators which would prevent the violence from happening again at family or community level. Porter and Mundkur argue that violence against women and girls poses a multidimensional threat to their security not only in terms of their physical security, but also their economic and social security.<sup>77</sup>

Contrasting these state interventions, are Sri Lanka's civil society organisations that might even be the best amongst the implementors of UNSCR 1325 in applying a broad approach to human security, and thus also considering structural and institutional issues.<sup>78</sup> Civil society has been active in the field of protection of women against violence since the 1970s.<sup>79</sup> They also play an important role in light of the pillar on relief and recovery. This pillar calls for efforts to support women's activities regarding relief and recovery, including the empowerment of women and granting them equal access to employment.<sup>80</sup> Civil society organisations form the backbone to almost all policy advocacy, they implement the aims of UNSCR 1325, they provide protection to those in need, they strive to make decision-making inclusive and they help to strengthen the accountability of state actors. For instance, The Women's Development Centre (WDC), Sri Lanka's largest NGO, strives to achieve gender equality through 'looking for ways to integrate women into the employment sector but simultaneously recognizes the triple burden facing women who often have to balance multiple roles within the public, private and household arenas.'<sup>81</sup> The WDC specifically tries to empower women to take part in non-traditional employment sectors with which it hopes to increase women's employment as well as challenge traditional gender roles associated with those sectors.<sup>82</sup> Although state independent organisations such as the WDC struggle to tackle the root causes to gender inequality, thus

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<sup>76</sup> World Health Organization, Country Office for Sri Lanka, *Country Profile on Gender-Based Violence in Sri Lanka*, 20.

<sup>77</sup> Porter and Mundkur, *Peace and Security*, 241.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, 229.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, 241.

<sup>80</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 206.

<sup>81</sup> The Women's Development Centre, *What We Do: Programmes* <http://womendev.org/programmes/#development> (20 February 2021).

<sup>82</sup> The Women's Development Centre, *What We Do: Programmes*, (20 February 2021).

applying the human security approach, it remains difficult for civil society organisations to convince authorities of the seriousness of the issues faced by women due to the lack of available data on the on the nature of these issues.<sup>83</sup> In the rare cases that data or research is available on structural women's issues, civil society organisations' importance was often underrecognized or lacked the opportunity to make it accessible to stakeholders.<sup>84</sup>

To conclude, this chapter demonstrated the shortcomings of the Sri Lankan state in their efforts to effectively protect women and girls from gender-based violence, to prevent the root-causes of this issue and to empower women in society. Although the human security approach is embedded in UNSCR 1325, the interventions by the Sri Lankan state were narrowly focussed on the protection of women and girls from violence when it was already perpetrated against them. This resulted in the failure to prevent the root-causes of the problem. Sri Lankan based civil society organisations demonstrated a more holistic approach throughout their interventions, confirming the importance of also tackling structural causes to insecurities, such as by challenging gender traditional employment sectors. However, due to the lack of say at state-level and the near absence of well-established data on the nature of the issues, as well as the opportunity to present this data to stake-holders, civil society organisations have not been able to effectively prevent women's insecurities on a wide-scale either.<sup>85</sup>

## Conclusions

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The implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the aftermath of the civil war in Sri Lanka, from 2009 until 2015, was mostly insufficient or too narrowly focussed, which prevented from sustainable peacebuilding. This thesis has proven the implementors to UNSCR 1325, including the UN Security Council, Sri Lanka as a UN Member State and civil society organisations, to fall short in their efforts to apply the resolution in the areas covered by the pillars of participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery. Through research on primary sources and secondary sources, the deficiencies of interventions and initiatives, specifically by the UN Security Council and the Sri Lankan state, have been argued for. Civil society organisations showed to have served more thoroughly the interest of UNSCR 1325, however, they were often

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<sup>83</sup> Porter and Mundkur, *Peace and Security*, 230.

<sup>84</sup> Porter and Mundkur, *Security and Peace*, 230.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*.

restricted by their lack of control in decision-making processes at state level. This accounted for the rather low impact of their efforts.

Although women played a vital role during and after the civil war, granting the importance of their inclusion in the reconstruction of Sri Lanka, this research has demonstrated the persistent underrepresentation of women at decision-making levels in peacebuilding and post-war reconstruction. A study by the Graduate Institute in Geneva has showed that the participation of women in peace processes including peace negotiations and peacebuilding activities has been proven to account for more sustainable peace.<sup>86</sup> However, the absence of a women's quota in politics and persistent social hierarchy made it difficult for women to enlist in the political system. The noteworthy efforts of civil society organisations, such as the political training programs of the AWAW, were no match for these factors resulting in overall insufficient efforts in support of UNSCR 1325 regarding the pillar of participation.

The pillars of protection and relief and recovery have been demonstrated to be reliant on the pillar of prevention. The human security approach accounts for this interconnectedness as it proposes the emphasis on preventive strategies in order to reach effective protection and empowerment of people. However, the Sri Lankan government and police department have tried to tackle the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, through for instance instalment of women and children's units and the creation of a helpline for victims and survivors, as an isolated issue. This means that they did not focus on the prevention of violence in order to protect women and girls, but rather on the protection itself, and usually after violence had been inflicted. Nongovernmental organisations have, on the contrary, used a more holistic approach towards the protection and empowerment of women by also challenging the structural causes to the insecurities of women, such as traditional gender roles within employment sectors. Despite their efforts, due to their lack of say at state-level and the absence of well-established data on the root-causes of the issues, such organisations' interventions could not make a substantial impact on Sri Lanka's post-war reconstruction in support of UNSCR 1325.

As this research focussed mainly on the impact of the implementation UNSCR 1325 on Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the civil war, and thereby neglecting a more critical perspective on the resolution itself, it is interesting to do further research on the interpretation of this resolution. Seeing as in chapter three, state actors to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 have

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<sup>86</sup> UN Women, *A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325*, 42.



sought contrasting ways of implementation, it is of importance to further establish how different implementors to the resolution interpret the content of the resolution and if this is what caused the opposing intervention strategies in the case of Sri Lanka.

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