

Press Release

Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) organized a panel Discussion on the topic

“Sri Lanka’s Children as Instrument of War”

on the 22nd February 2021 from 1000hrs-1130hrs



The Institute of National Security Studies (INSS)

PANEL DISCUSSION ON "SRI LANKA'S CHILDREN AS INSTRUMENTS OF WAR"

Moderator



Admiral (Prof.) Jayanath Colombage,
Director General
Institute of National Security Studies (INSS)

Speakers



Dr. Dayani Panagoda
Senior Technical Advisor
US AID Score Project



Dr. Malkanthi Hettiarachchi
Clinical Psychologist



Major General Sudantha Ranasinghe RWP RSP ndu psc
Additional Secretary (Disaster Management)
State Ministry of National Security and Disaster
Management

Date : 22nd of February 2021
Time : 1000 hrs to 1130 hrs

For any inquiry please contact :
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The Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) held a panel discussion titled “Sri Lanka’s Children as Instrument of War”. The discussion was held at the Mini Conference Hall at the Foreign Ministry on 22nd February 2021 from 1000hrs-1130hrs with the participation of foreign missions in Colombo, Sri Lankan missions abroad, diplomats, academics, military personnel and the general public on a virtual platform covering the subject on multiple dimensions.

The session was moderated by the Director General of INSS, Admiral (Prof.) Jayanath Colombage, and comprised of an expert panel of speakers namely Dr. Dayani Panagoda, Senior Technical Advisor, US AID Score Project. Dr. Malkanthi Hettiarachchi, Clinical Psychologist and Major General Sudantha Ranasinghe RWP RSP ndu psc, Additional Secretary (Disaster Management), State Ministry of National Security and Disaster Management.

At the onset, Admiral Colombage provided a descriptive narrative on how the LTTE was responsible for robbing the children of their basic freedom, dreams and their childhood. The panel discussion over all focused on providing an insight to the ruthless acts committed by the LTTE against the innocent Children of Sri Lanka, and how those actions reflected upon Sri Lanka while addressing the allegations raised by the international community on Sri Lanka.

Dr. Dayani Panagoda set out the legal frame work to the fundamental child rights which was deliberately abused by the LTTE. She also firmly stated that children who were victimized must be protected under the law and to be reintegrated back into society and to receive the opportunity to live a life that they truly deserve. Major General Sudantha Ranasinghe RWP RSP ndu psc, having personal experience in rehabilitation programs mentioned that over 6,000 of captured/surrendered cadres have been already re-integrated back into the society. The Former LTTE cadres were provided with vocational training while school children were facilitated to complete their secondary education. He also mentioned how 594 child soldiers have been reunited with their families. They are now into higher education, permanent employment and contributing to National Economy, whilst enjoying and living in peaceful environment in their original Habitats with kith and kin.

Dr. Malkanthi Hetteiarachi discussed about the physiological aspect that the children underwent and stressed that the horrors the victims faced are unfathomable and further discussed how certain children during their abduction were raped, beaten, tortured, and forced to carry out acts of violence against the military and innocent civilians. The LTTE gave cyanide capsules and grenades to its child soldiers, with instructions to take the capsule or blow themselves in the event they are captured.

The discussion concluded successfully with a significant outcome and multi-dimensional aspects to the topic was discussed whilst providing insights to the local and international audiences of the grave child rights violations committed by the LTTE over innocent children where the future of our nation's youth were stolen.

Institute of National Security Studies, (INSS)