

Annual Report



NPC
The National
Peace Council
of Sri Lanka

2011

Vision of NPC

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

Mission of NPC

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

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About NPC

The National Peace Council (NPC) was established as an independent and impartial national non-government organisation on 2 February 1995. The formation of NPC was the culmination of a process that began with a campaign against election violence in July 1994, launched by an inter-religious group of individuals and organisations. The strategic interventions made by this group during the 1994 Presidential Election campaign specifically, and for a peaceful and permanent resolution to the protracted conflict generally, led to the organisation of the first National Peace Conference the same year. The vision and mandate of National Peace Council were formulated at this conference, leading to the establishment of NPC the following year.

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

Members of the Board of Directors

- Mr. Joe William – Chairman of the Board
- Mr. Tony Senewiratne –Treasurer/National Director Habitat for Humanity
- Mr. G V. D. Thilakasiri – General Secretary/Secretary Free Trade Union Development Centre
- Mr. Javid Yusuf – Attorney at Law/former Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Dr. Anita Nesiah – Advisor, Policy Advocacy
- Dr. Jehan Perera – Executive Director
- Dr. Thangamuthu Jayasingam – Senior Lecturer Eastern University
- Prof. S. H. Hasbullah – Department of Geography, University of Peradeniya
- Ven. Buddhiegama Chandrarathne Thero – President Vanni Cultural Foundation Puttalam
- Prof. M. S. Mookiah – Former Vice Chancellor Eastern University

Members of the Governing Council

- All members of the Board of Directors
- Mr. John V. Thamber - Former Additional Director Social Service Department
- Sr. Mary Barbara - Provincial Councillor Apostolic Carmel
- Mr. Elmo Alles - Naturalist
- Mr. R. M. B. Senanayake - Former Director of Combined Services
- Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa - Chairperson Association of War Affected Women
- Mr. M. H. M. Niyas - Chairman Media Link/Steering Committee Member of Muslim Council/Director Lanka Salt Limited
- Ms. Saroja Sivachandran - Director Centre for Women & Development
- Rev. A. Iyadurai - J. P. All Island, Ex-Director, Educational Services SLBC
- Ms. Padmini Rajadurai



Staff Members

Dr. Jehan Perera	Executive Director
Mr. Kishan Ratnayake	Programme Manager
Mr. S. Palaninathan	Special Projects Manager
Ms. Rupika Chandani	Finance Manager
Ms. Marlene Machado	Administration Manager
Ms. Badra de Silva*	Receptionist
Mr. Shantha Mahindapala	Assistant Programme Coordinator - Media
Mr. T M Wajira Thennakoon	Driver
Ms. Pushpa Ranjanie	Programme Coordinator
Mr. W H Saman Seneviratne	Programme Coordinator
Ms. Priyadarshini Siluvaimuthu*	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. B Rukmal S N Silva	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. Sarath Karunaratne	Driver
Mr. Upendra Perera	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. Ajith Wickremasinghe	Accounts Assistant
Ms. Rasika Seneviratne	Assistant Program Coordinator
Mr. Rohitha Wickramarachchi	Graphic Designer
Mr. K.S. Ranaweera	Driver
Mr. B. Ranjeewa Indika Perera	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. Thiyaga C.Kumara Bandara	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. P. Navanetharan	Office Aide
Mr. Thushal Dhammika	Assistant Programme Coordinator Media
Ms. Thilina Madiwela	Programme Assistant
Mr. N P M Shakeer	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. M Manimaran	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Mr. Wesley Weerasinghe	IT Administrator – part time
Ms. Vathsala Yatigamage	Report Writer
Ms. Suganiya Sathanandan	Accounts Assistant
Ms. Tharshiny Gnanalingam	Typist

Chairman's Message

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to present the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the National Peace Council (NPC) for the financial year ended 31 December 2011.

There is no doubt that the defeat of the LTTE created an environment more conducive for positive expectations in the country. After all, it is far better to be in an environment in which politics, rather than the clash of arms, dominates. However, the question remains as to whether Sri Lanka will make use of this opportunity to develop a more just society, or merely to move in a direction that consolidates the structures of social exclusion.

We at NPC acknowledge that peace building is an intensely contested concept in Sri Lanka. There are official and reformist conceptualisations of it. The official approach is built on the analysis that with the military defeat of the LTTE, the terrorist problem has been resolved. Sri Lanka does not have an ethnic problem as such to address politically and the immediate need is for rapid economic development and political integration of the North and East with the rest of the island. Several civil society groups, including NPC, do not share the official project of peace building. On the contrary, following a reformist perspective, NPC believes that despite the military defeat of LTTE, Sri Lanka has not yet entered a post-conflict phase.

The conflict continues and it may re-emerge if it is not managed politically. Economic and infrastructure development in the North and East, as well as resettlement of the IDPs are immediate priorities, but they do not essentially constitute the whole agenda of post-civil war peace building. A political solution needs to be given priority along with the developmental and re-settlement agendas. A political solution is also an integral part of the post-civil war reconciliation process.

Peace building is consequently a highly sensitive undertaking requiring political transformation and compromise. It is bound to create resistance from many quarters. Peace needs to be forged through transformation of positions and a compromise between different interests and diverging goals. This is the transformation and compromise NPC is seeking to achieve.

In conclusion I would like to announce that this message would be my final one as Chairman of the Board of Directors of NPC, bringing the curtain down on my involvement at the helm of the organisation

from its inception. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our many donors, partners island-wide, the Executive Director and Staff for their trust and cooperation. Serving as your Chairman of the Board and the Governing Council has been an excellent experience, and I feel richer for having had the chance to work with you. Thank you for honouring me with your trust and commitment. I wish you good health and prosperity to continue to work to achieve our vision of a peaceful and prosperous Sri Lanka in which freedom, human rights, and democratic rights of all communities are respected.

Joe William
Chairman
Board of Directors

General Secretary's Message

The peace and normalcy that many in Sri Lanka believed would come with the end of the war in 2009 has not materialised in the quick manner that was anticipated. When we look at the evolving situation at the present time, it can be seen that the Sri Lankan people have a long march to undertake to achieve peace in the country. There are two main factors related to this matter. The first is that Sinhala and Tamil political leaders still have not come to an agreement on how the country should be governed in a democratic way. The second reason is that the international community has become involved with the matter and they are employing strong pressure for a solution. At the present time the Sri Lankan government has re-opened the option of the negotiation table through the vehicle of a Parliamentary Select Committee. However, the major representatives of the Tamil community have not participated to the process. The major opposition party and several other political groups are waiting for the Tamil response prior to entering this process. At this juncture Sri Lanka needs support from its South Asian neighbours, international governments and donors for the major representatives of the Tamil community to be brought into the process.

NPC believes that a long lasting solution will come from negotiations, discussion and agreement between the representatives of our communities and with the participation of the people themselves. NPC always stands for the unity of the Sri Lankan nation and sovereignty of the country. Post-war Sri Lanka presents a great opportunity to implement rule of law and democracy. It is our hope that the government will see new ways of moving towards a political solution through speedily trying to implement the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission. We believe that civil society and the government need to join hands to create a Sri Lankan nation in which justice and reconciliation prevail and which will lead to economic development that benefits all the people of the country.

I thank the Members of NPC, Directors of the Board, Governing Council members, all staff, District Committee members, and our foreign friends and donors who support our mission.

G. V. D. Thilakasiri
General Secretary
Board of Directors

Treasurer's Message

A famous author, Dorothy Parker, once said, "Finance is the art of passing money from one hand to another until it disappears". The trick of course is to see what appears in its place (me).

NPC has worked through another year and certainly money has disappeared from our hands and books – however in a way that leaves an absolute trail for the auditing bloodhounds to follow. Perhaps more importantly, in its place there appears a wealth of knowledge, not previously known or understood in any great depth, in the minds and hearts of those we have worked with. The reports and accounts in the other parts of this document I hope will be a verification and validation of this statement.

From our burden of accountability the audit report for the past year stands unqualified, but even more importantly for the past three years our Management Letter (ML) from the auditors is a nil – zero – report. Those of you who have read this note this far and understand the value of such letters will appreciate the pride we feel in this accomplishment. At the time of writing we had not received the ML for this year but we hope to have the same result.

We are also happy to report that though there were days that the future looked bleak and threatened a meltdown, we have finished the year in the black and at present we are quite optimistic about the coming years.

Tony Senewiratne
Treasurer
Board of Directors

Directors' Report

The year 2011 ended on a nationally significant note with the publication of the report of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) appointed by the President. NPC made written and verbal submissions before this Commission. We were gratified that the LLRC report and recommendations vindicated the work that civic groups of a liberal persuasion such as ours had done over the previous two decades. The LLRC report highlighted the need for a political solution that addressed the roots of the ethnic conflict, the devolution and sharing of power, and the role of inter-religious and civic groups in ensuring people's participation in the reform process. These have been the main areas of work that NPC has emphasised since its inception in 1995.

During the year under review NPC's focus was on strengthening inter-religious groups at the community level to be agents of humanitarian assistance to war-affected people by providing them with a reconciliation-oriented vision and technical skills. This included 12 District Inter-Religious Committees (DIRCs) with a membership of approximately 180 clergy and 540 lay adherents of the religious communities. DIRC members are able to hear and understand the voices of local communities and also have access to religious and political leaders whom they can inform and influence in order to find solutions to humanitarian issues.

Better relationships were built through various activities such as distributing donations to flood-affected victims in the North and the East of the island.

The period under review was one of the most challenging that NPC has ever had to face. The space for its activities was diminished by the policy orientation of the government. NPC's emphasis on the creation of awareness and advocacy in relation to minority rights, institutional reform and a political solution to the ethnic conflict was not in congruence with government policy. The constraints on the organisation's freedom of action became evident in the investigation into NPC by the Criminal Investigation Department of the police. This government action generated considerable concern amongst other NGOs and civic organisations. It dampened enthusiasm of partners to engage in peace building. However, it appears that the police

investigation of NPC did not yield any further grounds for investigation. With fewer and fewer organisations and individuals willing to take up the challenge of pressuring and critiquing the government to get onto a conflict resolving mode of behaviour, it became more incumbent on NPC to continue with its work. This led it to formulate and implement activities that strengthened the capacity of partner organisations to undertake peace building and reconciliation activities. In addition, NPC entered into a capacity building relationship with 8 established NGOs in 8 districts to enable them to contribute directly to the peace and reconciliation process.

The organisation undertook a regular programme advocating on Peace, Reconciliation and Human Rights, which has been financed by core funding received from the Royal Norwegian Embassy. The advocacy programme included placing newspaper articles in the print media in English, Sinhala and Tamil, producing a newspaper and publications, press releases, conducting workshops on peace and reconciliation, radio and television interviews, and lecturing at the local universities on peace and reconciliation.

On the occasion of publishing our Annual Report for 2011, we take this opportunity to thank our Board and Governing Council members and the general membership for their guidance and direction in meeting the challenges of working in a turbulent political environment. They assisted the staff in implementing programmes in the field and took on roles as resource persons. In addition, NPC and its members issued more than 80 commentaries and media releases that were published in the national and international media.

The strengthening of our partners requires NPC's own strengthening and continued support by our members, partners and donors. The challenges we face are great. There are human rights violations and acts of impunity taking place daily. We will join other organisations to save our country from the culture of abuse of power and fear that arises from it. The international community has been and remains an important contributor to the peace and reconciliation process in Sri Lanka. We place on record the gratitude of NPC to our donors, especially to the Royal Norwegian Embassy our core donor for many years, and to the EU and CAFOD who are supporting on going projects.

Jehan Perera
Executive Director
on behalf of Board of Directors

Activities and Achievements

Humanitarian Solutions through Multi-Religious Cooperation

With the help of the European Union (EU), NPC implemented a project to promote cooperation among multi-religious communities in Sri Lanka, focusing on groups who have been divided by the conflict. The overall objective of this project was to create peaceful relations between all communities in Sri Lanka's diverse population, contributing to a regenerated society in a post-war context. It was also anticipated to promote multi-religious community responsiveness of groups who have been polarised by the conflict and enable them to find appropriate humanitarian solutions to care for conflict-affected women and children.

Accordingly, in each target area, a District Level Inter-Religious Committee (DIRC) was established and strengthened in close cooperation with representatives from local NGOs, CBOs, civic and community institutions, and government.

DIRCs are active in 12 districts and have direct access to grassroots communities, enabling them to understand and voice their concerns. The committee members have contacts with higher-level religious leaders and those with political command, and are in a position to inform and influence them. By having a structure so closely tied to grassroots organising structure, NPC has been able to empower local CBO leaders and maintain a bottom up approach in finding solutions to humanitarian needs through a multi-religious perspective.

National Peace Secretariat Established

NPC took the initiative to establish the National Peace Secretariat in February 2011. Currently the secretariat consists of 24 members; 12 religious leaders representing each DIRC, 3 national level religious leaders, 1 representative from the business community, 3 national level NGO representatives and 2 NPC representatives. Since its inception, 6 meetings have been conducted. NPC is instrumental in obtaining high-level support and connecting grassroots, district level, provincial and national level religious leaders.

12 District Level Inter-Religious Committees (DIRCs) Established

Following the establishment of the DIRCs, 116 Action Committee meetings were held in all 12 districts since the beginning of the year. These committee meetings helped in building mutual understanding among religious and CBO leaders in working towards the overall objective of finding appropriate humanitarian solutions to care for conflict-affected women and children and building peaceful relations between multi-religious communities. Each DIRC has identified issues in their respective districts, which have been referred to the relevant government officials and have obtained fruitful results.

“As a Roman Catholic and a member of the inter-religious council, I was unaware of the importance and value of other religions prior to joining the programme. However after joining the council I began to appreciate the teachings of other religions. I started reading books on Buddhism. I even read the Koran.”
Elizabeth Nawaratne, DIRC, Puttalam



Provincial Level Dialogue to Promote Peace and Unity Facilitated

Three Provincial level councils were established during the year. The councils are based in North, East and South with four districts in each. The Northern provincial council consists of Jaffna, Puttalam, Vavuniya and Mannar districts. The Southern provincial council includes Anuradhapura, Kurunegala, Galle and Matara districts. The Eastern provincial council consists of Batticaloa, Ampara, Trincomalee and Polonnaruwa districts. Each council has 60 members, out of which 20 to 21 members comprise a committee that meets every two months.

“When we were discussing conflict resolution, we discussed the nature of the conflict, its various stages and how we, as efficient mediators, could resolve conflicts. I believe that these discussions helped us immensely in our private life and official activities.” Mrs Kumudini Abeywickrema, former director, Southern Provincial Council

Exposure Visits

Three exposure visits took place during 2011. The first was from South to East, the second from South to North and the last one was from North to South. These visits enabled members from various ethnic groups and districts to build a better understanding of one another's cultures and religious beliefs. While experiencing the local hospitality, many discovered that just as in the North and East of the island, people in the south also faced similar issues such as unemployment, alcoholism and violence against women.

"A group of 47 people from Galle attended a traditional ceremony of the daughter of Mr Dharmaraj, the District Coordinator of Jaffna DIRC. An adult of this house said that this was the first time that such a large group of Sinhala people participated in a ceremony of this kind. That was a valuable experience for those who participated from the South as they got the opportunity to learn about the customs and rituals of the North." Mr K. Welikala, DIRC Galle.

The exposure visits to the South received positive feedback from the government while visits to the North and the East enabled the DIRCs to interact with government officials and armed forces in a more constructive and amicable way.

The visits have brought about attitudinal changes that are evident in most of the clergy and CBO leaders of the DIRCs. This is reflected in joint initiatives they have been engaging in with each other since the commencement of the project. The project has progressed towards the goal of sustainability due to the greater bond of understanding and trust between the members of the inter-religious councils. It is anticipated that these new relationships would continue beyond the project. In addition, the DIRCs are actively identifying ways and means to continue their work in the post-project period.

Relationships Built to Facilitate Dialogue and Create Mutual Understanding

During the past year, the 12 DIRCs showed evidence of better relationships built both formally and informally through the implementation of activities such as distributing donations to flood-affected victims in the North and the East. In the same year the four DIRCs in the Northern provincial council wrote a letter addressed to the Northern Province Governor with recommendations and about the present situation in the district.

The issues identified were missing handicrafts and items of worship from the temples and the kovils in Jaffna district and issues relating to widowed women and war-affected women and children. The 12 DIRCs identified issues pertaining to their respective districts

and had discussions with both the government and the private sector in finding solutions. The DIRC members collaborated with the local CBOs as well in effectively supporting the conflict-affected women and children in the districts.

Follow up Publications in National Media

Updates on DIRC meetings, including humanitarian activities carried out, were regularly published in Thulawa (the newspaper publication of NPC and NPC website). Articles appeared in the mainstream newspapers in all three languages. Provincial journalists who are also members of the DIRCs wrote most of these published articles. The comments received about the articles from members and non-members will be used as inputs to prepare a manifesto.

Translation of Newspaper Articles and Media Releases

Over 100 political commentaries and media releases written in English were translated into Sinhala and Tamil and published in the mass media. These writings constituted an important aspect of NPC's advocacy programme. They were also transmitted to the international community through the World Wide Web.

Publication and Dissemination of Thulawa Newspaper

The Thulawa newspaper is produced by NPC for circulation among its members, participants in programmes, community leaders and to public libraries. It contains articles and analyses that explain current political affairs in the light of values of peace, justice and reconciliation. It also gives information about NPC's field activities and the response to them. In 2011 the paper was disseminated widely among its target audience. Thulawa is one of the main activities of the media section. It functions under Social Media and Citizenship Media concepts.



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සාමයක් | 08/07/2011

Thulawa can be considered as a paper that introduced a new dimension to the citizenship media of the country. Any citizen can contribute articles to this paper. It gives priority to articles on media pluralism, human rights and devolution of power that are of media value. Journalists are not paid for their articles, so they write on a voluntary basis, which is a victory for citizenship media in Sri Lanka.

The Thulawa newspaper does the important task of translating English and Tamil articles that are not translated into Sinhala by newspapers set on political and nationalist agendas. It gives publicity to programmes and activities of NPC and covers the programmes of other NGOs. As a result Thulawa has become popular among civil society organisations and has set up a powerful network of supporters. Thulawa is distributed among 800 public libraries, universities, national schools, pirivenas and media organisation libraries. The paper is also distributed at various programmes conducted by NPC and NGOs.

Workshops on Media Pluralism for University Students

A series of workshops was organised and conducted by NPC for university students to raise awareness on media pluralism. The closure of universities due to a strike by university lecturers provided an opportunity for NPC to reach out to the university community. The main objective of these workshops was to increase the awareness on correct media usage to avoid antagonising any one religion, ethnic group or nationality. The need to use the media responsibly and give equal treatment to all was emphasised during the workshops. The target audience was university students who study the media as their main subject.

Separate one-day workshops were organised for selected students from the University of Peradeniya, Sripali Campus, University of Kelaniya, University of Colombo and Eastern University in Oluvil, Ampara. In order to maintain a link between the students who participated and as a follow up and sustainability measure, students initiated and launched a monthly news bulletin called Mihasa in which they used the concepts of media pluralism.

Workshop on Martin Luther King for University Students

A 5-day residential workshop was organised and conducted by NPC on Martin Luther King for students from the universities of Kelaniya, Peradeniya, Rajarata, Eastern and Sripali. One of the main objectives was to create solidarity and links among university students. When the University Grants Commission conducted a training workshop on Non-Violent Communication in July 2011, selectors gave preference to students who had attended the Martin Luther King training. This project was undertaken with support from the US embassy in Sri Lanka

Rotary Club Scholarships for University Students

The Rotary Club of Carmarthan (Wales) reached an agreement with NPC to support students from the estate sector to complete their university studies. The first group of three students was selected after a competitive process that included an application advertised in newspapers. More students will be added in future years.

Shramadana for Peaceful Resolution of Disputes

A shramadana (work camp) was organised with the aim of settling a dispute between Sinhala and Tamil communities in Bandarawela. Both communities realised their common interests and were peaceful and cooperative afterwards.



Mobile Services to Issue Important Documents

A mobile service was organised by NPC to issue national identity cards and birth certificates to estate workers in the Edurapola estate in Kegalle. This was instrumental in narrowing the gap between government officers and estate workers, along with other communities. In turn it led to the minimising of misunderstandings, which paved the way for building trust and friendship.

Engagement with Social Sectors

North-South Cultural Programmes Initiated

A member of the Matara DAC went to Jaffna to discuss a North-South cultural programme with government officials and a Jaffna Municipal Councillor. He was supported by a member of the Jaffna DAC.

Networking for Regional Peace Promotion Activities

Through the networks already created and developed, activists in different districts and provinces organised and participated in peace promotion and other relevant peace building activities.



Strengthening of Local NGO Consortiums

Jeewashakti Foundation in Matara was supported by NPC to initiate and conduct dialogues with local governments on good governance. These dialogues, which were conducted with the participation of local government members and community leaders, provided support to local CBOs in Matara and made them understand that their role was not only to vote but also to influence the representatives to deliver a better public service. The politicians who participated accepted that they had to maintain better relationships with the public after they were elected.

Election Monitoring in the North

The conduct of the local government elections in the Northern Province after many years was an occasion to support civil society groups involved in the democratic process. NPC sent a team consisting of its Governing Council members and staff to monitor the elections in Jaffna and Killinochchi districts. NPC team worked in collaboration with PAFFREL, an experienced election monitoring body in Sri Lanka.

Support to National Integration Movement

NPC has a policy of collaborating with like-minded state and government institutions with similar objectives of promoting social and national integration. The Minister of National Languages and Social Integration requested NPC's support for the formation of a movement for the development of social integration. The initiatives and necessary support was provided by NPC to the ministry.

Celebration of Teacher's Day and Children's Day

The Free Trade Union Development Centre organised a multi-cultural event attended by over 700 children and adults from different multi-ethnic regions of the country. The theme of the day's programme was the importance of human rights in upholding children's rights. By participating in this event, children from different districts met each other, exchanged experiences and identified common issues. The children and adults who took part in this activity engaged in a multi-cultural experience while gaining some insight on the value of human rights and children's rights.

Celebration of International Human Rights Day

NCP participated in a programme in Vavuniya organised by the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation of Jaffna on December 10. This programme involved school children from the North and South meeting and getting to know each other. It was also a model for collaborative work with governmental ministries and agencies.

Advocacy Programme

The National Peace Council has undertaken a regular programme advocating on peace, reconciliation and human rights, which has been financed by core funds received from the Royal Norwegian Embassy.

A series of key activities were undertaken, including placing newspaper articles in the print media in English, Sinhala and Tamil; producing a newspaper and publications; press releases; conducting workshops on peace and reconciliation; radio and television interviews, and lecturing in the local universities on peace and reconciliation. The programme unit has quantified the value of the advocacy programme at more than Rs. 25 million in 2011 with regard to national newspaper publicity alone.

“After participating in the workshop on media pluralism organised by NPC, I heard that some people, including a Muslim businessman, was digging up an archaeological site where there was a Buddhist temple. If I wrote the story with the headline ‘Muslim businessman behind bulldozing of Buddhist archaeological remains’ it would get good publicity in Colombo and around the country. But I did not report the news the way I would have done before because my attitude had changed. Instead, realising that it was a matter of money and not race or religion, I mentioned only the destruction caused by digging and avoided connecting it to a religion. I avoided the words ‘Muslim businessman’ and confined myself only to the incident.”
Saman Manikka Arachchi, Regional Journalist, Ampara District

NPC’s media unit contributed regularly to the national debate on peace and reconciliation and human rights in the print and electronic media through interviews with international media including BBC, Al Jazeera, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and Voice of America. These interventions have given NPC a public profile both nationally and internationally. Electronic and print media covered NPC events and featured NPC press releases.

Exposure visits were conducted taking people from North to South and vice versa. Workshops were held at the South Eastern, Peradeniya and Colombo Universities on media pluralism and reconciliation, which spread the message to 500 beneficiaries who then passed it on to many others. NPC staff participated in picketing and demonstrations promoting media freedom, women’s rights and a host of similar issues. NPC staff attended seminars conducted by Centre for Policy Alternatives, Platform for Freedom, Centre for Society and Religion, and Women and Media Collective on topics associated with peace, reconciliation and human rights.

NPC staff such as the Media Coordinator regularly lectured at universities on undergraduate degree programmes including the Mass Media Degree programme at the University of Colombo. NPC staff also guided university students completing their final year thesis at

local and foreign universities. NPC published its monthly newspaper featuring articles on peace, reconciliation and human rights, which was circulated to all public libraries in the country, to peace and human rights activists, influential politicians and public figures. During the year NPC published several books on peace, reconciliation and human rights. The impact of the advocacy programme is that the public and the politicians will value the importance of creating an environment to promote reconciliation as well as to recognise the importance upholding human rights in the country.

Special Events

Citizens Peace Award 2011

The Citizens Peace Award was established in 2010 by NPC to honour and encourage those individuals in civil society who have demonstrated courage and consistency in the protection of and respect for human rights; peaceful settlement of disputes and promoting increased understanding between and among communities. During the selection process other criteria considered included work in hostile conditions, sacrifices made, and being a Sri Lankan citizen working within Sri Lanka. The Citizens Peace Award for 2010 was awarded to Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Alternatives. Dr. Saravanamuttu was selected from 52 nominations received after the award was announced in November 2010.



Capacity Building for NPC Staff Training on Non-Violent Communication

As part of its capacity building programme for staff, NPC commissioned training by the Centre for Non-Violent Communication. The training involved identifying relevant non-violent responses to conflict situations, conducting activities in a conflict-sensitive manner and engaging in inter-personal dispute resolution.

SELECTED MEDIA RELEASES

EXCERPTS FROM SELECTED NPC MEDIA RELEASES IN 2011

(All media releases are to be found on the NPC website www.peace-srilanka.org. The media releases have been published in national newspapers, including the Daily Mirror, Island and Sunday Leader, and on several websites including TransCurrents.com, www.srilankandiaspora.com/blog, www.uktamilnews.com, Colombotelegraph.com)

APPEAL TO MEDIA REGARDING CRITIQUES ABOUT NGOS

In recent months there has been a systematic campaign in sections of the media to bring a few NGOs that work in the areas of human rights, governance, peace and reconciliation into public disrepute...The National Peace Council (NPC) is one of the NGOs that have been singled out for this unfavourable commentary...We are also pleased to cooperate with the government and any other institution to create a more just society in which there is reconciliation and inter ethnic harmony.

12.04.11

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION IS A RIGHT IN THE NORTH AS ELSEWHERE

The physical attack of those attending a TNA election meeting in Jaffna ahead of local government elections to be held on July 23 has attracted considerable criticism and condemnation...The use of force against citizens engaging in lawful political activity is totally unacceptable.

24.06.11

FULL ACCOUNTING TO DEAL WITH WAR CRIMES CHALLENGES

The final phase of the war that saw much suffering and death of civilians was due to the fact that the LTTE used civilians as human shields, which trapped them in increasingly shrinking areas they controlled...Despite the above, as a Sri Lankan civil society organization, the National Peace Council believes that Sri Lanka has obligations towards its own citizens regardless of international behaviour and failures.

12.10.11

NORWEGIAN EVALUATION REPORT ON THE BREAKDOWN OF THE PEACE PROCESS IS WORTHY OF STUDY TO ASCERTAIN THE LESSONS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION

The Norwegian government's effort to facilitate a peace process in the period 2002-06 was the last attempt to achieve peace through peaceful means. The National Peace Council supported this final effort...Now that the war is over, we urge Norway and the international community to support Sri Lanka to achieve a political solution and post-war development.

18.11.11

GOVERNMENTAL FOLLOW UP TO LLRC REPORT IS IMPORTANT

The final report of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission appointed by President Mahinda Rajapaksa has drawn a mixed reaction...In this context, the National Peace Council reiterates our call for the appointment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to go more deeply into the entire tragedy of the war to ensure that victims are heard, their grievances addressed, compensation given and perpetrators identified and provided with an opportunity for repentance and amnesty.

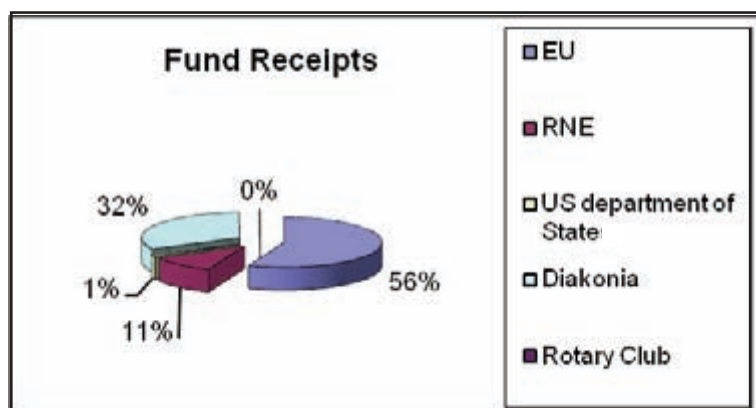
23.12.11

FINANCE

Financial Review 2011

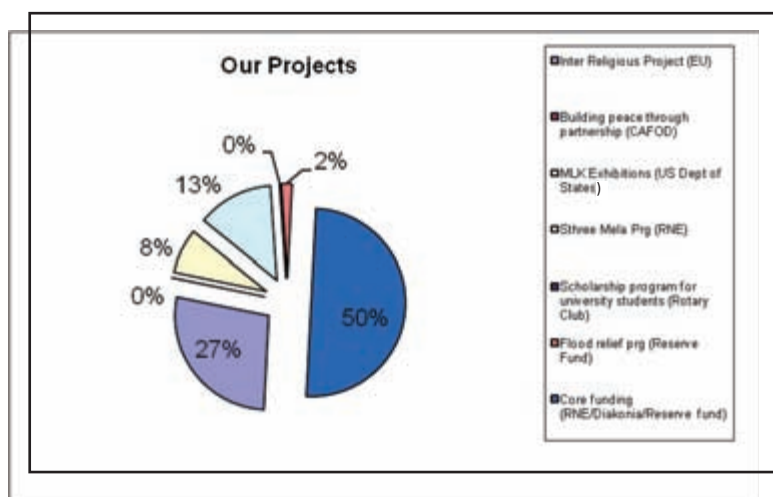
Fund Receipts

Donor Agency	Amount	%
EU	33,735,340.00	55.92
RNE	6,440,000.00	10.68
US State Department	609,897.00	1.01
Diakonia	19,469,494.00	32.27
Rotary Club	69,426.00	0.12
	60,324,157.00	100.00



Our Projects

Project Title	Amount (Rs)	%
Inter-Religious Project (EU)	13,627,144.00	27.36
Building Peace Through Partnership (CAFOD)	16,283.00	0.03
MLK Exhibitions (US Dept of State)	3,807,908.00	7.65
Sthree Mela Prg (RNE)	6,486,428.00	13.02
Scholarship program for university students (Rotary Club)	35,408.00	0.07
Flood relief prg (Reserve Fund)	921,212.00	1.85
Core funding (RNE/Diakonia /Reserve fund)	24,911,868.00	50.02
	49,806,251.00	100.00



Annual Report

2011

The National
Peace Council
of Sri Lanka

WAY FORWARD

The 19th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva gave a clear indication of the expectations of the international community from the Sri Lankan government. The main thrust of the resolution passed on that occasion was that the Sri Lankan government should implement the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission.

A full effort by civil society is needed at this time to ensure that what transpired in Geneva becomes a positive opportunity for the political transformation of the country. Due to interest of the more active sections of civil society to learn about the LLRC, there has been a revival of activism in those civic groups that are engaged in public education and awareness creation. However, the current priorities of the Sri Lankan government do not correspond to these expectations.

The vision of NCP is a just and peaceful country in which freedom, human and democratic rights of all people are assured. Our mission is to work in partnership with different target groups to educate, mobilise and advocate to build a society of rights-conscious citizens, and a political culture that enables a political solution to the ethnic conflict and equal opportunities for all.

Going beyond investigations and consultative discussions to actually bring an end to the culture of impunity and ensure the protection of human rights will require strengthening the country's core democratic institutions on the lines set out in the LLRC report.

Our aspiration was and remains to provide assistance to outreach and public education activities that reach the communities at the grassroots level so that they will make new demands on their elected representatives to enable social and political transformation in Sri Lanka.

Our intention in the coming period is engage in the groundwork for the full implementation of the LLRC recommendations in the context of international standards and considerations of transitional justice.

