

The EU Indo-Pacific Strategy through Sri Lanka's Lens: Opportunities for Co-operation and Partnership

Colombo, 27 January, 2022



*Hosted by
the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI)*





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About this Conference

Over the last few years, geopolitical competition has intensified in the region of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Taking these new dynamics into account, the European Union (EU) launched its strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in September 2021. The EU approach is designed to foster a rules-based international order, a level playing field, as well as an open and fair environment for trade and investment, tackling climate change and supporting connectivity with the EU. It is assumed that the rules-based international order refers to the application of customary international law and treaties to which a state has become a party through ratification or accession. In this context, seven priority areas are highlighted for EU action: sustainable and inclusive prosperity, green transition, ocean governance, digital governance and partnerships, connectivity, security and defence and human security. This strategy sets the framework for enhanced cooperation of the EU with the players of the Indo-Pacific region, States and regional organisations. Several states, including three EU member states and regional organisations had already embraced the “Indo-Pacific” as a concept to respond to new geopolitical and geo-economic dynamics.

To address the strategy’s relevance for Sri Lanka, the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI) in partnership with the EU Delegation to Sri Lanka and the Maldives organised a half-day conference in Colombo on 27 January, 2022. The conference included an opening plenary session with speeches by the following dignitaries;

- ❖ Hon. Prof.G.L. Peries, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka
- ❖ Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister for Regional Cooperation
- ❖ EU’s Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific, Dr. Gabriele Visentin
- ❖ H.E. Denis Chaibi, Ambassador for the Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- ❖ Amb. D.L. Mendis, Executive Director of the LKI.

The opening session was followed by three panel discussions on the following themes:

1. Sri Lanka’s and EU’s Positioning within Geopolitical Shifts in the Indo-Pacific
2. Trade, Connectivity and Green Recovery as Strategic Tools: Challenges and Opportunities for Sri Lanka and the EU
3. EU and Sri Lanka for Sustainable Ocean Governance

The conference was also attended by the following resident Heads of Missions of the EU members states;

- ❖ H.E.Eric Lavertu, Ambassador of the French Republic to Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- ❖ H.E. Tanja Gonggrijp, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- ❖ H.E. Ambassador Holger Seubert, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- ❖ Mr. Victor Chiujdea, Chargé d’affaires, Romanian Embassy in Sri Lanka

The panellists included leading experts from Sri Lanka and EU member states with specialisations in economics and trade, cyber policy, security studies, and international law. The conference was held as a hybrid event, with a mixture of both physical and virtual participants. Other members of the Board of Management of LKI including Ms. Suganthi Kadirgamar were also present.

THE EU INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY THROUGH SRI LANKA'S LENS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Thursday, 27 January 2022

Opening Ceremony

13:00 -13:10	National Anthems and Lighting of the Oil Lamp
13:10 -13:15	Welcome remarks by Amb. D.L. Mendis, Executive Director, LKI
13:15 -13:20	Opening remarks by H.E. Denis Chaibi, Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives
13:20 -13:35	Presentation by H.E. Gabriele Visentin, EU Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific
13:35 -13:45	Keynote Address by Hon. Prof. G.L. Peiris, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka

Panel One: *Sri Lanka's and EU's Positioning within geopolitical shifts in the Indo-Pacific*

Panel Chair - Hon. Prof. G.L. Peiris, Foreign Minister

13:50 -14:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Frederic Grare, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)• Prof. Rohan Gunaratna, Director General, Institute of National Security Studies (INSS)• Amb. Dr. Jasper Wieck, Special Representative of the Federal Government for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Director for South Asia and Indo-Pacific Policy, German Federal Foreign Office• Dr. Harinda Vidanage, Head of Department, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University• Dr. Alice Ekman, Senior Research Fellow, EU Institute of Security Studies (EUISS)
14:50 -15:05	Q & A

Panel Two: *Trade, Connectivity and Green Recovery as Strategic Tools: Challenges and Opportunities for Sri Lanka and the EU*

Panel Chair - Prof. Adml. Jayanath Colombage, Foreign Secretary

15:10 -16:10

- H.E. Tanja Gonggrijp, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Ms. Hasanthi Dissanayake, Additional Secretary, Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change
- Mr. Thorsten Bargfrede, Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- Dr. Asanka Wijesinghe, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies
- Dr. Maaïke Okano Heijmans, Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael

16:10 -16:25

Q & A

Panel Three: *EU and Sri Lanka Efforts for Sustainable Ocean Governance*

Presentations [*Security and Safety, International Conventions, IUU*]

Panel Chair - Amb. D.L. Mendis, Executive Director, LKI

17:00 -18:00

- H.E. Eric Lavertu, Ambassador of the French Republic to Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- Adml. Prof. Jayanath Colombage, Foreign Secretary
- Dr. Arron N. Honniball, Senior Research Fellow, Max Planck Foundation on UNCLOS and Rule of Law.
- Mr. Chandaka Jayasundere, P.C., Expert Marine Pollution and IUU.
- Ms. Theresa Winter, Manager Defence and Security Policy, Friedrich Naumann Foundation

18:00 -18:15

Q & A

Closing Session

18:15 -18:20

- Vote of Thanks, Mr. Chathuka Senanayake, Director, LKI

Speeches from the Opening Session





Amb. D.L. Mendis

Executive Director, Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI)

Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Dr. G. L. Peiris, MP
Foreign Secretary, Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage
Excellencies, Distinguished Invitees, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasant duty to warmly welcome Hon. Prof. G. L. Peiris, distinguished Foreign Minister and a legal luminary to give the Keynote Address at this seminar. It is also my pleasant duty to welcome Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage, who had a distinguished career as the Navy Commander, and an expert on matters relating to the Law of the Sea.

It is my pleasant duty to welcome His Excellency Gabrielle Vicentin, Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific who will deliver his Address on the EU Indo-Pacific Strategy for cooperation and partnerships. I also welcome His Excellency Denis Chaibi, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives to make the opening remarks at this Seminar and Their Excellencies from France, Germany and the Kingdom of The Netherlands.

It is also my duty to welcome the Board of Management of the LKI which includes Mrs. Suganthi Kadirgamar, wife of late Foreign Minister in whose name and honour this Institution is established. I wish to warmly welcome the Distinguished Speakers from Sri Lanka and abroad, namely, Dr. Frederic Grare, Dr. Alice Ekman, Prof. Rohan Gunaratna, Ambassador Dr. Jasper Wieck, Dr. Harinda Vidanage, Her Excellency Tanja Gonggrijp, Mr. Thorsten Bargfrede, Dr. Maaïke Okano Heijmans, Additional Secretary Ms. Hasanthi Dissanayake, Dr. Asanka Wijesinghe, His Excellency Eric Lavertu, Dr. Aaron Hanibol, Ms. Theresa Winter, President's Counsel Mr. Chandaka Jayasundera,

LKI is happy to co-sponsor this seminar with the EU and Frederic Naumann Stiftung. In my view, the EU Strategy for the Indo-Pacific region is a game-changer for the following 3 reasons –

Firstly, the EU has adopted a multilateral and inclusive approach to resolve a myriad of challenges and problems facing the Indo-Pacific region.

Secondly, the EU is willing to share her expertise and establish partnerships in the following seven areas:

1. Sustainable and inclusive prosperity
2. Green transition
3. Ocean Governance
4. Digital Governance and Partnerships
5. Connectivity
6. Security and Defence
7. Human Security

Thirdly, the EU is willing to share her expertise to promote a rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. EU is a rule-based integrated economic organization with a single market and economy. It is a model *sui generis*. There is no other model like it in the world. Rule-based order will allow small States to take up legal matters before ITLOS and ICJ, when such legal matters cannot be easily resolved by negotiations or arbitration. In this context, International Law will become the language of International Relations.

We welcome the initiative taken by the EU to unveil the Indo-Pacific Strategy for the benefit of Sri Lanka at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute. I also thank everyone attending this Seminar/Webinar in person or virtually.



H.E. Denis Chaibi
Ambassador, European Union Delegation to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

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Thank you Amb. Mendis. Foreign Minister Peiris, Foreign Secretary Colombage, Executive Director Amb. Mendis, fellow ambassadors, Director South Asia Indo-Pacific Dr. Wieck, Director of the Institute Senanayake, Director of the Institute of National Security Studies, Director of Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, distinguished academics, guests, friends:

It is a true pleasure to be here at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute. First of all, the EU has a long affiliation with the name Kadirgamar. Four ambassadors ago, the Chief of Mission was Julian Wilson, a colleague who unfortunately passed away last year, and when he arrived, he had a long conversation with Mrs. Kadirgamar, whom I thank very much for gracing us with her presence. And this set of conversations really helped to shape the perception of Sri Lanka and the bonds between Sri Lanka and the EU. I am very proud to be here and continue this tradition and this association with your name.

We are also very proud to be associated with the institute and all credits go to Mrs Anne Vaugier Chatterjee and M Thorsten Bargfrede for having had a vision of a series of conferences with the LKI. So, a year ago, we had a conference on maritime security that was under the patronage of Admiral Colombage, and now we are continuing with the Indo-Pacific. I think we will continue this practice also in the coming month. This partnership, which is a 1.5 track event, is something we want to all foster. These discussions fall into a formal dialogue that will feed the next Joint Commission between Sri Lanka and the EU. It also allows the EU Member States to collectively bring the strategy to the Sri Lankan authorities. Fellow ambassadors and myself are honoured to have the foreign minister and the foreign secretary and the state minister present here, and chairing the various sessions. We also have the pleasure to welcome our Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific, Mr Visentin. He does not have the fantastic vantage point of coming from an island in the Indian Ocean, but he comes from the region of Italy that was the most open to the Indian Ocean because he comes from Treviso, close to Venice.

I think if I were to name one early visitor who put Ceylon on the map, then it would be Marco Polo, Mr Visentin's fellow Italian. I will use a story about Marco Polo to illustrate that Mr Visentin is here to explain the cooperative approach of the EU and to show full respect for what he will learn here this afternoon. Marco Polo came to the island after a seventeen-year sojourn in China and after facing many ordeals to his fleet and the loss of his crew, finally making his way to Ceylon. It was a peaceful stop on his way back to Europe and he was with the Persian King, an ally of the Great Khan. It turned out that the Great Khan, on hearing that Ceylon had the world's best rubies, was determined to buy them, in particular the biggest one belonging to the King of Ceylon. The Great Khan even promised a ransom of a city in exchange for that rare gem. But the king of Ceylon said that on no account would he sell it as it was an heirloom inherited from his ancestors. I wish you good deliberations. Thank you

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H.E Gabriele Visentin European Union Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific

Minister, Excellencies, Distinguished guests;

I am particularly glad to be here in Sri Lanka as my first mission in person in the function of special envoy of the EU for the Indo-Pacific. This is surely not a coincidence. Obviously, there is the geographic dimension, Sri Lanka is at the heart of the Indo Pacific, just look at the map. But there is much more than this. Notably, the current state of play in the European Union – Sri Lanka relations.

The EU Sri Lanka relations have come a long way. Over the years we have managed to build a deep constructive partnership also on the basis that Sri Lanka is definitely the oldest democracy in the region, and that helps a lot among like-minded partners. This relationship has been changing over the years from one focus on development cooperation to an old encompassing relation of equal partners with many interests and challenges. From this perspective the Indo-Pacific strategy or the European Union offers a new dimension from which both the EU and Sri Lanka can fully benefit. And it relates also to many joint initiatives that are already underway. In your introduction, Ambassador Mendis, you reminded us that the European Strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific was published in September 2021, but this is the end of a process which started with our Member States. Here I would like to thank, for their presence but also for having initiated the reflection in the EU about Indo-Pacific, the three member states which have their own Indo-Pacific strategy. So, I say it from left to right, not specifically in protocol order, to the French representative, the Dutch representative and the German representative. So, these three Member States came out with their own views for the Indo-Pacific and this nourished the debate at the European level.

In April 2021, all Foreign Ministers of the EU decided to have an EU Indo-Pacific Strategy and asked the High Representative Borrell and the Commission to produce the document you just mentioned. So, the EU Indo-Pacific Strategy published in September is the result of an ongoing reflection and it has the full endorsement of all the EU Member States. This is very important because we always say that the Indo-Pacific Strategy is not just the EU's initiative but it is a Team Europe initiative. It is the endeavour of EU institutions and also the Member States. And the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the EU will not be able to bear fruit or be fully implemented unless the Member States of the EU fully endorse and actively contribute to its implementation. So why this strategy? The Indo-Pacific is not only the future but it is already the present. It is where the world centre of gravity already is. Both in geo-economic and geo-political terms. Some figures: the Indo-Pacific creates 60% of global GDP and 2/3 of global growth. It is the second largest destination for EU exports and the home to four of the top EU trading partners. And by 2030, more than two billion of people will join the middle class from this region. So, two billion people exiting poverty and joining the middle class will be based in the Indo-Pacific. However, in the middle of this positive dynamism, the regional order is increasingly challenged. The US-China geopolitical competition is intensifying and we see the consequences of this around the world, but most sharply in this region. There are conflicts or tensions over land and maritime borders and a certain lack of trust among the main players. As the EU, we have a vital interest that the regional order remains open and rules-based, and we have a big stake in the region's future and we

believe also a big contribution to make.

This is already recognised by our partners who view the EU as a trusted, consistent, and reliable interlocutor.

Like others, the EU recognises Sri Lanka's strategic importance in the Indian Ocean, which is a space not just of geopolitical importance for the region but also for global international trade. For this a multilateral approach can guarantee stability through the strengthening of international rules-based order including of course, the maritime sphere. These, in a nutshell, are the reasons why we want to step up our Indo-Pacific engagement and be visible on it. Concretely, Ambassador Mendis, you reminded that, but let me stress that once again, we have identified seven priority areas for cooperation. Seven pillars you could call them. Sustainable and inclusive prosperity with all the economic dimension and the trade dimension of our relations. The Green Transition, this is a global challenge which requires global answers. Ocean governance is paramount including its security. Digital governance and partnerships, be it on digital or even in research and development issues. We have a big chapter on connectivity which will probably be the backbone of our cooperation in the area. And then last but not least, after human security, with the response to the pandemic and the enforcement of the health care sectors, we have a chapter on security and defence. I would really like to stress the importance of this chapter because it is the first time that we have a security and defence dimension in our communication of the Commission and this goes very much in hand with all I said before. The free and open Indo-Pacific does not contain only an economic dimension but it has to continue as well a guarantee for international rules-based order and the stress that we put on the security is evidence of this aim.

So, a few words without going into too much detail on this chapter. The EU is, remains and will be even more, if you allow me to say, a connectivity superpower. We favour a sustainable and rules-based approach to connectivity. We want to build links but not dependencies and we have recently published a policy document on connectivity which is called 'Global Gateways' and there the European idea to connectivity is spelled out. The European project of connectivity consists of a blend of public-private contribution, complemented with financial institutions but above all based on, we call it, bankability or sustainability or financial feasibility of the project in the long run. The aim of this concept, once again I repeat myself, is to build links but not dependencies. When it comes to investment and financing, popular perceptions and reality, allow me to say, are two different things. So let me recall the EU is and remains the largest global investor with a total stock of 11.6 trillion Euro compared to US 6.8 trillion, China 1.9 trillion and Japan 1.5 trillion. Our markets, the EU market is open and our development assistance is large. The EU is the largest development donor in the world and we are ready to continue on that path of openness and cooperation with our Asian partners. And here I would like to stress the fact that the EU has an annual deficit in trade with Sri Lanka over 2 billion Euro. This shows the evidence of the goodwill when we talk about cooperation and openness of the market. We will also deepen our security engagement in and with Asia seeking to make that cooperation become as concrete as possible. For example, by strengthening the capacity of partners on maritime and cyber security. Final point but probably the most important, our strategy is inclusive of all our partners wishing to cooperate with the EU. It stretches from East Africa to the Pacific and does include China. On many areas such as climate and biodiversity for instance, China's cooperation is essential. Our strategy with everybody is one of cooperation and not of confrontation. The EU does not seek to take sides or to join as an additional competitor in the power game in the region. But on the contrary, the aim is to build bridges and strengthen the resilience of our partners. The EU strategy on the Indo-Pacific is an open invitation to our partners in the region to dialogue and to address the issues at stake upholding international law and defending values and principles to which we are committed with democracy and human rights at the forefront. So, after this long speech I could have probably condensed it all in one sentence which is the overall motto of the EU for the Indo-Pacific: cooperate whenever possible, but protect whenever necessary. And on this I thank you very much for your attention, and I look forward to the debate.

Thank you.

Keynote Address



Hon. Prof. G.L. Peries
Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka

My colleague, the honourable minister for regional cooperation Tharaka Balasuriya. Your excellency Denis Chaibi head of delegation of the European Union. Your excellency Gabriel Visentin, the special representative of the European Union for indo-pacific cooperation. Ambassador Laksiri Mendis, all ambassadors representing countries of the European Union. Mrs Suganthie Kadirgamar, Admiral Jayanath Colombage, Secretary to our ministry, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The European Union is probably one region of the world with which my country has the most intimate connections in terms of culture, education, language, entrepreneurs, business chambers. In all these different sectors, there is a very proximate affinity between Sri Lanka and countries comprising the EU, European Union. However, as far as Maritime activities are concerned, I think the relationship has not been developed to its optimum level.

There is much that can be accomplished with regard to cooperation in respect of ocean matters. It is therefore, very timely and appropriate that the European Union should turn its attention to a properly coordinated and structured strategy. Horizon Europe represents such a systematic, methodical effort and it is buttressed by a global approach which has been designed by countries of the European Union to impact content and substance to the ideals contained in Horizon Europe.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the German frigate Bayern called at the port of Colombo and I was rather surprised to learn that it was only after 14 years that a frigate setting sail from Bremerhaven entered Sri Lanka's shores. Now that is not a very desirable state of things. As I explained to his excellency ambassador Holger Seubert when I had the privilege of participating in two very pleasant, delightful events I ventured to express the hope to the ambassador that there would be much more frequent and regular contact between my country and countries of the European Union. Now, this is not a fanciful expectation, it is a goal and an objective that is capable of realisation by pragmatic means.

The theme of the discussion today is opportunities for cooperation and partnership. Now the opportunities for cooperation and partnership are profuse and abundant. This is because the approach of the European Union and my own country Sri Lanka have much in common in terms of shared assumptions, values, and perspectives. I think that cooperation needs to be built upon two very substantial pillars and those two pillars are first of all an unyielding belief in a rules-based order which represents the cornerstone of the regime of the oceans. Not predicated upon muscle or force or threats but a regime that is solidly founded upon rules which are defined, rules which have specificity and some kind of mechanism albeit imperfect for the enforcement and the implementation of those rules. I would conceive of that as a sine qua non for a realistic order applicable to the oceans of the world.

The other pillar in my view is a belief in freedom of navigation through international waters. This must be a sacrosanct concept. There cannot be any caveats or provisors or exceptions and that is an indispensable prerequisite for the fullest development that the contemporary world possesses for development of trade and commerce.

So as far as these two pivots are concerned. There is total convergence between the thinking of my country and the aspirations of the EU. Now, the theme that is set out there, also talks of the EU Indo-Pacific strategy through Sri Lanka's Lens. That is you want some kind of Sri Lankan flavour or a Sri Lankan dimension to the very timely initiatives that the European Union proposes to embark upon in these waters. That is not at all surprising because I think it is not at all surprising, it is no exaggeration, it is no hyperbole to describe the Indo-Pacific region as the throbbing heart of the world's economy.

Now Sri Lanka, smaller as it is, we are not a global player, we are not a colossus on the international stage but I think we have a contribution to make in partnership with countries in the EU, European Union. The reason why I say this is because Sri Lanka is currently playing, I would say, almost a leadership role in regional organizations that are connected with ocean affairs. Sri Lanka is today the vice chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association. Sri Lanka is the chair currently of Bimstec and the Bay of Bengal initiative has been developed and taken forward within the framework of Bimstec. The IORA summit took place in Dhaka Bangladesh and several countries that are represented here were also represented at that summit. Many of our countries took part as dialogue partners.

About 5 weeks ago, His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa and I were invited to address the 5th session of the Indian Ocean conference that was held in Abu Dhabi, UAE. We have also been recognised as a blue charter champion within the commonwealth and there was widespread acclaim regarding Sri Lanka's accomplishments particularly with regard to mangroves and the COP 26 event which was the initiative of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Furthermore, there has been almost universal acknowledgement of Sri Lanka's achievements in terms of sustainable nitrogen management in Colombo. The Colombo Declaration on Sustainable Nitrogen Management has won universal acclaim. So Sri Lanka is a partner which has the capability to make a contribution of intrinsic value to the ideas that are embedded in Horizon Europe to which you seek to give expression in a vital part of the world's oceans. About 60,000 ships passed through these waters and almost a third of the world's oil supplies all pass through this region.

Now when it comes to these ideas and objectives looked at through a Sri Lankan prism, that is from a Sri Lankan lens, I would like to succinctly identify some of the more important areas of convergence. Let us take first of all your own ideology that is based upon certain cornerstones, certain foundations which are set out in a document.

One of the pivots that you have identified there is a green economy. This is an ideal to which Sri Lanka is irrevocably committed. Climate change, global warming, these are not matters of theoretical or conceptual interest to us being an island state, these are crucially relevant to Sri Lanka's survival. So global warming, climate change, the conservation of our ocean resources, in particular pragmatic means for overexploitation of fisheries resources, biodiversity, coral reefs, all of these are matters of immediate and pragmatic concern to this island. The green economy is also encapsulated in the traditions that my country has inherited from its forebears. It is part and parcel of our cherished convictions when the Arahata Mahinda, son of King emperor Dharmasoka of India came with the message of Buddhism to Sri Lanka, arrived in Mihintale and when he was on the Mihintale Rock, he saw King Devanampiya Tissa who was ruling the island at the time engaged in the hunting of the deer and Arahata Mahinda addressing King Devanampiya Tissa said,

"King, you are not the absolute owner of the environment, our valleys, our streams, our forests are not yours to do with as you please, you do not have unfettered, untrammelled uncontrolled over these assets. You are but a trustee and you are duty bound to hand over these assets to posterity in the same pristine condition to those who went before you."

Now this message was cited in the International Court of Justice by one of Sri Lanka's greatest jurists, the late Christie Weeramantry, his great contribution was to infuse into international jurisprudence certain values and tenets that were derived from Eastern religion and this was one of the seminal passages that he made use of in a celebrated judgement that he delivered in the Hague at the Court of Justice.

So as far as Sri Lanka is concerned, there is no antagonism between economic development on the one hand and the preservation of the environment on the other. They are complementary and this is in every sense of the word as they are not mutually incompatible. I would identify this as a principal ingredient of Sri Lanka's cultural traditions. So that administers a very powerful impetus to the idea of the green economy. Governments in Sri Lanka have never felt called upon to make a choice between economic development and the protection of the environment because we remain unyielding in our belief that economic development that is achieved at the expense of the degradation of the environment cannot but be short-term, it is temporary. It cannot stand the test of time. The green economy is something that we share very much with you. Ocean governance, all the matters that are connected with the security of the ocean, narcotics, all of these are matters which lend themselves very readily to fruitful collaboration between countries of the EU, European Union and Sri Lanka.

One of the other topics that you had spelt out in that document was inclusive economic development. Actually, the phrase was sustainable and inclusive economic development. We do not believe in the theory that was put forward by some conservative economists, particularly by theorists in the University of Chicago, that if there is economic development, if there is enhanced prosperity then automatically there will be a flow down of that prosperity to the grass-root level. Empirical experience, not only in Sri Lanka but in other parts of the world, demonstrates beyond refutation that this is not really valid. It does not happen like that. Indeed, it can aggravate tensions in society by enhancing the chasm between the haves and the have-nots with dire consequences for the stability of the social order. So, we believe in inclusive economic development.

About 10 years ago, the GDP of Colombo was about 7 times the GDP of other parts of Sri Lanka like Monoragala and Pollonaruwa. That is no longer the case. This is no small coincidence as this was achieved by deliberate government planning. So there again we have something that we share with you.

You then mentioned connectivity. Connectivity as I observed yesterday when I spoke at the Indian Republic Day event. Connectivity does not refer to connectivity between governments. If the word is to have real meaning and is to be in any way relevant to the day-to-day lives of ordinary people, it must have a broader, more wholesome definition. Connectivity means connectivity between people, between business people, academics, artists, film makers, dramatists, leaders of civil society in other countries. That is the holistic conception of connectivity to which my country subscribes. Anything else is truncated and incomplete.

The best form of connectivity is trade. The European Union has concluded a comprehensive air transport agreement with ASEAN, you have concluded that with ASEAN so connectivity is an evolving, dynamic concept to which you and I subscribe equally and emphatically.

With regard to human development, the Erasmus + program is an initiative from which Sri Lanka has greatly benefited. During the short period that I served as Minister of Education, last year, I had some fruitful discussions with countries of the EU and other countries. The Erasmus + initiative is something of real value and relevance to Sri Lanka. Through the COVAX program, you were responsible for making life saving vaccines available to less affluent populations in different parts of the world. Many other things that are subsumed in these concepts are also embodied in Horizon Europe. Cyber security, for example, sharing of information with regard to counter terrorism. So all these areas straddle the entire spectrum of human development. These refer to matters which have the greatest immediacy and urgency in our time.

This initiative is preeminent among what we and you can do together. So, these are the reasons, your excellencies, the government of Sri Lanka is particularly happy about your choice of priorities, your identification of ocean cooperation as a very productive field in which we can work together. I commend your initiative in sending very high officials from Brussels to participate at this seminar at the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute. I assure you that you have our wholehearted support from the government of Sri Lanka and that we shall work very closely with you to take this initiative forward for the benefit of our peoples and to make the relationship between the EU and Sri Lanka even closer as we move into the new year of 2022.

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Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya State Minister for Regional Cooperation

Good afternoon, everybody

Hon. Prof. Peiris, H.E. Gabriele Visentin, Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage, H.E. Denis Chaibi, Excellencies, Dr. D.L. Mendis, Madam Kadirgamar and distinguished guests.

At the outset, let me thank Prof. Peiris for shedding light on these issues which are of utmost importance to the region. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. D.L. Mendis, Executive Director of LKI for organizing this conference.

The Late Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar wanted this institute to be an institute of research and a forum to exchange knowledge and ideas. I am glad we are taking the initiative to accomplish his vision of fulfilling the country's need for a think tank, thereby promoting the country's intellectual profile in the field of foreign policy and engagement.

In particular, I believe that as H.E. Gabriele Visentin pointed out that most of what we will discuss today, are not mutually exclusive areas. As Hon. Prof. Peiris suggested, these issues are of relevance not necessarily to Sri Lanka only but are of interest to the rest of the world including China. Therefore, we certainly need to work together on certain matters such as environmental issues, including climate change and ocean governance.

There are three key areas which everybody needs to focus on, particularly after COVID-19; Income disparity which is on the rise during the aftermath of COVID-19, global-warming expected a 1.5 degrees Celsius targeted increase by the end of this century, but now we are expecting it by mid 2030. It is likely to reach the 1.5 degree warning limit by 2030. Beyond this limit, the situation is likely to deteriorate rapidly. This is extremely unfortunate which is why it is crucial to have fruitful discussions to formulate effective solutions now. The key issue which today's discussion will relate to, is the possibility of the emergence of a war. We have always seen in history, when a major power is challenged by a second major power, there exists a possibility of war.

In order to find effective solutions to combat these issues, it is important that we have fruitful discussions and enable knowledge sharing. It is also crucial to use these discussions and fora as a bridge to communicate with governments and other think tanks. Further, it is vitally important to encourage our governments to effectively use legislation in order to improve societies and thereby our countries as a whole. Hence, the need for an age of reasoning is now more important than ever.

Rational thinking, exchange of knowledge and information is crucial for the betterment of everybody. In order to facilitate knowledge sharing and to create a fora to enable knowledge sharing, the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies will be organizing more conferences in future.

I once again thank Dr. D.L. Mendis, the Executive Director of LKI, for organizing this seminar and I thank the Excellencies, dignitaries and distinguished guests for your kind participation.

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Session One: Sri Lanka's and EU's Positioning within Geo-political Shifts in the Indo-Pacific



CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

Sri Lanka's and EU's Positioning within geopolitical shifts in the Indo-Pacific



Panel Chair: Hon. Prof. G.L. Peries, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka



1.1 Dr. Frederic Grare, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).

- ❖ Dr. Grare began his presentation by noting that the Indo-Pacific is not primarily a geographical concept but a strategic concept.
- ❖ The EU is not the first entity to come up with a strategic concept outlining the strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ The EU's Indo-Pacific strategy follows the numerous other strategic documents presented such as Japan, the US, Australia, ASEAN, and India.
- ❖ France was the first country to elaborate on the need for an Indo-Pacific Strategy, which became the catalyst for Germany and later the Netherlands to issue their own policy documents on the Indo-Pacific.
- ❖ This tripartite process involving France, Germany, and the Netherlands triggered the path for the joint communication from the EU commission on the EU Strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

- ❖ The common theme among all Indo-Pacific strategies is linked to the rise of China. The specifics in how China is ‘managed’ however, will continue to have numerous variations depending on the country and the region
- ❖ The need to ‘manage China’ should not be automatically seen as a hostile and confrontational maneuver against Beijing. Rather, it should be viewed as an expression for working towards harmonising the strategic dilemma of safeguarding security interests on the one hand while maintaining the economic benefits that stem from China’s economic growth.
- ❖ The EU Indo-Pacific document has three main areas of common categories of motivation with all the previously published documents on the Indo-Pacific.
 1. The willingness to ‘manage’ the rise of China
 - A gradual realisation in Europe that China intends to change the rules of the global system.
 - EU’s willingness to label China as a “systemic rival”, in addition to a “competitor” and a “partner”.
 2. The willingness to keep the US engaged in the security of the region
 - Given the tilts of both economic and strategic interests towards the Indo-Pacific region, its security responsibilities must be borne both by the US and the EU.
 3. The willingness to distance the EU from the most damaging consequences of the US-China rivalry.
 - The EU does not want to engage in a zero-sum game and to become a prisoner of the consequences of US-China rivalry.
- ❖ The EU Strategy on the Indo-Pacific is not a neutral position, nor is it equidistant with the other strategies of India, the US and other countries.
- ❖ EU’s strategy when elaborating on the need for a ‘level playing field and an open environment for trade and investment’, is neither exclusionary nor hostile to any party, but strongly reiterates that trade cannot be a one-way relationship.
- ❖ Even on the topics relating to sustainable development, there is a firm recognition that there is a need for the EU to contribute to the common good. Such actions need to be grounded in robust multilateralism and should not slide towards the path of ‘multi-bilateralism’, where the stronger parties get to determine the outcomes.
- ❖ The Indian Ocean is seen as a gateway for Europe into the Indo-Pacific and the principles of freedom of navigation are vital to ensure the stability of the European economy.
- ❖ Cooperation between the EU and its partners on the Indo-Pacific requires either total or partial convergence on the areas of values and governance found in the document. However, the strategy is not an instrument of coercion but an ‘option for options’.

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1.2 Prof. Rohan Gunaratna, Director General, Institute of National Security Studies (INSS)

- ❖ Prof. Gunaratna began his presentation by noting Sri Lanka's important geo-strategic location as a central node in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ Sri Lanka's historical ties with Europe is nothing new, but date as far back as the turn of the first century.
- ❖ Early contact between Europe and Sri Lanka is best illustrated by the historical record which notes diplomatic engagements between the envoys of the Sri Lankan royals and Claudius Caesar.
- ❖ Sri Lanka was also subject to numerous invasions from India and Europe. However, European contact has left a rich imprint on the culture of Sri Lanka especially in language, education, and the arts.
- ❖ In the current context, the security landscape of South Asia remains precarious, especially with the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban in August 2021.
- ❖ The security threats Sri Lanka faces are mostly associated with non-state actors.
- ❖ American withdrawal from Afghanistan has resulted in the proliferation of several illicit activities such as; narcotics trafficking, illegal arms transfers.
 - ❑ This has resulted in the increase of narcotics trafficking activities in Sri Lankan waters.
 - ❑ A majority of the crew members operating in such activities have been documented to be nationals of Pakistan and Iran.
 - ❑ The Sri Lankan Navy has been effective in intercepting vessels transporting heavily controlled substances such as Heroin and Methamphetamine.
 - ❑ This is a particular area that Sri Lanka would stand to benefit from close cooperation with the EU.
- ❖ While Sri Lanka continues to cooperate with other countries such as the US to curb illicit activities, it is important to note that it does not exclude Sri Lanka from cooperating with other countries in such matters.
- ❖ Sri Lanka's flexibility in its ability to cooperate with a range of actors towards the common good is grounded in President Gotabaya Rajapaksha's non-aligned foreign policy.

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1.3 Amb. Dr Jasper Wieck, Special Representative of the Federal Government for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Director for South Asia and Indo-Pacific Policy, German Federal Foreign Office

- ❖ Amb. Wieck commenced his presentation by noting that as a representative of the German government, his presentation will focus on the German approach to the Indo-Pacific.
- ❖ The starting point for the German strategic document was not simply a focus on the shifts in the Indo-Pacific but rather took a broader view in taking into account the global geopolitical shifts.
- ❖ Germany is not a resident Indo-Pacific power, and thus do not enjoy a prime position within regional organisations and institutions such as IORA, ASEAN, BIMSTEC, and the Mekong River Commission.
- ❖ Nevertheless, Germany still has a range of vital interests in the Indo-Pacific region and is primarily motivated by three challenges to increase its engagement efforts.
 - ❑ Economic, trade and environment issues such as; access to foreign markets, sustainable supply chains, protection of climate and the environment.
 - ❑ The second motivation for increased engagement has to do with the rise of China, which has posed numerous challenges for Germany and the global order. China's increase in political power has caused numerous fissures within the international rules-based system.
 - ❑ The third motivation is the growing polarisation of the world, and Germany strongly favours a situation where it does not have to choose a side.
- ❖ Germany's answer to two of these challenges would be to
 - ❑ to become stronger by; enhancing trade relationships, investments, and improving political partnerships in emerging markets within the Indo-Pacific region.
 - ❑ To improve inclusivity with countries in the region including China. To illustrate this point of inclusivity, Amb. Wieck brought up the example of the recent port of call visit by the German Frigate, 'Bayern'. When the route of the frigate was planned, Germany also offered a port call in China to demonstrate that such actions posed no hostile intentions towards any party.
- ❖ Germany already identifies Sri Lanka as a key maritime nation located at the crossroads of the world's major shipping routes. The sear routes are both of mutual interest to the vitality of both the economies of Germany and Sri Lanka.
- ❖ Germany is also working with Sri Lanka to strengthen its capacity on maritime security in regional organisations such as IORA, particularly with technical assistance from the Max Planck Foundation. In addition, both countries are working towards the implementation of UNCLOS into national law. Germany also maintains observer status in BIMSTEC.
- ❖ Germany is looking to enhance cooperation on climate change issues, particularly with respective climate ministries. In this domain, Germany has also been engaging on the issue of nitrogen management which is of particular interest to Sri Lanka.

- ❖ Renewable energy: Germany is a major producer of renewable energy technologies and sees great potential in a market that is already highly dependent on renewable energy for power generation.
- ❖ Human Rights: Germany is co-funding the project SCOPE in close cooperation with the government of Sri Lanka to improve the social cohesion between ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.
- ❖ Amb. Wieck concluded his presentation by noting that to improve the impact of the EU, member states should look to increase their coordination, particularly in the maritime domain to have the greatest collective impact.

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1.4 Dr. Harinda Vidanage, Head of Department, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University

- ❖ Dr. Vidanage prefaced his presentation by noting that his remarks will be presented from the perspective of a small state's view of the EU Indo-Pacific strategy.
- ❖ For small states, the foremost strategic challenge is finding a way to navigate the geo-strategic constellations that are constantly orbiting a smaller states strategic landscape which is subject to change at any given moment.
- ❖ The institutionalisation of the Indo-Pacific as a strategic concept has been taking place largely in the form of security and defence agreements.
- ❖ Great-power competition results in the evolution of regional spaces as commons; first to a contested space, which later is gradually militarised, later becomes weaponised. This poses a significant challenge to small powers in a region.
- ❖ Strategic autonomy is often a major tool used by smaller states for survival in a geographically rivalrous space. However, as systems and the space become more rigid, it limits the opportunities for smaller states to exercise strategic autonomy.
- ❖ Even as the EU strategy talks about the importance of multilateralism, a question needs to be raised whether a distinction should be made between real multilateralism and phantom multilateralism.
- ❖ Unilateralism can sometimes also emerge in the veneer of multilateralism. Dr. Vidanage highlighted the blindsiding of particular EU member states with the AUKUS deal as an example of unilateral multilateralism.
- ❖ The significance of the EU strategy for a smaller state like Sri Lanka is the options the EU strategy provides smaller states to break the rigidity of contested spaces by improving the ability to maneuver and influence outcomes.

- ❖ The EU strategy also helps Sri Lanka's long-standing hub aspirations in multiple domains, while also expanding the scope for security discourse of a smaller state like Sri Lanka.
- ❖ Sri Lanka is also located in one of the most weaponised regions of the world, with neighboring countries such as India, Pakistan, and Singapore investing significant amounts of money into the modernisation of their military and security capabilities.
- ❖ Despite Sri Lanka possessing a professional armed services, it lags behind in the modernisation of its assets.
- ❖ Sri Lanka's security capabilities are still based on legacy systems and traditional concepts such as domain superiority.
- ❖ Sri Lanka requires significant aid to develop its capabilities in cyber, and space domains.
- ❖ Questions still remain about how the EU is able to navigate the priorities of other major powers namely; the US, India, and China in building robust connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ There is also a challenge for the EU to harmonise its values and norms with the ground realities of a country like Sri Lanka which may offer a different perspective on the priority and nature of such values and norms.
- ❖ Small states have a natural disposition towards neutrality, but at certain times when their own survival is at stake they may be pushed towards pursuing other options.

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1.5 Dr. Alice Ekman, Senior Research Fellow, EU Institute of Security Studies (EUISS)

- ❖ Dr. Ekman started her presentation by noting the increasing polarisation in the world, mainly as a result of the geo-strategic rivalry between the US and China.
- ❖ While a number of countries have formally published a strategy on the Indo-Pacific, a number of others particularly in Asia have not done so and remain strategically ambiguous about the Indo-Pacific concept.
- ❖ Dr. Ekman referred to this development as a form of “Blurred Polarisation”, where the world is getting divided into three groupings; those who have accepted the Indo-Pacific strategic concept in some form, those who reject it, and finally those who still have not made their intentions clear.
- ❖ The diversity of countries that remain ambiguous about the Indo-Pacific range from South Korea to countries like Pakistan.
- ❖ There are also divergences amongst the Indo-Pacific grouping of countries, including marked tensions between countries such as France and Australia over the AUKUS deal. However, these divergences should not be exaggerated either.
- ❖ The Covid-19 Pandemic has also exacerbated a number of strategic challenges for Europe and its partners. These include:
 - ❑ Maintaining freedom of navigation and access to the sea lines of communication.
 - ❑ Overcoming over-dependence of trade relations with a singular market while ensuring openness and reciprocity.
 - ❑ Managing compatibility issues between Chinese and American companies, and components.
 - ❑ The challenge of maintaining connectivity between countries and regions while ensuring border security to manage a health crisis like COVID-19.
- ❖ Another broad challenge when focusing on geo-political issues with an Indo-Pacific lens is that the Indo-Pacific strategy/s do not adequately cover other crises such as Taiwan and North Korea.
- ❖ In light of the current US-China tensions, coupled with the challenges of the ongoing pandemic, the goal of enhancing the EU’s connectivity strategy will be much more difficult to implement.
- ❖ The EU will also have other challenges such as the Ukraine crisis which will impede commercial activity and connectivity efforts.

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Session Two: Trade, Connectivity and Opportunities for Sri Lanka and the EU



**Trade, Connectivity and Green Recovery as Strategic Tools:
Challenges and Opportunities for Sri Lanka and the EU**



Panel Chair: Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage

- ❖ Sri Lanka is at the centre of the Indian Ocean, and the ocean is the key gateway to the global maritime economy with 90% of international traded goods transported in the maritime domain.
 - ❖ The global economic interests of the blue economy must also be balanced with the sustainability of these systems that help sustain life on earth.
 - ❖ Every country in the Indian Ocean desires an international maritime rules-based order that safeguards; freedom of maritime commerce, freedom of overflight, and the right to utilise seabed resources for economic development.
 - ❖ While geostrategic competition among bigger powers can only be managed and not eradicated, there are common areas of interest for all states to work together such as Climate Change and its accompanying deleterious effects on the ocean environment.
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2.1 H.E. Tanja Gonggrijp, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

- ❖ Amb. Gonggrijp began her presentation with a reference to ‘Don’t Look Up’ - a satirical film which highlighted the paucity of policy and decision makers ability to effectively respond to an existential crisis like climate change.
- ❖ She noted that Sri Lanka is not immune to the effects of climate change as evidenced by recent unpredictable weather patterns, floods, landslides, rising sea level and other climate disasters.
- ❖ She further stated that these efforts are not just about climate change, but also about inequality as a social concern. According to Oxfam International, the ten richest men in the world doubled their wealth during the Covid-19 pandemic, while 99% of humanity are worse off. If these ten men were to lose 99.999% of

- ❖ their wealth tomorrow, they would still be richer than the 99% of humanity.
- ❖ Trade and development lead to economic growth and development, but there is a negative aspect to it.
 - ❑ Cheap and low cost production in countries may result in loss of jobs and a race to the bottom as countries compete to attract investments in low-wage sectors.
 - ❑ It can also result in the easing of labour, environmental and tax regulations, with the purpose of profiting at the detriment of people and the planet.
- ❖ She asserted that as mentioned by the European Union (EU) Special Envoy Mr. Visentin, the Indo-Pacific region is of importance to the world and the EU, as the region is becoming an economic and strategic centre of gravity, and also the throbbing heart of the global economy. With the growing middle class and the rise of Asia, the Indian Ocean has become one of the busiest East-West trade corridors.
- ❖ The EU is the leading investor and one of the biggest trading partners in the Indo-Pacific region. Together the Indo-Pacific and the EU account for over 70% of the global trade in goods and services, and for over 60% of foreign direct investment flows. 35% of the European export is targeting markets in the Indo-Pacific region and the region is an important producer for Europe.
- ❖ The Indo-Pacific also presents certain challenges.
 - ❑ The Indo-Pacific region exists at the beginning of the value chain. Though countries developed quickly due to international trade, they are struggling to protect their forests, biodiversity, natural resources and their people.
 - ❑ The Indo-Pacific region is a major contributor to global carbon-dioxide emission and will account for more than 70% of growth in the global energy demand by 2030.
 - ❑ The stability in the region is at risk as democratic principles, rule of law and human rights are under constraint, and transparency of global trade rules are increasingly undermined.
 - ❑ The Covid19 pandemic has clearly exposed interdependence of countries which makes people vulnerable, but if managed well, it can be part of the solution.
- ❖ She highlighted that the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the Paris agreement will lead the way to the future, and cooperation between the EU and Sri Lanka will be beneficial to reach these common goals. In terms of trade, providing open, diversified and undistorted access to world markets and reconsidering the current economic system are essential, including engaging in responsible sustainable trade and green recovery.
- ❖ The EU has a shared responsibility in terms of producing, sourcing and consuming to uphold environmental human and labour rights. It also requires companies to evaluate their supply chains for identifying risks of child labour, low wages, pollution and deforestation, and to make a plan to mitigate such risks.
 - ❑ She further noted that the Netherlands has started drafting a law for international responsible business conduct which Germany has already implemented and that the EU has promised to speed-up the EU legislation process to include the sustainability requirements for imports into the EU.
- ❖ She highlighted that consumers in European countries might have to pay higher prices, so that production standards are being upheld in both environmental and social terms.
 - ❑ The prices of products like tea and spices, should reflect the real costs of fair wages and mitigation of environmental damage.
 - ❑ There is also a growing demand across the world for products that are grown and produced responsibly, especially organic products.

- ❖ She stated that Sri Lanka could become the preferred sustainable choice for Dutch and European buyers and that it is a multi-stakeholder effort.
 - ☐ The government should implement and enforce labour and environmental laws.
 - ☐ Businesses should produce responsibly and buyers should do due diligence.
 - ☐ Civil societies should engage with governments and research institutions to find complex environmental, social and systemic issues that require restructuring and innovation.
 - ☐ Consumers should buy responsibly and European consumers in particular should be willing to pay a higher value if needed.
- ❖ She stated that the Netherlands and the EU will push effort to implement the mentioned regulations for responsible trade and develop a new GSP+ scheme focusing on accelerating progress towards the Paris agreement and the SDGs, and that the EU will continue to support Sri Lanka in this endeavour.
- ❖ She posed the following questions that need to be addressed
 - ☐ With the digitization of services and trade moving towards our cyber era, how will this change occur?
 - ☐ Will the trade dynamics influence the green recovery in this region? For example, technologies like blockchain and cyber currencies can completely change the trade game and make trade more transparent but trade could become potentially less controllable for governments.
 - ☐ How can the EU tap into the growing potential of offshore renewable energy to diminish dependency on coal and manage maritime space sustainably?
- ❖ Energy transition and the emerging concept of sustainable blue economy are also important to the Indo-Pacific discussion. This transition is essential to reach our global climate ambitions nor build back better in a green way.
- ❖ She noted that green recovery can be challenging for the developing countries in the region.
 - ☐ It will necessitate structural changes which are bound to raise equity and distributional concerns.
 - ☐ The financial challenges may tip such countries into debt distress. Thus, it is important to provide external support including from the EU and its member states in this matter.
- ❖ In her concluding remarks, H.E. Gonggrijp highlighted that it is necessary to accelerate the actions to reach the SDGs and the Paris agreement within the Indo-Pacific. The EU is assertive that trade will continue to thrive given that it remains open, rules based and sustainable.
- ❖ Sri Lanka can become the preferred sustainable choice for European buyers if it develops towards more responsible and sustainable production.

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2.2 Ms. Hasanthi Dissanayake, Additional Secretary, Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change, Foreign Ministry Sri Lanka

- ❖ Ms. Dissanayake brought attention to the 2008-2009 financial, socio economic and environmental problems that became a triple crisis, and compared its aftermath as a dry run for the Covid-19 pandemic which put countries at a socio-economic tipping point. Pandemic-induced public health and economic crisis exacerbated the threats and opportunities, it is up to the countries to individually and collectively shape the future.
- ❖ Global ongoing challenges include; climate change, increased urbanisation, widening inequalities, and the wide ranging ramifications of the Covid-19 outbreak.
- ❖ She highlighted that Covid-19 could be an opportunity to reset economies along a low carbon trajectory, but economic recovery requires careful planning to balance environmental and economic concerns.
- ❖ Recovery packages that established synergies between climate and economic goals are beneficial for increasing national wealth and enhancing productive human, social, physical, intangible and natural capital.
- ❖ The EU plans to dedicate around 30% of its 880 billion dollars Covid-19 crisis plan to climate change related measures, including the issuance of US\$ 240 billion in green bonds. There are also blue bonds which are connected to oceans.
- ❖ Other countries have also adopted a wave of green policies. Some of the notable countries include; China, Japan, The Republic of Korea, Canada, and the United States. All of these countries are targeting the years between 2050 and 2060 to achieve a carbon neutral plan.
- ❖ She noted that given the prevailing price of fossil fuels, history may repeat itself because economies attempting a green transition tend to resort to fossil fuels to restart their economies in the wake of recessions.
 - ❑ Following the 2008-2009 crisis, the consumption of coal increased in fast growing economies such as China, India, Vietnam, South Africa and Indonesia.
 - ❑ In the first half of 2020, G20 countries committed \$151 billion to fossil fuels of which only 20% was made conditional on even modest green requirements, such as setting climate targets or implementing pollution reduction plans.
 - ❑ She stated that the recovery has to be much more than green to put countries on a path to a better economy, to better health and wellbeing, to inclusion and a just transition.
- ❖ For developing countries, green recovery is a difficult proposition as deviating from established economic models will necessitate structural changes which are bound to raise equity and distributional concerns.
 - ❑ Financial challenges may tip them into debt distress or lead to financial instability.
 - ❑ A first glimpse of the fiscal crises comes from countries as diverse as Argentina, Zambia and Lebanon. Several African nations including Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria, have resorted to

emergency financing to deal with the effects of the pandemic.

- ❖ She highlighted that debt–for-climate-protection swaps, if properly implemented, can provide significant debt relief and support climate action in many developing countries. The principle of a Debt for Nature Swaps (DNS) involves an agreement to reduce or cancel the level of debt by a developing country in exchange for commitments to utilise the saved debt payment for investments in conservation or nature projects.
- ❖ DNS design and impact require both the donor or debt provider and governments to address how the “saved” funds will be used, giving consideration to local and indigenous people affected and carefully monitoring systems.
 - ❑ For example, Costa Rica’ DNS is supported by the government of the United States (US) along with Conservation International and the Nature Conservancy.
 - ❑ Accordingly, \$26 million of debt was forgiven by the US government in exchange for the Country spending the saved amount on tropical forest conservation.
- ❖ She noted that rather than focusing solely on restructuring existing debts, using DNS to attract fresh investment is the hybrid approach.
 - ❑ The governments could create a ring-fenced fund or vehicle to attract global private sector investors into the fund.
 - ❑ For example, the Seychelles Initiative is aimed at supporting the sustainable long term use and protection of marine resources within Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- ❖ She highlighted that post-Covid 19 stimulus packages pose the risk of widening global inequality and pushing poorer countries to turn to fossil fuels. Green Recovery plans are almost entirely domestic and of little aid to poorer countries attempting to recover from the economic crisis. She pointed out that debt cancellation, fossil fuel subsidy removal and more investments in overseas renewables rather than fossil fuels are required for a global recovery.
- ❖ Despite Sri Lanka’s limited resources, Sri Lanka is attempting to make a green recovery through a range of activities including;
 - ❑ Updating Nationally Determined Contributions
 - ❑ A moratorium on new coal power plants.
 - ❑ Acting in accordance with Commonwealth Blue Charter including action related to conservation of mangroves.
 - ❑ Work on the ‘Colombo Declaration’, which was a first of its kind in terms of governments agreeing to work together on a major quantitative global goal for improved nitrogen management.
 - ❑ The 30x30 Campaign which promotes marine protection to 30% by 2030.
- ❖ Sri Lanka is also working on Maritime Disaster Preparedness Mechanism in order to mitigate ecological damage of oil/ chemical spills.
- ❖ She further highlighted that in terms of international maritime trade, countries need to mitigate the impacts to the marine and coastal ecosystem as maritime trade will progress in the foreseeable future.
- ❖ On a final note, Ms. Dissanayake detailed a number of priority areas for cooperation between the EU and Sri Lanka on maritime issues.
 - ❑ Promoting sustainable livelihood support for coastal communities
 - ❑ Providing access to real-time information through satellite data on fish stock movements for fishermen.
 - ❑ Mapping of resources with potential economic value that can be extracted in a sustainable manner from the EEZ of Sri Lanka.



2.3 Mr. Thorsten Bargfrede, Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

- ❖ In 2019, the European Union (EU) adopted the Green Deal with a set of overarching policy principles for the years to come. The EU is committed to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030, be a world champion in the circular economy, and also to reach net-zero emission goal by 2050. In other words, every EU action should be consistent with the EU's climate change and environmental objectives.
- ❖ He highlighted that this EU policy is a game changer in the sense that it requires cooperation with third world countries. For example, the future GSP+ regulations will more likely be greener than the current regulations.
- ❖ Along with the Paris agreement, green recovery will complement the EU trade policy so that the entire value chain of production is carbon neutral and Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism can be applied. Green recovery is the EU's key cooperation objective for Sri Lanka in the near future.
- ❖ In 2022, the EU will initiate a £5 million green policy dialogue facility jointly with the development agencies of Germany and France.
 - ❑ This facility will continue the dialogue on climate issues bringing policy ideas forward and conducting research where necessary.
 - ❑ Other key objectives here will be an emphasis on the circular economy, protecting biodiversity and waste management.
 - ❑ These are some of the issues the EU expects to concretely engage with the Sri Lankan government.
- ❖ The EU is particularly of the belief that borders need to stay open amidst the Covid-19 crisis for the purpose of trade and cooperation. Countries closed borders not only for people but also for products and services, and because of it multilateral trade system is under challenge.
- ❖ The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is the concrete multilateral organisation for trade, and it needs protection to ensure that an open and rules based trading system will be upheld and to avoid the rule of the fittest and the most powerful nations. An weakened WTO will have a disproportionate effect on smaller nations like Sri Lanka.
- ❖ In 2020, the exports from Sri Lanka went down 10%. The export trade surplus of Sri Lanka to the EU which was raising US\$ 2 billion because our exports to Sri Lanka went down 30%.
 - ❑ In turn, Sri Lanka benefited as such from the trade surplus with Europe.
 - ❑ It is in the interest of Sri Lanka, to keep the multilateral trade system alive and the EU is already delivering on trade to Sri Lanka.
 - ❑ For the EU, better products, better services, more productivity, obtaining new ideas, people and ways of cooperation.

- ❖ He noted that the EU expects Sri Lanka to reopen its economy and engage in international supply chains to gain more opportunities. The EU is willing to support Sri Lanka.
 - ❑ The trade surplus of Sri Lanka combined with the EU, the US and the UK, is approximately US\$ 4 billion, which is approximately the trade deficit Sri Lanka has with a number of large Asian nations.
 - ❑ The value obtained from exports to Europe and the West, helps Sri Lanka to purchase products from the East. It indicates the importance of partnership.
- ❖ Concluding, Mr. Bargfrede highlighted that the EU wants to be a leader in the digital arena.
 - ❑ The EU has the biggest market with 450 million consumers and has the power to put standards even on the global market leaders including social media that is not in the EU's region.
 - ❑ The EU shows willingness to make such regulations before the other countries set such standards. The EU believes that digital connectivity is also of interest to Sri Lanka especially as a way to enhance people to people connectivity.



2.4 Dr. Asanka Wijesinghe, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies

- ❖ Mr. Wijesinghe noted that the European Union (EU) and Sri Lanka have a long history because of colonial ties, and due to these colonial linkages, Sri Lanka has reduced trade costs. Currently, Sri Lanka benefits from non-reciprocal trade concessions from the EU under GSP+ scheme which reduced tariffs on products.
- ❖ Through this mechanism, the EU gets the opportunity to transfer low-tech manufacturing to Sri Lanka, profit and efficiently seek investment. The EU firms can invest in sectors with high preferential margin.
- ❖ Before the pandemic, Sri Lanka accounted for about US\$ 3.57 billion of exports to the EU which is 30% of earnings for the government of Sri Lanka.
 - ❑ Low tech manufacturing products dominated these exports, readymade apparels, men's and boys' t-shirts are some of the products. The EU is the major market for Sri Lanka's seafood.
 - ❑ Most of Sri Lanka's exports are covered by GSP+ and it induces forward and backward linkages because of the reduced trade costs and Sri Lanka has preferential access to the EU markets.
- ❖ The EU can also act as a supplier of raw materials. For example, currently knitted and crocheted fabrics, parts of electric sound/visual signalling apparatus, and narrow woven fabrics use raw materials in the production process.
- ❖ He highlighted that a trade-led cooperative strategy is the way forward for Sri Lanka as it is a small country with less resource endowment and small consumer bases. He noted that even if Sri Lanka tries to produce everything in the country without trading with other countries, there is a need to import capital products and intermediate products because Sri Lanka does not have the necessary endowments.
- ❖ Sri Lanka is a party to South Asian legal agreements and bilateral free trade agreements with countries in

the region.

- ❑ In almost all the sectors such as agriculture, food, textile, and trade, the impact of regional trade agreements on export flows is trivial or can sometimes be negative, due to regulatory barriers (for example, rules of origin) within the trade agreements.
 - ❑ Sri Lanka has a large list of sensitive products list that is not eligible for further tariff cuts.
- ❖ The GSP impact on Asian countries' trade, in agricultural products, EU's GSP+ has a positive impact. However, in food export it has a negative impact.
- ❑ The EU trade concessions have produced a positive impact on our agricultural exports. Most of the Sri Lankan products are low tech manufacturing products and there is a need to diversify low tech into high tech complex products.
 - ❑ The EU concessions are economically and strategically important. The key sectors benefited are the ones that employ workers from economically marginalised sectors (agriculture or seafood).
 - ❑ Agriculture employs nearly a quarter of the labour force in Sri Lanka. For the EU, Sri Lanka is a destination for investments and trade through forward and backward linkages.
- ❖ In the context of EU Indo-Pacific Strategy, the EU's emphasis is on rule based trade under multilateral institutes like the World Trade Organisation. Implementing and enforcing comprehensive trade agreements with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Vietnam are other such strategies.
- ❖ Open trade will allow Sri Lanka to have a trade based comparative advantage increasing economic efficiency, and preferential access (GSP+) will allow the EU to profit through efficiency seeking investments, to diversify into high tech manufacturing, etc. Moreover, trade with the EU will help poverty alleviation, income growth and efficiency, while tangible economic benefits will strengthen strategic alliances.
- ❖ Sri Lanka's challenge is to make sure the country is following import controls (the EU's rule based open trade), to adhere to WTO's stipulations, maintain the link between human rights and GSP+, avoid harmful political sentiments in the context of trade, and attempt to expand cumulation (for example, in textiles), so that a percentage of value addition is directed to Sri Lanka.
- ❖ Additionally, trade diversion to other competitive nations will need to be overcome to ensure Sri Lankan exports have value in the EU market. Sri Lanka's trade policy requires it to be in compliance with the WTO framework. Sri Lanka is supportive of green initiatives but Sri Lanka needs to be ready to take on green initiatives as they may increase our compliance costs.



2.5 Dr. Maaike Okano Heijmans, Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael

- ❖ Dr. Heijmans highlighted that in the field of digital connectivity, EU-Sri Lanka cooperation should involve the member states, private sector and other stakeholders. Green and digital transitions can be a challenge for countries around the world. The EU wants to be the standard setter for digital connectivity.
- ❖ The EU initiated a set of data protection regulations years ago as an internal effort and it had a surprising extra territorial effect. She noted that there is also a need for a different EU approach with the rapid

technological development and shifting power balances in the international system.

- ☐ The Chinese approach favors more state involvement online, and is sometimes referred to as digital authoritarianism.
 - ☐ The United States tends to stay away from regulating big businesses.
 - ☐ Conversely, the EU puts their citizens first and argues that rights and rules that are offline should also be upheld online.
 - ☐ Sri Lanka has its own approach but there is plenty of opportunity to do more in this regard.
- ❖ The EU welcomes all big tech companies and small tech companies to invest in Europe and the countries in Asia also welcomes such investments. However, it is also important to develop awareness that this presence should be accompanied by robust norms and standards.
- ❖ On 9 March 2021, the European Commission presented a vision and avenues for Europe's digital transformation by 2030. The Commission proposes a Digital Compass for the EU's digital decade that evolves around four cardinal points: infrastructure, skills, governments and business.
- ❖ The EU is taking a human centred approach and some of the recent actions initiated in the EU include:
- ☐ The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) focuses on data protection of individuals.
 - ☐ The Digital Services Act package seeks to uphold and protect freedom of speech and tackle dis-information which is a growing concern in our society.
 - ☐ The EU is also developing the Digital Markets Act to handle anti-monopoly and market fairness.
- ❖ Moreover, the EU is taking steps to provide more online government services to citizens referred to as digital identity.
- ☐ In South Asia and South East Asia, this approach can be considered as financial inclusion providing access to government schemes, online banking and filing taxes online.
 - ☐ Dr. Heijmans further stated that as India has experiences with digital financial inclusion, perhaps the EU and India can help other countries in the region including Sri Lanka to pursue it.
- ❖ Under Global Gateway pillar, the EU also takes its domestic policies to other countries that are interested in the EU alternatives which includes digital connectivity.
- ❖ She highlighted that understanding the local circumstances as well as applying the underpinning EU standards is important to create opportunities for EU-Sri Lanka cooperation. The EU has established cyber security and cyber policy dialogues to exchange information as a learning exercise and as developing infrastructure.
- ❖ In terms of infrastructure, Sri Lanka has an established strong telecommunications sector but more can be done to increase the quality of connections. Sri Lanka is also a hub for submarine cable networks in the region.
- ❖ In terms of skills, innovation and digital transformation can be promoted with the involvement of non-governmental organisations and the private sector.
- ❖ In the business field, the e-economy is booming in South East Asia and South Asia, and there is a need to have more dialogues about ensuring regulations, improving and facilitating trade and remittance, and lowering costs will be beneficial for digital governance cooperation.
- ☐ The EU- Sri Lanka innovation partnership that was launched in 2020, can be inclined more towards the digital domain.
 - ☐ In terms of governments and governance, digital inclusion and digital financial inclusion can be ensured by providing online services for people at home.
- ❖ The Digital Economy and Society Index was developed by the EU to determine the skill level of people

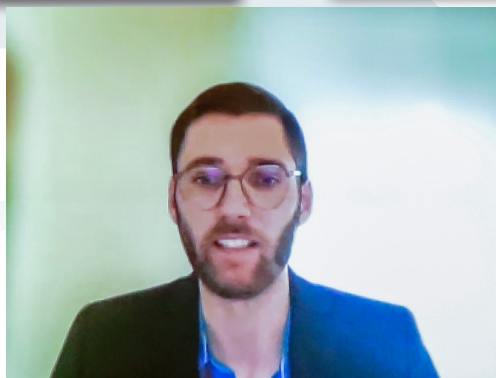
in order to identify where to invest.

- ❖ The EU has been working in the past few years with countries in South East Asia and ASEAN to help them build these indicators for better improved policy. It can be applied in Sri Lanka as well.
- ❖ The rules-based order and international cooperation in a multilateral forum addressing digital governance, standards and norms is another area where the EU is looking for partners to cooperate and engage in deep dialogues.

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Session Three

EU and Sri Lanka for Sustainable Ocean Governance



EU and Sri Lanka for Sustainable Ocean Governance



Panel Chair: Amb. D.L. Mendis, Executive Director, Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies

- ❖ Sri Lanka is uniquely placed to derive benefits from sustainable ocean governance, because of her strategic location and the vast ocean space to manage in the Indian Ocean.
- ❖ Small States do not have the required resources to play a role in sustainable ocean governance. We need to cooperate with the EU in finding solutions to issues of common concerns relating to ocean governance. The EU has technological and legal expertise to deal with complex issues relating to such governance.
- ❖ Sustainable Ocean Governance is dealt exhaustively in the EU Strategy for Cooperation and Partnerships. It is one of the seven thematic areas of the EU Strategy.
- ❖ Oceans are a major source of food and nutrition. It is also a platform for ocean-based industries. Oceans are rich in bio-diversity and minerals. Twenty five percent (25%) of the CO₂ emissions are absorbed by the oceans. Half the oxygen we breathe comes out of the oceans. There is symbiotic relationship between oceans and human existence.
- ❖ Oceans encounter several threats and challenges in relation to sustainable ocean governance. These threats and challenges including:
 - ❑ National security and defence.
 - ❑ Drug trafficking, piracy, human trafficking, arms trade and transportation of weapons of mass destruction.
 - ❑ Marine pollution, over fishing and IUU.
- ❖ Treaties and non-treaty instruments play an important role in attaining sustainable ocean governance and they deal with threats and challenges. The UN Law of the Sea Convention is a package deal which transformed *mare liberum* to *mare clausum* and thereby giving small States a major role in ocean affairs.
 - ❑ IMO treaties deal with safety in relation to shipping and marine pollution prevention. Ratification and implementation of these treaties are of great importance to Sri Lanka and other littoral States.
 - ❑ There are many legislative techniques used today to transform treaties relating to sustainable ocean governance into national legislation and to keep them up to date.
 - ❑ Legislation needs to be drafted to transform IMO and LOS treaty standards in such a way that they can be amended from time to time, in order to introduce new Rules or Regulations relating to sustainable ocean governance.



3.1 H.E. Eric Lavertu, Ambassador-The French Republic to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

- ❖ Amb. Lavertu began by observing that the Indo-Pacific region lies deep in European history because the Europeans have been based in the Indian Ocean for nearly 3 centuries and the Pacific for 2 centuries.
 - ❑ This historical relationship might be the reason why the EU was motivated to develop a strategy on the Indo-Pacific and why it was adopted in 2018.
 - ❑ The Indo-Pacific Strategy is based on three main pillars 1) Maritime freedom through law, 2) Multilateralism and regional cooperation, 3) Environmental action.
- ❖ A key motivation behind the EU's development of an Indo-Pacific Strategy is to promote a safe, peaceful, prosperous region that respects the law of the sea and the environment.
- ❖ He highlighted that France is a key player in the Indo-Pacific.
 - ❑ 2 million French people live in the Indo-Pacific.
 - ❑ 93% of the French EEZ (10.2 million km²) is located in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
 - ❑ France also has a military presence of 7,000 permanently deployed personnel, 700 sailors on mission, 18 defense attaches.
 - ❑ Several strategic partnerships exist between France and India, Japan and Indonesia along with a strong presence in multilateral fora for the Indian ocean such as IORA, IOC and IONs.
- ❖ He noted that maritime security is at the heart of the Indo-Pacific region's challenges.
 - ❑ This is because the Indian Ocean has become a theater for growing tensions and rivalries between multiple actors.
 - ❑ The region has the largest commercial flows in the world which poses significant risks for navigation and of pollution.
 - ❑ Along with this, there is a strong need to work against and fight trafficking and illicit activities such as piracy near Somalia, the flow of arms, drugs and human trafficking.
 - ❑ Mr Lavertu also expressed his gratitude to the Sri Lanka Navy for the supportive role played in preventing illegal trafficking in Sri Lanka.
- ❖ He proceeded to illustrate the number of European programs that contribute to the protection of maritime security in the Indian Ocean:
 - ❑ Atalante is a program aimed at fighting piracy at sea in the Southern Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and a part of the Indian Ocean including Seychelles.
 - ❑ Agenor protects navigation in the Arabian Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.
 - ❑ Crimario is a maritime communication and capacity building program.
- ❖ There is a need to go one step further in building a safe and prosperous region, emphasized Mr Lavertu.
 - ❑ Mr Lavertu mentioned that the EU will try to develop domain awareness through Information Fusion Centers (IFC) and CRIMARIO to allow for an automatic system of information exchange between coastal states.
 - ❑ The EU is also engaged in the action of state at sea, which is a way of tackling all events at sea by dedicating control and coordination and avoiding the creation of a coast guard.

- ❑ Another need is to consolidate governance in the Indian Ocean, not only through dialogue and bilateral and multilateral cooperation but also through the adoption of common standards, particularly with regard to the high seas.
- ❑ Building regional integration through economic exchanges, academic or cultural cooperation is also crucial to promoting safety and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.



3.2 Admiral Prof. Jayanath Colombage, Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka

- ❖ Adm. Prof. Colombage spoke on the issue of maritime security and safety through the lens of EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- ❖ Adm. Prof. Colombage stated that it is a known fact that the Indian Ocean is a major channel of international trade as well as that it is common knowledge that 72% of energy, 50% of containers, 35% of bulk cargo for the world is transported across the Indian Ocean.
- ❖ Adm. Prof. Colombage chose to analyse four incidents that took place in the Indian ocean in the last decade with special emphasis placed on the last two years.
 - ❑ The first event was in September 2020 when MT New Diamond, a large oil tanker caught fire about 60 nautical miles southeast of Sri Lanka. Fortunately, the fire was extinguished and minimal damage was caused.
 - ❑ The second event was in March 2021 when Ever Given, a 20,000 TEU container ship, obstructed the Suez Canal. The impact was colossal as this being one of the world's busiest trade routes, ships could not pass through the Suez Canal for weeks causing a significant negative impact on trade.
 - ❑ The third event is the X-Press Pearl, a Singapore registered ship carrying hazardous material which caught fire off the coast of Colombo, Sri Lanka. This was an event that could have easily been prevented by other ports in the Indian Ocean region; but this was not done causing massive damage in the form of plastic nodules scattered over the beach and ruined livelihoods.
 - ❑ Another incident is the hijacking of the UAE flag vessel by Yemeni rebels in January 2022.
- ❖ What Adm. Prof. Colombage concluded from these 4 incidents is that disasters can happen in a blink of an eye which can have a huge impact on international maritime trade which is why preparedness planning, mitigation planning, contingency planning are very important in the Indian Ocean.
- ❖ According to Adm. Prof. Colombage, moving from cooperation to collaboration is the only way in which we can successfully engage in disaster preparedness, planning and mitigation.
- ❖ Adm. Prof. Colombage emphasized the importance of preventing ocean pollution and maintaining ocean health which is where the EU can provide the necessary assistance and expertise.

- ❖ Another threat posed to the Indian Ocean region is the illegal narcotics trade. Adml. Prof. Colombage mentioned that Sri Lanka seized 300 kg of heroin mid sea and during the last 12 months alone seized more than 1 tonne of heroin.
- ❖ Adml. Prof. Colombage concluded by observing that what makes the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy particularly attractive to Sri Lanka is that the EU is viewed as a pacifier devoid of any hegemonic ulterior motives.

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3.3 Dr. Arron N. Honniball, Senior Research Fellow Max Planck Foundation on UNCLOS and Rule of Law

- ❖ Dr. Honniball spoke on IUU fishing and maritime safety and the importance of UNCLOS in maintaining the rule of law.
- ❖ While the current project with the Max Planck Foundation was launched in December 2021, collaboration between Sri Lanka and the foundation on the regional implementation of UNCLOS has stretched back to 2017 with a series of previous successful projects.
 - ❑ Dr Honniball mentioned that Sri Lanka is an ideal partner in ocean governance because of the instrumental role Sri Lanka played in the negotiations of UNCLOS as well as its continued support as a proponent of its domestic implementation by states and its further development by the international community.
 - ❑ In the year 2015, one of the decisions that came out of UNCLOS concerned jurisdictional rights and responsibilities to combat IUU fishing. The EU and Sri Lanka provided valuable input through voluntary written statements during the proceedings of a request submitted by the Fisheries Union in West Africa.
- ❖ Dr Honniball then turned to the ongoing collaboration between Sri Lanka and the Foundation on ocean governance. Dr Honniball emphasized that the guiding principles of the foundation are political neutrality, independence, local ownership and academic excellence.
- ❖ According to Dr Honniball, where synergies of international law do exist, there will be scope for cooperation but this will always be determined by discussions with other local partners and their interests.
 - ❑ The foundation will be assisting Sri Lanka's ocean governance efforts both at the national and regional level. At a national level, a series of anticipated workshops will bring together relevant stakeholders to further discuss and build on the findings of the Indian Ocean baseline study, an independent impartial study on the domestic laws of 21 regional states adopting UNCLOS.
 - ❑ Other activities planned for 2022 to 2023 will support Sri Lanka's efforts as the leading country of the IORA working group on maritime safety and security and maritime disaster preparedness and response.
- ❖ The importance of following consistent implementation of UNCLOS throughout the region and beyond cannot be understated.

- ❖ A focus on capacity development, cooperation, and the transfer of marine technology and scientific expertise to implement existing international conventions is just as important if not more important than the focus on the creation of new rules and new standards.
- ❖ Dr Honniball argued that there is a need to recognize the importance of wider UNCLOS implementation as the wider definition of IUU fishing. This is especially relevant in the case of the distribution of state responsibilities which is predicated on for example, small states implementing baselines, maritime zones and maritime implementation in a manner consistent with UNCLOS.
- ❖ Another element of this project with Sri Lanka focuses on maritime safety and security and the work of IORA.
 - ❑ An IORA workshop in 2022 and 2023 would seek to promote the identification of shared maritime safety and security concerns within the framework of UNCLOS.

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3.4 Mr. Chandaka Jayasundere P.C., Expert, Marine Pollution and IUU

- ❖ Mr. Jayasundere spoke on Sri Lanka's efforts with respect to IUU fishing and marine pollution.
- ❖ First, Mr. Jayasundere began by stating some facts about Sri Lanka's maritime industry.
 - ❑ Approximately 1.3% of the GDP of Sri Lanka is contributed by fisheries which provide direct and indirect employment to around 585,000 people.
 - ❑ 28000 tonnes of fish are exported to the US and the EU providing US\$ 400 million with a surplus of US\$ 200 million.
 - ❑ Sri Lanka has a fleet of about 50,000 boats, where approximately 20,000 are small traditional crafts. The coastal and offshore fishing fleet consists of approximately 25,000 motorized one-day boats. There are around 1500 high seas fishing vessels with 99% of boats being less than 24m in length. There are 4200 multi-day fishing boats that contribute to one of the major problems of unreported and unregulated fishing.
- ❖ Second, Mr Jayasundere evaluated the rule of law in Sri Lanka with respect to illegal fishing.
 - ❑ In 2015, Sri Lanka was the 7th hotspot in the Indo-Pacific region for IUU fishing with Indian fishermen visiting the coast of Sri Lanka on a regular basis.
 - ❑ The Sri Lankan government's initial response from 2013 to 2018 was to seize trawlers and arrest as many Indian fishermen as possible. This led to a humanitarian problem of hundreds of fishermen from India languishing in Sri Lankan jails.
 - ❑ Within six months, the law was changed to the following: instead of arresting the fisherman, their boats were taken away and only released upon the payment of a fine of 3-4 million rupees.
 - ❑ This change in law successfully led to a reduction in the amount of illegal fishing taking place on Sri Lankan waters.
- ❖ Third, Mr Jayasundere distinguished between illegal fishing and unreported or unregulated fishing.
 - ❑ Unreported refers to fishing activities that are not reported or misreported to relevant authorities

while unregulated fishing refers to poor management or non-management of vessels.

- ❑ Addressing these issues involve addressing questions of management which are catch management, report management and data management. For example, the fisheries department implemented a procedure of giving multiday trawlers a log book to record the catch in the port.

❖ Mr Jayasundere proceeded to the topic of the development of preventative marine pollution measures in Sri Lanka.

- ❑ The justice and shipping ministries have initiated a maritime disaster center in response to the X-Press Pearl disaster, which will be operational within the next 6-7 months.
- ❑ The X-Press Pearl disaster has exacerbated pre-existing marine pollution because of the plastic pellets sunk in the ocean bed and beaches. The true extent of the damage will only be apparent in the long term.

❖ Mr Jayasundere also mentioned that the EU can provide assistance in technical knowledge involved in the management of a marine disaster and overall guidance on the establishment of a marine disaster prevention center by the government.

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3.5 Ms. Theresa Winter, Manager- Defense and Security Policy, Friedrich Naumann Foundation

❖ Ms Winter stressed the need for a security perspective on sustainable ocean governance.

❖ A comprehensive approach on ocean governance should include security provision that involves sustainable security measures taking into consideration climate change and various other threats.

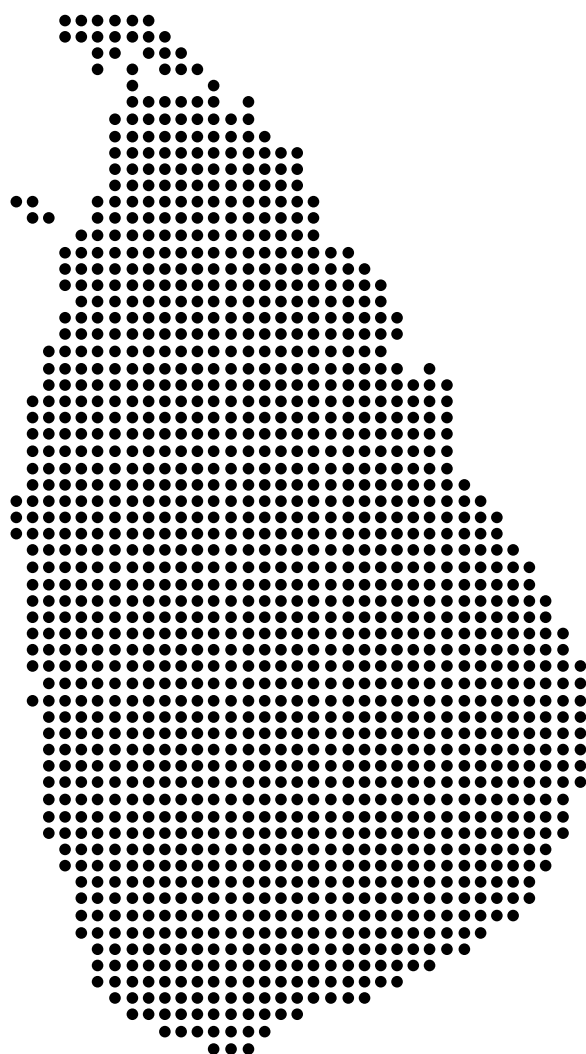
❖ Ms Winter emphasized the importance of not only addressing security provision in political, military or academia circles but most importantly at the level of civil societies where failing to reach the civil level will prolong the process.

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Speaker



Profiles



**Hon. Prof. G.L. Peiris,
Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka**



Hon. Prof. Gamini Lakshman Peiris was appointed as the Foreign Minister on 16 August 2021. Previously, he served as the Minister of Education, Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and Minister of Ethnic Affairs and National Integration.

Professor Peiris is a distinguished academic who previously served as the Vice-Chancellor at the University of Colombo from 1988 – 1994. He was also a Visiting Fellow at Christ's College, Cambridge, a Smuts Visiting Fellow in Commonwealth Studies at the University of Cambridge and a Butterworths Visiting Fellow in the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London. Professor Peiris has authored a number of books in the fields of property law, criminal procedure, law of evidence and administrative law.

Hon. Prof. Peiris who received his early education at S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia subsequently obtained his Bachelor of Laws with First Class Honors from the University of Ceylon and was a Rhodes scholar at the University of Oxford, where he obtained his Doctor of Philosophy in 1968. He also holds a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Colombo.

**Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya
State Minister for Regional Cooperation**



Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, was appointed as State Minister for Regional Co-operation on the 12 August 2020 at the historic Magul Maduwa in Kandy. An second term Parliamentarian, the Hon. State Minister counts near a decade in Politics, preceded by a career in the Corporate Sector.

State Minister Balasuriya was first elected to Parliament in 2015 and held the State Ministerial portfolio of Social Security following the establishment of the new Government under President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in November 2019. Previously, he was a member of the Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council, to which he was elected in the year 2012.

State Minister Balasuriya also accounts for 15 years of corporate experience in the insurance and banking sectors having ended his career as the Head Corporate Business at Sri Lanka's largest insurance company prior to his entrance into politics in 2012.

Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya holds a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Mathematics and Economics from University of Wisconsin and has a Master's degree in Business Administration from Cardiff Metropolitan University. He had his primary education at Colombo International School.

**H. E. Gabriele Visentin,
EU Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific**



Mr. Gabriele Visentin was appointed EU Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific in September 2021. He has been an official of the European External Action Service since 2011, where he served as Head of the Parliamentary Affairs Division.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Visentin was an official of the European Commission and served in the Directorate General for External Relations, as the representative of the European Commission to the Committee for the civilian crisis management of the EU (CivCom).

Mr. Visentin was also Head of Cabinet to the last President of the ECSC (European Community for Steel and Coal) and, during the Italian Presidency of the EU, he was detached to Rome as Advisor on European affairs to the Minister of Industry, Energy and International Trade. Mr. Visentin holds a degree in law and is specialized in International and Community law.

**Adml. Prof. Jayanath Colombage,
Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka**



Adml. Prof. Jayanath Colombage served in the Sri Lanka Navy for 36 years and retired as the Commander of the Navy on 1 July 2014. He is the 18th Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy and was decorated for gallantry and commended for exceptional service to the Navy.

He is a graduate of Defence Services Staff College in India and Royal College of Defence Studies, UK. He holds a PhD from General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (Sri Lanka). His doctoral thesis; ‘Asymmetric Warfare at sea: The Case of Sri Lanka’ was published. He holds an MSc in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University and an MA in International Studies from King’s College, London. He is a visiting lecturer at the University of Colombo, Defence Services Command and Staff College (Sri Lanka), Kotelawala Defence University, BCIS and BDITI.

He is a Fellow of Nautical Institute, London UK. Admiral Colombage is a Guest Professor at Sichuan University and Leshan Normal University in China and an adjunct professor at the National Institute of South China Sea Studies, Haikou, China. In addition, He has been a guest lecturer in several key universities and training institutes in Bangladesh, India, Japan and Pakistan. He has also been an editor and reviewer of a number of internationally renowned academic journals. In addition, he has served as the Director-General of the Institute of National Security Studies Sri Lanka (INSS) as well. Adml. Prof. Colombage previously served as the Additional Secretary to H.E. the President for Foreign Relations.

**H.E. Eric Lavertu,
Ambassador of the French Republic to Sri Lanka and the Maldives**



His Excellency Eric Lavertu is the Ambassador of France to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and a Hors Classe Adviser for Foreign Affairs. He holds a Master's degree in Political Science. Prior to his current position, he worked as an Assistant Director and then a Deputy Director of the Crisis and Support Centre in 2015.

He was the Consul General of the Head of the Economic Section in Bangalore during 2012-2015. He has worked in the positions of Diplomatic Counsellor and Financial Counsellor to the Director and Head of the financial mechanisms and agreements office and to the Director and Head of the Central Europe countries office at the Ministry of Defense from 2004 to 2008.

Eric was a Second Counsellor and a First Secretary at Cooperation and Culture Counselor in Kabul and in Addis-Aba-ba. In 1998, he worked as a Political Counsellor in the United Nations Special Mission in Kabul. He has also held the positions of Second Secretary in Santa Domingo and Third Secretary in Islamabad. He has also been in the Central administration of French Nationals Abroad and Foreigners in France, and he is fluent in English and Spanish.

**H.E. Tanja Gonggrijp,
Ambassador, Kingdom of the Netherlands to Sri Lanka and the Maldives**



Currently, Her Excellency Tanja Gonggrijp is the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. In this position, she pays special attention to cultural heritage, sustainable production and trade and empowerment of women. Tanja has been working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2004, fulfilling different positions.

Before moving to Sri Lanka, she was a member of the management team of the Department for Sustainable Economic Development. Earlier she was, amongst others, senior adviser to the Director-General International Cooperation and worked at the Netherlands Embassy in Dakar, Senegal. She started her career at the Clingendael Institute for International Relations.

**H.E. Denis Chaibi,
Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives**



He started his career in the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during the Belgian Presidency of the EU in 1993, and went on to the Embassy in Madrid. He then moved to the European Union, where he spent a number of years working on trade issues, specialising on China and in high profile investigations involving the U.S., Japan and other trade giants. His next assignment was Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Nicosia during the EU-Cyprus accession negotiations and the Annan plan put forward by the UN to solve the Cyprus problem.

In 2004, he was appointed as an Assistant European Correspondent, focusing on the European Commission's input in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, covering Middle-East and Asia. He continued his work on Asia by focusing on India and organizing four EU-India Summits.

He became the diplomatic adviser and Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Georgieva in 2010, dealing with Humanitarian assistance and Crisis Response. This was followed by a stint at the EU Delegation in Washington, before coming back to work for Ms Georgieva, who in the meantime had become Vice-President of the European Commission. As Senior Member and Deputy Chief of Staff, he covered budgetary and human resources issues. Denis Chaibi organized the first Brussels Conference on Syria in 2017, and became the Head of the Task Force Iran in the EU, in charge of coordinating the work of the international community regarding the implementation of the nuclear deal with Iran. He has degrees in law, political science, European studies, international law and an LLM from Cambridge University.

**Dr. Frederic Grare, Senior Policy Fellow,
European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)**



Dr. Frédéric Grare is a Senior Policy Fellow with the Asia Programme at the European Council on Foreign Relations. He previously worked at the Center for Analysis, Planning and Strategy (CAPS) of the French Ministry for Europe and External Affairs (MEAE), Paris, where he focused on Indo-Pacific dynamics and Indian Ocean security issues.

Prior to joining the French MEAE, he served as the South Asia Program Director at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington DC. Grare also served as head of the Asia bureau of the Directorate for strategic affairs of the French Ministry of Defense and Counselor for Culture and Cooperation at the French embassy in Islamabad.

He was a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Counselor at the French Embassy in Islamabad and Director of the Center for Social Sciences and Humanities in New Delhi. Grare holds a PhD from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva and a Habilitation from the Paris Institute of Political Science (Science Po) in Paris. He has published extensively on topics related to South Asian security, India's Foreign Policy, and Indo-Pacific dynamics. His last books include *The Future Indian Ocean: The Emergence of a New Political and Security Region* (co-authored with Jean-Loup Samaan).

**Prof. Rohan Gunaratna,
Director General, Institute of National Security Studies of Sri Lanka (INSS)**



Prof. Rohan Gunaratna is the Director-General of the Institute of National Security Studies, Sri Lanka. He is also an Honorary Professor at the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University and Senior Advisor to its Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka. He is a member of the advisory council of the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, Malta, as well. He is also a member of the advisory board of the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, the Hague.

A former Senior Fellow at the United States Military Academy at West Point and at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, he is a trainer for military, law enforcement and intelligence. He received his Masters from the University of Notre Dame, US, where he was a Hesburgh Scholar. and obtained his doctorate from the University of St Andrews, UK, where he was a British Chevening Scholar. Professor Gunaratna received the Maj. Gen. Ralph H. Van Deman Award for advancing international intelligence cooperation.

**Amb. D.L. Mendis,
Executive Director,
Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI)**



Dr Dayantha Laksiri Mendis obtained his LLB from the University of Ceylon and was called to the Bar in Sri Lanka. He obtained MPhil (Cantab) from the University of Cambridge (Trinity Hall) in the UK in International Relations. Later he obtained a PhD from the Shri Venkateshwara University, India. He was a Research Scholar at The Hague Academy at the Peace Palace in Den Haag and also served as Visiting Scholar for the Centre for International Studies at Cambridge University, UK.

Dr Mendis has served as UN Legal Expert (UN/DTCD, New York, USA) and ICAO Air Law Legislation Consultant (ICAO, Montreal, Canada) and Commonwealth Legal Expert (Commonwealth Secretariat, London, UK) and was assigned to many countries and regions of the world. He taught Legislative Drafting at Athabasca University in Canada. He served as Legal Adviser to the ICRC (Sri Lanka). At a young age, he served as First Parliamentary Counsel and Head of the Parliamentary Division in Sierra Leone (West Africa).

He also served as Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Austria with accreditation to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia. He was also the Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Vienna. He was a Member of the UNIDO and the IAEA Board of Governors. He is a Member of the Academic Council of the United Nations and a Member of the American Society of International Law.

**Mr. Thorsten Bargfrede,
Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives**



Thorsten Bargfrede is the Deputy Head of Mission of the European Union Delegation to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Mr. Bargfrede is a senior official of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the diplomatic service of the European Union.

He comes with a broad background and experience in the field of diplomacy, economic affairs and development as well as security and defence issues. In previous assignments with the European Union, he was a member of the Iran Task Force and a strategic planner in the fight against maritime piracy.

He was also on diplomatic postings in Pakistan and Kenya. Prior to joining the European Union, he worked in the UN system, with the International Labour Organization in New York, Geneva and Moscow. Mr. Bargfrede has studied International Relations and Economics and holds a bi-national Master Degree in Political Science from the Institute of Political Science in Paris and the Free University of Berlin.

**Ms. Hasanthi Dissanayake,
Additional Secretary, Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change**



Ms. Hasanthi Urugodawatte Dissanayake is the Acting Additional Secretary of Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change at the Foreign Ministry Sri Lanka. She is a career diplomat with over 25 years of experience in the Sri Lanka Foreign Service. She served as a diplomat in the Sri Lanka Embassies in Tokyo, Stockholm and Rome. She then served as the Consul General for Sri Lanka in Shanghai and Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Vietnam.

At the Foreign Ministry, she has served previously in political, economic affairs, protocol and UN and Human Rights Division. Prior to joining the Sri Lanka Foreign Service, she has worked in a wide range of fields from banking to IT to environment and sustainable development, with experience in the private sector, civil society and advocacy organizations at local, regional and international levels. She has an International MSc in Natural Resource Management, Globalization and Governance from the University of Stockholm and postgraduate qualifications in archaeology.

**Amb. Dr. Jasper Wieck,
Special Representative, Federal Government for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Director for South Asia
and Indo-Pacific Policy, German Federal Foreign Office**



In 2021, Dr. Jasper Wieck commenced duties as Special Representative of the Federal Government for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Deputy Director-General for South Asia and Indo-Pacific Policy. From 2020 to 2021, he was Deputy Director-General for East Asia, Southeast Asia and Pacific at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin. From 2017 to 2020, he served as Deputy Head of Mission of the German Embassy New Delhi.

Prior to this, Dr Wieck was Director for Defense and Security Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin. From 2009 to 2012 he headed the Political Section at the German Delegation to NATO, Brussels, after having served as Deputy Head of Parliamentary and Cabinet Affairs Division in the Foreign Office (2006-2009) and as Political Counselor at the German Embassy in Moscow (2002 – 2006).

He was also the Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy in Baku. Dr Wieck received his PhD in History in 1995 from the University of Bonn, where he also completed his Master's in history, Philosophy and Theology and holds a Diplôme de l'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (1993).

**Dr. Harinda Vidanage,
Head of Department, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies,
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Dr. Harinda Vidanage was formerly Director, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS), prior to his assignment at the BCIS, he was Assistant Professor of International Relations, St. Lawrence University, New York from 2012 – 2016. He taught courses on International Relations, Global Governance, International Security, Technology & Warfare and global implications of Cyber Politics. He specializes in the areas of International Security & Cyber Politics. Dr. Vidanage graduated from the University of Colombo Sri Lanka with first-class honors for Political Science. He gained his PhD from the University of Edinburgh in 2009. He was a senior Fulbright scholar in residence in New York from 2011 – 2012 and is a recipient of the prestigious ORSAS award and University of Edinburgh Principal's Scholarship. He was the Academic Director, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) 2009 – 2011. His professional experiences include appointments as Adviser, International Affairs to the Sri Lankan President 2006 – 2010 and the role of Consultant to the Sri Lanka Prime Minister during 2004- 2005 on International Affairs. Dr. Vidanage has presented on various local and international academic and corporate forums on themes ranging from cyber security, international security, and geopolitics.

**Dr. Alice Ekman,
Senior Research Fellow, EU Institute of security Studies (EUISS)**



Alice Ekman has been the Senior Analyst in charge of the Asia portfolio at the EUISS since September 2019. She covers foreign policy and security developments in the Asian region including China, the Korean Peninsula, Japan, India and ASEAN. At the EUISS, Alice also manages regular ‘Track 1,5’ dialogues with the EU’s partners in Asia and coordinates the EU member committee of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP EU).

Alice was formerly the Head of China Research at the French Institute of International Relations (Ifri) in Paris. She has also been a Visiting Scholar at Tsinghua University (Beijing), at National Taiwan Normal University (Taipei) and at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies (Seoul). She holds a Master in International Relations, Economics, and Anthropology (China-focused) from the London School of Economics and a PhD in International Relations from Sciences Po, and is fluent in Mandarin Chinese.

**Dr. Asanka Wijesinghe,
Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies**



Asanka Wijesinghe is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) with research interests in international trade. He is mainly interested in the political impact of adjustment costs of trade, trade integration, the trade origins of populist politics and econometric modelling of trade policy impact. He has undertaken efficiency analyses, particularly on public spending efficiency, using parametric and non-parametric efficiency analysis approaches.

Asanka holds a BSc in Agricultural Technology and Management from the University of Peradeniya, an MS in Agribusiness and Applied Economics from North Dakota State University, and an MS and PhD in Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics from The Ohio State University. His latest research focused on the effect of trade-induced labour market changes on voting behaviour in recent US elections, including the 2016 presidential election, the impact of import controls on Sri Lanka’s economy and the effects of GSP+ withdrawal on Sri Lanka’s exports to the EU.

**Dr Maaïke Okano Heijmans,
Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael**



Maaïke Okano-Heijmans is a senior research fellow at the Netherlands Institute for International Relations ‘Clingendael’ in The Hague. She is also a visiting lecturer at the University of Leiden, where she teaches on ‘Non-Western Diplomacy’ in the Master of Science in International Relations and Diplomacy (MIRD). Her main research interests are in connectivity and the geopolitics of high-tech in EU-Asia relations, with a special focus on China, Japan and the Indo-Pacific. A key question underlying much of her work is how the fourth industrial revolution reshapes international relations, and what this means for the EU and its member states – in particular the Netherlands.

She has more than 15 years of experience in (policy-oriented) research and advice for Dutch, EU/European and Asian governments. Maaïke leads Clingendael’s projects on Geopolitics, great powers and global governance for the Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, under the multi-annual Progress framework. She is a regularly invited speaker at track 1.5 dialogues, think tanks and universities in Europe and Asia. Maaïke obtained a Ph.D. from the University of Antwerp, Belgium, and holds Master degrees from the University of Amsterdam and Waseda University in Tokyo.

**Dr Arron N. Honniball,
Senior Research Fellow, Max Planck Foundation on UNCLOS and Rule of Law**



Dr Arron N. Honniball is a Senior Research Fellow at The Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law (Germany), principally working within the Foundation’s ASEAN and Indian Ocean maritime governance projects. Prior to joining MPFPR, Arron was a Research Fellow (2019-2021) in the Ocean Law and Policy Team at the Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore (Singapore) and PhD Candidate (2014-2018) at the Netherlands Institute for the Law of the Sea, Utrecht University (The Netherlands).

He defended his PhD at Utrecht University (2019), entitled ‘Extraterritorial Port State Measures: The basis and limits of unilateral port state jurisdiction to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing’ and has published on numerous oceans law topics in leading journals, including jurisdiction at sea, IUU fishing, international piracy, and international dispute settlement. Research interests principally concern the law of the sea and state jurisdiction in international law.

**Mr. Chandaka Jayasundere,
President's Counsel and Expert -Marine Pollution and IUU.**



Mr Chandaka Jayasundere is a member of the President's Counsel and specializes in commercial law with special emphasis on maritime law, transport law, cross border trade law, company law, intellectual property law, banking law. Mr Jayasundere has been practising since 1991, mainly in the Commercial High Court, Admiralty Court and the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka representing both corporate and individual clients. He has represented clients at several local and international arbitration proceedings and has also acted as an Arbitrator.

Mr Jayasundere holds an LLM in International Trade Law from the University of Colombo. He has written extensively and presented papers on maritime law, cross border trade law, transport law, and arbitration. He was appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers as the Chairman of the Committee to identify, study and recommend the introduction of necessary maritime laws in line with the international treaties ratified by Sri Lanka and those yet to be ratified by Sri Lanka. Finally, Mr Jayasundere was appointed as the Chairman of the Expert Panel on Maritime Law Reforms by the Ministry of Justice.

**Ms. Theresa Winter,
Manager Defence and Security Policy, Friedrich Naumann Foundation**



Theresa Caroline Winter is the manager for security and defence politics at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF). In particular, she specialized in nuclear deterrence, the comprehensive approach, and crisis management. Her current research focus is on security alliances in the Indo-Pacific region. Prior to her position at FNF, Theresa Winter worked as a government relations manager for Germany at an aerospace and defence company Lockheed Martin. She is an extended board member of the women's network, Women In International Security Germany. She received her Master's degree in Crisis and Security Management from Leiden University (Netherlands) and her Bachelor's degree in European Studies from the University of Magdeburg (Germany).

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