

**Panel 37:** Confrontations in Sri Lankan politics. Origins and present developments

**Convener:** Prof. Peter Schalk, University of Uppsala

**Abstract:** In 2008/2009 observers of Sri Lanka could notice radical changes in the island. More than hundred thousand refugees were caught in the armed struggle of the Sri Lankan armed forces and the LTTE. The LTTE suffered a military defeat but at the same time a resilient Tamil Diaspora in Canada, Australia and the EU demonstrated the LTTE's defiance. Media were extremely restricted in the reporting from the island. India, Japan, China, Pakistan, the USA, EU and the UN intervened in different ways and transformed a local conflict into a regional in South Asia awakening a global interest for the island. Inside the country the ideology called Mahinda cintanaya became dominant and the political opposition was marginalized. The JVP and the JHU fought in the Sinhala ethnonationalist forefront as guardians of the nation.

Scholars are invited to elaborate on and explain these and other radical changes and its consequences for the economic development and for the possibilities of reconciliation for peace.

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