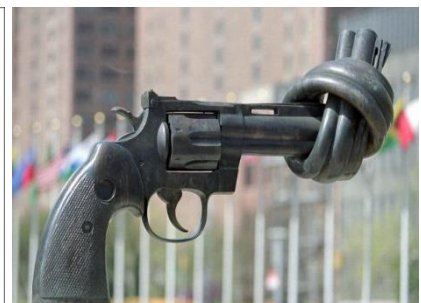


# Web Seminar Perspectives on Post-War Sri Lanka

Thursday 16 February 2023  
15:00-17:00 NL time / 19:30-21:30 SL time



To commemorate 70 years of diplomatic relations between the Netherlands and Sri Lanka, the Netherlands Sri Lanka Foundation of the Netherlands has organised a web seminar delving into different aspects of Dutch-Sri Lankan collaboration in the fields of research such as Heritage, Cultural Artefacts, Conflict & Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation and similar themes.

During this web seminar, renowned scholars from the Netherlands and Sri Lanka will offer the audience a unique opportunity to reflect on the multifaceted perspectives of post-war Sri Lanka.

Following the talks, the seminar attendees will also be able to interact with the speakers and ask questions.

Please register in advance for this seminar by using following link  
(ZOOM account is not needed to register)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZltcu6hri0qHdDKUUNpYx66fCwcnJMoGHqF>

After registration you will receive a confirmation email containing information about

## Lists of speakers

### **Governance during Armed Conflict: Theoretical & empirical reflections on prominent conflict dynamics in Sri Lanka**

**Dr. Niels Terpstra**

Assistant Professor in Conflict Studies

Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management, Radboud University, Netherlands

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### **Violence against women in post-war Sri Lanka**

**Dr. Shyamika Jayasundara-Smiths**

Assistant Professor in Conflict and Peace Studies

International Institute of Social Studies (ISS)-Erasmus University Rotterdam

# Web Seminar

## Perspectives on Post-War Sri Lanka



**Thursday 16 February 2023**  
**15:00-17:00 NL time / 19:30-21:30 SL time**

### **Sri Lanka's Failed Reconciliation: Actors, Issues and Complexities**

**Professor S.I. Keethaponcalan**

Professor of Conflict resolution, Salisbury University, Maryland  
Former Professor of Political Science, University of Colombo

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### **The Rajapaksa regnum: From populism to authoritarianism**

**Professor Nira Wickramasinghe**

Chair & Professor of Modern South Asian Studies  
Leiden University

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**Moderator**

**Professor (Emeritus) Georg Frerks**

Professor Emeritus of Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management, Utrecht University  
Professor Emeritus of International Security Studies, Netherlands Defence Academy

#### **To join this free web seminar**

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After registration you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting on 16 February 2023 at 15:00 hrs and 19:30 hrs SL

The event is free and supported by  
the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Sri Lanka.

**See further pages for synopsis & Bio speakers**

# Web Seminar

## Perspectives on Post-War Sri Lanka



Thursday 16 February 2023  
15:00-17:00 NL time / 19:30-21:30 SL time

### **Synopsis**

#### **Governance during Armed Conflict: Theoretical and empirical reflections on prominent conflict dynamics in Sri Lanka**

In this talk, dr. Terpstra will take stock of recent theoretical insights from the existing conflict studies scholarship and will apply these insights to dynamics of (armed) conflict in Sri Lanka.

### **Bio**

**Dr. Niels Terpstra** is Assistant Professor in Conflict Studies at the Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM), Radboud University. His research focuses on the dynamics of civil war, political violence, insurgency, and terrorism. He is particularly interested in governance and legitimation practices during and after civil war. Furthermore, he is interested in foreign policy, particularly the political and strategic dimensions of peace- and state-building missions.

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### **Synopsis**

#### **Violence against women in post-war Sri Lanka**

This presentation of Dr. Shyamika Jayasundra-Smits focuses on the changing picture of violence against women in post-war Sri Lanka. The main question asked here is: how post-war populist politics backed by religious extremists has violently manifested on women and what are the specific mechanisms through which religious extremism, authoritarian populism and violence against women are connected. It argues that post-war populist politics backed by Buddhist religious extremists and the post-war Sinhalese-Buddhist hegemonic state re-building project have generated dialectical relationships with Sri Lanka's minorities — Tamils and Muslims. These relationships are partially enacted through gender violence targeting women.

### **Bio**

**Dr. Shyamika Jayasundara-Smits** is an Assistant Professor in Conflict and Peace Studies, at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Erasmus University Rotterdam. She obtained her PhD from Erasmus University Rotterdam. Her research focuses on violent conflicts, state building, external interventions and challenges in and to post-war transitions. She is a published author. Her latest publication 'An Uneasy Hegemony: Politics of State-Building and Struggles for Justice in Sri Lanka' (2022) was published with Cambridge University Press.

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# Web Seminar Perspectives on Post-War Sri Lanka



Thursday 16 February 2023  
15:00-17:00 NL time / 19:30-21:30 SL time

## **Synopsis**

### **Sri Lanka's Failed Reconciliation: Actors, Issues, and Complexities**

The end of the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009 shifted the focus to ethnic reconciliation. However, after about thirteen years, communities remain divided, and new divisions have emerged. One reason for the failed reconciliation in Sri Lanka is that the stakeholders view reconciliation differently and expect vastly different outcomes. This paper/presentation explores the actors, issues, and complexities involved in Sri Lanka's reconciliation process. The economic crisis of 2022 imparted an opportunity for a reset. However, it is unlikely to result in a significant paradigm shift.

## **Bio**

**Dr. S. I. Keethaponcalan** is a professor of conflict resolution at Salisbury University, Maryland. He was Chair of the Conflict Resolution Department from 2011 to 2018. His recent books include: (1) *Electoral Politics in Sri Lanka: Presidential Elections, Manipulation, and Democracy* (2022. London: Routledge), (2) *Post-war Dilemmas of Sri Lanka: Democracy and Reconciliation* (2019. London: Routledge), and (3) *Conflict Resolution: An Introduction to Third Party Intervention* (2017. New York: Lexington Books).

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## **Synopsis**

### **The Rajapaksa regnum: from populism to authoritarianism**

Mahinda Rajapaksa's rule from 2005 onwards displayed many continuities with past regimes: patronage, family politics, and peasantism were a constant during the post-independence period. But this paper will argue that his rule introduced new features such as the idea of a separation of the citizenry into two groups: the pure and patriotic people vs. the corrupt people, who encompassed minorities and all those NGOs, civil society members, and cosmopolitan elites who had different ideas of an ideal society. Mahinda's populist regime oversaw the end of ideology in politics and the fading away of any alternative. In the recent years, his brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa moved the country even more forcefully from populism to a more stringent form of authoritarianism.

## **Bio**

**Dr. Nira Wickramasinghe** is Chair and Professor of Modern South Asian studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Before taking up her post in the Netherlands in 2010, she worked in the Department of History at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Her research centers on issues of belonging, everyday life under colonialism and the relationship between state and society in Sri Lanka and the Indian Ocean.



# Web Seminar

## Perspectives on Post-War Sri Lanka

**Thursday 16 February 2023**  
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**Bio: *Dr. Nira Wickramasinghe continued***

Trained as a historian she has written on late colonial and modern Sri Lanka using a variety of archives. Her books include: *Slave in a Palanquin: Colonial Servitude and Resistance in Sri Lanka* (Columbia University Press 2020); *Sri Lanka in the Modern Age. A History* (Oxford University Press 2015); *Metallic Modern. Everyday machines in Colonial Sri Lanka* (Berghahn 2014), *L'Invention du Vêtement National au Sri Lanka* (Karthala 2006), *Dressing the Colonised Body* (Orient Longman 2003), *Civil Society in Sri Lanka* (Sage Publ. 2001). She has been, inter alia, a Fellow at the Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University (2008-2009), British Academy Visiting Professor (2005) at the University of Oxford and Fulbright Senior Scholar at ICAS, New York University (2003-2004). She is the recipient of an NWO free competition grant for a 4 year project (2023-2027) on "Forgotten Lineages. Afterlives of Dutch slavery in the Indian Ocean World."

Nira Wickramasinghe, grew up and schooled in Paris, studied at the Université de Paris-IV Sorbonne and received her D.Phil in modern history from the University of Oxford (1989). She is presently spearheading a small academic press in Sri Lanka called Tambapanni Academic Publishers.

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