

113TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. INHOFE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

Whereas May 19, 2014, marks the five-year anniversary of the end of the 26 year civil war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka;

Whereas the people of Sri Lanka suffered greatly as a result of this conflict, the impact and aftermath of which has been felt by all, especially by women, children, and families;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka established a “Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission” (LLRC) to report whether any person, group, or institution directly or indirectly bears responsibility for incidents that oc-

curred between February 2002 and May 2009 and to recommend measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future and promote further national unity and reconciliation among all communities;

Whereas the LLRC report was presented to the Sri Lankan Parliament on December 16, 2011, and officially translated into Sinhala and Tamil on August 16, 2012;

Whereas the LLRC report acknowledges important events and grievances that have contributed to decades of political violence and war in Sri Lanka and makes constructive recommendations on a wide range of issues, including the need to credibly investigate widespread allegations of extrajudicial killings; enforced disappearances; intentional targeting of civilians and noncombatants; demilitarizing the north and the country as a whole; reaching a political settlement with minority communities on the meaningful decentralization of power; and promoting and protecting the right to freedom of expression for all through the enactment of a right to information law and additional rule of law reforms;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka developed the National Plan of Action to implement the recommendations of the LLRC and has made significant progress within limited time in the implementation of the National Plan of Action, notably in the areas of demining, rehabilitation of ex-combatants, resettlement of displaced persons, improvements of infrastructure and social services in the North and East, as well as investigations into complaints regarding persons who have disappeared during the war;

Whereas there have been reports of attacks on places of worship and restrictions on the media in several places in Sri Lanka;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka expressed its commitment to address the needs of all ethnic groups and has recognized the necessity of a political settlement and reconciliation for a peaceful and just society, which is a long-term process that will need to be driven by the people of Sri Lanka themselves;

Whereas the September 21, 2013, elections in Sri Lanka for the Northern, Central, and North Western Provincial Councils were an important step in fulfilling this commitment;

Whereas these elections were made possible through a sustained effort by the Government of Sri Lanka to restore infrastructure in the North and put in place a system for the conduct of the elections;

Whereas the elections allowed the people of the North of Sri Lanka to exercise their political rights that had been withheld from them for more than 20 years by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and resulted in a clear victory for the provincial wing of the Tamil National Alliance;

Whereas Sri Lanka is enjoying rapid economic growth as an important hub for shipping transport, technology, and tourism in the South Asia region;

Whereas Sri Lanka is of great strategic importance to the United States, due to its location, deep-water ports, and proximity to the world's busiest shipping lanes, an importance noticed and pursued by other significant powers; and

Whereas Sri Lanka seeks to be a key United States partner in the fight against terrorism and Indian Ocean piracy: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) calls upon the President to develop a com-
3 prehensive and well balanced policy towards Sri
4 Lanka that reflects United States interests, includ-
5 ing respect for human rights, democracy, and the
6 rule of law, as well as economic and security inter-
7 ests;

8 (2) calls on the United States Government and
9 the international community to assist the Govern-
10 ment of Sri Lanka, with due regard to its sov-
11 ereignty, stability, and security, in establishing do-
12 mestic mechanisms to deal with any grievances aris-
13 ing from actions committed by both sides during and
14 after the civil war in Sri Lanka;

15 (3) encourages the Government of Sri Lanka to
16 put in place a truth and reconciliation commission
17 similar to the one adopted by South Africa to help
18 heal the wounds of war, taking into account the
19 unique characteristics of the conflict and its after-
20 math; and

21 (4) urges the Government of Sri Lanka to im-
22 prove religious and media freedoms and to bring to
23 justice those responsible for attacks on journalists
24 and newspaper offices as well as places of worship,
25 regardless of religion.