



In 2000, the Sri Lankan government headed by President Kumaratunga and together with the Tamil Tigers (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) invited Norway to take the role of facilitator in the forthcoming peace process. A ceasefire between the Tigers and the Government was successfully established in 2002 and led the way for a Nordic civil observational delegation called the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission (SLMM) with 20 officers from Norway and 10 from Iceland. The goal of the mission was that all ethnic groups would agree to a peaceful political solution to the violent conflict that the country had suffered for decades. This agreement was renewed in 2006 by incoming President Rajapakse, but in 2008 the Sri Lankan government terminated the deal and the SLMM delegation left the country.

Norway has, as a central player in the peace negotiations, received a lot of criticism from all those involved in the conflict. The Sri Lankan Government accused Norway of supporting the Tamil Tigers and their fight for a separate Tamil state, while Human Rights Watch accused Norway of thwarting a UN based observation mission because they wanted to play the role themselves. The Norwegian government has denied both charges and says they support a UN observation mission in Sri Lanka, which the Sri Lankan government strongly opposes. And although Norway's role has been criticized the negotiators feel that their efforts in the ceasefire agreement prevented thousands of people being killed.

The Sri Lankan Government finally defeated the Tamil Tigers in 2009. Both parties have been accused of war crimes.

In early 2011, Norway offered to play a part in reconciling ethnic groups, especially Tamils living abroad, with the Sri Lankan Government, but was rebuffed.

Norway still supports the Sri Lankan government with money and the total bilateral aid for 2010 was almost 23 million Euros.

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