



**K**nowledge

**A**ttitudes

**P**ractices

**S**urvey on the

Sri Lankan Peace Process

# POTENTIAL FOR PEACE

**SOCIAL INDICATOR - CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

**2004**



# Foreword

**T**he deadlock in negotiations since March 2003, profiles the multiple challenges that beset the search for a negotiated peace in Sri Lanka. It is clear that a negotiated political and constitutional settlement requires difficult compromises and paradigmatic shifts in popular political culture if it is to have the legitimacy and support necessary for its durability and success.

The surveys conducted by SI on the peace process since 2001, namely the Peace Confidence Index (PCI) and KAPS 2003 have demonstrated this, outlining the differences in opinion with respect to how a negotiated settlement should be arrived at and as to what it should entail. At the same time, a clear and consistent message from these surveys is the broad and solid support base for peace, understood as an absence of armed conflict.

This survey, KAPS 2004, conducted at a time when the initial expectation of a negotiated settlement has been declining, nevertheless reveals a reinforced popular sentiment and demand for peace. Interestingly too, it reveals a willingness on the part of the public to accept certain "trade offs" and compromises in a final settlement. Accordingly, as all KAP surveys are about bringing to the attention of decision and opinion makers the real hopes, concerns and fears of the general public and the likelihood of activism in support of or in opposition to dominant trends and developments

in the peace process, CPA -SI sincerely hopes that the results of KAPS 2004 too, will be utilized to inform decision making and advocacy efforts. In particular, given the design of KAPS 2004, we hope it will be of especial value in refining and sharpening these efforts.

We see KAPS 2004 as a catalyst for more targeted advocacy and intervention to ensure greater understanding and subscription to the overarching objective of a negotiated political and constitutional settlement. It is an integral part of our contribution to advancing democratic peace and governance in Sri Lanka in fulfillment of our mandate. As with previous SI - CPA surveys on the peace process, we hope that KAPS 2004 will be the public good, we intend it to be, of value and utility to all those who share with us the goal of a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Sri Lanka.

KAPS 2004 was made possible by the financial assistance of the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the technical support of William Mishler, Professor and Head, Department of Political Science, University of Arizona, US and Steven Finkel, Department of Government and Foreign Affairs, University of Virginia, US, which CPA-SI gratefully acknowledges. Their collaboration with us has greatly enhanced our capacity building and deepened our understanding of the pivotal relationship between public opinion, popular legitimacy and support for a just, durable and democratic peace.

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**Pradeep Peiris**

Unit Head  
Social Indicator – Centre for Policy Alternatives



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# Executive Summary

**T**his report documents the results of the second Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey (KAPS II) on the Sri Lankan Peace Process, conducted by Social Indicator, a non-partisan survey research centre associated with the Centre for Policy Alternatives, Colombo. The survey was conducted in mid 2004, and was supported in part by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with technical assistance from the Academy for Educational Development (AED), a nonprofit organization supporting assistance programs in more than 130 nations. The survey aimed to determine the changes in public opinion that might have occurred in Sri Lanka in response to the events of the past year, as well as to take advantage of the lessons learned in the KAPS I survey of 2003 by exploring in greater depth the nature of public support for peace. Specifically, KAPS II expands on last year's survey by:

- Examining a larger and more diverse set of peace proposals put forward by different sections of Sri Lankan society;

- Examining in greater depth the sources of public support for peace, including an expanded focus on individual experiences with the conflict and individual perceptions of costs and benefits associated with a permanent peace settlement or a return to armed conflict;

- Incorporating an assessment of public reaction to incidents such as the intra-LTTE split (i.e. the newly emerged Karuna faction) and the July suicide-bomb attack on the Colpetty

police station.

- Using more innovative survey research techniques to explore the conditions under which individuals from different ethnic groups might be persuaded to embrace the compromises necessary for a just and lasting peace.



¶ The results of the study suggest that the Sri Lankan public overall has become more supportive of a number of specific peace proposals in comparison to the 2003 survey. The public also appears to be more willing to resort to protest if the peace agreement arrived at is perceived to be unfair (Chapters II and III-A). Moreover, there is consensus among a majority of all Sri Lankan ethnic groups with regard to the acceptability of five of the eight specific proposals that were presented to respondents. Namely:

- Support for peace proposals included in both KAPS I and II (including federalism, asymmetric federalism, guaranteed minority representation in parliament, and amnesty for war violence against civilians) is higher in 2004 than in 2003, except in the case of amnesty which remains unchanged.

- Protest potential is substantially higher in 2004 than in 2003 with more than 60% of citizens, today, expressing a willingness to protest an unfair agreement, and about 40% approving the use of violence if necessary to do so.

- A new array of peace proposals integrated into KAPS II (including proposals advocated by the different

*“... Support for peace can be enhanced through the bundling of diverse peace proposals, thereby encouraging citizens to weigh the tangible gains...”*

sides to the conflict) indicate that a majority of Sri Lankans, and indeed a majority in each ethnic group, are prepared to accept a diverse array of proposals, including:

- ▶ The return of homes and lands to displaced Muslims.

- ▶ Permanent merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces.

- ▶ Decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons.

- ▶ Establishment of an impartial commission to monitor and enforce human rights.

- ▶ Adoption of comprehensive constitutional reform as part of the peace process.

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¶ As with KAPS I, the support for peace proposals and the individual's willingness to protest an unfair agreement were combined to produce a four-fold Peace Typology comprised of Activist Peace Supporters and Opponents, and Passive Peace Supporters and Opponents. The results of these analyses indicate that (Chapters II and III-A):

- The number of Activist Peace Process Supporters has substantially increased over the past year, as has the number of Activist Peace Process Opponents, although by a smaller percentage.

- Passive Supporters and Passive Opponents of the Peace process have both declined over the year indicating that the peace process has become more politically charged during this time period.

- Minority ethnic groups are dominated by Activist Supporters of the peace process. Tamils in Up-country areas however appear to be more passive than minorities living elsewhere in the country.

- Sinhala ethnic group members are relatively equally divided among the four peace types. They are far from being the monolithic opponents of a

compromise peace as is sometimes portrayed.

- Support for a compromise peace agreement is strongest in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and, to a lesser extent, in the Central province.

- Opposition to a compromise peace agreement is strongest in the North Central Province followed by the three southern provinces, although even in these most hostile areas there are large minorities willing to accept a variety of proposals for peace.

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¶ We further examined the sources of public opinion toward peace, specifically a series of factors related to an individual's social position (including gender, age, education, and urban/rural residence); the intensity of his/her ethnic identification and the extent of interaction with other ethnic group members; political values including support for democracy; political knowledge and engagement; perceptions of political performance and trust; and the personal impact of the war, perceptions of the causes of war, and on the costs and benefits of war and peace. These analyses show that (Chapter III-B):

- Citizens with higher formal education are significantly more likely to support a compromise peace agreement. Other demographic differences however appear to have weak effects on support for the peace process.

- Sri Lankans with strong ethnic, national and religious identities are moderately to strongly more likely to support a compromise peace agreement and are strongly more likely to have high peace protest potential.

- The extent of an individual's knowledge of and contact with members of other ethnic groups is strongly linked to the individual's support for a compromise peace agreement.

- Sri Lankans with strong democratic values and those who are most supportive of maintaining Sri Lanka as a democracy are substantially more likely to support a compromise peace and to manifest high protest potential.

■ Public knowledge of the peace process, today, is remarkably high. Those with the greatest knowledge of the Peace Process are the most likely to support the widest range of peace proposals. They are also more likely to protest against a peace proposal that is unfair or against a political party that is perceived as a peace process spoiler.

■ Political interest is positively linked to support for the peace process, but participation in conventional political activities (voting, party work) is not.

■ Sri Lankans with the highest trust in the nation's political institutions such as the parliament, the army and police are modestly more supportive of a peace agreement.

■ Sri Lankans who most trust the President are more likely to oppose a compromise peace agreement, although their opposition tends to be more passive.

■ The more directly Sri Lankans have experienced the conflict, first or second-hand, the more likely they are to support a compromise peace agreement. They also express much higher peace protest potential.

■ While virtually all Tamils and Muslims have suffered directly as a consequence of the war, a sizable minority of Sinhalese, especially those in the southern provinces, have little or no direct experience with the conflict and as a result are much less supportive of a compromise peace agreement.

■ Large majorities of citizens from all ethnic groups are convinced that a permanent peace agreement will bring important benefits to all parts of the country and that a return to war would be disastrous.

■ Sri Lankans who believe that a permanent peace will bring additional benefits to themselves and the country are much more supportive of a compromise peace. The same is true, though to a lesser extent, for those who think a return to war would impose big costs.

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¶ **An innovative feature of KAPS II is the use of experimental survey methods to probe the possibility**

**of persuading Sri Lankans to be more accepting of peace. Overall, these analyses confirm the possibility of shaping Sri Lankan attitudes for peace through a combination of persuasive techniques. Specifically, these analyses indicate that (Chapter IV):**

■ A powerful persuasive technique is one that combines peace proposals that are favored by different sides to the conflict into a single "bundle, for example, merging a popular proposal such as decommissioning LTTE heavy weapons with an unpopular proposal such as eliminating High Security Zones in the North and East in persuading a majority of citizens to accept both for the sake of peace. Those persuaded include a substantial portion of Sinhala respondents, for whom the issue of eliminating High Security Zones is deeply unpopular when considered separately.

■ While bundles almost always produce some positive change in public support for the less favored proposal in the package, the change in public acceptance toward the proposals aimed at creating an LTTE ISGA is however, generally modest and not sufficient to produce majority acceptance.

■ A second persuasive technique involves the discussion or "framing" of peace proposals using language or symbols designed to activate different perspectives on the conflict and hence change the ways individuals consider specific peace proposals. Framing effects however, were relatively weak, although the Sinhalese are somewhat more susceptible to arguments couched in the language of ethnic grievances and economic gain, and Tamils are somewhat more responsive to arguments emphasizing the end to violence. None of the frames used in KAPS II have much effect on Muslims.

■ A final persuasive technique involves the use of "counter-arguments" to change opinion. In fact, counter arguments, which are used on the question of support for a federal solution to the conflict, appear very effective in persuading Sri Lankans to change their initial attitudes about a federal solution. Unfortunately, counter-arguments are more effective in discouraging initial supporters of federalism

than in persuading initial opponents of federalism. However, counter-arguments articulated by religious and party leaders that evoke issues of ethnic fairness and regional autonomy in federal systems had significant ability to persuade individuals to adopt more supportive positions.

■ Public opinion on federalism in general, is mixed, though there is significant support for regional powers in many areas of governmental responsibility. When presented with a list of ten governmental powers there was a clear consensus among respondents that up to five of them (namely, transportation, culture and religion, agriculture and fishing, education and natural resources) should be devolved with at least equal power to regional governments.

■ In the five other areas presented however (namely, military and defense, foreign policy, police, judiciary, and economics and taxation), opinions were more clearly polarized, with Tamils favoring more of a regional role and Sinhalese and Muslims favoring greater centralized power. Tamil opinion in these areas however, does allow for the national government to play at least an equal role, suggesting that a compromise solution even in these difficult areas may be possible.

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¶ **Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations for public information campaigns to promote the Sri Lankan peace process (Chapter V):**

■ Given that knowledge about the peace process is, after ethnicity, the single most important factor in determining support for a variety of peace proposals, public information campaigns have the potential to be highly effective, not only in informing individuals about the issues involved, but also in promoting greater levels of peace support. Such campaigns should be founded first, on those proposals for which there is majority acceptance across all four ethnic groups.

■ Support for peace can be enhanced through the bundling of diverse peace proposals, thereby encouraging citizens

to weigh the tangible gains to be won on some issues in return for making concessions on others.

■ A public information campaign can also take advantage of the information in KAPS 2 on framing and counter-argument effects. While these effects are modest in the survey, there are good reasons to believe they would be more effective when used in a coordinated and sustained campaign. In addition, religious and party elites need to be encouraged to lend their authority to these efforts, as arguments articulated by these leaders led to the greatest changes in public opinion in our survey manipulations.

■ Some form of power-sharing (whether called federalism, devolution, or self-government) is probably essential for a successful peace agreement. Federalism can be designed in myriad ways. A public information campaign needs to prepare public opinion on this issue by emphasizing the prospects for power-sharing in those areas where a majority of the public already embrace the value of national-regional cooperation.

■ A public information campaign need not focus exclusively on the peace process. Support for democracy is important in its own right; citizens with the strongest democratic values and firmest commitment to a democratic regime are much more supportive of peace. This suggest that there may real value in expanding current efforts both at building support for peace while simultaneously building a stronger democratic citizenry.

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**In the longer term, of course, much more needs to be done to increase interaction and build trust between ethnic groups. It is encouraging that the younger generation of Sri Lankans are already more supportive of peace than their elders. This, in combination with sustained efforts at civic education by political and civil society groups, could help to realize the goal of a just and lasting peace within a stable Sri Lankan democracy. ¶**







# Introduction

*“..Although the ceasefire remains officially in place, it is increasingly fragile, and speculation about the possible resumption of war is widespread. ..”*

Sri Lanka is a country rich in history and culture, endowed with bountiful natural resources, possessing an enterprising and democratic citizenry, but beset nonetheless by a long and ugly civil war. After more than two decades of conflict, costing tens of thousands of casualties and massive social and economic dislocations, the announcement of the February 2002 ceasefire gave tangible hope to citizens on all sides that a just and lasting peace might finally be approaching.

To understand the nature and extent of public support for the peace process, Social Indicator undertook Sri Lanka's first Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey (KAPS I) in June 2003, at a time when public hopes for the peace process were at their optimal. The Final Report of that survey, *For the Sake of A Just and Lasting Peace (Social Indicator, December, 2003)*, confirmed the deep divisions separating Sri Lanka's ethnic communities but also documented the existence of widespread support for the peace process among Sri Lankans of all ethnic backgrounds and in all regions of the country. A majority of Sri Lankans was convinced that the achievement of a permanent peace would pay rich dividends in terms of greater individual freedom, enhanced human rights, and a healthier, more robust national economy. Most citizens were also willing to accept some changes at least in the status quo in order to achieve a permanent peace. Nevertheless, while the final report expressed optimism about the overall level of public support for a permanent peace agreement, it also noted significant resistance to a peace agreement among important sub-groups as well. The report cautioned,

moreover, that the achievement of peace required more than the support of the majority public, but also required political leaders willing and able to deliver peace initiatives that a majority could support. The report further questioned the preparedness of Sri Lanka's leaders to deliver the peace initiatives required for meaningful negotiations.

Today, 3 years following the Ceasefire Agreement, the high hopes with which peace was initially greeted have begun to fade. Although the ceasefire remains officially in place, it is increasingly fragile, and speculation about the possible resumption of war is widespread. The past year has been especially eventful. National elections were held in April, producing a new government critical of the former government's approach to peace, but divided on its own approach. The LTTE also faced an internal division and subsequent splintering, an event that resulted in a marked increase in political violence in diverse areas of the country. There has been little meaningful movement in the peace process and no significant generation of ideas and options for moving forward.

It is against this background that Social Indicator, a non-partisan survey research centre associated with the Centre for Policy Alternatives in Colombo, undertook a second, nationwide **Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey (KAPS II)** of Sri Lankan citizens in the summer of 2004. The survey is supported in part by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and received technical assistance from the Academy for Educational

Development (AED), a nonprofit organization supporting assistance programs in more than 130 nations. In addition to understanding the changes in public opinion that might have occurred in Sri Lanka in response to the manifold events of the past year, the survey is intended to take advantage of the lessons learned in KAPS I by exploring in greater depth the nature of public support for peace. Specifically, KAPS II expands on last year's survey by:

- Examining a larger and more diverse set of peace proposals put forward by different sections of Sri Lankan society;

- Examining in greater depth the sources of public support for peace, including an expanded focus on individual experience with the conflict and individual perceptions of costs and benefits associated with a permanent peace settlement or a return to armed conflict;

- Incorporating an assessment of public reaction to incidents such as the intra-LTTE split (i.e. the newly emerged Karuna faction) and the July suicide-bomb attack on the Colpetty police station.

- Using more innovative survey research techniques to explore the conditions under which individuals from different ethnic groups might be

persuaded to embrace the compromises necessary for a just and lasting peace.

Fieldwork for KAPS II was carried out during July and August of 2004, shortly after the Colpetty bombing and the departure of Karuna from Batticoloa. The study uses a lengthy, structured questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews amongst a nation-wide sample of 3513 respondents.

The sample includes respondents from 21 districts in Sri Lanka, excluding only those areas in Amparai, Batticoloa, Trincomalee and Jaffna not under government control. Minority ethnic groups are systematically over-sampled to insure sufficient numbers for meaningful analysis. The resulting sample consists of 1742 Sinhala, 749 Tamil, 323 Tamils in Up-Country Areas, and 699 Muslim respondents and is weighted by ethnic group and region to create a national probability sample of 3513 individuals, allowing valid inferences to be drawn about the country as a whole and about the different ethnic groups<sup>1</sup>.

Restrictions on the survey prevented our conducting interviews in LTTE controlled areas in the North and East. *Appendix A* provides additional details on the survey methods. *Appendix B* provides a copy of the questionnaire used in the study.



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<sup>1</sup>The sampling scheme, as noted in Appendix A, provides for the distinction between Tamil respondents living in areas generally considered "up-country" (i.e. Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle, Badulla, Ratnapura districts) and other Tamils. We did not, however, ascertain directly whether the respondents considered themselves as "UpCountry Tamils," nor whether their ancestry would be classified as "Sri Lankan" or "Indian" Tamil according to Census categorizations. Nevertheless, we refer to this group as Up-Country Tamils in the text for ease of presentation.



# For the Sake of Peace

*"...Today, the percentage supporting ethnic representation has grown to 67%, and the percentage opposing ethnic representation has also decreased slightly..."*

## A: New Peace Proposals

To measure public support for changes in the political status quo that might address at least some of the LTTE's demands for greater regional autonomy, the 2003 KAP I survey included an array of questions asking respondents whether, "for the sake of a just and lasting peace," they could agree to proposals such as the creation of a federal system, the provision of amnesty for those who committed illegal violence during the conflict, and the guarantee of minority representation in Parliament. To measure changes in public attitudes over the past year, we repeated four of the most important of these questions in KAPS II. Table II-1 records those changes, comparing the percentages of citizens who Strongly Agree, Agree, are undecided (i.e., Neither Agree nor Disagree), Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the four proposals that were asked in the two surveys.

Despite the turmoil of the past year -- or perhaps because of it -- Sri Lankans today express even more support for a wider variety of peace proposals than they did in 2003. When asked last year, 43% of citizens "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" that the "powers of regional governments need to be increased even if those of the central government need to be reduced." A year later, the percentage supporting a federal solution has risen nearly 6 percentage points and currently stands at 49%. By contrast the percentage of citizens opposing federalism has decreased during the past year from 45 to 41%, so in effect, there is today a clear plurality of citizens favoring some form of power-sharing between the national and regional governments. An even larger increase

has occurred in the percentage of citizens who agree that the powers of some regional governments may need to be increased more than others. In 2003 only 18% of citizens supported asymmetric federalism. A year later, 26% of citizens agree with this proposal, an increase of 8 percentage points. To be sure, opponents of asymmetric federalism continue to outnumber supporters by a substantial margin, but the trend is clearly upward. (See Table II-1)

Support for the more popular proposals has also increased. A year ago, a substantial majority of citizens (62%) agreed that "every ethnic group should have the right to elect a certain number of members to Parliament," and only 25% disagreed. Today, the percentage supporting ethnic representation has grown to 67%, and the percentage opposing ethnic representation has also decreased slightly. The only item asked in both surveys that does not enjoy greater public support today is "general amnesty for people who have committed illegal political violence against citizens." While 25% of Sri Lankans agreed with amnesty in 2003 (63% opposed it), support for amnesty today is lower but by just under 2 percentage points, an insignificant margin.

The peace proposals in KAPS I included, by necessity, just a small number of the many proposals advanced by the parties to the conflict. Moreover, the items included were mostly those favored by the LTTE, since LTTE grievances with the status quo arguably are the principal cause of the civil war and must be resolved satisfactorily if a peace agreement is to be reached. Nevertheless, a peace agreement ultimately requires that all sides be at least minimally satisfied with the

<b>Table II-1</b>						
<b>Sri Lankan Opinions on Peace Proposals KAPS I vs. KAPS II</b>						
<b>Peace Proposal</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>The powers of regional governments should be increased, even if those of the government at the center have to be decreased</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>21.0</b>
	<b>II</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>20.3</b>
<b>The powers of some regional governments may need to be increased more than others</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>36.5</b>
	<b>II</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>28.9</b>	<b>32.4</b>
<b>Every ethnic group should have the right to elect a certain number of members to Parliament</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>12.7</b>
	<b>II</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>12.2</b>
<b>There should be a general Amnesty for people who may have committed illegal political violence against civilians during the war, so long as they testify in front of an official peace commission.</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>47.3</b>
	<b>II</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>46.7</b>

terms of the deal. Thus, to obtain a broader perspective on public support for a comprehensive peace agreement, we include a second and expanded battery of peace proposals in KAPS II. We constructed these questions after extensive consultations in June 2004 with leaders of Sri Lankan political and civil society groups, as well as with several Sri Lankan academics. The new questions in KAPS II include three questions most favored by Tamil leaders:

a. The Northern and Eastern provinces should be permanently merged

b. An LTTE interim self-governing authority should be established in the Northern and Eastern provinces until a final settlement is reached; and,

c. High Security Zones should be dismantled in the Northern and Eastern provinces

We also included two questions advocated by Muslim leaders:

d. Displaced Muslims should be allowed to return to their homes and the lands they owned returned; and,

e. There should be a separate Muslim self-governing region in the North East

Two questions were included of particular interest to Sinhala leaders:

f. The LTTE should place all of their heavy weapons under the control of a neutral international force

g. Any peace agreement should be part of a comprehensive reform of the Sri Lankan constitution

A final question was advocated by several individuals but does not, on the surface, appear to be favored by any one ethnic group over the others:

h. An impartial commission should be established to monitor and enforce human rights

In addition to including the eight new peace proposals, we also included a new set of response (answer) categories. Rather than ask citizens in KAPS II whether they agree or disagree with the new proposals as we did in KAPS I, we borrowed an idea from surveys con-

ducted by the Centre for the Study of Ethnic Conflict at Queen's University Belfast as part of the Northern Ireland peace process (see [www.peacepolls.org](http://www.peacepolls.org)). In this formulation, the questions are posed in a way that compel citizens to consider not only whether they personally favor a proposal and think it personally beneficial but also, in the event that they dislike the proposal, whether they can at least accept it as the price for peace. Specifically, we ask whether each proposal is "Absolutely Necessary for Peace, Desirable but Not necessary for Peace, Undesirable but I could Accept It for Peace, or Absolutely Undesirable." We can use the responses to these questions to understand not only what Sri Lankans would prefer, but also what they could ultimately accept as part of a final peace settlement. The public responses to the eight new proposals are reported in Table II-2.

Virtually all respondents say that they can accept the general proposal that the homes and lands of displaced Muslims be restored to them as part of a permanent peace agreement. More than 80% say it is absolutely necessary and 95% are at least willing to accept the proposal for the sake of peace. The new proposal to establish an impartial commission as part of the peace agreement to enforce human rights receives almost as much support. Three-quarters of citizens say it is absolutely necessary and nearly 95% say that they can accept the proposal if it is necessary for peace (See Table II-2, following page).

In contrast to the near unanimity of support, or at least acceptance, to returning Muslim property and enforcing human rights, there is considerable disagreement about placing LTTE heavy weapons under international control and undertaking comprehensive constitutional reform as part of the peace process. While 63% of citizens think that decommissioning LTTE weapons is essential for a peace agreement, 15% think it is absolutely undesirable, while another 10% oppose the idea but could accept it as a necessary condition for peace. Similarly, about 60% of citizens favor comprehensive constitutional reform, while 13% absolutely oppose it, and about a quarter say they could accept it for the sake of peace. On balance, however, both proposals receive overwhelming consent; with 87% saying they either support or can ac-

**Table II-2**

**Sri Lankan Opinions of New KAPS II Peace Proposals**

<b>New Peace Proposals</b>	<b>Absolutely Necessary for Peace</b>	<b>Desirable but Not Necessary for Peace</b>	<b>Undesirable but I Could Accept it for Peace</b>	<b>Absolutely Undesirable for Peace</b>
Displaced Muslims should be allowed to return to their homes and the lands they owned returned.	81.6	8.4	4.6	5.4
There should be a separate Muslim self-governing region in the North East.	14.8	9.5	10	65.8
The Northern and Eastern provinces should be permanently merged.	39.7	11.7	12.8	35.7
An LTTE interim self-governing authority should be established in the Northern and Eastern provinces until a final settlement is reached.	18.9	8.1	10.4	62.5
The LTTE should place all of their heavy weapons under the control of a neutral international force.	63	11.4	10.4	15.2
High Security Zones should be dismantled in the Northern and Eastern provinces.	21.5	8.3	9.9	60.3
An impartial commission should be established to monitor and enforce human rights.	75.2	11.5	7.9	5.5
Any peace agreement should be part of a comprehensive reform of the Sri Lankan constitution.	59	15.3	13	12.7

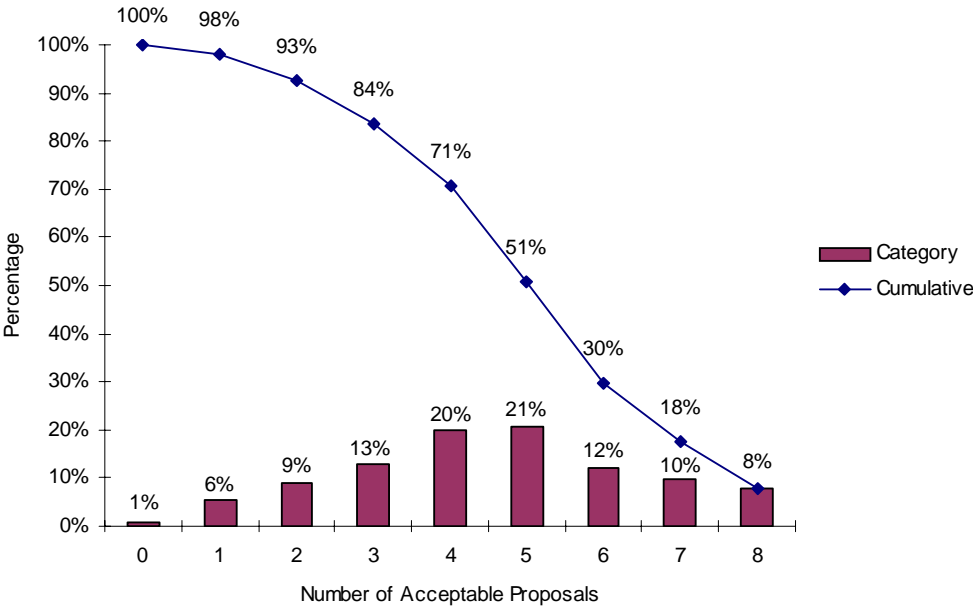
cept constitutional reform as the price for peace and 85% saying they either support or can at least accept the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons for the same goal.

The proposals for an LTTE interim self-governing authority (ISGA), the dismantling of High Security Zones (HSZs) in the Northern and Eastern provinces, and the establishment of a Muslim self-governing region in the North-east draw higher degrees of controversy. The creation of an ISGA, a principal demand of the LTTE, is considered absolutely necessary by almost 20% of Sri Lankans. Overall, however, less than one-third of the country's citizens embrace the proposal positively, while nearly three-quarters dislike the idea and a substantial majority finds it absolutely undesirable. Similarly, with respect to the proposal to create a separate Muslim region, only 15% think the idea is absolutely necessary for peace while three-quarters dislike the idea and only about 35% are willing to accept the proposal for the sake of peace. The dismantling of HSZs in the Northern and Eastern Provinces elicits slightly greater margins of support. One in five citizens thinks the idea is absolutely necessary for peace and 40% say they can accept it if necessary for a peace agreement, while an overwhelming majority dislike the idea, and 60% say it is absolutely undesirable. Finally, Sri Lankans are relatively evenly divided on the issue of the North and East merger. A slight majority (51%) positively favours the idea, and a sub-

stantial majority (64%) can accept if for the sake of peace. Nevertheless about one-third of citizens reject the idea as absolutely undesirable.

As we have noted, the peace proposals in KAPS II include something for each of the principal ethnic groups. Compromise, however, is the essence of negotiation. Compromise is fundamentally about tradeoffs - giving in on a proposal you don't like but that is important to others in order to win support for a proposal you favor but others do not. In a real sense therefore, the measure of citizens' support for peace is the number of different proposals they are willing to accept. Those willing to accept two or three proposals are likely supporting only the proposals that benefit themselves or that everyone can agree upon. Those supporting more proposals are likely supporting at least some proposals that are more important to other people or groups. To measure the breadth of Sri Lankans' commitment to peace, Figure II-1 reports the percentage of citizens who indicate their willingness to accept none, one, or multiple proposals for peace. By "accept" we mean that the individual responded that the proposal was either "absolutely necessary," "desirable," or "undesirable but I could accept it for peace." We also present the percentage of respondents who accept at least one proposal, at least two proposals, at least three proposals, and so on; these are labeled the "cumulative percentages" in the figure (See Figure II-1).

**Figure II-1: Acceptance for Multiple New Proposals**





Given the diversity of peace proposals included in KAPS II, it is not surprising that virtually all Sri Lankans find something to their liking and are willing to accept one or more of the proposals put forward for peace. Less than 1% of citizens find all eight of proposals "absolutely undesirable" while 93% of citizens say they can accept at least two or more of the proposals. By contrast nearly 10% of citizens are willing to accept all eight of proposals; more than 70% accept at least four proposals, and more than 30% say they accept six or more. Assuming that citizens who accept at least five proposals are accepting of at least one or two proposals desired principally by other groups then a small majority (52%) of Sri Lankans are willing to embrace at least some proposals advanced by competing groups. These are impressive numbers, suggesting that last year's optimistic results were not simply the result of relatively "easy" peace proposals presented to respondents. More importantly, the broad support for the new peace proposals suggest that there is substantial room for serious negotiations on peace, at least from the perspective of public opinion.



## **B: Revisiting Peace Protest Potential**

In addition to understanding Sri Lankans' willingness to accept diverse peace proposals, it is important to understand the intensity of their opinions and the extent to which they are prepared to fight for what they think is just and fair. The concern is not only whether they will revert to armed conflict should negotiations fail, but also whether they will protest against an unfair agreement or vote against political parties perceived as either having obstructed the peace process or as supporting an unjust agreement. In this regard we asked respondents to agree or disagree with four questions:

*a. If there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair, I will join with others to protest against it;*

*b. If there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair, I will vote against any political party that supported it;*

*c. If a peace agreement is not*

*reached in Sri Lanka, I will vote against any political party that I think was a spoiler;*

and

*d. If there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair, I would approve the use of any means necessary, including violence, to defeat it.*

Sri Lankans express a remarkably strong and widespread willingness to resort to protest and to punish parties for their role in a failed or unjust peace accord, indicating perhaps the intensity of feeling the peace process generates among the country's citizenry. For example, nearly 70% of citizens agree or strongly agree that they would join with others to protest against a peace agreement that they think is unfair compared to only 21% who clearly say that they would not do so. Four out of five citizens also say that they are prepared to vote against any political party that supports an unfair agreement while only 11% say they would not. Another nearly three-quarters of respondents say they would vote against any political party that was a 'spoiler' perceived to be responsible for obstructing a peace agreement. Most dramatically of all, fully 41 % of Sri Lankans say they approve the use of violence if that is necessary to defeat an unfair peace agreement, whereas only 29% clearly reject the use of violence in that circumstance.

Comparisons of the level of Sri Lankan protest potential this year with that registered in June 2003 is complicated by the fact that KAPS II uses a new and enhanced array of questions to measure protest potential. KAPS I asked two questions: whether citizens would "participate in a protest" against an unfair agreement and whether they would "join an organization" opposed to an unfair peace agreement. In 2003, 51% said they would be willing to join an organization opposed to an unfair agreement and 58% said they would participate in a protest against an unfair agreement. The most direct comparison across the two surveys is between the KAPS I question about participating in a protest and the KAPS II question about "joining with others to protest" against an unfair agreement. While there is a slight variation in the wording of these questions, their

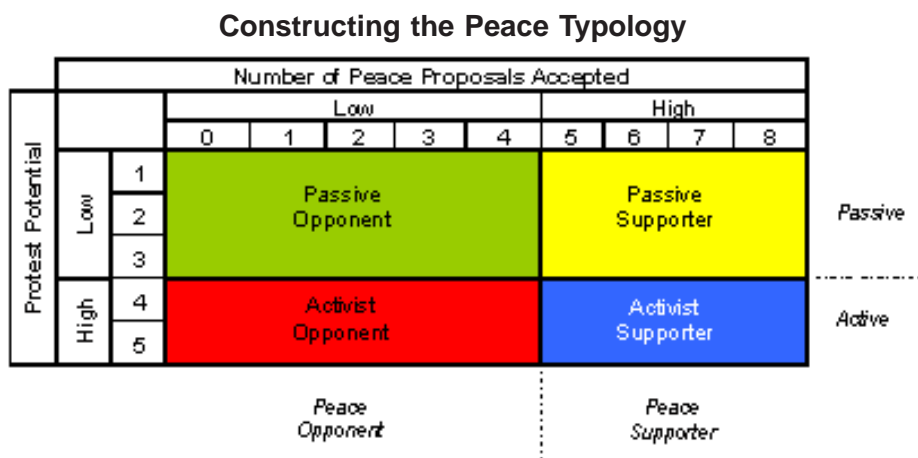
connotations are very much the same. Nevertheless, whereas 58% of Sri Lankans expressed a willingness to protest an unfair agreement in June 2003, that number increases to 69% in July 2004 - fully 10 percentage points higher than a year earlier. Interestingly, peace protest potential as measured by the KAPS I question was even higher in a March 2004 Social Indicator survey conducted during this year's national elections (see Appendix C). These results suggest that Sri Lankan opinion regarding the peace process has intensified over the past year. This increase in intensity is apparent among both supporters and opponents of the peace process, but is larger (by almost 2:1) among supporters. While supporters of the peace process have increased in both size and intensity, opponents of the process have decreased in size even as they have increased modestly in intensity.

### C: Peace Activists and Opponents

To better understand the dynamics of public support and opposition to the peace process, KAPS I introduced a Peace Process Typology based on respondents' support for the various peace proposals combined with their willingness to protest against an unfair or spoiled agreement. Although

different peace proposals are used in 2004 along with the more detailed and nuanced measures of protest potential, a new typology was constructed for 2004 following the same logic and methodology as in 2003 (See Figure II-2). Figure II-2 shows the procedures used to construct the 2004 typology. Peace process "supporters" are defined as those citizens supporting at least five of the eight (or more than half) peace proposals. These are individuals who typically accept the two or three peace proposals strongly favored by their own ethnic group but also accept two or more of the proposals favored by other ethnic groups. Peace process "opponents" by contrast are identified as those who accept four or fewer proposals, typically including only those proposals favored by their own groups or broadly embraced by all groups. Similarly peace process "activists" are identified as those citizens who, on average, agreed or strongly agreed with all four peace protest questions including, in most cases, approval of violent protest. Peace process "passives," conversely, are those individuals who on average disagree with or are undecided about engaging in political protest. By comparing peace protest activists and passives with supporters and opponents of the majority of new peace proposals, four distinct peace types are created. The

Figure II-2: 2004 Peace Typology



*Activist Opponents = Low on Support for Peace Proposals, High on Protest Potential*  
*Passive Opponents = Low on Support for Peace Proposals, Low on Protest Potential*  
*Passive Supporters = High on Support for Peace Proposals, Low on Protest Potential*  
*Activist Supporters = High on Support for Peace Proposals, High on Protest Potential*

percentage of all Sri Lankan respondents who fall into each of these four peace categories are given in Figure II-3 (See Figure II-3).

Activist Supporters of the peace process are those who support five or more of the eight new peace proposals and who indicate a strong willingness to protest against an unfair agreement or the failure to reach an agreement. As observed in Figure II-3, Activist Supporters are the largest group in Sri Lanka and constitute more than a third (34%) of all citizens. The average member of this group supports six of the eight proposals. There is majority support among members of this group for all of the eight proposals except for creating a separate Muslim self-governing authority, which is supported by "only" 49% of Activist Supporters.

Activist Opponents of the peace process are the second largest group. These are individuals who find a majority of the peace proposals absolutely undesirable and are unwilling to accept them even if necessary for a peace agreement. They are also individuals who feel strongly enough about the peace process to be willing to protest an agreement they consider unfair. Overall, 26% of Sri Lankans in KAPS II are Activist Opponents of the peace proposals. The average member of this group supports only three of the eight proposals, although a majority of the group supports returning Muslim lands, decommissioning LTTE weapons, enforcing human rights, and undertaking comprehensive consti-

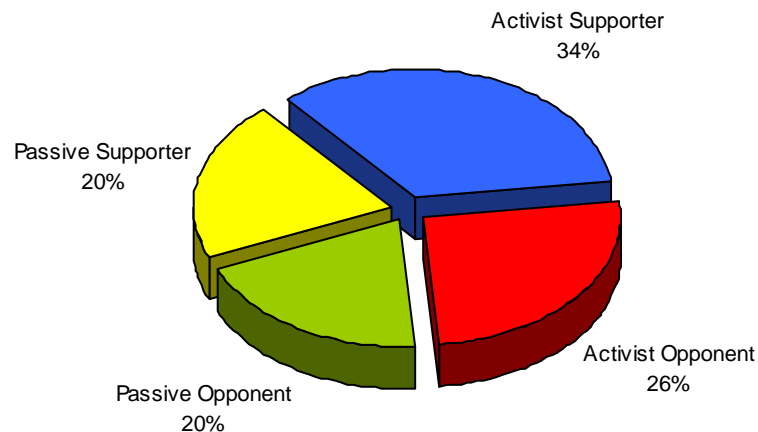
tutional reforms. Notably, the proposals they accept are all supported by a large percentage of all Sri Lankans and include mostly proposals favored by the current Government.

Passive Supporters of the peace process are also willing to accept a majority of the eight peace proposals. Unlike activists however, they are largely unwilling to engage in protest activities if the process is thwarted or an unfair agreement is reached. Passive Supporters are the smallest of the four groups at 20.1% of the population. Interestingly, the average member of this group accepts 6.2 of the eight proposals, the largest number of any of the four types. Moreover, there is majority support among this group for all eight of proposals including the creation of a Muslim self-governing authority, which is supported by almost 55% of Passives Supporters.

Finally, Passive Opponents of the peace process are individuals who support fewer than half of the eight proposals and indicate little willingness to protest against an unfair agreement. At 20.4% of the population, they are the second smallest group, slightly larger than the Passive Supporters. The average Passive Opponents accept only 2.8 of the proposals, the fewest of any group, although a majority in this group do accept four of the eight proposals including the return of Muslim lands, LTTE decommissioning, comprehensive constitutional reform and the creation of a human rights commission with enforcement powers.

Comparisons between the KAPS I and KAPS II typologies must be ap-

**Figure II-3: Sri Lankan Peace Types 2004 (New Proposals)**



proached with caution, because as previously noted, the two analyses are based on different sets of peace proposals and slightly different measures of peace protest potential<sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, the typologies are sufficiently similar to permit some broad if qualified comparisons. The biggest change in the typology across the year is the substantial increase recorded in the percentage of Activist Supporters. This group increased by fully seven percentage points, from 27% in 2003 to 34% in 2004,. Activist Opponents and Passive Supporters of the

peace process have remained relatively constant at about 25% and 20% respectively, while Passive Opponents of the peace process have suffered a significant decline, from 27% to 20%. Overall the percentage of peace supporters appears to have increased moderately over the past year, although this is hard to assess with certainty given the different peace proposals use in the two surveys. Equally striking, however, is the strong increase in political protest potential in Sri Lanka on both sides of this process.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B for a more detailed discussion of the trends in the peace typology over time, including analysis of a March 2004 national survey conducted by Social Indicator in regards to the 3 April national elections.



# Explaining Support for Peace

*“..large differences exist in the KAPS II among Sri Lanka's principal ethnic groups with respect both to the number and types of peace proposals...”*

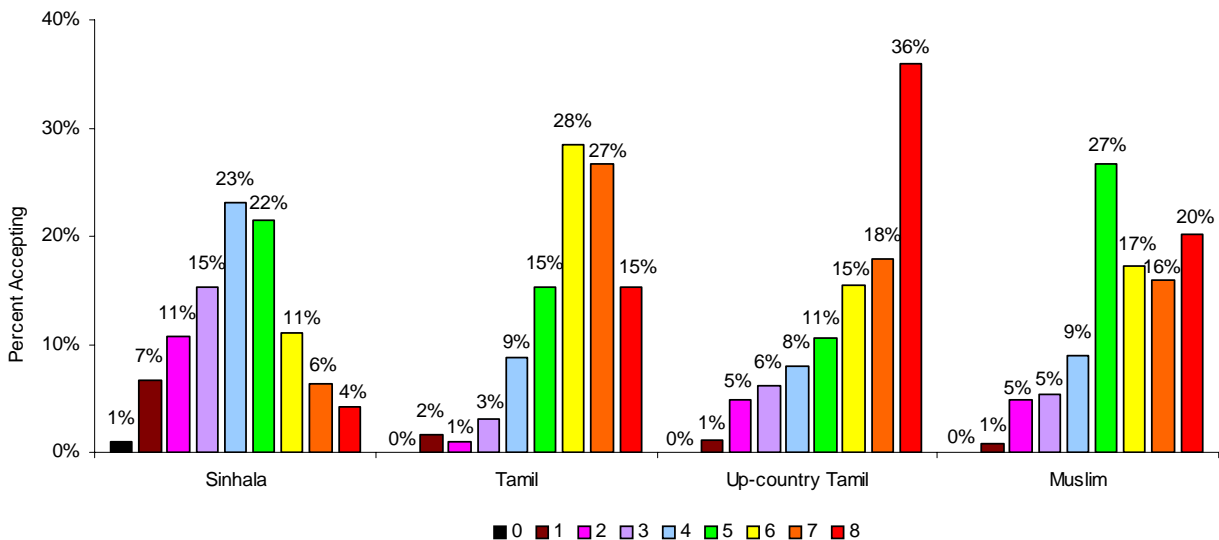
A primary aim of the KAPS project is to understand how support for the peace process varies across and within different segments of Sri Lankan society. In this regard, we focused on several of the same determinants of peace attitudes as with the previous report, while also including several new determinants based on the individuals' experience with the conflict, their attitudes towards religious influence in politics, their support for non-democratic forms of government, and their perceptions of the likely consequences for themselves and for Sri Lanka if a permanent peace settlement were to be reached, or if armed conflict were to resume.

underlie and have driven the decades-long conflict from its inception. Ethnic cleavages in Sri Lanka are palpable and permeate virtually all aspects of politics, the economy and society. It is hardly surprising then that they play a major role in shaping attitudes toward peace. Consistent with this perspective, large differences exist in the KAPS II among Sri Lanka's principal ethnic groups with respect both to the number and types of peace proposals that citizens are willing to accept for the sake of achieving a permanent peace. While there are differences in this regard between the Muslim and Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka, the sharpest divisions are between the Sinhala majority and everyone else. As indicated in Figure III-1, for example, Sinhalese respondents in June 2004 were willing to accept an average of approximately 4 of the eight new peace proposals, compared to the approximately six proposals accepted by both Muslim and Tamil respondents.

## A. Ethnicity, Geography and Political Party

In Sri Lanka, understanding differences in public attitudes toward the peace process naturally begins with the ethnic and regional differences that

**Figure III-1: Number of New Peace Proposals Accepted by Ethnicity**



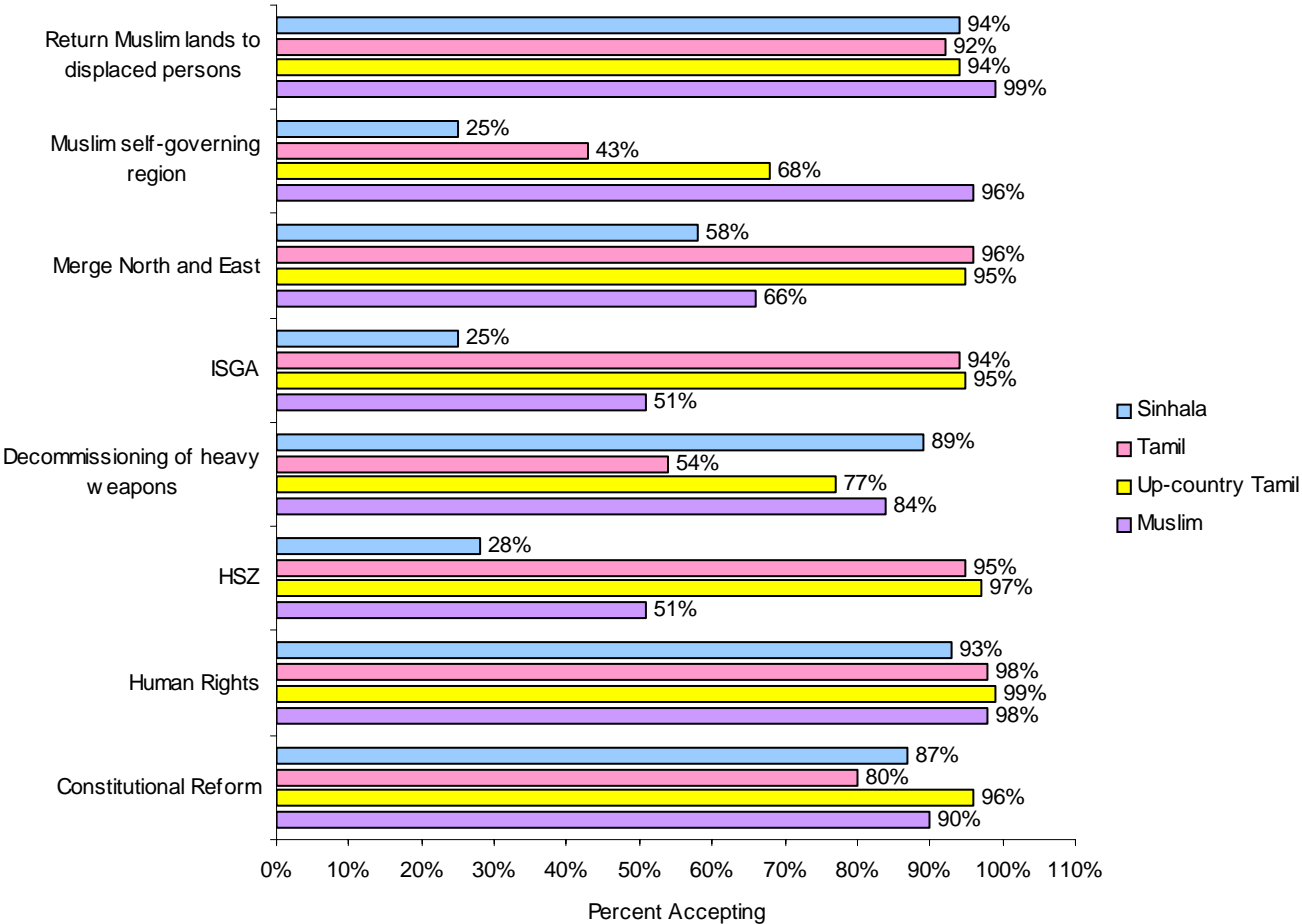
Nearly 20% of Sinhalese reject at least six of the eight proposals as absolutely undesirable compared to only about 6% of Muslims and Tamils that do the same. Conversely, a majority of Muslims and 70% of Tamils express a willingness to accept at least six of the eight proposals while only 22 % of Sinhala respondents do the same. Among Tamils, Up Country Tamils (UCT) support slightly more of the eight proposals on average (6.2 vs. 6.0), although the difference is not statistically significant. (See Figure III-1).

While Sinhalese respondents accept substantially fewer peace proposals than do minority respondents, there is nevertheless significant support within the Sinhala community for a surprising number of proposals, including at least some advocated by the Tamil and Muslim communities. As shown in Figure III-2, for example, an overwhelming majority of Sinhalese support the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons (89%), the establishment of a hu-

man rights commission with enforcement powers (93%) and comprehensive constitutional reforms (87%), but they also overwhelmingly accept the Muslim demand for the return of Muslim homes and lands (94%), and broadly accept the LTTE demand for permanently merging the North and Eastern provinces (58%). Nevertheless, Sinhalese respondents overwhelmingly reject three of the proposals most favored by the ethnic minorities, especially the Tamils. Nearly three-quarters of Sinhalese respondents absolutely reject the LTTE idea of eliminating HSZs, and a similar number reject both the LTTE demand for an Interim Self-Governing Authority and the desire of some Muslims for a separate self-governing region. (See Figure III-2).

Muslim, Tamil, and Tamils in Up-Country regions, by contrast, not only accept more proposals overall, but are also more accepting of

**Figure III-2: Acceptance of the New Peace Proposals by Ethnicity**



the demands made by the Sinhala community and the current government. Indeed, majorities within all three groups express a willingness to accept all eight of the peace proposals. Muslims express the most support for Muslim proposals, such as the return of Muslim lands and the creation of a separate Muslim region. They also overwhelmingly accept the government's call for comprehensive constitutional reform, the establishment of a human rights commission, and the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons. Somewhat smaller Muslim majorities also support the LTTE demand for a permanent merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces (66%), the creation of an LTTE ISGA (51%) and the dismantling of HSZs (51%).

Tamil respondents are even more accepting of the whole range of peace proposals. Tamils overwhelmingly support demands for an ISGA, the dismantling of HSZs, and the permanent merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces. Tamils also overwhelmingly accept the return of Muslim lands, the establishment of a human rights commission with enforcement powers and comprehensive constitutional reform. Tamils are less enthusiastic about other government and Muslim proposals. Nevertheless, a clear majority of Tamils accepts the government demand for the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons, and a small majority (51%) also accepts the creation of a separate Muslim self-governing region. Again, Tamils and Up-country Tamils are very similar in their responses in this regard with two notable exceptions. Up-country Tamils are substantially more accepting of a Muslim self-governing region (68% vs. 43%), and the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons (77% vs. 54%). The differences between Tamils as a whole and Tamils in Up-country areas, however, are largely differences of degree or emphasis; their basic outlooks on the peace process are fundamentally the same.

While there are large and obvious differences in the attitudes toward peace among Sri Lanka's several ethnic groups, it is important to emphasize that there also are important areas of cross-ethnic consensus that can provide a foundation upon which peace negotiations can begin and from which the construction of a comprehensive peace agreement can proceed.

As illustrated in Figure III-2, a clear majority of all four ethnic communities accepts no fewer than five of the eight peace proposals including:

- the return of Muslim homes and land that was displaced during the conflict;
- comprehensive reform of Sri Lanka's constitution;
- the creation of an impartial commission to monitor and enforce human rights
- the permanent merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces; and
- the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons.

In most cases the majorities are substantial. To be sure, the Sinhala rejection of the LTTE demand for an ISGA poses a major obstacle to commencing negotiations, but the number and diversity of the peace proposals that are already accepted by all of the ethnic communities suggests that political leaders in Sri Lanka have much more flexibility in negotiating peace than they often lament. Even after the turmoil of the past year, Sri Lankans on all sides of the conflict are willing to accept a wide variety of proposals, including several they do not personally like, for the sake of negotiating a permanent peace.

Somewhat smaller ethnic differences are observed with respect to peace protest potential. Muslims, not Tamils, express the greatest willingness to protest the failure to achieve a permanent peace agreement or the achievement of a peace agreement that they consider to be unfair. The percentage of Muslim activists is marginally higher than that of Tamils and substantially higher than that of Sinhalese. Still, all four groups manifest relatively high levels of potential protest behavior. Interestingly, Muslims' greater protest potential extends to all four types of protest, including both joining with others to protest an unjust agreement, voting against any political party supporting an unjust agreement, voting against any party perceived as a peace agreement spoiler, and accepting violence if necessary to defeat an unjust agreement. While Tamils and Up-Country Tamils have similar protest potential scores,

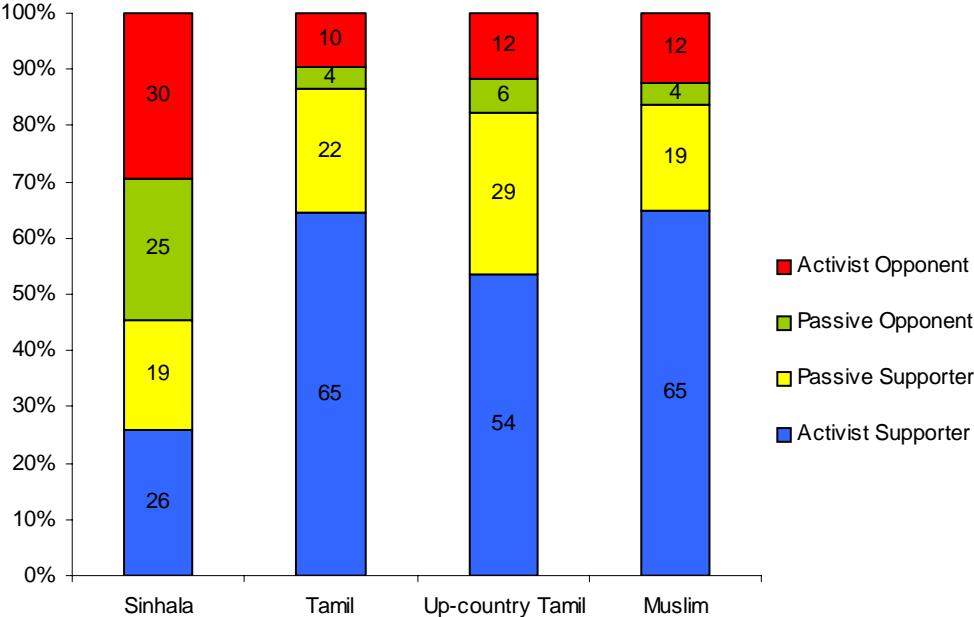
they differ in the types of protest they favor. In particular Up-country Tamils are less likely to join a protest against an unfair agreement or to vote against peace spoilers, but they express a greater willingness than Tamils to engage in violent protest. These differences are small however and within the range of sampling error (See Figure III-3).

Muslim and Tamil respondents' broad support for the peace process, combined with their relatively high levels of protest potential, means that members of these minority groups are much more likely overall to be peace process activists than members of the Sinhala community. As illustrated in Figure III-3, large majorities of Muslims, Tamils and up-country Tamils compared to only about a quarter of Sinhalese are categorized as Peace Activists. By contrast only 12% of Muslims and up-country Tamils and 10% of Tamils are Activist Opponents of these peace proposals, in contrast to almost one third of Sinhalese that fall into the same category. Another quarter of Sinhala respondents are Passive Opponents of the peace proposals. By comparison, Passive Opponents of the peace proposals constitute only about 5% of Sri Lanka's minority groups. Overall, the Sinhala community is the most divided with regard to the peace process. While Activists Opponents of the process are

the largest Sinhala sub-group (30%), Activist Supports of peace are only slightly smaller in size (26%), with substantial numbers of Passive Supporters and Opponents as well (19% and 25% respectively). Muslims and Tamils by contrast overwhelmingly support the peace proposals and differ mostly with regard to protest potential. Indeed, majorities of each of the three minority groups are Activist Supporters of peace. Passive Supporters are the next largest group in all three cases.

Again, comparisons between the 2003 and 2004 typologies must be made with caution given the different questions put forward. It is nevertheless interesting to observe the differences across the year. Perhaps the most surprising observation in this regard is the evidence of the substantial decline in opposition to the peace process among Sinhala respondents over the past year and the proportionate increase in peace process supporters. While there has only been a slight change in the number of Activists Opponents of the peace process among the Sinhalese (dropping from 32% to 30%), there has been a clear decline in the number of Sinhala passive opponents (from 32% to 25%). Conversely, passive supporters among the Sinhalese have remained relatively constant at just under 20%, while the percentage of Active Supporters of the peace

**Figure III-3: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Ethnicity**





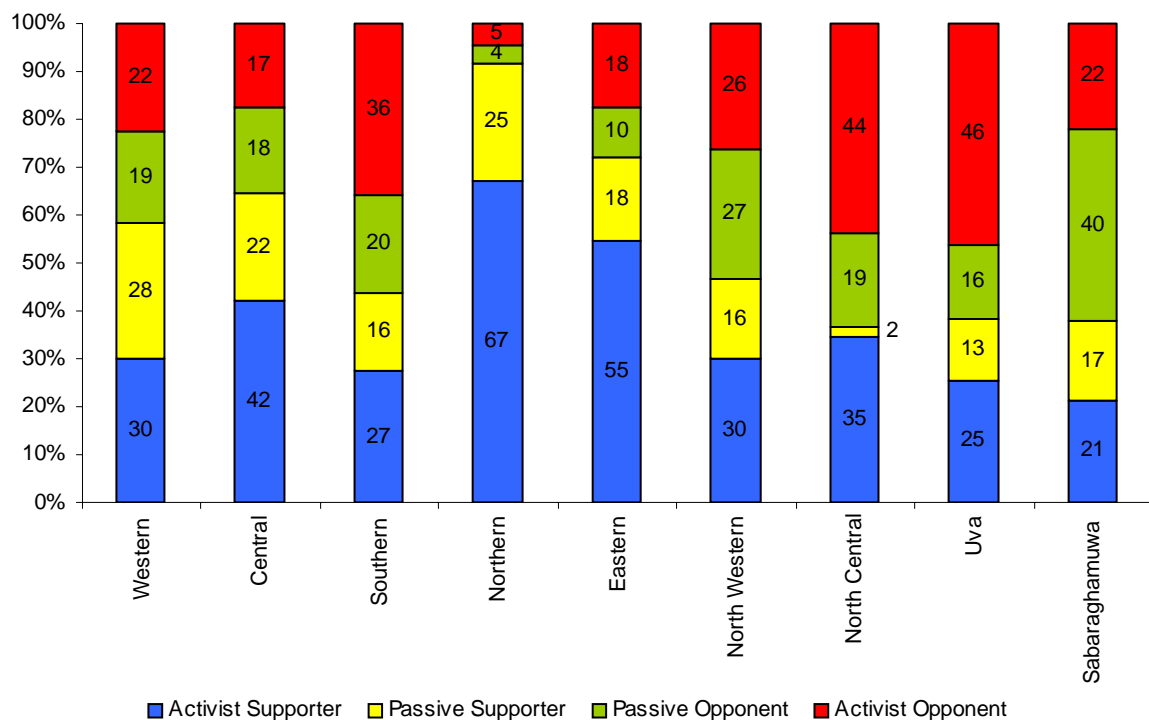
process has increased in the Sinhala community from 18% to 26%. It is hard to determine whether the increase support for the peace process among the Sinhalese reflects a greater confidence in the new government's handling of the peace process, or is a manifestation of their fears of a process in jeopardy that they seek to reinvigorate. But the shift in Sinhala attitudes toward greater acceptance of a variety of peace proposals is interesting in either case.

Also interesting is the evidence suggesting that Tamil and Muslim respondents have somewhat slipped in their commitment to the peace process over the past year. To be sure, there is little shrinkage in the large majority of both groups who are activist supporters of peace. Activist Supporters have declined marginally among the Tamils and have remained effectively constant among Muslims. But both minority groups have seen larger reductions in passive supporters of peace (Tamils declining from 29% to 22% and Muslims from 24% to 18%). Both groups have seen substantial increases in Activist Opponents of the peace process (from 2% to 10% for Tamils and from

5% to 12% for Muslims). The pattern has been somewhat different among Up-Country Tamils, who have experienced an 8 percentage point decline in Active Supporters of the process. In the case of Up-Country Tamils, the decline in Activist Supporters is absorbed partly by the small increase in Passive Supporters (from 26% to 29%) but mostly by the large increase in Activist Opponents of peace. Given the defeat of the previous government, the failure of the peace process to make substantial progress since the election, and the rise in ethnic violence, it is not surprising that attitudes toward peace have changed. For Tamils and Muslims the events of the past year have led some of them at least to question the value of the peace process and others to become significantly more activist. The events of the past year have also had the effect of opening a slight gap between the Tamil and Up-country Tamil communities, as the latter group, concerned perhaps by the recent increase in violence, has become less activist with regard to the peace process (See Figure III-4).

The 2003 KAPS survey suggested that, contrary to the conventional wisdom in Sri Lankan politics, Activist Opposition to the peace process was not

**Figure III-4: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Province**



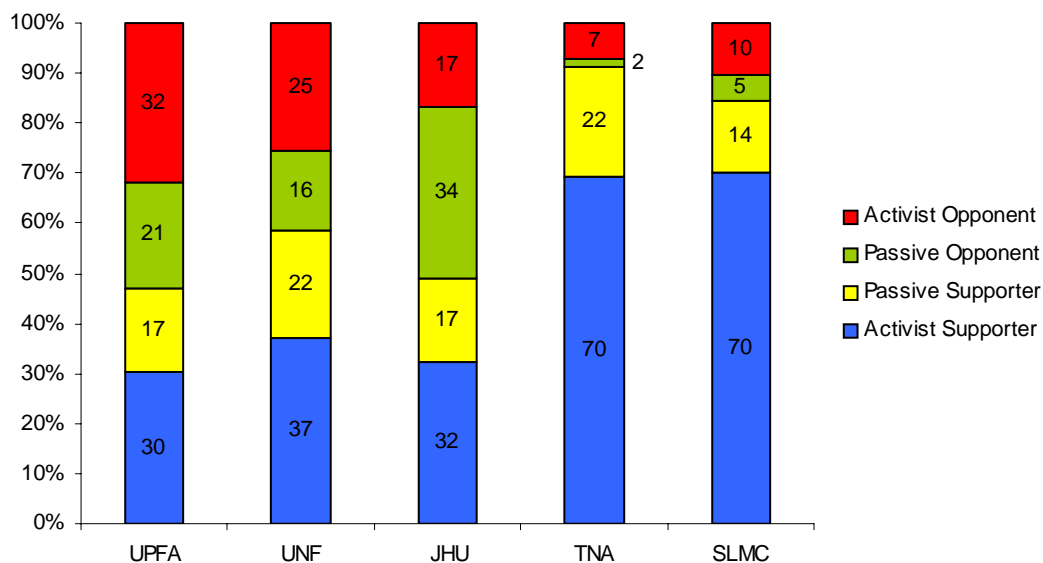
concentrated in the Sinhala strongholds of the south, but instead was strongest in the North Central and North Western Provinces, both of which are adjacent to Tamil areas in the north. As indicated in Figure III-4, the evidence from the 2004 KAPS II survey confirms the concentration of Activist Opponents in the North Central Province but indicates that there are large concentrations of Activist Opponents in the south as well, especially in the Uva and - to a lesser extent - Southern provinces. Interestingly, the percentage of Activist Opponents in the North Central and North Western provinces has declined by about 10 points over the past year but has increased by an even greater amount in the Uva and the Southern provinces.

Consistent with last year's findings, the strongest support for the peace process appears to be concentrated in the Tamil and Muslim areas of the Northern and Eastern provinces, where clear majorities of citizens are Activist Supporters of the Peace Process. While the percentage of Activist Supporters is largely unchanged in these two provinces over the past year, there have been large increases in Activist Supporters of the peace process in the Western Province (17%), the Southern Province (14%), and the North Central Province (15%) all of which have become much more internally polarized over the past year between Activist

Opponents and Supporters of peace (See Figure III-5).

The partisan landscape of Sri Lanka has changed over the past year with the formation of the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) and its subsequent victory in the national elections. Despite the animosity sometimes expressed between the leaders and cadre of UPFA and United National Party (UNP), there are relatively minor differences in the attitudes toward peace among supporters of the two political groups. Overall, UNP supporters express a willingness to accept slightly more of the eight peace proposals than do UPFA supporters, although that difference (4.7 vs. 4.3 proposals on average) is modest. Members of these political groups also manifest almost identical protest potential. This combination means, however, that UNP supporters are significantly more likely to be activist supporters of the peace process (by 37% vs. 30%) whereas UPFA members are more likely to be activist opponents of the process (by 32% to 25%). The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) supporters are overwhelmingly Activist Supporters of the peace proposals, as are supporters of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC). Supporters of the Up-Country People's Front (UCPF) also are overwhelmingly accepting of the majority of peace proposals, but a far smaller percentage is willing to pro-

**Figure III-5: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Political Party**



test an unfair agreement. Activist Supporters of peace constitute only 54% of the UCPF, with most of the rest (38%) being categorized as Passive Supporters for peace. The party most divided on the peace process is the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU). While nearly one third of JHU members are Activist Opponents of the peace process, a virtually equal proportion (34%) are Passive Opponents of the peace process, meaning that they oppose the majority of peace proposals, but are not inclined to protest an agreement they consider unfair.

## B. Beyond Ethnicity

A characteristic feature of Sri Lanka's KAP surveys is the commitment to going beyond the country's obvious ethnic differences in an effort to understand the prospects and possibilities for peace. There is no denying, of course, that Sri Lanka's ethnic divisions are deep and abiding or that they have powerful effects not only on the peace process but on virtually all aspects of Sri Lankan politics. Nevertheless, none of Sri Lanka's ethnic groups are monoliths. As the results above indicate, there is a diversity of opinion within each of the ethnic groups even on an ethnically divisive subject such as peace. This diversity is especially noticeable within the majority Sinhala community. To understand the prospects for peace, it is important to recognize the importance of ethnic difference but it also is necessary to go beyond ethnicity to consider in more detail the nuances within and across ethnicities. In this regard, the KAP I survey considered several broad sets of factors as potential explanations of peace attitudes:

1. Support for peace is a function of social position including gender, age, education, and urban/rural residence.
2. Support for peace is a function of the intensity of ethnic identification and the extent of interaction with other ethnic group members.
3. Support for peace is a function of political values including support for democracy.
4. Support for peace is a function of a person's political knowledge

and engagement.

5. Support for peace is a function of political performance and trust.

In addition to considering these same explanations a year later, KAPS II also considered a new set of factors, specifically:

6. Support for war is a function of the personal impact of the war, the causes of war, and the costs and benefits of war and peace.

### 1. Social Structure and Position

The experiences to which individuals are exposed to as a result of their positions within society play important roles in shaping their more basic attitudes and values. For example, experiences related to age, sex, education, income and urban vs. rural residence can either reinforce or undermine the primary effects of ethnicity and create diverse ethnic attitudes toward peace. Figure III-6 reports the effects of demographic difference on peace types (See Figure III-6).

The conventional wisdom in Sri Lanka and elsewhere is that women are typically more committed to peace than men. Contrary to this expectation, KAPS I reported virtually identical levels of support for last year's peace proposals among Sri Lankan men and women. The results from KAPS II run even more contrary to the idea of women as peacemakers. While a slight majority of women support a majority of the eight new peace proposals, an even larger percentage of men accept at least five of the eight proposals. Women also continue to be less willing to protest an unfair peace agreement, as a consequence of which men are more likely to be both Activist Supporters and Opponents of peace while women are more likely to be Passive Opponents and Supporters.

Age has more predictable effects on peace attitudes. In keeping with their youthful idealism, the youngest group of citizens are most likely to embrace a majority of peace proposals. Overall, 60% of those 25 years of age and under accept a majority of the peace proposals, and 38% are Activist Supporters. The effects of age on peace are U shaped. While the oldest citizens (those over 60) are the

second most committed to peace, they are less likely to express protest potential. By contrast middle aged citizens - those 36 to 45 years old - are the least supportive of peace and the most likely to be Activists Opponents of peace.

Whereas KAPS I only found weak education effects on peace, the KAPS II data suggest that educational differences have sharpened in the past year. This is possibly a result of the broader and more detailed set of peace proposals used in KAPS II. Whatever the cause, education has relatively strong effects in KAPS II with regard to support for peace, albeit little effect on peace protest potential. More than 60% of the most educated citizens support a majority of the peace proposals and 36% are Activist Supporters. The greatest opposition to the peace process, in contrast, is found among those with little or no formal education. Among Sri Lankans who can neither read nor write, nearly two-thirds oppose the majority of peace proposals and 35% are Activist Opponents.

Consistent with the results from KAPS I, income differences continue to have limited effects on attitudes toward peace, although higher income is associated with greater protest potential. In fact, the wealthiest citizens (those earning over rupees 10,000 per year) are most likely to be both Activist Supporters and Activist

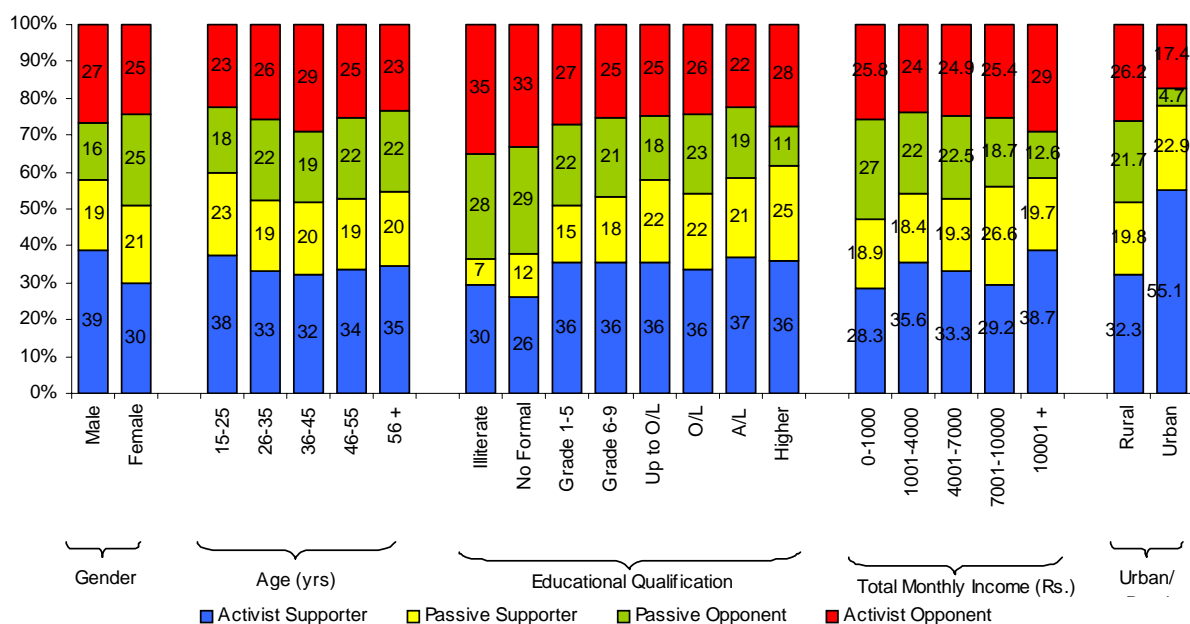
Opponents of peace while the poorest citizens are most likely to be Passive Opponents and Supporters. These patterns are generally weak however; and income is not one of the more potent influences on peace attitudes.

Finally, the results from 2004 confirm last year's finding that support for peace is strongest in Sri Lanka's cities and weakest in its rural areas. The differences are even greater this year than last. Urban dwellers are much more likely to support the peace proposals and are modestly more likely to be Activists. In fact three-quarters of city residents support a majority of the new peace proposals and a majority are Activist Supporters. Among the much larger numbers of rural dwellers, a bare majority (52%) support the majority of the peace proposals, although a considerable but much smaller number (32%) are Activist Supporters of peace

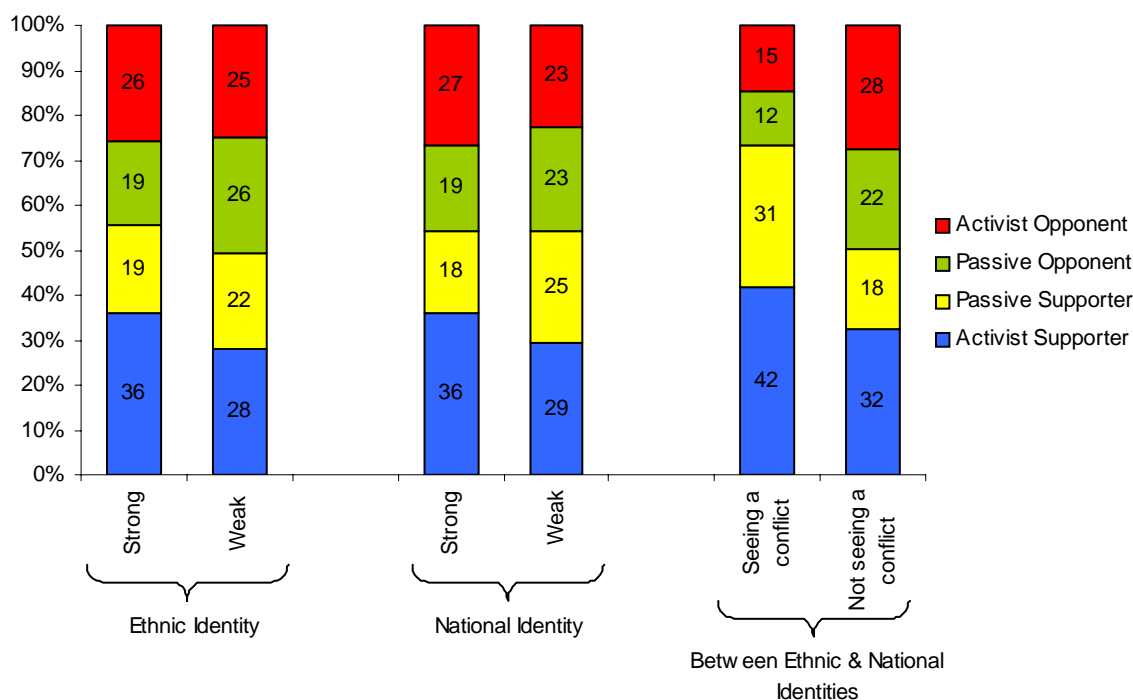
## 2. Ethnic Interaction and Identity

As noted previously, the ethnic divide in Sri Lanka is far from absolute and there is considerable diversity of opinion within all of the ethnic groups, particularly the Sinhalese. One explanation for this diversity of opinions is the diversity of ethnic identification; the degree and extent of discrimination and harm suffered as a result of one's ethnic group identity; and the degree and

**Figure III-6: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Gender, Age, Educational Qualification, Total Monthly Income and Urban/Rural**



**Figure III-7: Sri Lankan Peace Types by the Strength of Ethnic and National Identity**



nature of inter-ethnic interaction.

To assess these possibilities in KAPS II, we included a series of questions about respondents' ethnic and national identities, and their knowledge of and interaction with other ethnic groups. When asked how important their ethnic group is "to the way you think of yourself" the overwhelming majority of Sri Lankans say it is "very important." This holds across all ethnic groups. Ethnic identity is highest among Muslims and Tamils (though less so among Up-country Tamils), more than 80% of whom say ethnicity is very important to them. Even among the Sinhalese, for whom ethnicity appears less important, fully 70% say that it is very important in their lives. Most citizens, however, see little conflict between their ethnic identity and their identity as Sri Lankans. When asked how important "being Sri Lankan is to the way you think of yourself," the percentage saying "very important" is virtually identical to the number saying ethnicity is very important. Tamils are the most likely to express the importance of being Sri Lankan, with 78% saying it is very important to them. Although Muslims are the least likely to emphasize their national identity, 66% still mention it as being very important, as do 67% of Sinhalese respon-

dents.

As this indicates, most Sri Lankans of all ethnic backgrounds have "dual identities", in that they strongly identify both as members of an ethnic group and as Sri Lankans. When asked if they ever see a conflict between their national and ethnic identities fewer than 5% say "sometimes" or "often." Members of minority ethnic groups are more likely to see occasional conflicts between country and ethnicity. This is especially true in the case of Tamils, among whom 45% say they sometimes experience such conflicts. Only about a quarter of all Muslims and fewer than 10% of Sinhalese face a similar clash between national and ethnic identities (See Figure III-7).

Having a strong ethnic or national identity in Sri Lanka is moderately related to support for the eight peace proposals and strongly related to high protest potential. As a result, Figure III-7 indicates that those with strong ethnic identities are substantially more likely to be Activist Supporters of the peace process and are less likely to be Passive Supporters or Opponents. Those without strong ethnic identities are much more likely to be passive. Among those who perceive a conflict between the two identities, a group dominated by minority ethnic group

members, support for peace and peace protest potential are both very high. More than 42 % of those seeing a conflict are Activist supporters of the peace proposals, another 31% are Passive Supporters and only 15% are Activist Opponents.

Religion, of course, is closely tied to ethnic group membership in Sri Lanka. Consequently, we included a new series of questions in KAPS II to measure how important religion is in the lives of respondents, including:

"How often do you attend religious services?" Response Categories: Regularly, Sometimes, Rarely, Never.

"Which of the following BEST describes the importance of religion on your life?" Response Categories: It's the most important thing in my life; It's very important but it doesn't dominate my life; It's somewhat important in my life; It's not very important in my life; or It's not at all important in my life.

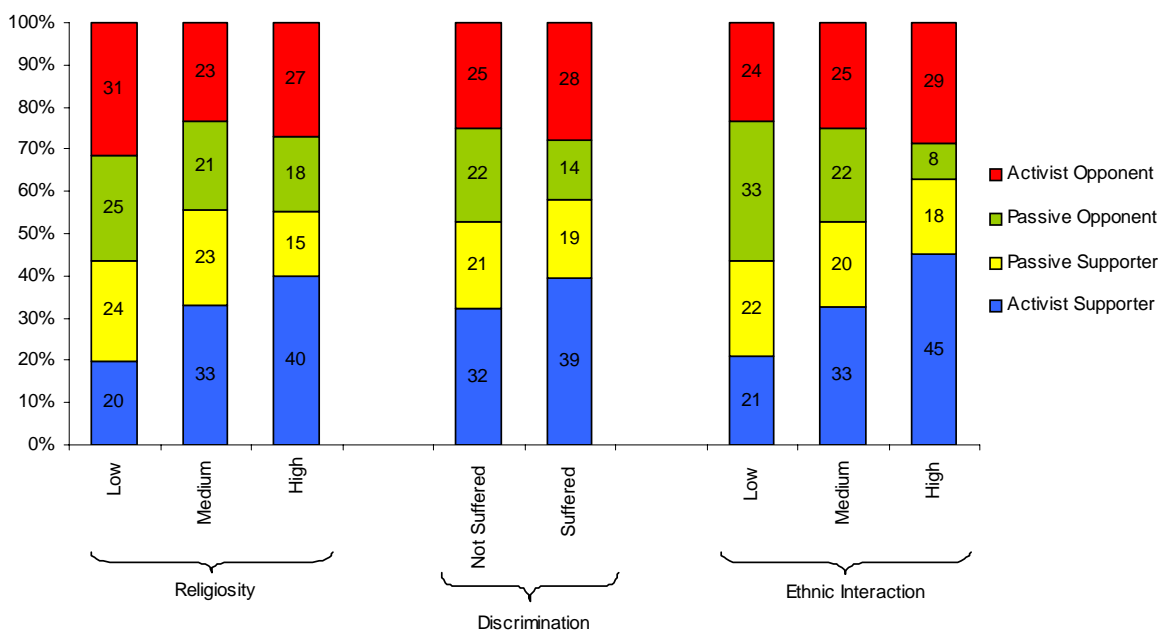
"And what about your religious leaders, which of the following best describes your attitude toward them?" Response Categories: I follow their teaching in all matters including religion and politics; I following their religious teachings but make up my own mind about politics and other matters; I listen to their teaching in all matters but then make up my own mind; I do not pay much attention to them.

(See Figure III-8)

As with country and ethnic group, religion is central to the identities of most Sri Lankans. 65% say it is the most important thing in their lives; 57% follow the teachings of their religious teachers; 57% attend religious services regularly and 83% do so at least occasionally. We combined responses from the three questions to create an overall religiosity scale as shown in Figure III-8. Similar to the patterns seen for ethnic and national identity, religiosity is strongly related with peace protest potential but only moderately related to support for peace proposals. Overall, 40% of those with the strongest religious commitment are Activist Supporters of the peace process compared to only about half as many of those with the weakest religious commitments. Conversely, those with the weakest religious commitments were slightly more likely to be Activist Opponents than more religious Sri Lankans. On balance, 55% with the strongest religious commitments accept a majority of the eight peace proposals compared to only 44% with the weakest commitments.

While the strength of ethnic and national identities clearly plays an important role in shaping attitudes toward peace, it is likely that those who have experienced discrimination based on their ethnicity or religion will have even stronger attitudes about the peace pro-

**Figure III-8: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Religiosity, Discrimination and Ethnic Interaction**



cess as a result. We asked respondents whether they had ever suffered discrimination in education, employment or in their dealings with the police based on their ethnicity, religion or party affiliation. Only 7% of all Sri Lankans (the same percentage as in KAPS I) report suffering discrimination based on their ethnicity, although this varies widely by ethnic group, with 31% of Tamils, 22% of Muslims and 1% of Sinhalese responding affirmatively.. Religious discrimination is less prevalent, though still unequally distributed; with 18% of Muslims, 6% of Tamils and less than 1% of Sinhala report having experienced religious discrimination. Discrimination based on party affiliation is more widespread and is reported by 18% of Sinhalese, 9% of Tamils and 21% of Muslims.

Perhaps due to the relatively limited experiences with discrimination, the effects of discrimination of any type are only moderately related to peace support or peace protest potential (Figure III-8). Still those who have experienced discrimination are more likely to support the peace proposals and express peace protest potential. Thus, nearly 40% who have experienced discrimination are Activist Supporters compared to about one-third who have not experienced discrimination. Similarly, 28% who have experienced discrimination are Activist Opponents of Peace compared to 25% who have not. Those not experiencing discrimination are much more likely to be Passive Opponents or Supporters. Predictably, Tamils and Muslims who report ethnic or religious discrimination are much more likely to be Activist Supporters of the peace proposals. Sinhalese who have experienced party-based discrimination are much more likely to be Activist Opponents.

There are conflicting theories about the impact of ethnic interaction on ethnic conflict. One theory holds that greater ethnic interaction promotes mutual understanding, encourages empathy and reduces ethnic tension. Another suggests that increased interaction increases opportunities for friction and promotes fear by virtue of the greater proximity of the other group. KAPS I provided some evidence supporting both perspectives suggesting that a small amount of interaction increases fear but more substantial interaction increases understanding and

cooperation. We explore this issue further in KAPS II with two questions:

*"How often do you tend to come into contact with people from other ethnic groups?" Response Categories: Daily; Once a week; Once a month; Once a year; Rarely/Never;*

*"How much knowledge do you feel you have about other ethnic groups in Sri Lanka?" Response Categories: A lot of knowledge; Some knowledge; Not very much knowledge; No knowledge at all.*

Many Sri Lankans live in ethnically homogenous communities where opportunities to interact with members of other ethnic groups are limited. Indeed, 46% report having contact with other ethnic groups once a month or less on average. Fewer than 20% report weekly interactions, while 35% say they interact with other groups on a daily basis. Ethnic interactions are much more common among members of Sri Lanka's ethnic minorities. Three-quarters of Muslims and 90% of Up-country Tamils report daily interactions with other ethnic groups compared to 38% of other Tamils and only 28% of Sinhalese. Conversely, small majorities of Sinhala and Tamil respondents encounter other ethnic groups once a month or less.

When asked how much knowledge they have about other groups only 8% said a lot, although 48% report at least some knowledge. The rest said either "not very much" or "none at all." Again, minority ethnic group members are more likely to have a lot of information about others. While 20% to 25% of Muslims and Tamils report having a lot of knowledge about other groups, only 5% of Sinhalese said the same. Conversely a majority of Sinhalese report little or no knowledge about other ethnic groups compared to about a quarter of minority group members who report the same.

We combined responses to the two ethnic interaction questions to create a composite index distinguishing individuals with high, moderate and low knowledge of and contact with other ethnic groups. As shown in Figure III-8, the relationship between this index and support for the peace process in Sri Lanka is complex. While higher levels of ethnic interaction strongly increase both support for

the peace process and peace protest potential, the combination of these two relationships has non-obvious effects. For example, among those with the highest levels of interaction with other ethnic groups, 46% are Activist Supporters of peace. This is more than twice the number of Activist Supporters as among those reporting the least ethnic interaction.

This of course is consistent with the hypothesis that increased ethnic interaction builds empathy and trust. On the other hand, those with the highest levels of ethnic interaction also are the most likely to be Activist Opponents of peace. 28% of the high interaction respondents are Activist Opponents compared to 24% of those reporting the fewest interactions. This is consistent with the hypothesis that familiarity breeds suspicion and hostility.

Overall 64% of those interacting most frequently support a majority of the peace proposals compared to 43% of those interacting least frequently, but there is a strong minority of high interaction citizens opposed to the majority of peace agreements. Low interaction respondents are perhaps best characterized by their lack of passion in that 55% are either Passive Opponents or Passive Supporters.

### 3. Democratic Values

The peaceful transfer of power to a new government following the hard-fought 2004 elections is testament to Sri Lanka's commitment to democracy. One of the characteristics of democracies is that they rarely go to war against other democracies presumably because democratic people are more likely to resolve their differences through negotiation and compromise rather than violence. To assess the impact of democratic values on Sri Lankans' commitment to the peace process, we included an expanded array of questions in KAPS II designed to measure not only people's belief in democratic ideals but also their acceptance of democratic practices.

Members of all ethnic groups in Sri Lanka strongly believe in democracy as an ideal. When asked in KAPS II "on a scale, where 10 means complete democracy and 0 means no democracy, ideally where would you like Sri Lanka to be," the average Sri Lankan

responds that they would like the country to be very near the top of the scale at 8.5. Moreover the variation among different ethnic groups is small ranging from a low of 8.3 for up country Tamils to 8.7 for Sinhalese. Similarly, fully three quarters of Sri Lankans agree that "democracy may have its problems but its better than any other form of government." The percentage agreeing ranged from a low of 62% among Up-country Tamils to a high of 88% among Muslims with Tamils and Sinhalese in the middle at about 75% each.

Sri Lankans however, are considerably more divided about democracy in practice and harbor significant reservations about how well the current political system lives up to democratic ideals. When asked specifically whether Sri Lanka would be better off if it were governed by strong leaders, i.e. by experts or religious leaders making decisions they think best for the country, large numbers of Sri Lankans embrace each of these alternatives to democracy. Whereas a small majority (52%) say it would be good to have "a strong leader who does not have to bother with a parliament and elections," fully 93% favor having "experts not elected politicians make decisions according to what is best for the country," and just over a third think it would be good to "have religious leader rule." Muslim and Sinhalese respondents are marginally more likely to prefer religious rule. The Sinhalese are by far the most supportive of rule by a strong leader, while large majorities of all groups favoured rule by un-elected experts. Overall, a slight majority of Sri Lankans embrace two or more of these alternatives (16% embrace all three), including 60% of Sinhalese, 57% of Muslims, 27% of Tamils, and 21% of Up-country Tamils. Regarding the democratic character of Sri Lanka's current political system, the average citizen places the current system just below the middle of the 0-10 democracy scale (at 4.8) or only just about half as democratic as they say they want the country to be. Clearly, however, there is evidence of some confusion here since citizens say, simultaneously that they want a fully democratic country, which they do not now think they have, but they also are willing in large numbers to abolish their existing democracy in favor of various forms of undemocratic rule. (See *Figure III-9*).



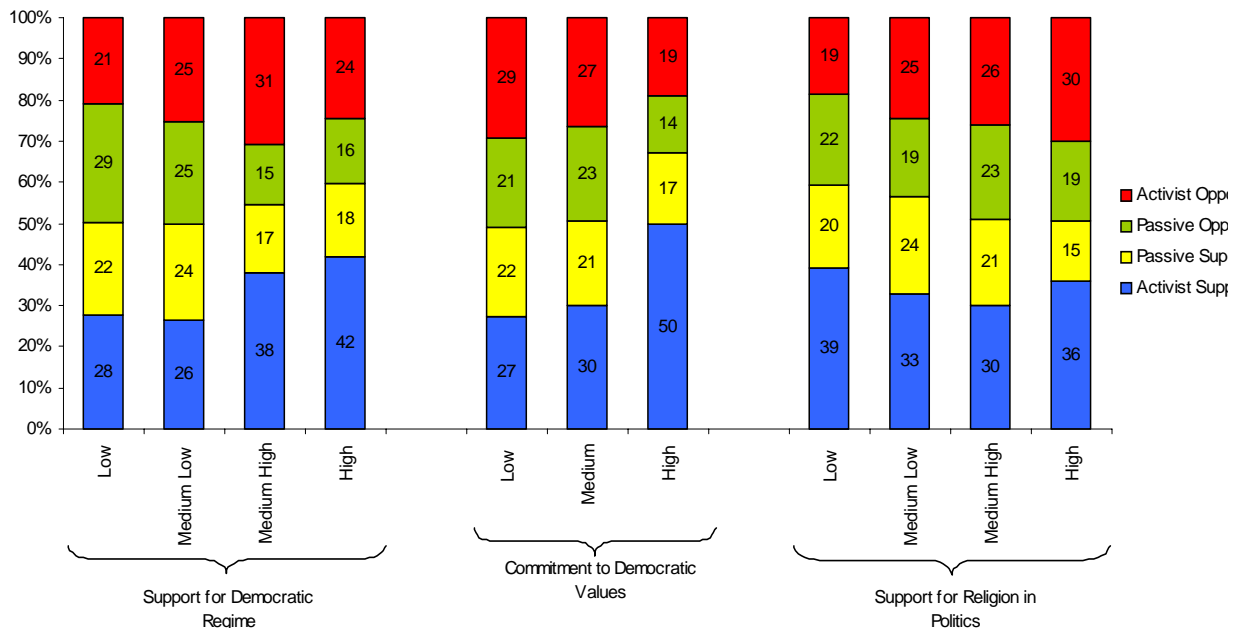
To test the impact of democratic values on the support for the peace process, we constructed a composite measure distinguishing four levels of democratic commitment by combining agreement that democracy is the best system of government with rejection of rule by strong leaders or by religious leaders. Consistent with the democratic peace hypothesis, those most committed to democracy also are the most accepting of the peace proposals and the most willing to protest against an unfair or failed peace process. As illustrated in Figure III-9, among Sri Lankans with the strongest commitment to democracy, 60% support a majority of the peace proposals and 42% are Activist Supporters, while 24% are Activist Opponents. By comparison, among those with the least commitment to democracy, only 50% are Peace Supporters and only 28% are Activist Supporters.

Another way to measure support for democracy is to assess the public's commitment to some of the important principles that underlie and make democracy workable. These include such principles as majority rule, minority rights, the rule of law, openness to compromise, religious liberty and political inclusion. Responses to questions in KAPS II measuring these values indicate that Sri Lankans vary

widely in their acceptance of democratic principles. For example, contrary to the rule of law, 45% of Sri Lankans, including even higher percentages of ethnic minorities, agree that "people should not have to obey laws they consider unjust." On the issue of majority rule citizens embrace a hyper-majoritarian point of view; with nearly 60%, agreeing that "if the majority of the people want something the constitution should not get in their way." Moreover, when asked whether the majority party "ought not to have to share political power with the political minority," the largest group of respondents (38%) is undecided, while 24% say the majority should not have to share power and 38% thinking that they should. Interestingly, those most committed to a radical view of majority rule are Sri Lanka's minority communities. Although the differences are relatively small, Tamils are the most likely to agree that the constitution should not limit majority rule and Muslims are the most likely to agree that the majority party should not have to share power.

Regarding the virtue of compromise, 54% of citizens say that "politicians ought to stick with their ideology and not make bargains" compared to only 22% who think that compromise is a necessary virtue of democratic

**Figure III-9: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Support for Democratic Regime, Commitment to Democratic Values and Support for Religion in Politics**



governance. Here again, minority ethnic groups are much more likely to reject compromise in favor of ideological purity. On the issue of religion and politics, most Sri Lankans, across all faiths, reject the idea of separating the church and state, and strongly advocate religious involvement in politics. Two-thirds of all respondents agree that "politicians who are not religious are unfit for public office." Sinhalese respondents are the most likely to agree with this, but the difference is small. Similarly 42% of citizens disagree that "religious leaders should not influence government decisions" while only 36% agree on the same. Again, Sinhalese respondents are slightly more likely to disagree, and Tamils are more likely to agree. Regarding religious freedom, a majority of Sri Lankans agree that citizens "should be prohibited from converting to a different religion without special approval" compared to only 27% who disagree. Tamils and Sinhalese are the most likely to agree with this, while Muslims are substantially less likely to agree. Sri Lankans appear to embrace the idea of political inclusion at least insofar as women are concerned. More than three-quarters of respondents agreed that women should participate more in politics, and fewer than 15% disagreed.

To test the effects of democratic values on peace attitudes we constructed a composite index of support for democratic values from the questions measuring citizens' commitments to the rule of law, majority rule and compromise. As indicated in Figure III-9, the 24% of Sri Lankans with the strongest democratic values also are most accepting of the peace proposals and express the greatest peace protest potential. As a result, among those with the strongest conception of majority rule, 50% are Activist Peace Supporters compared to only 19% who are Activist Opponents and fewer than 20% who are Passive Activists and Opponents combined. In contrast, the 26% with the lowest commitment to democratic values are the least supportive of the peace agreement and are also the most passive. Regarding religious involvement in politics, those most accepting of a strong role for religion in Sri Lanka are the least supportive of the peace proposals. Among those most in favor of involving religion in politics, a bare majority supports five or more of the eight peace

proposals; 36% are Activist Supporters whereas 30% are Activist Opponents. By contrast, among those least favorable toward religion's role in politics, 59% support a majority of peace proposals and 39% are Activist Supporters compared to only 18% Activist Opponents.

One of the more important values associated with democracy is that of political tolerance, i.e. the willingness of citizens to extend democratic rights to fellow citizens with whom they don't necessarily see eye to eye. To measure tolerance, we asked respondents to indicate which group in Sri Lanka they "liked least." The options given included Muslims, Sinhala, Tamils, as well as supporters of the LTTE and of Sinhala nationalism. LTTE supporters are the most disliked nationwide with almost two-thirds selecting them. About 15% of respondents chose Sinhala nationalists as their least liked group. No other group is disliked by more than 5% of the country's citizens. To measure tolerance, respondents were then asked whether they were willing to allow members of their least favorite group to stand for election to parliament, hold a protest march in Colombo, give a speech advocating controversial issues, or marry their son or daughter. While KAPS I indicated that Sri Lankans were relatively tolerant in the abstract, the results from KAPS II indicate that they are not at all tolerant of the rights of those they truly dislike. More than 60% agree, for example, that a member from their most disliked group should not be allowed to stand for election to parliament. Although the majority of Sri Lankans embrace the right to protest a peace agreement they personally do not like, most do not extend this right to those they dislike. Only 18% agree that members of their disliked group should be allowed to hold a protest march in Colombo, while more than two-thirds disagree on the same issue. Similarly only a quarter of respondents would allow members of the disliked group to make a speech in their community, two-thirds, again, disagree with this right. The vast majority of Sri Lankans would not want their son or daughter to marry a member of that disliked group. Interestingly, these figures are very similar across all four of Sri Lanka's principal ethnic groups. The focus of their intolerance is different, of course, but they are very similar in their unwillingness to extend basic

political rights to those they dislike.

Although tolerance toward disliked groups is relatively low in Sri Lanka, those with higher levels of tolerance are more supportive of the peace proposals, although they are no more or less likely to engage in protest. Among the most tolerant citizens, 58% accept a majority of peace proposals and 43% are Activist Supporters. Among the least tolerant segment of society, 48% accept a majority of proposals and 34% are Activist Supporters compared to 31% who are Activist Opponents.

#### 4. Political and Civic Engagement

Democracy works best not only when citizens possess strong democratic values, but also when they are highly engaged in the political process, informing themselves about political issues and taking full advantage of opportunities for political participation. Political engagement helps the democratic process to function and strengthens citizens' commitments to the political system and national community.

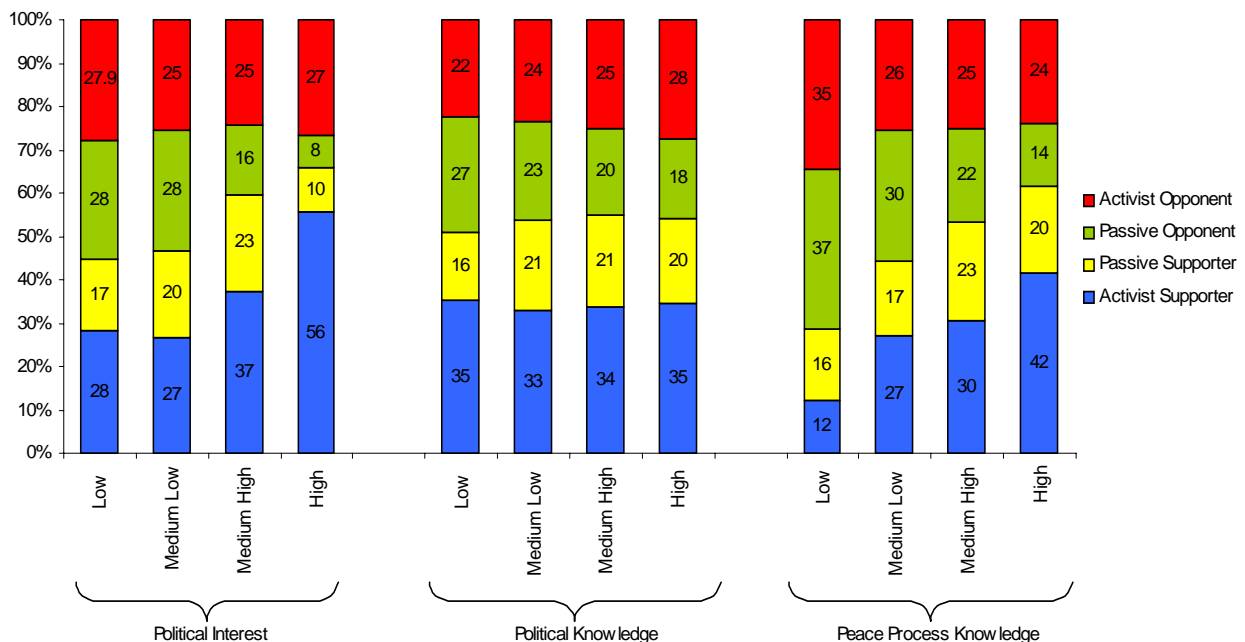
One measure of political engagement is the level of interest that citizens express in politics and the political process. Reflecting the greater political turmoil in Sri Lanka, today,

public interest in politics is substantially higher than a year ago. When asked about their political interest in KAPS I, only about 10% of Sri Lankans said that they had a great deal of interest in politics and another 25% said they had at least some interest. Today, the percentage with a great deal of interest in politics remains about the same, but the number with at least some interest in politics has nearly doubled to 45%. Only about a quarter of citizens say they have very little interest in politics and fewer than 20% say they have no interest at all (See Figure III-10).

As expected, Figure III-10 confirms that citizens with greater political interest are considerably more accepting of the peace proposals than are less interested citizens; they also manifest much greater peace protest potential. Among the most interested Sri Lankans, 63% accept the majority of the peace proposals, 52% are Activist Supporters and 26% are Activist Opponents of the peace proposals. Conversely, among those with little or no political interest, 47% are supporters of peace, and only 28% are Activist Supporters.

Consistent with their relatively high levels of interest in politics, Sri Lankans also appear to have relatively

**Figure III-10: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Political Interest, Political Knowledge and Peace Process Knowledge**



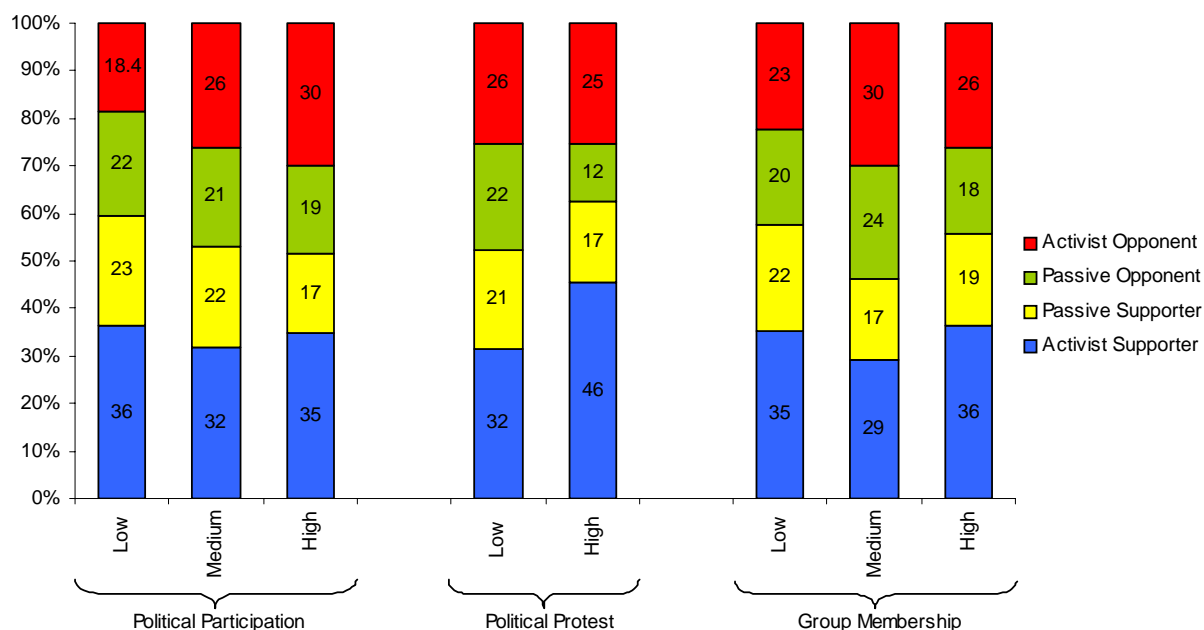
high levels of political knowledge. Not only do 63% of respondents claim that they are very informed or somewhat informed about politics, but most perform very well on a series of questions designed to test their political knowledge. For example, 86% of Sri Lankans are able to correctly identify the party that received the most votes in the April 2004 elections; almost 80% are able to name the Prime Minister; 65% know that Sinhala is Sri Lanka's only official language, 43% know the percentage of MPs required to pass a constitutional amendment, and 23% correctly identify the term of office for MPs and many others were only one year off in their estimates. Similarly, with regard to specific knowledge about the peace process, 64% of citizens correctly identify Norway as the mediator in the current peace talks, 73% correctly identify Karuna as the leader of the breakaway faction of the LTTE; and 69% know that the creation of an Interim Self-Governing Authority is a principal demand of the LTTE.

Contrary to expectations, however, there is little relationship between general political knowledge and support for the peace process or between political knowledge and protest potential. About a third of Sri Lankans are Activist Supporters of the peace proposals regardless of knowl-

edge levels, and while the level of Activist Opposition to the peace proposals increases with political knowledge the differences are marginal. In contrast, knowledge of the peace process is very strongly related both to support for the peace proposals and to peace protest potential (see Figure III-10). Among the majority of respondents correctly answering all three questions about the peace process, 62% accept a majority of the peace proposals, 42% are Activist Supporters and only 24% are Activist Opponents. Among the 10% of citizens who know nothing about the peace process, 71% reject a majority of the proposals and 35% are Activist Opponents compared to only 12% who are Activist Supporters. Clearly knowledge about the peace process has a major effect on support for peace.

Regarding political participation, the overwhelming majority of respondents (83% in fact) report that they voted in the 2003 election while two-thirds say that they voted in the last Provincial Council elections, both of which are very high by international standards. Sri Lankans also report participating at very high levels in other activities. Nearly half say they "have worked with a neighborhood or community group to improve local conditions;" 41% say they have attended a

**Figure III-11: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Political Participation, Political Protest and Group Membership**



political rally or meeting; 34% have contacted a government official asking a favour or raising an issue; and 27% say they have worked for a party or candidate in an election campaign. All of these are high by international standards, as well. Fewer citizens report having engaged in political protest activities, with only 10% saying they have taken part in a protest rally or march, and only 6% admitting to breaking a law they consider to be unjust.

Participation in the peace process appears to be even higher than overall political participation. We have already discussed the high levels of peace protest potential in Sri Lanka. Additionally 40% of respondents say they have discussed the peace process with others, while just 10% report having expressed their views on the peace process to the government or their party. One of the reasons participation appears relatively high in Sri Lanka is possibly the role of political parties themselves. A third of all respondents say they are often contacted by party leaders trying to persuade them to vote or support the party in other ways. Another 52% report more occasional contacts by party officials, a very high number in combination. Conversely, only 14% of respondents can remember ever having attended "an instructional workshop or meeting where issues related to democracy, human rights or the Sri Lankan peace process were discussed," numbers which are likely to be disappointing to those who have worked so hard to inform and educate the public on democracy and peace (See Figure III-11).

Significantly, those who participate most in conventional political activities in Sri Lanka (voting, working in campaigns, etc.) are somewhat less likely to accept the peace proposals than those who participate least, as can be seen in Figure III-11. Among the most politically active one-third of the population, a bare majority supports at least five of eight peace proposals and only 35% are Activist Supporters of peace. On the other hand, among those least active in politics, 59% accept a majority of the proposals, 36% are Activist Supporters while only 18% are Activist Opponents.

In contrast to conventional participation, citizens who have previously taken part in political protest

activities are much more likely to accept the peace proposals and much more likely to protest against a peace agreement they consider unfair. Among prior protestors, 63% accept a majority of the peace proposals and 46% are Activist Supporters. Among previous non-protestors, only 52% accept a majority of the proposals and 32% are Activist Supporters compared to 25% who are Activist Opponents (Figure III-11). Clearly, if supporters of the peace process want to accelerate the pace of the peace process they must be willing to play a more active role in everyday politics in Sri Lanka, working through their parties and the political process to apply pressure onto all sides in the process to negotiate in good faith. It is insufficient for peace supporters to stand ready to protest an unjust agreement; their impact and success also depend on their increased involvement in the full range of activities that a democratic system provides.

While the importance of political participation has long been recognized, there is also an increasing recognition of the importance of civic engagement. According to this perspective, citizens who are involved in a whole range of social institutions including religious organization, unions, and professional associations are more likely to acquire the "social capital" that leads to greater social and political trust and enables people to cooperate more effectively. To assess the extent to which citizens are members of and active in Sri Lankan social institutions we asked respondents if they were members of and active in a variety of organizations including: religious organizations, labor unions, women's groups, neighborhood groups, business or professional associations, or groups related to the peace process. Overall there appears to be very little civic engagement in Sri Lanka. While 40% of respondents report being members of neighborhood associations and 28% are members of religious organizations, few citizens report being members of other groups, and fewer still report being active members. With respect to peace groups in particular, only 5% of citizens say they are members and only 1% report being active in these groups. Overall, 45% of citizens say they do not belong to any civic group or organization, while 26% say they belong to only one. Only

about a quarter of all citizens say they are active in any group and only about 6% are active in more than a single group. Overall, members of the majority Sinhala community are about twice as likely belong to and be active in a variety of civic groups than are members of other ethnic groups. Contrary to theory however, group membership does not appear closely related to citizen attitudes toward peace (Figure III-11). Peace process differences related to civic engagement levels are generally small and statistically insignificant.

**5. Political Performance and Trust**

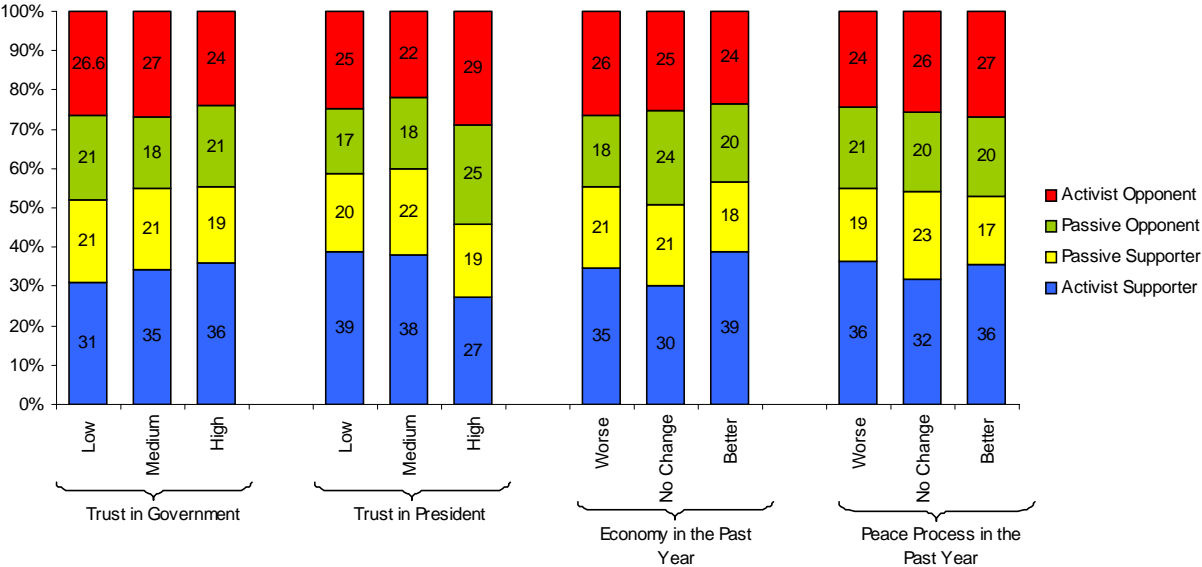
Peace negotiations are made easier if all sides to the conflict have at least some confidence that the other sides will honour the agreement that is arrived at. It is especially important that the government be trusted since the government, ultimately, is responsible for legislating and enforcing any changes negotiated in the peace agreement. Citizens, of course, have long experience with Sri Lanka's government institutions and have been able to assess not only how trustworthy those institutions are but also how effective they have been in performing their other duties such as managing the economy and protecting people from crime.

To measure trust in political institutions, we asked KAPS II respondents how much trust they have in the national government, regional govern-

ment, the President, Parliament, Police, Army and media (These numbers cannot be directly compared with KAP I because of the different numbers of response categories). Overall, confidence in government institutions in Sri Lanka is generally high. More than three-quarters of citizens say that they have a lot of trust or some trust in the army. This is closely followed by the President who is trusted by 71% of the country's citizens. The national government is trusted by two-thirds of all citizens, which is slightly higher than the 57% who trust their regional government. The police are trusted by 57%, while the Parliament and the media, are trusted by only 42% of respondents. Trust for the President and army is much higher among Sinhalese respondents and lower among minority ethnic groups. By contrast, trust for government institutions, such as parliament and the police, does not vary greatly across ethnic cleavages (See Figure III-12).

Contrary to expectations, trust in most political institutions appears to have very little consequence on Sri Lankan attitudes toward peace. Trust in the President however, is strongly associated with opposition to the peace proposals as indicated in Figure III-12. Among those most trusting of the President, 54 % oppose a majority of the peace proposals and 29% are Activist Opponents compared to only 27% who are Activist Supporters. The

**Figure III-12: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Trust in the Government and the President and by Economic Progress and Progress of the Peace Process**



opposite pattern exists among those most distrusting of the President. 59% of these individuals support a majority of the peace proposals, 39% are Activist Supporters and only 25% are Activist Opponents.

Another way to assess public satisfaction with government performance is to explore its management of specific issues most important in peoples' lives. To determine this we first asked respondents what they considered to be the most important issues in Sri Lanka. An overwhelmingly 55% of the public say the economy is most important followed by the peace process (25%), with education a distant third (10%). We then asked respondents whether they think the economy and the peace process have gotten better or worse over the past year. A slight majority of respondents say that the economy is worse today than a year ago. Only 16% think the economy has gotten better and 37% say that it remains unchanged. This pattern holds for all ethnic groups, although Tamils have the least negative view of the economy's recent performance; with only 41% saying it is worse today and 35% saying it is better today. Regarding the peace process, 50% of respondents see little change over the past year; 22% say that the process has gotten better and 28% say has worsened.

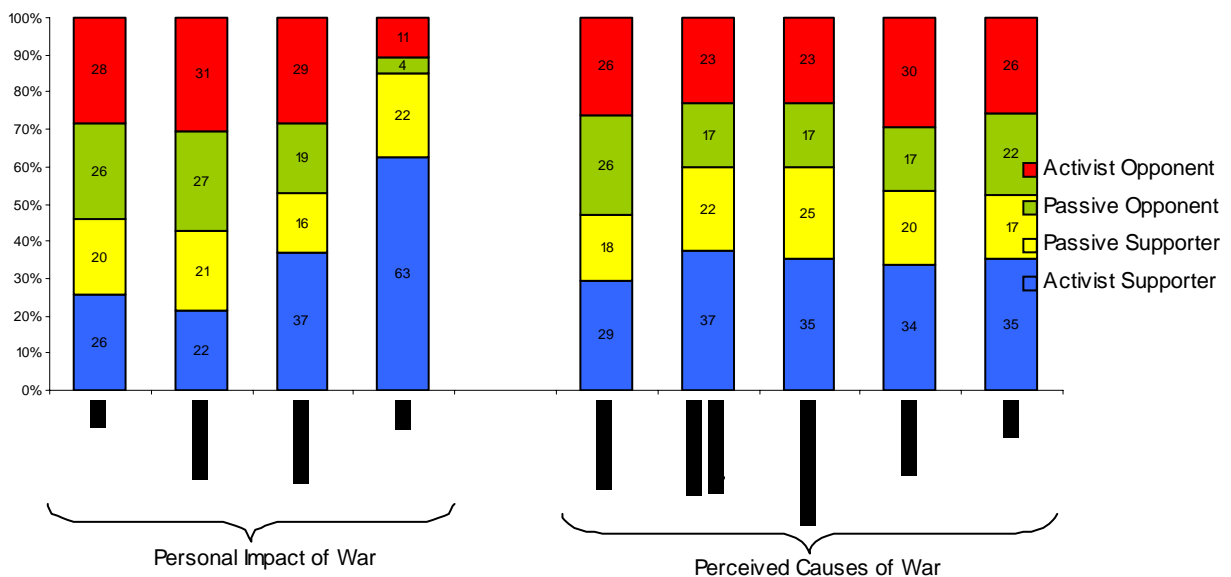
Perceptions of the success or

failure of the economy over the past year, however, appear to have no effect on respondents' acceptance or rejection of the peace proposals. Neither do they affect peoples' peace protest potential. The minority who think the economy has improved in the past year are slightly more likely to be Activist Supporters of peace than those who think the economy has worsened (39% vs. 35%) and they are marginally less likely to be Activist Opponents of peace (by 24% vs. 26%), but these differences are marginal. Perceptions of the progress made toward peace over the past year have only weak effects on current attitudes toward the peace process as documented in Figure III-12. Understandably, those who believe progress has been made over the past year are slightly less accepting of the new proposals and slightly less willing to protest an unfair agreement. The differences, however, are very small, and it is virtually impossible to distinguish Activist Supporters and Opponents of peace based on their perceptions of peace progress over the past year.

### 6. The Context, Causes, Costs and Benefits of War and Peace

An innovative feature of KAPS II is the inclusion of a more detailed series of questions probing citizens' experiences with the conflict and their perceptions of the costs and benefits

**Figure III-13: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Personal Impact of War and Perceived Cause of War**



of a permanent peace versus a return to war. The survey also attempts to assess the impact of both the June 2004 bomb attack on the Colpetty police station and the internal split in the LTTE on public attitudes towards peace.

While virtually no one in Sri Lanka has completely escaped the consequences of the country's long and costly civil war, the impact of the war is one that is both geographically and ethnically apportioned. Citizens in the north and east have been on the front lines of the conflict, while those in the south and west have had relatively fewer direct experiences with open combat. To assess the consequences of these differences we asked respondents in KAPS II about their experiences in the war; whether they had personally fought in the war; whether a family member, friend or neighbor had fought in the war; whether they, personally, or a family member, neighbor or friend had been injured or killed in the conflict, and whether they or their family had suffered the loss or damage of property or the loss of rights as a result of the conflict. Indicative of the scope and severity of the civil war in Sri Lanka, very large numbers of citizens report multiple impacts of the war on themselves and those close to them. Overall, 41% of respondents report that they or a member of their family fight in the conflict, and 60% say they had friends and neighbors fight in the conflict. More than a third of respondents say that someone in their family was killed or wounded in the conflict and 45% know of neighbors or friends who were killed or wounded. One quarter of respondents say they had property that was lost or damaged in the conflict and 28% feel that their rights have been diminished as a result of the conflict. When totaled, 80% of Sri Lankans report having one or more of these war related experiences, and 38% report enduring three or more of these devastating events.

The direct experience of the war is felt most widely in the Eastern, Central and particularly Northern provinces where the war has been fought. Residents of the North Western and North Central provinces, which border the conflict areas, are about half as likely as those in the Northern and Eastern Provinces to report these experiences, while those living further to the south and west report many fewer direct ex-

periences with the devastation of the war. Among the different ethnic groups, the war has taken the greatest toll on Sri Lanka's three minority groups, more than 95% of whom report suffering directly in multiple ways. About one-third of the Sinhalese respondents report no direct experiences with the war, another third report having friends or neighbors who were in the war, while another third report direct suffering as a result of the war (See Figure III-13).

Those who have suffered most in the war, are more likely to support a majority of the peace proposals and also are much more willing to protest an unjust or spoiled peace agreement. Figure III-13 shows that among those who have suffered most in the war, more than 80% accept a majority of the peace proposals and 63% are Activist Supporters compared to 11% who are Activist Opponents. By comparison, among those reporting no direct experience with the conflict, 54% reject the majority of the peace proposals, 28% are Activist Opponents. A fully one quarter of the least affected groups are Activist Supporters of peace.

An important factor for assessing the fairness of a particular peace proposal is understanding what gave rise to the conflict in the first place. People who blame the Tamils for the conflict likely will be less willing to make concessions for peace than those who think the conflict was caused by government policies or by discriminatory practices against ethnic minorities. In this regard we asked respondents what they thought was the root cause of the conflict. Sri Lankans do not agree on the answer. The largest group of respondents (22%) blame LTTE violence. 18% say that the principal cause was discrimination against the Tamils; another 18% say it was caused by the government's nationalist policies; and 17% say it was a consequence of intolerance among ethnic groups. The remaining 25% divide the blame between nearly 50 other causes, none being cited as the primary cause by more than 5% of respondents.

One might expect that attributions of blame would vary substantially among ethnic groups, but this is not the case. While it is true that Sinhalese respondents are more likely to blame the LTTE for the war, the more striking observation is that nearly three-quarters of the Sinhalese reject this explanation and blame the war on other



causes. Indeed, 17% of Sinhalese blame discrimination against the Tamils as the primary cause, and another 17% blame government policies promoting Sinhala nationalism. A further 16% place the blame ethnic intolerance, and 22% blame a myriad of other causes. Among the Tamils, the most widely cited cause of the war is the government's nationalist policies (25%) followed by discrimination against the Tamils (21%). Muslims view the causes similarly; with 14% blaming government policies, 19% blaming discrimination against Tamils, 23% blaming ethnic intolerance, and 10% blaming LTTE violence.

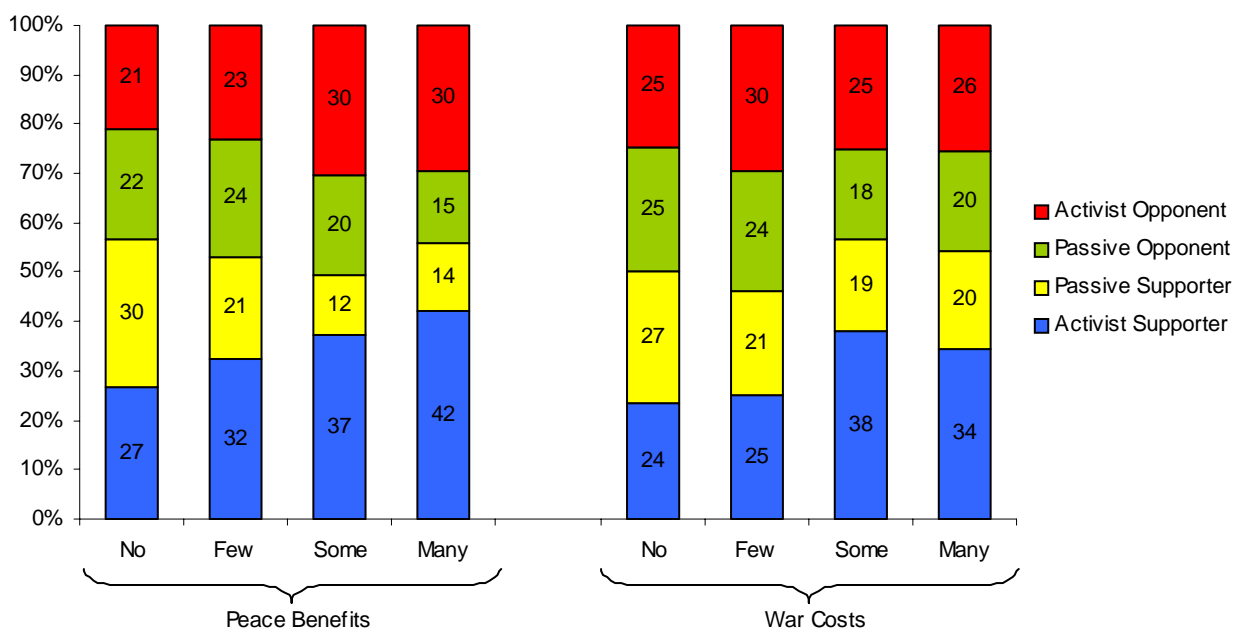
Perhaps because the blame is widely spread, perceptions of the cause of the war have relatively modest effects on attitudes toward the peace process. As reported in Figure III-13, those who blame the Tamils are the least likely to accept a majority of the peace proposals. Still, 29% of these individuals are Activist Supporters of peace compared to 26% who are Activist Opponents. Among those who think that discrimination against the Tamils is the principal cause, 37% are Activist Supporters compared to 23% who are Activist Opponents. From this perspective it stands that regardless of the public's perceptions on the causes of war, people are willing to accept a wide variety of peace proposals favored by different sides in order to end the war and herald in a

permanent peace.

Part of the reason that citizens may not be more concerned about the causes of the war is that they believe that the resumption of the war would have enormous costs and that a permanent peace will bring important benefits to themselves and the country. As reported in KAPS I, most Sri Lankans give the ceasefire agreement high marks for improving the quality of life in the country. When probed further in KAPS II, asking citizens what aspects of life the ceasefire has improved, nearly two-thirds say that the level of violence in the country is lower now than before the ceasefire and three-quarters say that ethnic minorities are treated better now than before. Smaller numbers of respondents think however, that the ceasefire has helped the economy, improved their personal standards of living, or enhanced respect for human rights. It is important to assess whether Sri Lankans think that a permanent agreement will bring any additional benefits beyond what the ceasefire has already provided. Or else citizens might well decide that a ceasefire is sufficient and further peace negotiations unnecessary. To determine this we asked respondents "how do you think a permanent peace agreement would affect Sri Lanka ... would a permanent peace agreement make things [better or worse]?"

While citizens clearly appreci-

**Figure III-14: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Costs and Benefits of War and Peace**



ate the improvements ushered in by the ceasefire, they are convinced that a permanent peace agreement will provide important additional benefits. 80% of citizens expect that ethnic minorities will be afforded better treatment after a permanent peace agreement. Three-quarters anticipate higher living standards; 79% anticipate a stronger national economy; and 78% expect greater respect for human rights. Overall, 60% of Sri Lankans expect greater benefits in all areas as a result of a permanent peace agreement; 26% expect some additional benefits, while only 14% say they don't expect any additional benefits. Tamils are far and away the most optimistic about the additional benefits of a permanent peace agreement while Muslims and Sinhalese are most skeptical. A majority within each ethnic group however anticipate a peace agreement to provide significant additional benefits (See Figure III-14).

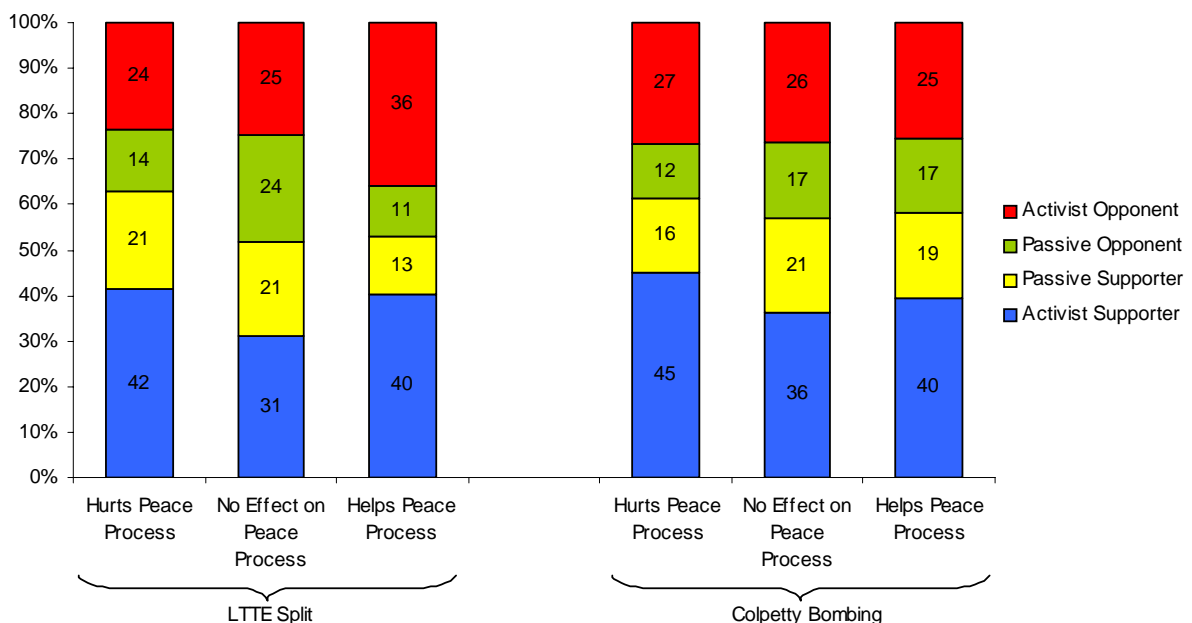
Those who expect the most benefits from a permanent peace are most accepting of the peace proposals. They also have the highest peace protest potential. As shown in Figure III-14, 61% of those expecting the greatest peace dividend are willing to accept a majority of the peace proposals and 42% are Activist Supporters. 30% are Activist Opponents of peace despite its perceived benefits. Among those who think that peace will provide no additional benefits, 56% still support the peace proposals, but only

27% are Activist Supporters, while 21% are activist Opponents.

Of course, even if people do not believe that a permanent peace agreement will provide additional benefits beyond those provided by the ceasefire, they may still support a permanent peace out of fear that a return to war would inflict serious costs on themselves or the country. In this regard we asked KAPS II respondents how they "think the collapse of the peace negotiations and the resumption of conflict would affect Sri Lanka." There is near unanimous agreement that a breakdown of the peace negotiations would seriously damage Sri Lankan society. Between 80% and 90% of citizens say that the resumption of war would increase violence, reduce standards of living, hurt the nation's economy, degrade respect for human rights and worsen the treatment of ethnic minorities. Moreover, while Sinhalese respondents view the possible resumption of war in less dramatic terms, the other ethnic groups, and majorities within all ethnic groups, think resumption of the war would damage virtually all aspects of the country's life.

Those believing a return to war would be most detrimental also are the most supportive of the peace proposals and most willing to protest an unfair or spoiled peace agreement (see Figure III-14). Nearly 60% of those most fearful of a return to war support a majority of peace proposals including

**Figure III-15: Sri Lankan Peace Types by Effects of LTTE Split and of Colpetty Bombing, on the Peace Process**



38% who are Activist Supporters, although one quarter are also Activist Opponents. Among those least concerned about the resumption of war, 50% support a majority of peace proposals including 24% who are Activist Supporters and 25% who are Activist Opponents.

As KAPS II data collection was about to begin in July 2004, two important events occurred that illustrate the new and more difficult environment confronting the peace process today. One was the public split in the LTTE leadership dramatized by Karuna's controversial departure from Batticaloa. The other was the suicide bombing of the Colpetty police station that foreshadowed a marked increase in political violence throughout the country. To assess how these developments might affect people's attitudes toward the peace process, we added several questions to the survey exploring the public's awareness of and reactions to these events. Given the high media visibility of these events, most Sri Lankans say they were aware at the time of these two incidents. About three-quarters of respondents report having heard of the split in the LTTE and more than 80% say they heard about the Colpetty bombing. These figures are largely the same across the different ethnic groups and regions. One of the controversies surrounding the LTTE split was whether the government should (or did) provide Karuna with security or other assistance in his departure from Batticaloa. When asked whether the government should provide Karuna with help, a majority of citizens said that this was an internal LTTE issue which the government should avoid; about one third of citizens didn't have an opinion, and only 18% said they thought the government should help Karuna. The ethnic group whose members most approve of government assistance for Karuna are the Muslims, numbering at 40%. Among the Tamils and Sinhalese, strong majorities oppose government help for Karuna.

As for the effects of these events on the peace process, very few respondents (11%) think the split in the LTTE has helped the peace process. Most (59%) think the split will have little effect in this regard while 31% think it will hurt the peace negotiations. Attitudes about the bombing are more divided; one quarter of respondents say it makes them more supportive of

the peace process, about 40% say it makes them less supportive and about 35% say it has no effect on their support. Muslim attitudes appear most affected by the bombing, albeit in opposite directions. 28% of Muslims say it makes them more supportive of peace compared to 24% of Sinhalese, 18% of Tamils and 16% of UCT that think the same. On the other hand, 55% of Muslims say it makes them less supportive of a peace agreement as do 42% of Up-Country Tamils, 37% of Tamils and 36% of Sinhalese respondents (See Figure III-15).

Interestingly, those who say the Colpetty bombing makes them less supportive of a peace agreement are the same respondents who are most accepting of the peace proposals and most willing to protest against an unfair or spoiled peace agreement, although the differences are small. Among those most negatively affected by the bombing, 61% continue to accept a majority of the eight peace proposals and 45% are Activist Supporters. Those least supportive of the peace process say their opinions were unaffected by the bombing. Among these respondents, 57% favor a majority of peace proposals and 36% are Activist Supporters. Similarly, those who think the split in the LTTE has hurt the peace process are the most supportive of that process; 63% favor a majority of the proposals and 42% are Activist Supporters. acceptance of democratic practices.

### C. Portraits of Supporters and Activists

While the preceding discussions provide a detailed description of the attitudes and values distinguishing supporters and opponents of the peace proposals as well as their protest potential, this level of detail can sometimes obscure the larger picture. To obtain a more simplified and more holistic portrait of peace process supporters and opponents and to better understand the most important differences between them, we use the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis to statistically measure the independent effects and relative impact on peace attitudes of the individual influences considered previously in this analysis. Rather than cluttering the analysis by including all of the variables considered thus far, the regres-

<b>Table III-1</b>					
<b>Significant Influences (Standardized Regression Coefficients) on Number of New Peace Proposals Accepted</b>					
<b>Influences</b>	<b>All Sri Lankans</b>	<b>Sinhala</b>	<b>All Tamil</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	
<b>Sinhala</b>	<b>-.31</b>	<b>Na</b>	<b>Na</b>	<b>Na</b>	
<b>Up-Country Tamil</b>		<b>Na</b>	<b>Na</b>	<b>Na</b>	
<b>Muslim</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>Na</b>	<b>Na</b>	<b>Na</b>	
<b>Female</b>					
<b>Formal Education</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.09</b>		
<b>Age 25 and under</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>.06</b>			
<b>Age 51 and older</b>			<b>.10</b>		
<b>Ethnic Importance</b>					
<b>Treated Unfairly</b>			<b>-.12</b>	<b>-.11</b>	
<b>Ethnic Interaction</b>				<b>.12</b>	
<b>Religiosity</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>.09</b>			
<b>Democratic Values</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.06</b>	
<b>Democratic Regime Support</b>	<b>-.04</b>		<b>-.10</b>		
<b>Political Tolerance of Most Disliked Group</b>				<b>.13</b>	
<b>Political Interest</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.09</b>		<b>.09</b>	
<b>Peace Knowledge</b>	<b>.17</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.25</b>	
<b>Political Knowledge</b>	<b>.05</b>		<b>.10</b>		
<b>Political Participation</b>				<b>.11</b>	
<b>Group Memberships</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.07</b>		<b>-.11</b>	
<b>Economy Better than Last Year</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>-.09</b>	<b>.09</b>		
<b>Peace Process Better than last Year</b>	<b>.04</b>		<b>.</b>		
<b>Trust President</b>					
<b>Trust Government</b>			<b>.09</b>	<b>.14</b>	
<b>Personal Impact of War</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>.14</b>		
<b>Permanent Peace Benefits</b>			<b>-.13</b>		
<b>Resumption of War Costs</b>					
<b>Adjusted R2</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	
<b>N</b>	<b>3007</b>	<b>1496</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>625</b>	

sion includes only those variables from each category of explanations (ethnicity, demographics, ethnic interaction, etc.) that bivariate the analyses and an initial regression analyses suggest are most important. The results displayed in Table III-1 include only those variables that remain statistically significant when all other variables are controlled. In interpreting these statistics, the standardized regression coefficients (B) indicate the relative impact that each variable has on support for the new peace proposals, after controlling the influence of all other variables in the table. A positive sign means that an increase in the variable produces an increase in support for peace; a negative sign means an increase in the variable produces a reduction in support for peace (See Table III-1).

Consistent with the pervasive influence of ethnicity in Sri Lankan society, ethnic differences dominate the explanation of support for the new peace proposals. The ethnic variables included in the model measure, in effect, the difference in support for peace of the three ethnic groups (Sinhala, Up-country Tamil, and Muslim) compared to the excluded ethnic group, the Tamils. The most obvious observation is the strong negative effects on support for the peace proposals that is associated with the Sinhala community. The B coefficient (-.30) is nearly twice as large as any other influence. This is the case, moreover, even after we control the differential effects that education, ethnic interaction, support for democracy, government trust, peace knowledge, participation, and all of the other variables have on Sinhala and Tamil respondents.

Muslims also significantly support fewer peace proposals than do the Tamils ( $B = -.05$ ) but the difference is much smaller and more easily bridged by other influences. Importantly, while Up-Country Tamils accept slightly more peace proposals than other Tamils ( $b = .02$ ) the difference is statistically insignificant (and therefore not shown in the table) suggesting that any differences that exist between Tamils and Up-Country Tamils in support for the peace proposals are due entirely to factors such as education, interaction with other ethnic groups, and other factors in the model.

Among other influences on peace support, those related to the

peace process itself have the next greatest influence. Particularly notable is the strong effect which knowledge of the peace process has on support for the peace proposals ( $B = .17$ ). Those more informed about the peace process support significantly larger numbers of peace proposals than those with less knowledge. Those more knowledgeable about Sri Lankan government and politics in general also support more of the peace proposals, but the effect of generalized knowledge is less than half as strong as that of more specialized knowledge about the peace process ( $b = .17$  vs.  $.07$ ). This is the case moreover, even after controlling for ethnic group membership and all other influences in the table. Only slightly less important than peace knowledge is the respondents' personal experience of war. Those who have suffered more and more directly in the conflict support more of the peace proposals, as do those who think that progress has been made in the peace process over the past year.

Among the more optimistic results of the analysis is the evidence that younger citizens (specifically those 25 and under) are substantially more supportive of the peace proposals than older citizens. Those with higher formal educations also support significantly higher numbers of peace proposals as do citizens who have the closest, most frequent interactions with members of other ethnic groups.

Table III-2 replicates this analysis focusing on the factors than explaining differences in peace protest potential. Importantly, ethnic differences play much less of a role here, while individual experiences appear to matter more. While Sinhalese respondents express slightly higher protest potential than Tamils and Up-Country Tamils, these differences are not statistically significant when other influences are taken into account. Muslims by contrast, express significantly greater protest potential than other groups, but the size of the influence is relatively modest. More important than ethnic identity for protest potential is the strength of that identity and its impact on one's life. Respondents who say their ethnicity is very important to them and those that report that they have suffered discrimination based on their ethnicity, religion or party affiliation express significantly higher protest potential. So also do those who in-

<b>Table III-2</b>				
<b>Significant Influences (Standardized Regression Coefficients) on Strength of Peace Protest Potential</b>				
<b>Influences</b>	<b>All Sri Lankans</b>	<b>Sinhala</b>	<b>All Tamil</b>	<b>Muslim</b>
<b>Sinhala</b>		Na	Na	Na
<b>Up-Country Tamil</b>		Na	Na	Na
<b>Muslim</b>	.06	Na	Na	Na
<b>Female</b>	-.05			
<b>Formal Education</b>			-.13	
<b>Age 25 and under</b>				
<b>Age 51 and older</b>	-.05		-.09	
<b>Ethnic Importance</b>			.14	
<b>Treated Unfairly</b>	.04	.06		
<b>Ethnic Interaction</b>	.14	.14	.12	-.08
<b>Religiosity</b>	.06		.09	.09
<b>Democratic Values</b>	.11	.08	.10	.37
<b>Democratic Regime Support</b>	.08	.08		.13
<b>Political Tolerance of Most Disliked Group</b>				
<b>Political Interest</b>				
<b>Peace Knowledge</b>	.10	.09	.14	
<b>Political Knowledge</b>				
<b>Political Participation</b>	.10	.10	.11	
<b>Group Memberships</b>	.07	.08		
<b>Economy Better than Last Year</b>			.11	-.08
<b>Peace Process Better than last Year</b>				
<b>Trust President</b>	-.07	-.09		.08
<b>Trust Government</b>				-.10
<b>Personal Impact of War</b>				
<b>Permanent Peace Benefits</b>	.08	.11		-.11
<b>Resumption of War Costs</b>	.04			
<b>Adjusted R2</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>.21.1%</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>2886</b>	<b>1412</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>589</b>

teract most with other ethnic groups. Supporters of democracy and of democratic values also express relatively high levels of peace protest potential. As might be expected, those expressing greater tolerance for groups they don't like are slightly but significantly less likely to protest (*See Table III-2*).

Older citizens (those over 50) and women have significantly lower protest potential, though the differences are modest. Similarly, those who participate most in everyday politics and who are members of social groups also express more protest potential, suggesting protest behavior is simply a specialized form of more general political activity.

Regarding the peace process itself, protest potential is significantly higher among those with greater knowledge about the peace process. It also is higher both among those most optimistic about the benefits of a permanent peace and those most fearful of the costs that the resumption of the war would bring. It is interesting to note that the impact of hope outstrips that of fear in this regard by about 2:1 ( $B = .09$  vs.  $.05$ ).

The strength of ethnic differences in Sri Lanka can disguise important differences within or among members of the same group. To better assess what motivates the peace attitudes of different ethnic groups in Sri Lanka, Table x compares the results of separate regressions for Sinhalese, Tamils (including both Up-Country and other Tamils) and Muslims.

The results indicate that the principal influences on the support for the peace proposals in all three groups are very similar. Knowledge of the peace process is among the strongest influences for all three groups. Clearly, those who know more about the process significantly support more of the proposals - including, by implication, more of the proposals favored by the other ethnic groups. Similarly, those within each ethnic group with the clearest commitment to democratic values support significantly higher numbers of peace proposals. The reason for this is not clear. Among the Sinhalese, those who think the economy has weakened in the past year are more supportive of the peace proposals, though the pattern is reversed among Tamil respondents. Among both groups, individuals who

have experienced the effects of the war most directly, and those with higher formal education are most supportive of the proposals. Among Tamils and Muslims, those who report suffering the most discrimination are less supportive of the peace proposals, while those more trusting of government institutions accept significantly more of the proposals. Interestingly, Muslims stand out from the other ethnic groups in the extent to which their acceptance of peace proposals is based on their interactions with other ethnic groups, their tolerance for those they do not like, and their political and civic involvement. In this sense their acceptance of the peace proposals appears to be based as much on their assessments of what is important for other groups as well as what is important for their own group.

There is less commonality among the different ethnic groups in terms of the influences affecting peace protest potential. A commitment to democratic values has the strongest overall influence on protest potential within these groups. Political participation and civic engagement also have broad effects. Peace knowledge is significantly related to protest potential among Sinhalese and Tamil respondents and is close to being significant among Muslims. Measures of ethnic or religious commitment are also significantly related to protest potential in each group.

This analysis gives us a portrait of the peace activists, as younger, better-educated individuals from all three ethnic groups who have strong ethnic or religious identities, as well as a commitment to democracy. They also tend to interact regularly with members of other ethnic groups, have been personally affected by the war and are highly knowledgeable about the peace process. Activist opponents by contrast, tend to be middle aged Sinhalese, with less formal education, relatively little contact with other ethnic groups, with high levels of trust in the President and little knowledge about the peace process.

The strength and consistency with which knowledge about the peace process is associated with support for peace proposals and peace protest potential is especially intriguing. Unfortunately, the causal direction of this relationship cannot fully be

determined based on available data. Specifically, we cannot say with certainty whether exposure to more information about the peace process 'causes' citizens to accept more peace proposals and to become peace activists or whether those who become peace activists acquire more knowledge about the peace process by virtue of their greater interest and involvement. No doubt both dynamics operate to some extent. Nevertheless, the extent to which peace activism is as-

sociated with direct exposure to the war, with higher levels of interaction with other ethnic groups, with formal education, and, to a lesser extent, with general political knowledge is strong, albeit circumstantial evidence, in our judgment, that increasing the public's knowledge about the peace process is likely to increase both public support for that process and the public's willingness to protest against an unfair or spoiled peace agreement.







# Persuasion for Peace

*“...peace negotiations by their very nature require trade-offs and compromises, and this section has shown that discussing peace proposals explicitly in terms of trade-offs typically produces much higher levels of support for the peace package...”*

As discussed above, one of the major additions to this year's KAPS survey was an extensive array of questions designed to assess the ways in which Sri Lankans could be persuaded to support various proposals for peace. We sought to uncover how Sri Lankan public opinion could change from its current distribution to one that is more supportive of the peace process, as well as the specific mechanisms, appeals, and rhetorical strategies by which politicians, party leaders, and other political elites might effectuate such change. In last year's KAPS survey, we were only able to make tentative conclusions in this regard, as the questionnaire was designed primarily to gauge the levels of public opinion regarding peace, and the differences on peace opinions between ethnic, partisan, and regional groups in Sri Lankan society. This year, we made use of a variety of recently-developed survey methods that presented respondents with different information from different sources about peace proposals, in order to determine how individuals may move from initial positions that are opposed to particular peace proposals to positions that are more favourable.

We conducted three general kinds of "persuasability" analyses. In the first, we presented individuals with several proposals that were combined or "bundled" together as part of a compromise peace package. For example, one bundle combined the proposal for the LTTE to place their heavy weapons under the control of a neutral international force with the proposal to dismantle high security zones in the Northern and Eastern provinces. Responses to these peace "bundles" can then be compared to earlier responses to the individual proposals that comprised the bundle, so that we could determine how combining proposals

together might generate greater willingness among Sri Lankans to accept compromises or trade-offs in the peace process. We present the results of these analyses in section A below.

In the second set of analyses, presented below in section B, we exposed individuals to a different introductory statement about the peace process before they answered questions about specific peace proposals, in order to determine how "framing" the peace process in different ways may influence individuals' peace attitudes. For example, some respondents were exposed to rhetoric that "framed" the peace process in terms of ending violence and human suffering, while others were exposed to the rhetoric that framed peace in terms of redressing past discrimination against Sri Lankan ethnic groups. Responses to specific peace proposals were then compared for individuals exposed to different peace frames in order to determine how cueing respondents to think differently about peace may influence their willingness to accept specific proposals.

We present the results of a final persuasability test in section C below. In this test, we examine the extent to which individuals may be persuaded to accept a federal solution to the conflict as part of a final peace settlement. More specifically, we ask individuals for their opinion about a federal solution, and, depending on their initial response, we present them with a "counterargument" that could change their minds. For example, some individuals opposed to a federal solution were then asked whether they would change their opinion if they knew "that the government and the LTTE agreed to a federal solution in the Oslo Accord of 2000," while others were asked if they would change their minds if they knew that

"some party leaders" or "religious leaders" feel that a federal solution would bring about certain benefits. In this way we can assess how individuals can be "talked into" accepting a federal solution, and which kinds of appeals from which sources are most effective in winning over individuals who are initially opposed. Of course, the opposite process may also occur, that is, individuals who are initially accepting of a federal solution may be "talked out of" their support. A further goal of these analyses is to determine the relative durability of initial support and opposition towards federalism, and to assess the implications of these patterns for the overall Sri Lankan peace process.

## A. Peace "Bundles"

### 1. Overall Findings

We tested six different peace bundles, all of which combined proposals that were relatively unpopular with at least one of the major Sri Lankan ethnic groups. Our primary goal was to determine whether combining proposals into a single package containing an explicit trade-off or compromise would lead to greater public acceptance than when treating the proposals in isolation. For example, we have seen that support for an interim self-governing authority in the Northern and Eastern provinces is relatively unpopular among the Sinhalese. Would however the Sinhalese be more willing to accept an interim self-governing authority if it were bundled with another proposal which enjoyed greater support, such as the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weaponry under the aegis of an international force?? If so, it would indicate that individuals were willing to accept unpopular proposals if they were paired off with popular ones in ways that facilitated compromise.

The specific bundles presented to respondents were as follows:

1. The LTTE would place all of their heavy weapons under the control of a neutral international force, in return for which the Government would eliminate all High Security Zones from the Northern and Eastern provinces.

2. The LTTE would place all of their heavy weapons under the control

of a neutral international force, in return for which there would be a general amnesty for people who may have committed illegal political violence against civilians during the war

3. An interim self-governing authority would be established in the Northern and Eastern provinces, in return for which the LTTE would place all of their heavy weapons under the control of a neutral international force

4. An interim self-governing authority would be established in the Northern and Eastern provinces, in return for which a Muslim self-governing region would also be established

5. The Northern and Eastern regions would be permanently merged as part of a final peace agreement, in return for which a Muslim self-governing region would be established

6. The Northern and Eastern regions would be permanently merged, in return for which displaced Muslims would be allowed to return to their homes and the land they owned returned

Note that each of the bundles is phrased explicitly in the language of trade-offs or compromise, as the first proposal is presented to the respondent for approval in return for which the respondent would also agree to another proposal that may be decidedly more or less popular. Thus the "bundling" concept goes further than our earlier formulation of whether a respondent would accept a proposal "for the sake of" a general peace agreement. In these questions the respondent is forced to make a specific trade-off and accept both proposals as part of a single peace package. Note further that across the full set of bundles there are "difficult" issues for each ethnic group to accept - an interim self-governing authority and an end to High Security Zones for Sinhalese and to a lesser extent Muslims, and the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weaponry and a return of displaced Muslim lands in the North and East for Tamils. Finally, it is important to note that at least some of the bundles echo explicitly various compromises and peace packages that have been promoted recently by Sri Lankan political elites, in particular the trade-off between decommis-

sioning and an end to HSZ and some versions of proposals put forward to establish an ISGA in the Northern and Eastern provinces (See Figures IV-1 and IV-2).

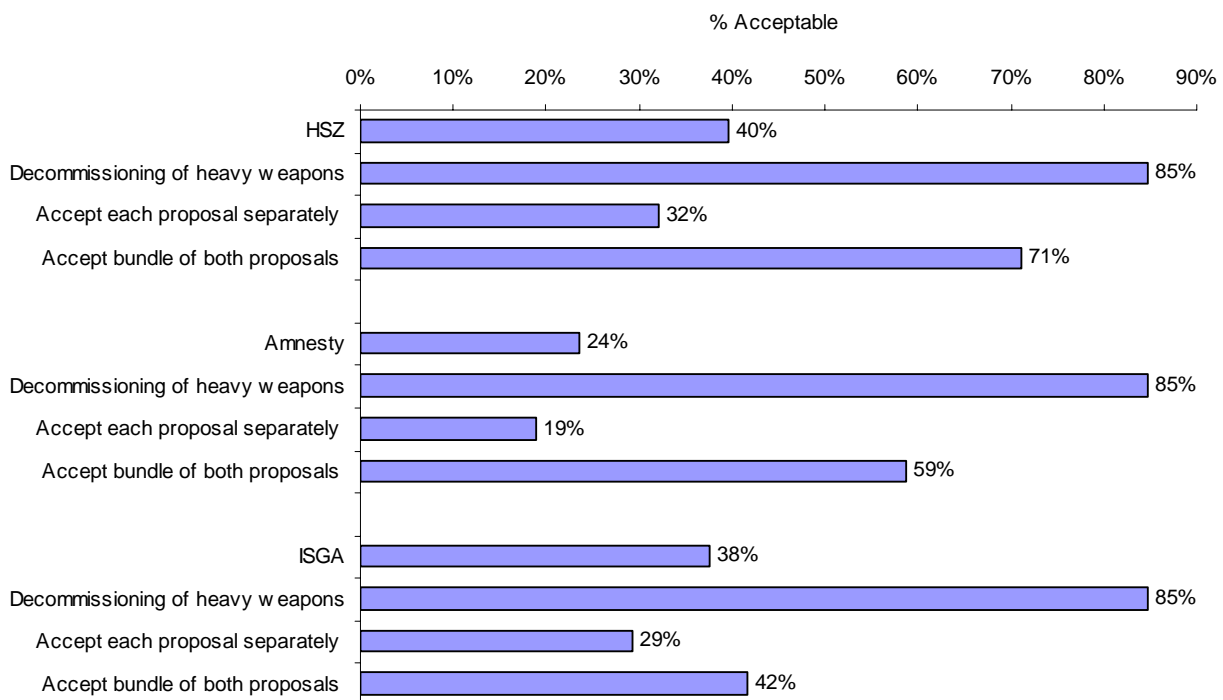
We present the results of the "bundling" experiments for all Sri Lankan respondents in Figures IV-1 and IV-2. For each of the bundles, we present first the proportion of respondents who report that the peace proposals, when considered separately, are at least "acceptable," that is, that they find the proposal either "absolutely necessary for peace," "desirable but not necessary for peace," or "undesirable but I could accept it for peace." These results are in fact the same as are shown in Table III-2 above. For example, it can be seen from the first set of findings at the top of the figure that approximately 85% of Sri Lankans believe that the LTTE should place their heavy weapons under the control of an international force, while only 40% believe that the Government should eliminate all High Security Zones from the Northern and Eastern provinces. The third bar from each set of graphs shows the proportion of respondents who find both proposals at least acceptable when answering the two questions separately; in this case just over 30% of Sri Lankans consider eliminating High Se-

curity Zones and decommissioning heavy LTTE weapons "acceptable for peace."

How do these responses change when proposals are bundled, i.e. when respondents are asked to consider the two proposals as part of an overall compromise or package of trade-offs? The fourth and final bar for each set of graphs shows the proportion of Sri Lankans who find the bundle at least "acceptable" for peace. In the first set of graphs, for example, it can be seen that approximately 71% of respondents accept the bundling of HSZ elimination and decommissioning of heavy LTTE weapons. In other words, the bundling of the two proposals produced a nearly 40% increase in the proportion that find both proposals acceptable for peace. This is an extremely large increase, and indicates that bundling this unpopular proposal with one that enjoys widespread acceptance has a strong positive effect on persuading individuals to accept the package. And since a true peace agreement most likely will contain both of these elements, it is clear that such a packaging would result in much larger support than if the two proposals are considered by individuals in isolation.

It must be noted, however, that the proportion that favour the

**Figure IV-1: The Effects of Peace Bundles on Public Acceptance of the Peace Proposals**



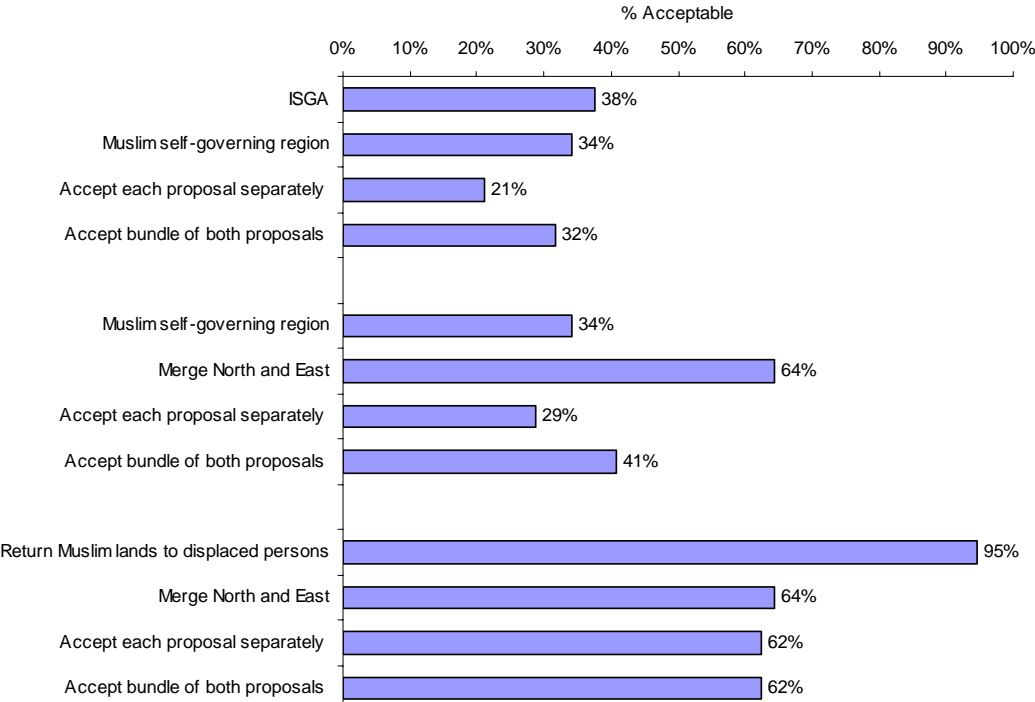
peace bundle (71%) is still lower than the proportion that find decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons "acceptable" in the absence of the bundle (85%). This indicates that some respondents find the elimination of HSZ so "unacceptable" that they will not accept it as part of a peace package, even bundled with a proposal that they support. We take this as evidence of "hard core" opposition to the elimination of HSZ. At the same time, the difference between the proportion who find the elimination of HSZ "acceptable" (40%) and those who find the peace bundle acceptable (70%) indicates that many opponents can in fact be persuaded to accept the elimination of HSZ when combined with the highly popular proposal to decommission LTTE heavy weapons.

A similar pattern can be seen for the peace bundle in the middle of Figure IV-1. Bundling the popular decommissioning proposal with the unpopular proposal to grant amnesty for people who may have committed illegal political violence against civilians during the war produces a sharp increase in the proportions that find the proposals acceptable. While only 22% of respondents think that amnesty is at least "acceptable," and less than 20% agree to both amnesty and decommissioning when considered separately,

nearly 60% find the bundle at least "acceptable" for peace. Again, there is a hard core of amnesty opponents who produce less support for the bundle than for decommissioning when taken separately. The general pattern of responses nevertheless indicates that a package with LTTE decommissioning can move nearly 1/3 of the Sri Lankan population to accept something that they had not originally supported.

The four other bundles presented to respondents produced weaker effects, though in all but one case the peace package did produce greater acceptance than the two proposals taken separately. At the bottom of Figure IV-1, for example, it can be seen that bundling the highly popular decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons with the relatively unpopular establishment of an LTTE interim self-governing authority produces movement from 12% of the public: less than 30% finds both proposals acceptable when considered separately, while just over 40% accepts the bundle. At the same time, the movement compared to the support for the ISGA in isolation (38%) indicates that much of the opposition to the ISGA is intense enough to withstand a peace deal that is softened with a proposal that enjoys nearly universal support. In general, the three sets of findings suggest that the opposition

**Figure IV-2: The Effects of Peace Bundles on Public Acceptance of the Peace Proposals**



to amnesty and the elimination of High Security Zones are "persuadable" when combined with the offer to decommissioning LTTE heavy weaponry, while opposition to an ISGA is less open to compromise.

This conclusion is reinforced by the results at the top of Figure IV-2, where the ISGA proposal is bundled with the establishment of a Muslim self-governing region. As can be seen, both proposals are relatively unpopular considered separately, and only 21% find both proposals at least acceptable for peace. The proportion accepting the bundle rises to about 32%, again only a modest effect of the peace bundle in moving opponents of an ISGA towards accepting a peace package. Again, opposition to an ISGA is intense enough to cause a decline in the numbers of those who accept a Muslim self-governing region when considered separately. Opposition to a Muslim region causes a similar decline in the numbers among those who accept an ISGA by itself, indicating that two unpopular proposals, bundled together, can produce only limited movement in public opinion.

The two final peace bundles involve issues related to a Muslim self-governing region and the return of Muslim lands to displaced persons, each of which is offered to the respondent as part of a package that would include the merging of the Northern and Eastern provinces. As can be seen, the merger proposal by itself is accepted by over 60% of respondents, and its inclusion in the bundle moves support for a Muslim self-governing region from 34% to 41%. The increase among individuals who accept both proposals considered separately is stronger although still relatively small (12%), approximately the same magnitude as in the ISGA bundles. Finally, bundling the return of Muslim lands with a merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces produces almost no effects. The bundle is dominated by the merger proposal, and pairing it with the universally accepted proposal to return Muslim lands produces no difference compared to the proportion that accept both proposals when considered individually.

## 2. Who is Most Persuadable?

Factors Affecting Bundle Acceptance

### a. Ethnicity

The preceding section demon-

strates that bundling has significant persuasive effect on the public's acceptance of specific peace proposals, with very large increases registered for bundles involving the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons, the elimination of High Security Zones, and the granting of amnesty for those involved in political violence against civilians during the war. In this section, we attempt to determine whether individuals from different ethnic groups are especially affected by different peace bundles, as well as whether other demographic or political factors are associated with an individual's persuasability from bundling proposals together into a single peace package

As in the previous analysis of bundle effects, we report first the percentage of individuals within each ethnic group who find both proposals at least acceptable when considered separately. We then report the percentage of individuals within each group who find the peace bundle at least acceptable, and then we report the difference between these two percentages. This difference measures the overall increase in the public's acceptance of both proposals that can be directly attributable to their bundling. We present the findings for ethnicity in Table IV-1 (*See Table IV-1*).

The findings suggest that there are important differences between ethnic groups in the effects of the peace bundles. For example, bundling the decommissioning of LTTE heavy weapons and the elimination of High Security Zones produces greater increases among Sinhalese and Muslim respondents than among Tamils, who already registered relatively high acceptance rates for the two separate proposals. What is most striking however, is that the large initial difference between Tamils and Sinhalese on the two proposals is almost completely eliminated when the proposals are bundled, as 70% of Sinhalese and 74% of Tamils accept the peace bundle. Given that more than twice as many Tamils as Sinhalese initially accepted both proposals, this is evidence of the strong persuasive power of this particular trade-off in the Sinhala community. It is also evident that this bundle is acceptable to large majorities of all Sri Lankan ethnic groups, and thus would appear to be a promising package for future peace negotiations.

A very similar pattern between ethnic groups is seen for the second bundle involving decommissioning LTTE heavy weapons and the granting of amnesty for those committing political violence against civilians. Here a scant 12% of Sinhalese initially accept both proposals compared to a solid majority (56%) who accept the peace bundle, an overall persuasion effect of 44%. Again, this is larger than the increase in the Tamil community (32%), and virtually eliminates the initial Sinhala-Tamil differences in the acceptability of these proposals. Muslim respondents were initially supportive of the two proposals and increased in roughly equal proportions as Sinhalese, resulting in a near

universal acceptance of the bundle within this community. As with the GUNS-HSZ bundle, the GUNS-AMNESTY bundle is acceptable to majorities of all Sri Lankan ethnic groups.

This pattern of relative consensus with these peace bundles however, does not extend to the three subsequent peace packages. Each of these bundles involves a proposal that is deeply unpopular in the Sinhalese community, the establishment of an LTTE interim self-governing authority, or the establishment of a Muslim self-governing region in the Northern and Eastern provinces. In each case, only between 10% and 20 % of Sinhala respondents support the two proposals separately,

**TABLE IV-1  
PEACE BUNDLE ACCEPTANCE  
BY ETHNICITY**

<b>BUNDLE</b>	<b>Separate Proposals Both Acceptable?</b>	<b>Peace Bundle Acceptable?</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>LTTE Guns-High Security Zones</b>			
<i>Sinhala</i>	24%	70%	46%
<i>Tamil</i>	52%	74%	22%
<i>Muslim</i>	41%	82%	41%
<b>LTTE Guns-Amnesty</b>			
<i>Sinhala</i>	12	56	44
<i>Tamil</i>	27	59	32
<i>Muslim</i>	44	85	41
<b>ISGA-LTTE Decommissioning</b>			
<i>Sinhala</i>	21	32	11
<i>Tamil</i>	51	78	27
<i>Muslim</i>	41	66	25
<b>ISGA-Muslim Region</b>			
<i>Sinhala</i>	12	20	8
<i>Tamil</i>	42	57	15
<i>Muslim</i>	44	92	38
<b>Muslim Region-Merger North and East</b>			
<i>Sinhala</i>	17	31	14
<i>Tamil</i>	43	58	15
<i>Muslim</i>	55	90	35
<b>Merger North and East-Return of Displaced Land</b>			
<i>Sinhala</i>	50	55	5
<i>Tamil</i>	83	94	11
<i>Muslim</i>	58	71	13

and the increase in support attributable to the bundle ranges from 8-14% depending on the specific package. Moreover, only 20-32% of Sinhalese respondents find each of the resulting bundles acceptable, percentages that are lower than the Tamil and Muslim figures by anywhere from 27% to 72%. This indicates that bundling can provide some movement of Sinhala opinion on these unpopular issues; Sinhalese respondents do respond to trade-offs. Nevertheless, none of the bundles produces anything close to majority acceptance in the Sinhala community. By contrast, proposals involving the ISGA, Muslim self-governing regions, and the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces are initially more popular in the Tamil and Muslim communities, and the bundling process produces greater relative change among these respondents as well.

The final bundle, involving the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces and the return of land for displace Muslims, produces the smallest change in peace proposal acceptance. Majorities of each ethnic group, especially Tamils, support the two proposals taken separately, and the bundling process produces increases of between 5% and 13% in overall support.

#### a. Beyond Ethnicity

What factors aside from ethnicity are associated with an individual's susceptibility to persuasion of the peace bundles? We examined a series of demographic and political variables culled from the core predictive regression model for peace presented in Section III-C above. For each bundle, we created a variable that signifies whether or not an individual found the peace bundle acceptable after finding one or both of the individual proposals in the bundle unacceptable; that is, the variable represents whether or not an individual who initially opposed one or both proposals is persuaded to accept both proposals as part of a compromise peace package. What we call "Bundle Persuasion" corresponds to the final column in Table IV-1 above, where a "1" signifies that the individual accepts a bundle after initially being opposed to one or both of the proposals in that bundle. A "0" signifies that the individual remained opposed to the bundle after opposing the constituent

proposals, remained supportive of the bundle after supporting both of the proposals separately, or, in rare instances, opposed the bundle after expressing earlier support for both of the individual proposals.

For each of the six bundles, we estimated regression models predicting Bundle Persuasion from an individual's ethnic group, sex, educational attainment, age, religiosity, political interest, peace knowledge, support for non-democratic regime alternatives, personal war impact, ethnic interaction, trust in the President, and satisfaction with current economic conditions. In Table IV-2 below we show a summary of the effects, with Positive indicating that the variable had a statistically significant positive effect on persuading an individual to accept a peace bundle, and Negative indicating that the variable had a statistically significant negative effect on bundle persuasion (*See Table IV-2*).

As expected, none of these variables come close to matching ethnicity in explaining persuasion. Nevertheless, several additional findings are of importance:

- The most consistent variable influencing bundle acceptance is religiosity, which has statistically significant (though modest) effects in four of the six regressions. Recall that religiosity is also positively associated with the number of peace proposals individuals initially endorsed; the finding here suggests that more religious individuals are also more likely to accept the trade-offs contained in explicit peace bundles. This may be the result of a heightened sense of reciprocity or fairness among these individuals, or that whatever opposition they had to the specific proposals initially was sufficiently weak or ambivalent to be overcome by the effects of bundling.

- Individuals who have experienced personal hardship, or witnessed hardship among their family or friends as a result of the conflict, are significantly more likely to be persuaded to accept three of the six peace bundles. The specific bundles are those most directly related to the demands of the Tamil and Muslim communities in the Northern and Eastern provinces, and hence suggest that individuals who

have been most directly impacted by the war are most susceptible to persuasion on proposals related to areas where the conflict has been most intense.

■ Individuals who know the least about the peace process are more likely to be persuaded by two peace bundles, those involving the LTTE heavy weapons- High Security Zone and the LTTE heavy weapons-ISGA tradeoff. These are two of the more prominent trade-offs currently under discussion, and the results indicate that headway can be made in stimulating support through the bundling process. As was shown above, those who know more about the peace process are much more supportive of the peace proposals when considered separately. The finding here suggests that bundling can promote greater acceptance of peace proposals among poorly informed individuals who are not necessarily predisposed towards peace support.

■ Demographic factors (aside from ethnicity) are generally unrelated

to the susceptibility of individuals to bundle persuasion

■ Political evaluations such as support for non-democratic regime alternative, trust in the President and economic perceptions are inconsistently related to bundle persuasion

In sum, the bundling process appears to have been successful in persuading many Sri Lankans to support peace packages whose constituent parts they had earlier not endorsed. As we have discussed repeatedly throughout this report, peace negotiations by their very nature require trade-offs and compromises, and this section has shown that discussing peace proposals explicitly in terms of trade-offs typically produces much higher levels of support for the peace package than for individual proposals considered in isolation. To be sure, some trade-offs are more difficult than others. Among the Sinhala community, for example, trade-offs involving the establishment of an LTTE ISGA produced only an 8% increase in bundle acceptance over the already

**TABLE IV-2  
SUMMARY OF EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT VARIABLES ON  
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO BUNDLE PERSUASION**

Variable	BUNDLE					
	GUNS-HSZ	GUNS-AMNESY	ISGA-GUNS	ISGA-MUSLIM REGION	MERGER-MUSLIM REGION	MERGER-DISPLACED LAND RETURN
Female	-----	Positive	-----	Positive	-----	-----
Education	Positive	Negative	-----	-----	-----	-----
Age	-----	Negative	-----	-----	-----	-----
Religiosity	-----	Positive	Positive	Positive	Positive	-----
Political Interest	Positive	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Peace Knowledge	Negative	-----	Negative	-----	-----	-----
Anti-Democratic	-----	Negative	Positive	-----	-----	-----
Personal War Impact	-----	-----	-----	Positive	Positive	Positive
Ethnic Interaction	-----	Positive	-----	Negative	-----	-----
Trust in President	Positive	Negative	-----	-----	-----	Positive
Perceived Economic Progress	-----	-----	-----	Negative	-----	-----



low levels of initial support for the separate proposal. But in all of the other trade-offs that we tested, the explicit pairing of proposals substantially increased support in the Sinhala community, producing majority support in three instances and close to 75% support in another. For the Tamil and Muslim communities, initial support for the individual proposals was usually higher, but so too was their level of persuasion from the bundling of the proposals. As a result, the differences between ethnic groups on the peace bundles were in many instances significantly less than the differences between ethnic groups on the two proposals that comprised the bundle. To this extent, the findings suggest that talking about proposals in terms of explicit peace packages can be very useful in activating the kind of cross-ethnic compromise and coalition building that can help move the peace process forward.

## B. Peace Frames

Another way that respondents may be persuaded to support peace is by stimulating individuals to think about the conflict in different ways before responding to specific peace proposals. To test this, we presented individuals at random with different introductory paragraphs before asking them about the eight specific peace proposals that we have analyzed thus far in the survey. Each of the paragraphs was designed to "frame" the conflict in different ways and thereby stimulate individuals to adopt a different perspective on the conflict and the peace process. If it can be shown that different peace frames can persuade individuals to be supportive of the peace process, then political elites could adopt rhetorical strategies that emphasize the perspectives contained in the most successful frames in order to increase public support for specific proposals or peace packages.

The procedure for presenting individuals with different peace frames was very simple. For half of the sample, no specific information was given before respondents were asked about the eight peace proposals, and thus these individuals are the "control" group against which respondents from the other conditions are compared. The introductory paragraph for the control group was as follows:

*"Now I'm going to ask about some more specific proposals that have been discussed recently. For each of the following, please tell me if you think the proposal is:*

*Absolutely Necessary for Peace; Desirable but not Necessary for Peace; Undesirable but I could Accept it for Peace; or Absolutely Undesirable."*

For other respondents, they were presented at random with one of the following four frames:

### 1. ETHNIC GRIEVANCE FRAME

*"Now I'm going to ask you about some more specific peace proposals that have been discussed recently. Many of these proposals have been developed to address long-standing grievances of Sri Lanka's ethnic minorities and their desire for greater self-government. For each of the following, please tell me if you think the proposal is..."*

### 2. END VIOLENCE FRAME

*Now I'm going to ask you about some more specific peace proposals that have been discussed recently. Many of these proposals have been developed to permanently end the violence that has taken thousands of lives and injured or displaced thousands of others from their homes over the past several decades. For each of the following, please tell me if you think the proposal is ..."*

### 3. ECONOMIC GAIN FRAME

*Now I'm going to ask you about some more specific peace proposals that have been discussed recently. Many of these proposals have been developed so that Sri Lanka can develop economically, benefit from foreign assistance, and provide all citizens with an improved standard of living. For each of the following, please tell me if you think the proposal is ..."*

### 4. PREVENT BREAK-UP FRAME

*"Now I'm going to ask you about some more specific peace proposals that have been discussed recently. Many of these proposals have been developed to prevent the breakup of the country and ensure the permanent unity of Sri Lanka. For each of the following, please tell me if you think the proposal is ..."*

The frames were designed to capture some of the key ways in which the conflict and the peace process are perceived by the Sri Lankan

public and political elites. They were also designed to capture the main ways that different ethnic groups view the conflict. We may compare, for example, how Sinhalese respondents react when stimulated to take the Tamil perspective and view the conflict in terms of the long-standing grievances of the country's ethnic minorities, and we may also compare how Tamil respondents react when stimulated to take the Sinhala perspective of preventing the break-up of the country. The other frames are directed towards benefits of peace, ending the violence and stimulating economic gains, which may have more universal appeal.

The results of the framing experiment are presented below in Table IV-3. The table presents the proportion of individuals in the overall population, and then in each of the three ethnic groupings, who report that a given peace proposal is at least acceptable for peace. By virtue of the randomization process, there were almost exactly the same proportions of Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim respondents who were exposed to each of the versions of the questionnaire, meaning that there is little risk that the responses would differ across the versions simply based on the ethnic composition of individuals exposed to that version. Nor were there correlations between the version to which individuals were exposed and other relevant peace-related attitudes such as peace knowledge, political engagement, support for democracy, and other factors that we have considered thus far (*See Table IV-3*).

The results indicate that the frames produce little change in the overall distribution of responses to specific peace proposals. In no case do the frames move public opinion as a whole more than seven percentage points, and in most cases the changes were substantially lower. Two frames did produce changes of seven points compared to the control group (highlighted in bold on the Table), framing the proposal to establish a Muslim self-governing region in terms of economic gain, and framing the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces in terms of ending violence. Evidently, the mostly one-sentence frames were not strong enough to change respondents' perspectives on the issues at hand.

Examination of the effects of the peace frames by ethnic group pro-

duces similar results, although there are several findings of note. First, Sinhalese respondents can be moved on some proposals by framing the conflict in terms of long-standing grievances of the country's ethnic minorities. Stimulating Sinhalese respondents to think about the conflict in terms of ethnic grievances, for example, produces a 9% increase in support for an interim self-governing authority, the core demand of the LTTE and their supporters. Similar to the bundling process described above, the framing process increases support for this proposal from about one quarter of the Sinhala community to nearly one third. The use of an ethnic grievance frame also increases Sinhalese support for the permanent merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces, as does the ethnic violence frame and, to a lesser extent, the frame of promoting economic growth and development. As can be seen in the summary section of the table, Sinhalese responses in general were affected most strongly by the frames of ethnic grievance and economic gain. Interestingly, in no case did Sinhala opinion increase in response to the frame of preventing the country's break-up, perhaps reflecting that this is the overarching frame through which Sinhala respondents already view the conflict and peace process.

At the same time, there are three instances where the ethnic grievance frame has the opposite effect on the Tamil minority: for proposals to establish a Muslim self-governing region, to merge the Northern and Eastern provinces, and to decommission LTTE heavy weapons. Framing the peace process in these terms promotes less support among Tamils apparently intensifying Tamil opposition to proposals perceived as benefiting other ethnic groups. For Tamils, the most promising rhetorical frame is that of ending violence, as this frame produced more supportive majorities for the proposal to establish a Muslim self-governing region and to decommission LTTE heavy weapons.

We find little evidence that the frames have disproportionate effect on individuals with different educational backgrounds, engagement in politics, knowledge of the peace process, or personal impact from the conflict. The main conclusion to be drawn is that the rhetorical frames that we used to describe the conflict to respondents had

very limited influence on their support for peace. There is some tendency for Sinhalese and Tamil respondents to move toward one another when presented with the ethnic grievances and ending violence frames, respectively, indicating that adoption of the other group's general perspective on the conflict produces somewhat greater overall support as well as more inter-group consensus. More generally, however, framing succeeded in per-

suading respondents to a limited extent.

### C. Peace Counterarguments and Support for a Federal Solution

It is likely that a final peace agreement in Sri Lanka will contain provisions for some form of a federal solution, that is, some kind of power-sharing arrangement between the national and regional governments. It is this fact that has led us to inquire from

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>No Frame</b>	<b>Ethnic Grievance</b>	<b>End Violence</b>	<b>Economic Gain</b>	<b>Prevent Breakup</b>
<b>Muslim Lands</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+2%</b>	<b>+1%</b>	<b>-2%</b>
<i>Sinhala</i>	94	0	+3	+2	-1
<i>Tamil</i>	93	+1	-1	+1	-2
<i>Muslim</i>	99	+1	-1	0	+1
<b>Muslim Self-Governing Region</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>+7</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Sinhala</i>	23	+1	0	+9	+1
<i>Tamil</i>	52	-13	+6	-2	-1
<i>Muslim</i>	95	+2	+5	+3	-2
<b>Merger of North and East</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>+7</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>+1</b>
<i>Sinhala</i>	54	+9	+9	+6	+2
<i>Tamil</i>	96	-7	+2	-4	+2
<i>Muslim</i>	66	+7	-10	+1	-1
<b>LTTE ISGA</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>-5</b>
<i>Sinhala</i>	24	+8	0	+2	-5
<i>Tamil</i>	94	+2	-1	-2	-1
<i>Muslim</i>	51	-2	0	-2	+1
<b>LTTE Heavy Weapons</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>-2</b>
<i>Sinhala</i>	88	+3	+4	+6	-4
<i>Tamil</i>	60	-12	+10	-3	+11
<i>Muslim</i>	81	+7	-6	+8	+1
<b>End HSZ</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2</b>
<i>Sinhala</i>	28	+1	0	-1	-1
<i>Tamil</i>	96	-2	-2	-6	0
<i>Muslim</i>	55	-6	-14	-1	-9
<b>SUMMARY</b>					
<i>Overall</i>	---	+1.5	+3	+3	-1.7
<i>Sinhala</i>	---	+3.7	+2.7	+4	-1.3
<i>Tamil</i>	---	-5.2	+2.3	-2.7	+1.5
<i>Muslim</i>	---	+1.5	-4.3	+1.5	-1.5
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>(1542)</b>	<b>(501)</b>	<b>(485)</b>	<b>(485)</b>	<b>(500)</b>

the beginning of the KAPS project about respondent's general opinions about federalism and asymmetric federalism, as well as about some specific manifestations of regional power-sharing where ethnic groups or factions would have their own governing authority. In this year's survey, we explored the issue of a federal solution in several additional ways. First, we attempted to determine whether individuals, under certain conditions, can be talked out of their initial positions on the issue. That is, we investigated whether particular counter-arguments, for and against a federal solution, can persuade individuals to reverse their original positions. If so, this would provide important information to political elites and policy-makers about the kinds of rhetoric and public arguments that may have the greatest positive impact on peace.

Second, we attempted to determine what features of federalism are most and least appealing to respondents, including respondents from different ethnic groups. We presented a series of governmental powers, ranging from defense and foreign policy to transportation, agriculture and fishing, and asked respondents whether the national or regional governments should have the most responsibility in that area, or whether the two levels should share power equally. The responses can help define the specific contours of a federal solution that would promote the greatest support among the Sri Lankan population. Taken together, the two perspectives on federalism will provide information about the best ways to structure a federal solution as well as the best ways to discuss and promote an eventual agreement among the Sri Lankan public.

### **1. Counterarguments About Federalism**

The procedure for invoking counterarguments about federalism is as follows. We first ask all respondents:

*"Some people think that a federal solution, in which power is shared between the national and regional governments, is necessary to any peace agreement. Others disagree and prefer the current centralized system. How about you? Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly dis-*

*agree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

Then, depending on their initial responses, we attempt to talk the respondents into changing their positions. For individuals who either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that a federal solution was necessary, we follow with:

*"Would your opinion be different if you knew that some party leaders feel that federal systems have higher taxes, and regions have less influence in important national decisions affecting defense and foreign affairs? In that case, do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

This counterargument lists several potential disadvantages of systems with strong regional governments (higher taxes and less regional influence in defense and foreign policy), articulated by individuals (party leaders) who the respondent may respect.

For individuals who either "disagreed" or "strongly agreed" with the initial federalism question, or who "neither agreed nor disagreed" with the question, we followed with one of five potential counterarguments, selected at random:

#### **a. OSLO Counterargument**

*"Would your opinion be different if you knew that the government and the LTTE agreed to a federal solution in the Oslo Communique of 2002? In that case, do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

#### **b. President Counterargument**

*"Would your opinion be different if you knew that President Kumaratunga advocated a federal solution in her 1994 peace proposal? In that case, do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

#### **c. Party Leaders-Regional Control Counterargument**

*"Would your opinion be different if you knew that some party leaders feel*

*that a federal solution would give your region greater independence from the national government and more control over its economic and other affairs? In that case, do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

**d. Religious Leaders -Preserve Country Counterargument**

*"Would your opinion be different if you knew that religious leaders feel that a federal solution is the only way to avoid a separate state in the North East and preserve a united Sri Lanka? In that case, do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

**e. Religious Leaders -Ethnic Group Fairness Counterargument**

*"Would your opinion be different if you knew that religious leaders feel that a federal solution is the best way to ensure that all ethnic groups are treated fairly and equitably? In that case, do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree that a federal solution is necessary to any peace agreement?"*

These counterarguments provide the respondent with different kinds of positive information with regard to a federal solution: that it was already agreed upon in principle; that the President had been in favor of it in the past; or that federalism would provide greater regional autonomy, promote ethnic group fairness, or prevent a full-fledged break-up of the country. The counterarguments also differ in the source that is responsible for the argument, with some versions attributing it to "party leaders," others to "religious leaders," others to the "President" or to "the government and the LTTE." We were not able to randomize the presentation of both the argument itself and the source of the argument; nevertheless we can observe the differences produced by both components of the counterarguments that were presented to respondents.

We show the basic movement in public opinion in response to the counterarguments in Table IV-4 below. The table shows the final opinion about a federal solution to the conflict among

those who were initially supportive, neutral, or opposed (See Table IV-4).

Several important findings are apparent from the Table. First, opinion about a federal solution is highly malleable, as approximately one third of all respondents were induced to change their minds about the issue after being presented with a single counterargument to their initial position. This suggests that there is much room to influence public opinion as the issue unfolds in concrete peace negotiations.

Second, a less positive result is that opinion change on the issue is strongly asymmetric, as it is easier to persuade individuals to talk respondents out of their initial support for federalism than it is to persuade those initially opposed to accept federalism. Nearly half of the respondents who initially supported a federal solution could be talked out of this support by appealing to various anti-federalist arguments made by party leaders, with almost one third moving to the opposition camp and another 20% becoming neutral. The net result is a big overall shift away from federalism. Initially nearly even percentages of respondents favour (38%) and opposed (40%) a federal solution, but following the counterarguments both ways almost a majority opposes (46%) federalism and only about a quarter of Sri Lankans (26%) remain in favour of it. This suggests that the predispositions of the Sri Lankan public are largely against a federal solution considered most generally, and that the support that is expressed initially is somewhat tenuous and vulnerable to attack.

It is interesting to recall from Table II-1, however, when we ask the same citizens if "the powers of the regional government should be increased even if those of the government at the center have to be decreased," 48% agreed including 22% who strongly agreed. The relatively lower support that is registered when we asked citizens if they support a federal solution suggests that many citizens do not equate federalism with regional power-sharing. Indeed, one reason why attitudes toward federalism may be so volatile and easy to manipulate is that many citizens do not have a good understanding of what it is or how it might work.

Nevertheless, it is also the case that

nearly 20% of individuals who are initially opposed to federalism were talked into supporting it by a single one of the five counterarguments that we presented. To a considerable extent, then, *there is potential to increase support for federalism through counterarguments, even among those initially opposed.*

What counterarguments are most successful in compelling individuals who initially opposed a federal solution to change their minds? In Figure IV-3, we show the percentage of individuals who changed positions, among those who were initially opposed and after their exposure to each of the five pro-federalism counterarguments (See Figure IV-3, following page).

As can be seen, there is large variation in the responsiveness of the Sri Lankan population to the five counterarguments. The most successful counterargument is that attributed to religious leaders who argue that a federal solution is necessary to ensure fairness to all Sri Lanka's ethnic groups. This counterargument produced a change in nearly one quarter of those who initially opposed federalism. Another powerful counterargument, from party leaders who argue that federalism will increase regional autonomy and independence, produces a change in 22% of all respondents who were initially opposed. The remaining counterarguments are less successful, especially those reminding respondents about the OSLO agreement and the uses of federalism in preventing the country's break-up. What seems clear is that the past positions and agreements of the negotiating parties (the government, the President, and the LTTE) have much less powerful persuasive stimuli than arguments centered around current advantages and disadvantages of a federal solution. In par-

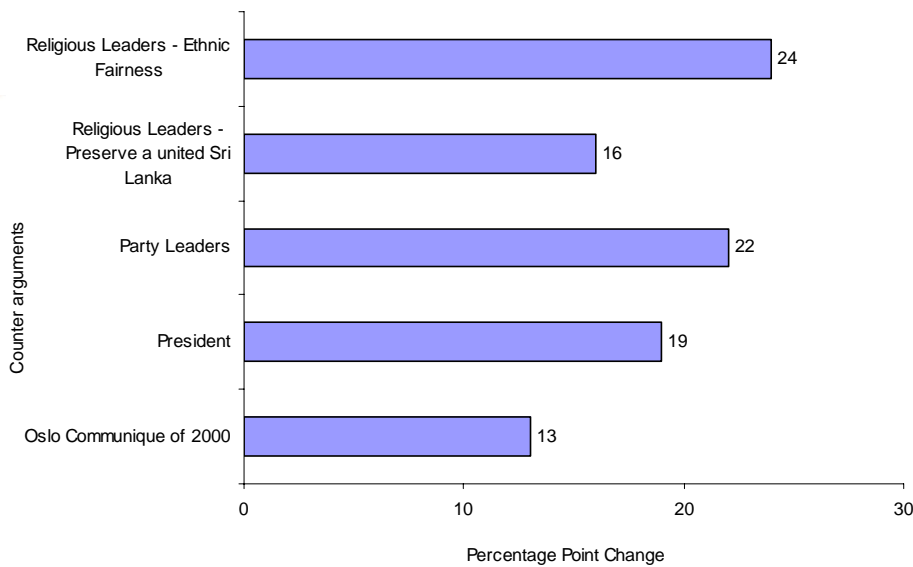
ticular, the endorsement of a federal solution on the grounds of ethnic fairness is the most powerful stimulus for change, especially when articulated by the widely regarded religious elite (See Figure IV-4, following page).

Figure IV-4 replicates this analysis separately for each of the three major ethnic groups. As would be expected, Sinhalese respondents are least likely to be persuaded by any of the counterarguments. The ethnic fairness counterargument articulated by religious leaders and the regional autonomy counterargument articulated by party leaders generate the greatest change among the Sinhalese, but even here the change is modest. This pattern holds among the Tamil and Muslim populations as well, populations that are generally more susceptible to movement in support of a federal solution. Indeed, it appears from this evidence that ethnic fairness arguments articulated by religious leaders could persuade significant numbers of all Sri Lankans to accept a federal solution if those leaders would be willing to make the argument. Arguments from party leaders are also likely to be relatively successful among all ethnic groups, while Muslim respondents appear to be responsive to all counterarguments aside from preventing the break-up of the country.

Finally, we use regression analysis to predict whether or not initially opposed individuals would become either neutral or supportive after exposure to the counterarguments. We included the individual's ethnicity as well as the particular counterargument to which they were exposed, as well as variables related to their knowledge, interest and engagement with politics and the peace process, their personal impact from the conflict, their evaluations of the economy and the President,

	Initial Opinion			
Final Opinion	Support Federal Solution	Neutral	Oppose Federal Solution	Total
Support Federal Solution	53%	13%	8%	26%
Neutral	17%	78%	9%	28%
Oppose Federal Solution	30%	9%	83%	46%
Percentage of Cases	38%	22%	40%	100%

**Figure IV-3: The Effects of Counterarguments on Individuals Initially Opposed to Federal Solution**



**Oslo Accord of 2002:** Government & LTTE agreed to explore a federal solution within the framework of a united Sri Lanka in the Oslo Communique of 2000

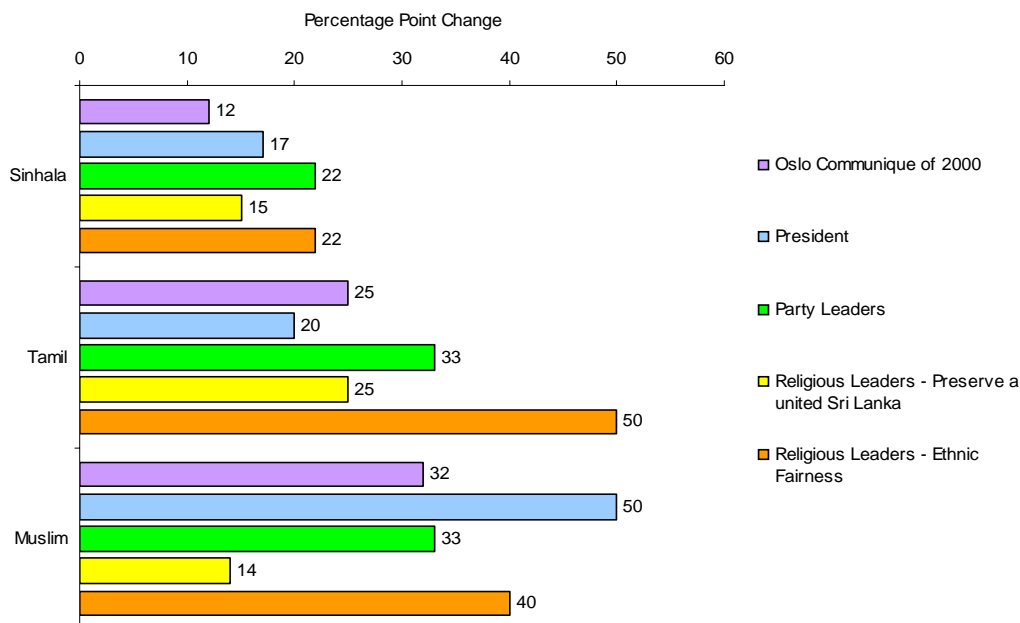
**President:** President Kumaratunga advocated a federal solution in her 1994 peace proposal

**Party Leaders:** Party Leaders feel that a federal solution would give your region greater independence from the national government and more control over its economic and other affairs

**Religious Leaders - Preserve a united Sri Lanka:** Religious Leaders feel that a federal solution is the only way to avoid a separate state in the North East and preserve a united Sri Lanka

**Religious Leaders - Ethnic Fairness:** Religious Leaders feel that a federal solution is the best way to ensure that all the ethnic groups are treated fairly and equitably

**Figure IV-4: The Effects of Counterarguments on Individuals Initially Opposed to Federal Solution by the Three Major Ethnicities**



**Oslo Accord of 2002:** Government & LTTE agreed to explore a federal solution within the framework of a united Sri Lanka in the Oslo Communique of 2000

**President:** President Kumaratunga advocated a federal solution in her 1994 peace proposal

**Party Leaders:** Party Leaders feel that a federal solution would give your region greater independence from the national government and more control over its economic and other affairs

**Religious Leaders - Preserve a united Sri Lanka:** Religious Leaders feel that a federal solution is the only way to avoid a separate state in the North East and preserve a united Sri Lanka

**Religious Leaders - Ethnic Fairness:** Religious Leaders feel that a federal solution is the best way to ensure that all the ethnic groups are treated fairly and equitably

and their overall attitudes towards democratic politics. The results indicate, as is shown in this section's figures, that the party leader counterargument and the religious leader/ethnic fairness counterarguments produce significantly greater change compared to other counterarguments. Among individual characteristics, the greatest changes, controlling for ethnicity, are produced among those who are most democratic and who are least trusting of the President. Among Sinhalese respondents in particular, those with the least amount of knowledge about the peace process are also the most susceptible to persuasion. Generally, those factors associated with support for federalism in the first place also are the ones that make respondents most susceptible to change. Thus, citizens who are more democratic, less knowledgeable and less trusting of the President report greater levels of agreement with the initial federal solution question, and these are the same individuals who are more likely to be persuaded to support federalism when presented with arguments in its favor.

## **2. Support for Federal Versus Regional Responsibility for Specific Governmental Powers**

Given the importance of a federal solution to ongoing discussions about the Sri Lankan peace process, we included another section in the survey that explores the issue of federalism in more detail. In this section, we ask about "different ways of dividing power between the national and regional governments as part of a peace agreement." We then present individuals with several areas of governmental responsibility, and ask them which level of government should have "the most power," with the choices being "the national government," "the regional governments," or "should the two levels of government share power equally in this area?" Our goals were to determine the areas of governmental responsibility that individuals felt should be exercised by regional governments and the areas that were thought to be the sole province of the national government. Further, we sought to determine whether there was consensus on these preferences among the three Sri Lankan ethnic groups, in which case recommendations could be made about the form

of a federal solution that would be broadly acceptable in Sri Lanka. Such results could also lead to strategies for framing arguments in support of federalism in the hope of persuading greater numbers of individuals to accept a federal solution (See Figure IV-5).

Figure IV-5 reports the preferences of all respondents regarding which level of government should exert primary responsibility in ten areas: transportation, schools and education, culture and religious affairs, economic policy and taxation, military and national defense, police powers, courts and the judicial system, land and natural resources, agriculture and fishing, and foreign policy and diplomacy. We order the items according to the percentage that think that the national government should have more power; at the top of the graph are those areas where fewer individuals prefer a primary role for the federal government, and at the bottom of the graph are those areas where more individuals prefer a primary role for the federal government.

The graph shows that there is considerable support for regional governments to exert at least equal power with the national government in five of the ten areas. The most support exists in the areas of transportation, culture and religious affairs, and control over agriculture and fishing policies, where approximately 60% of respondents think that regional governments should either have primary responsibility or share power equally with the national government. Respondents are far from endorsing regional primacy in these areas, as the majority of individuals within this group think that power should be shared equally between the two levels of government. Nevertheless, there is considerable support in these areas for substantially increasing regional power.

In the other five areas there is much greater support for the primacy of the national government. This is especially true in the areas of military and defense policy, and in foreign policy and diplomacy, areas that are generally the prerogative of national as opposed to sub-national governments. In these areas, along with the areas of police and judicial powers, at least two thirds of respondents believe that the national government should have primary responsibility.



Opinions on economic policy and taxation are somewhat more divided, with about a 60% favoring national responsibility versus about 40% favoring either shared or regional power. In general, it appears that areas related to defense, the legal system and revenues are thought to be the primary responsibility of the national government, while the regional governments are thought to have at least an equal role in the more specialized areas of the stewardship of land, water and natural resources, and the provision of basic governmental services such as transportation and education (See Figure IV-6).

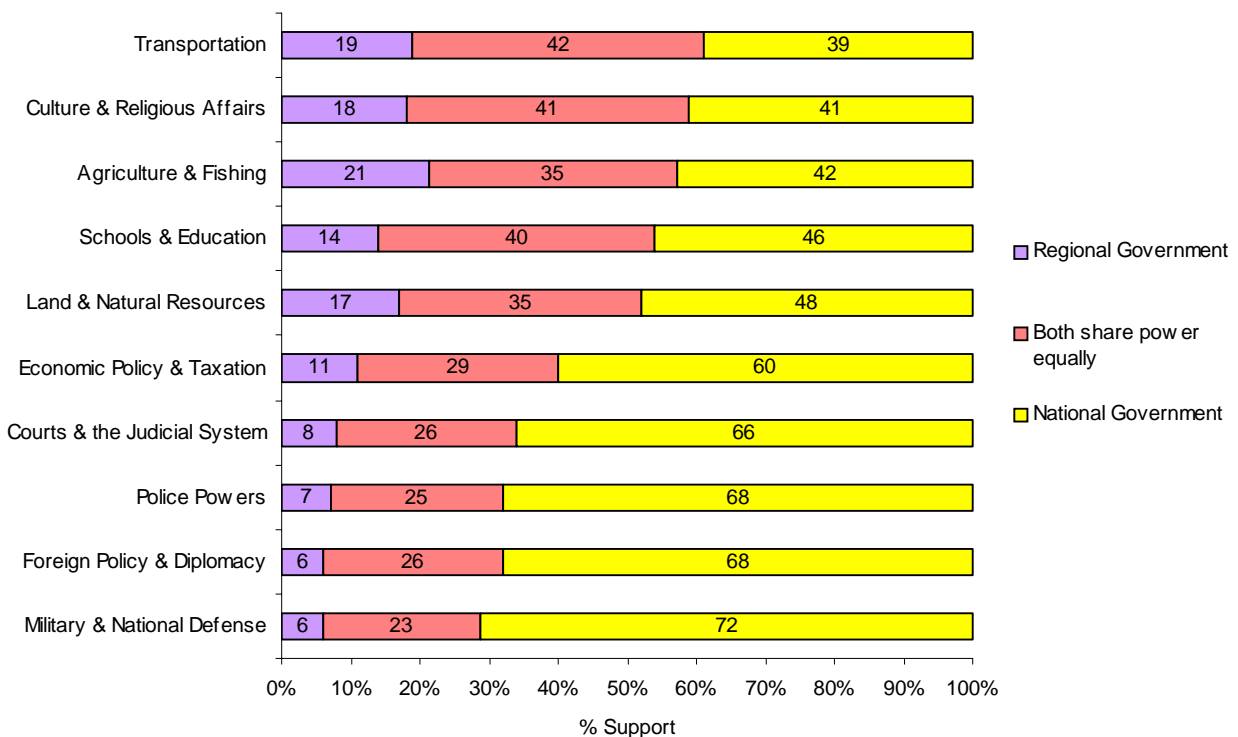
Figure IV-6 illustrates the degree of consensus or dissension on these preferences across the three ethnic groups. The figure shows the percentage within each ethnic group that favor the regional governments exerting primary responsibility combined with the percentage that think the two levels of government should have equal power. We put the main axis at the 50% mark, so that bars to the right of this mark indicate a majority favoring regional or shared responsibility, and bars to the left of this mark indicate a minority favoring these positions, or, alternatively, a majority favoring national responsibility in the given policy area.

There are several important findings from the figure. First, on the same five policy areas as in Figure IV-6 - transportation, culture and religion, agriculture and fishing, education, and natural resources - there are majorities or near-majorities of all ethnic groups who favor at least an equal role for regional governments. Support is nearly unanimous in the Tamil community, with approximately two out of three Muslim respondents and approximately half of Sinhalese respondents in favor. *This is evidence of a general public consensus on power-sharing in at least these five areas of public policy.*

There appears to be much polarization between the ethnic groups on the remaining issues. Only one-quarter to one-third of Sinhalese respondents, for example, favor even equal power in the defense, legal and economic realms. Support of regional or shared power in these areas is less than 50% in the Muslim community as well. If one examines the percentage in these groups who favor regional primacy, the numbers are much lower, with less than 10% of Sinhalese and less than 25% of Muslims *supporting regional power.*

However, there may be room for some degree of compromise even

**Figure IV-5: Opinions on National Vs. Regional Control of Government Powers in ten areas**



in these five difficult policy areas. Examining Tamil opinion more closely reveals that in no instance do more than one-quarter favor primary regional responsibility.

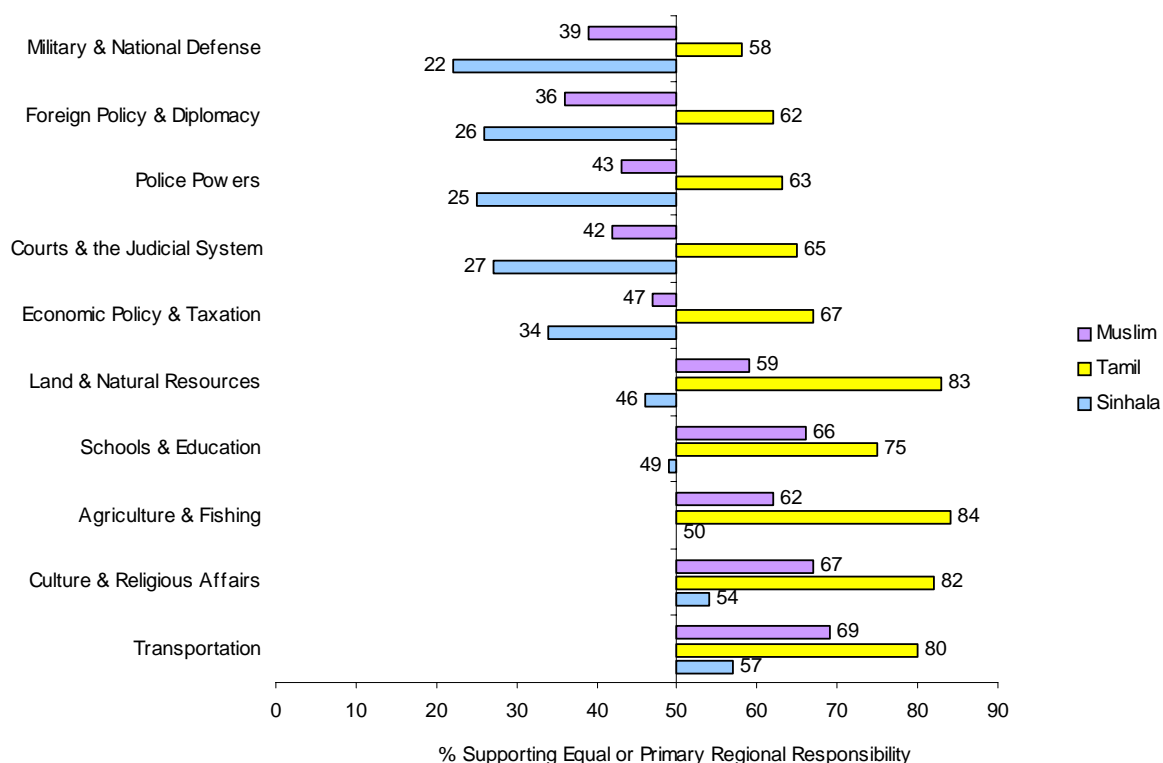
Thus, Tamil preferences are focused on power-sharing between the national and regional governments, with approximately 40% registering this preference in each of the policy areas. Similar figures in the 30-40% range are registered for Muslim respondents. This indicates that all Sri Lankan ethnic groups favor large amounts of national responsibility in the areas of defense, legal/judicial and economics, with about 40% of Tamils, 35% of Muslims and 25% of Sinhala respondents favoring an equally large degree of regional responsibility. The prevalence of opinion favoring a system weighted more heavily toward regional powers is quite small, representing at most only one quarter of the Tamil population and less than 10% of the Sinhala and Muslim communities.

Overall, the results may be viewed with some degree of optimism. There is broad consensus on regional governments exerting at least equal power in areas related to regional land use, trans-

portation, education and even culture and religious concerns, while there is broad consensus on the national government exerting at least equal power in important areas of defense, police, judicial powers and revenues. The conflict in public opinion primarily concerns how much, if any authority the regional governments should have in these latter areas.

But even here public opinion appears somewhat permissive, as one quarter of Sinhala respondents favor an equal role for the regional governments, along with one third of Muslims and nearly half of Tamil respondents. This suggests that compromise solutions that provide some, though less than equal, role for regional governments in these areas, and an equal or greater than equal role in the more specialized areas related to regional land and service, would likely enjoy significant support across the entire Sri Lankan population. In combination with the results from the counterargument section above, the findings point to several ways in which the public could be persuaded to endorse a federal solution as part of a final peace settlement. ¶

**Figure IV-6: Support for Regional Powers by the Three Major Ethnicities**





# Recommendations

The Final Report for KAPS I concluded with a largely optimistic assessment about the prospects for peace in Sri Lanka. That optimism was based partly on the evidence that the ceasefire appeared to be holding and that most of the parties to the conflict appeared to be developing reasonable negotiating positions. The results of the first KAPs Survey also found widespread public support for many of the elements needed for concluding a just and lasting peace agreement. A year later, many of the reasons for the initial optimism about the peace process have faded.

To be sure, the evidence from the second KAP Survey reinforces the findings from last year and documents the willingness of a majority of the public, including substantial numbers from all ethnic groups and regions, to accept a remarkably broad range of peace proposals - including a number of proposals that they personally may not favour - in order to advance the prospects for achieving a just and lasting peace. Indeed, if anything, the evidence from KAPS II paints an even more hopeful portrait of the **public** attitude towards peace than was reported in KAPS I.

The evidence from KAPS II demonstrates that the public remains committed to peace in 2004, even more strongly than in 2003. Moreover, the survey results suggest that public support for peace can be furthered if it is modestly strengthened through a well-designed and coordinated program of public information and persuasion.

Nevertheless, the events of the past year combined with the current political and security situation in the country highlights the dimensions of the challenge in respect of the prospects for achieving a permanent peace agreement. Divisions within the government coalition combined with the intransigence of the LTTE make meaningful

negotiations appear less likely than at anytime in the past two years. Heightened political violence exacerbates the situation. The apparent interest of all parties to the conflict to "score political points" against the other instead of building confidence in their credibility and trustworthiness as negotiating partners creates a vicious cycle of recrimination and ill-will that threatens the stability of the ceasefire and hinders a return to civil war. Unfortunately, the supply of peace proposals on offer from Sri Lanka's political leaders falls far short of the demand for peace evident among the public at large.

So what, then, can be done? The KAPS I final report concluded with a series of both short and long term recommendations for reinforcing and widening public support for the peace process in Sri Lanka. Short term recommendations included the establishment of a public information campaign using diverse mediums (television in particular), to increase public knowledge and to increase understanding of the overall gist of the peace process as well as the specific proposals in question. It also advanced some tentative ideas on bundling conflicting proposals to maximize their joint appeal, and some preliminary ideas on how to frame the peace process for different groups to achieve maximum persuasion for peace. KAPS I's longer term recommendations emphasized steps that might help bridge the ethnic divide in Sri Lanka and promote greater ethnic integration by encouraging multi-lingual education, developing national symbols and institutions such as a national, non-partisan and non-ethnic media, and reducing the economic gap between society's 'haves' and 'have nots'. In the intervening year, some efforts appear to have been undertaken on implementing

some of the short term recommendations, but the efforts have been limited and piecemeal. Nothing resembling a strong and coordinated public information campaign is in prospect.

Moreover, the election campaign of 2004 arguably served as a major public misinformation campaign that hurt more than helped the peace efforts of NGOs and other parties.

The evidence from KAPS II strongly reinforces last year's recommendations and suggests several others as well.

■ A much-improved measure of public information about the peace process this year confirms that knowledge about the process is, next to ethnicity, the single strongest predictor of support for that process. The additional evidence that general political knowledge and higher formal education both have positive, albeit more modest, positive effects on peace attitudes further strengthens this point.

■ In designing a public information campaign, KAPS 2 suggests that support for peace can be enhanced by emphasizing the possibilities of bundling diverse peace proposals, thereby showing citizens that there are tangible gains to be won on important issues in return for making concessions on others.

■ A public information campaign can begin by emphasizing those proposals for which there is majority acceptance across all four ethnic groups.

■ A public information campaign can also take advantage of the information in KAPS 2 on framing and counter-argument effects. While these effects are modest in the survey, there are good reasons to believe they could be more effective when used in a coordinated and sustained public information campaign. In addition, religious and party elites need to be encouraged to lend their authority to these efforts, as arguments articulated by these leaders led to the greatest changes in public opinion in our survey experiments.

■ Power sharing in some form whether called federalism, devolution, or self-government is probably essential for a successful peace agreement. Federalism can be designed in myriad ways. A public information campaign

needs to prepare opinion on this issue by emphasizing the prospect for power-sharing in those areas where majorities of the public already embrace the value of national-regional cooperation.

■ A public information campaign need not focus exclusively on the peace process. Support for democracy is important in its own right; citizens with the strongest democratic values and firmest commitment to a democratic regime are much more supportive of peace. This suggests that there may be real value in expanding current efforts both at building support for peace but also at educating a stronger democratic citizenry.

In the longer term, the maintenance of a just and lasting peace will require that ethnic fear and mistrust is reduced. The achievement of a permanent peace will bring about a reduction in violence and pave the way for economic reconstruction both of which will go some distance, in reducing ethnic hostility. However, there is also much that can be done, pro-actively, to promote these goals.

■ KAPS II highlights the value of ethnic understanding and interaction and underlines the need for the state and civil society to develop and promote a genuinely integrated multi-ethnic society.

■ In this regard schools should be encouraged to begin instruction in multilingualism from an early stage. School curricular should be developed with a multi-ethnic perspective.

■ While bilingualism is a long-term goal, the state needs to encourage bilingual practices in all its dealings, including official documents, citizen contacts with government, and street signs.

■ The critical task of rebuilding war torn areas in Sri Lanka must be addressed by all parties as a matter of priority. While those areas that have been ravaged by the war require urgent attention, aid must be channeled in ways that all groups may feel they are partaking in the benefits of peace.

■ Again, the strong links between democratic values and attitudes toward peace argue in favour of

strengthening and expanding on-going civic education programmes that target not only to Sri Lankan youth, but also a broader spectrum of people. The opportunity to foster peace while promoting democratic rule must not be overlooked.

KAPS I and II are comprehensive surveys of public attitudes toward peace in Sri Lanka. As such, it is both inevitable and appropriate that virtually all of the recommendations emanating from these studies are directed at strengthening and expanding the breadth and depth of public support for a just and lasting peace in Sri Lanka. The evidence of the past year suggests that while increasing the demand for peace is certainly desirable, the principal obstacle to peace in Sri Lanka currently is more one of supply. Simply put, there has been very little effort and ingenuity on the part of the country's political institutions and actors in advancing the peace process in response to public support and will. More needs to be done to promote the demand for peace, but this will be of limited value unless the various sides to the conflict are prepared to come to the negotiating table in good faith.

Unfortunately KAPS I and II have much less to tell us about how to persuade Sri Lanka's leaders to supply the proposals needed for real negotiations or to sit down at the negotiating table to bargain in good faith. One recommendation that does flow from KAPS however, is the importance of developing public information campaign targeted at the country's political leaders, policy makers, and ethnic and religious elites. Conversations with political leaders and other elites in Sri Lanka over the past two years convince us that elite knowledge of public opinion in Sri Lanka is substantially distorted by stereotypes and tunnel vision. Po-

litical leaders like everyone else are more likely to see and hear information that confirms what they already know, while tending to dismiss information to the contrary.

They also tend to hear most clearly those with the loudest voices who frequently have vested interests in the status quo.

The problem is not that leaders are out of touch with their followers and constituents. Rather, it is that their understanding of public opinion is frequently distorted and incomplete and they act on this opinion as if it were true. For example, contrary to the conventional wisdom that political leaders and analysts have subscribed to, the evidence from KAPS I and II clearly demonstrates the strongest opposition to a compromise peace agreement in Sri Lanka is not concentrated in the Southern Province but among Sinhalese in the North Central Province.

That conventional wisdom is not entirely wrong. In fact, there is considerable opposition to peace compromises in the Southern Province as well, but there also is much more support in the Southern Province for those compromises than most leaders seem to appreciate.

It is an open question whether better education of Sri Lankan leaders on the true nature and extent of public support for peace will inspire them to bolder action or persuade them that it is safe to meet the peace demands of the public. But in the absence of other more effective options for addressing the weak supply of peace proposals in the current environment, a strategy of widely circulating the KAPS data and promoting its use among the media, in the universities and in seminars designed for Sri Lanka's opinion and policy makers makes considerable sense.





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# Background and Methodology

## Survey Methods & Sampling Procedures

This study was carried out using a lengthy, structured questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews amongst a nation-wide sample of 3513 respondents. The sample includes respondents from all 21 districts, excluding only those areas in Amparai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Jaffna, areas which currently are not under government control. To compensate for these omissions, the areas under government control -- Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee -- were over-sampled, thus insuring their proportionate representation in the sample.

The sampling procedures began at the district level, with 167 initial interviews allocated in each district in accordance with each ethnic group's proportion of the district population. Then, we over-sampled Tamil and Muslim respondents within districts in order to obtain interviews with at least 700 individuals from each ethnic group. This was done so that we could provide more detailed and more robust information about each minority ethnic group's attitudes, opinions, and behaviors than would be possible with samples of smaller size. In addition, later portions of the survey presenting differently worded questions to randomly-selected portions of the sample in order to test the effects of different "peace frames" and "counterarguments" on changes in public opinion (see Chapter IV). By oversampling in this manner, we ensured that there would be at least 250 Sinhala, 150 Tamil and 100 Muslim respondents who were exposed to each of the different experimental conditions, thus providing relatively robust sample sizes from which to draw conclusions about the effects of these manipulations. The final unweighted sample consists of 1742 ethnic Sinhala, 1072 Tamil, and 699 Muslim respondents. Among the Tamil

sample were 323 respondents from the five "Up-Country Tamil" districts: Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle, Badulla, Ratnapura. We did not ascertain directly whether the respondents considered themselves as "UpCountry Tamils," nor whether their ancestry would be classified as "Sri Lankan" or "Indian" Tamil according to Census categorizations. Nevertheless, we refer to this group as "Up-Country Tamils" in the text for ease of presentation.

Because the over-sampling factor for each of the minority ethnic groups was identical for all districts, each ethnic sub-sample may be treated as a random sample of the particular ethnic groups' population in Sri Lanka as a whole, once the district is weighted to reflect its proportionate size in the population. When the results are presented for the overall sample, the data are weighted to reflect:

- 1) the true ethnic population within each district (i.e. the oversampling factor is corrected downward for Tamil and Muslim respondents); and

- 2) the overall size of the district's population. In this way the overall weighted sample provides an accurate representation of nation-wide opinions, as well as an accurate reflection of the opinions of each Sri Lankan ethnic group.

Interviews were obtained within each district by first determining the number of desired respondents from each ethnic group, followed by the procedures described in the above paragraph. A total of four Divisional Secretariats Divisions (DSDs) were randomly selected from each of the 21 districts and 10 Grama Niladhari Divisions (GNDs) were selected from within the selected DSDs at random. Only four interviews were conducted in each selected GND. Interviewers followed a random-walk procedure within the GND, beginning at a selected landmark

such as a school or a hospital, and conducting interviews at every random household. In the GNDs of urban areas, interviewers were instructed to skip one house after every successful interview.

At the household level, the Kish Grid was used to ensure that a random adult within the household was selected to be interviewed. A total of 71 experienced field enumerators from all three communities were deployed for the data collection and care was taken to send an enumerator of the same ethnic community as the respondent. Of the fieldwork 10% was back-checked in addition to accompanied visits and spot-checks in order to maintain the

quality of the data collection. The weighted nation-wide results are subject to a margin of error of +/- 1.2%. When considering the ethnic sub-groups separately, the margin of error is +/- 2.35% for the Sinhalese sub-sample, +/- 2.99% for the entire Tamil sub-sample, +/- 5.45% for the Up-Country Tamil sub-sample, and +/- 3.71% for the Muslim sub-sample.

Whilst various civil society groups and the Government Peace Secretariat were consulted in the designing of the questionnaire, Prof. William Mishler of University of Arizona and Prof. Steven Finkel of University of Virginia provided the technical assistance throughout the study. ¶





# Sri Lankan Peace Typology

## Comparisons Over Time

A central focus of the KAPS I project in 2003 involved the creation and analysis of the Sri Lankan Peace Typology. The typology distinguished four groups of individuals – Activist Peace Process Supporters, Passive Peace Process Supporters, Passive Peace Process Opponents and Activist Peace Process Opponents – based on the combination of respondent's support for a series of peace proposals and their stated willingness to engage in political protest against any peace agreement they consider unfair. The general methodology for constructing that typology is discussed at length in the KAPS I Final Report and is summarized in Chapter II of the current report.

Specifically the KAPS I typology measured individual agreement or disagreement with five peace proposals and two peace protest potential measures. The KAPS I peace proposals included:

■ *The powers of regional governments should be increased, even if those of the government at the center have to be decreased;*

■ *The powers of some regional governments may need to be increased more than others;*

■ *There should be a rotating Presidency, where the President for one term will be someone from one ethnic group, and the next term someone from a different ethnic group;*

■ *Each ethnic group should have the right to elect a certain number of members to the Parliament;*

■ *There should be a general amnesty for people who may have committed illegal political violence against civilians*

*during the war so long as they testify in front of an official peace commission.*

The KAPS I peace protest potential questions included

■ *If there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair, I will participate in a protest against it;*

and

■ *If there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair I will join an organization that is opposed to it.*

The Peace Typology in KAPS I was very well received, as a result of which Social Indicator included these same peace proposal and protest questions in the March 2004 Sri Lankan Election Study. Nevertheless, our experience presenting the KAPS I results to different groups in Sri Lanka convinced us of the need to develop a new, expanded, more ethnically diverse and more realistic set of peace proposals for KAPS 2 and, also, to develop a new and more sophisticated battery of questions about peace protest potential. These new peace proposal and protest questions are discussed at length in Chapter II of this report and will not be repeated, here, in order to save space and avoid redundancy.

While we believe the new peace proposal and peace protest questions have enabled KAPS II to develop a even better, more ethnically balanced, and rigorous peace typology as compared to KAPS I, we also realize that the extensive new content in this year's typology make comparisons with the KAPS I typology very difficult. To accommodate this concern, we also included in KAPS II four of the five peace proposal questions asked in KAPS I. We did not include the

question on a rotating presidency because no one in the Sri Lankan peace process has advocated it and there was very little support for it in the KAP I survey.

KAPS II does include not an identical version of either of the peace protest questions from KAPS I, but the KAPS II question, “if there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair I will join with others to protest it,” is very similar in language and meaning to the KAPS I question, “if there is a peace agreement in Sri Lanka that I think is unfair, I will participate in a protest against it,” and appears to be a very reasonable proxy for the earlier question.

By focusing on the four KAPS I peace proposal questions that also are included in the Sri Lankan Election Survey and in KAPS II, combined with the one peace protest question that is the same in KAPS I and the election survey and very similar in KAPS II, we can construct nearly identical peace process typologies for all three surveys spanning the time period June 2003 — March 2004 — June 2004. While these typologies have somewhat less breadth and depth as the original typologies reported in the KAPS I final report and in Chapter II, above, they have the advantage of permitting better comparisons over time and allowing more accurate measures of change.

As in the KAPS I and II typologies the Cross-Time Typology defines peace process supporters as those who support more than half (i.e. 3 or more of the four proposals). Peace process opponents in these data are defined as those supporting two proposals or less. Similar, as in the KAPS I and II typologies, peace process activists are defined as those agreeing or strongly agreeing with the one peace protest question that is asked similarly in all three surveys. Peace process passives are defined as those who strongly disagree, disagree or neither agree or disagree with the single peace protest question.

Table B-1 compares the original KAPS I typology reported in the 2003 Final Report with the reconstructed 2003 Cross-Time Typology. It also compares the KAPS II typology reported in Chapter II above with the Cross-Time version of the typology for 2004. Comparison of the first two columns in Table B-1 indicates the Cross-Time Typology for 2003 tends to underestimate the number of peace supporters in 2003 (38%) compared to the KAPS I typology (47%) with its greater numbers of questions. The 2003 Cross-Time typology also reports somewhat larger numbers of activists (59%) as compared to the original KAPS I survey (54%). As a result, the 2003 Cross-Time Typology is dominated by Activist

Table C-1  
Comparisons of KAPS 1 and II Typologies with 2003-2004 Cross-Time Typologies

Peace Type	KAPS I	Cross Time June 2003	Cross Time June 2004	KAPS II
Active Supporter	27	25	33	34
Passive Supporter	21	13	11	20
Passive Opponent	25	28	18	20
Active Opponent	27	34	38	26

Table C-2  
Comparisons Of Cross-Time Typologies June 2003, March 2004, June 2004

Peace Type	June 2003	March 2004	June 2004
Active Supporter	25	33	33
Passive Supporter	13	8	11
Passive Opponent	28	12	18
Active Opponent	34	47	38

Opponents of the peace process whereas the original (and we believe better) typology shows equal percentages of Active Supporter and Active Opponents (*See Table C-1*).

Comparison of the KAPS II typology in Table B-1 with the reconstructed 2004 Cross-Time Typology based on the old peace questions, shows that the Cross-Time Typology in 2004 also underestimates both peace supporters and peace activists compared to the Typology with its richer set of questions. Whereas the 2004 Cross-Time typology reports 44% peace supporters and KAPS II reports 54% (the identical difference between the 2003 Cross-Time and KAPS I typologies). Similarly the 2004 Cross-Time Typology reports 71% peace activists compared to the 60% seen in KAPS II (a difference very close to that between the 2003 Cross-Time and KAPS I typologies).

The results of these comparisons indicate that KAPS I and II typologies differ in almost identical ways from their respective Cross-Time typologies. This means that there is a high degree of reliability in these measures. More importantly it means that we can have considerable confidence when we compare the KAPS I and II results, as we do very cautiously in Chapters II and III, that we are comparing very similar if not identical things. While it is good to keep in mind that the KAP I and II typologies are based on different questions, those differences should not prevent comparisons of the two reports (*See Table C-2*).

Nevertheless, the most accurate way to measure the change in peace attitudes over time is to compare the Cross-Time typologies which not only use more similar questions but also have been asked three times over the last year, not just twice. Table B-2 does precisely this, comparing the results for the Cross-Time typologies

for all three time points, June 2003, March 2004, and June 2004. Three patterns are clearly evidence in these results.

First, despite the turmoil of the past year and the lack of movement on the peace talks, there has been a slow but steady increase in the public's willingness to accept a variety of peace proposals for the sake of peace. Whereas only 38% of Sri Lankans supported a majority of the old proposals in June 2003, this number increased slightly to 41% in the heat of the election campaign in March 2004, and, then, increased still further to 44% in June 2004. To be sure, the number of opponents, while falling, outnumbers supporters in all three surveys. But it is important to remember that these cross-time measures appear consistently to underestimate the number of peace supporters by about 10 percentage points compared to the broader based KAPS measures.

Second, there is even stronger evidence of a marked increase in the politicization or activation of attitudes. In June 2003 59% of Sri Lankans were peace activists (25% supporters and 34% opponents). This jumps dramatically during the election campaign to 80% activists (including 33% supporters and 47% opponents). Peace attitudes have calmed down somewhat since the election; in June 2004 72% are activists (33% supporters and 28% opponents), but this still represents a large increase in the politicization of the peace process over the past year.

Third, the trends observed in the Cross-Time typology closely accord with those observed between the more extensive KAPS I and II typologies. The Cross-Time numbers consistently show more opponents and more activists than the KAPS numbers, but the changes in these numbers overtime are the same.



# Notes