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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
AND THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF
LAW IN SRI LANKA.**

By

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VIII

Abstract

The incidence and manifestation of violence against women in Sri Lanka has changed in form, in degree and in the profile of perpetrators since the adoption of the Women's Charter in 1993, the strengthening of penal provisions in 1995 and the adoption of new legislation in 2005. Increased militarization, protracted armed conflict and the condoning of political violence has also led to a deeply entrenched culture of violence and impunity in the country since the 1980s, with significant impact on violence against women. I am deeply concerned at the high levels of domestic and intimate partner violence reported by women and am also aware of the serious under reporting of such violence. I note that the nature of this violence is becoming more and more grievous and sexualized. I observe that mediation is often used to deal with domestic and intimate partner violence and I stress the need for more concerted efforts to address prevention while also addressing the issue of impunity, and finding means of holding perpetrators accountable for their violence. I also note that women victim/survivors have inadequate protection from perpetrators and there are insufficient services and support available to them to rebuild their lives. Women are increasingly objectified and subject to sexual and physical violence by politicians and their acolytes and this appear to be an increasing trend that is the result of high levels of power and impunity enjoyed and exercised by these perpetrators at will.

By compiling and analyzing available data this report captures the different forms of violence suffered by women and emphasizes the widespread nature of the problem and how it affects women's lives detrimentally. Throughout this study, the injustices faced by women are due to the lack of legal frameworks related to domestic violence against women. Although it is said that the laws and regulations of Sri Lanka have provided protection for women, it is shown throughout this study how it is no longer practical.