

# Development through International Events: a case study on Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Sri Lanka 2013

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## Introduction

The concept of power is explicated by the school of realists by focusing the nature of independent states. According to realists the primary concern of states is to attain power and there are several ways to exercise power- namely, coerce with threats (Sticks), induce with payments (carrots) or attract and co-opt to obtain outcomes what require to attain. Moreover, military capability, economic capacity, industrial and natural resources and political stability have named as the elements of power. Apart from those as Montevideo Convention in 1933 mentioned “international recognition” is an essential fact of cognizing a state in de jure manner and it is a part of a power as well. Further states are able to obtain power as a byproduct of development and vise versa.

As explained above power is a key concern of any state which can be obtained through development. When investigating the history of the world phenomena it is apparent that there are impacts of international events on development of states in some extent. For instance, as [Stefanie Beyer](#) mentioned in Chinese Journal of International Law, China has gained massive development specially in tourism field by means of hosting 2008 Beijing Olympics. Hence the intention of this research paper is to investigate how Sri Lanka utilized international events in order to gain development by means of a case study on Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) which was hosted in 2013.

## Problem Statement and Research Problem

It is apparent that states of the world have developed through international events. Therefore, the research statement of this research is ‘Many independent states of the world have developed their countries by hosting international events. According to the research statement has stated above, the research problem is ‘Have independent/ states of the world developed through international events?’

## Significance of the research

In this anarchical international system every states pursues to gain power and to thrive by themselves. For that purpose development is a key factor. In that sense when observing the history of the world, it is visible that states have gained development as well as power through hosting international events. According to this, the significance of this research is to realize the gained development of Sri Lanka through CHOGM 2013 and open this research to further researches as well as to point out the significance of international events as a development tool. Apart from that, since this research is being done by two principle disciplines of Marketing and International Relations (IR), this research will be good experience for multi-disciplinary intellectual research exercise.

### **Hypothesis**

‘Countries are able to gain development through international events’ is the procreated hypothesis which is driven this research for convenient study.

### **Objectives**

The main objective of this research is to investigate how Sri Lanka utilized CHOGM 2013 as a tool in the process of post war development. The secondary objectives are to examine the use of Marketing strategies and concepts of IR used at CHOGM 2013 for development and to explore and suggest strategies and models for countries which and be used in international events in order to gain development.

### **Methodology**

Type of research which has been used was qualitative. Whole idea of using qualitative research was to gain in depth understanding about the problem interested. When conducting qualitative research several tools were used. Primary data were gathered through discussions with experts and secondary data were gathered using case study research methods using books, journals, magazines and official websites of relevant parties.

### **Research Findings and Discussion**

“Growth with Equity; Inclusive Development.”

When looking at the theme of CHOGM 2013 which is stated above it is clear that the main focus of this international event is the concept of Development. According to the Brutland report sustainable development is defined as meeting the needs of present without compromising resources which are to be used by future generations. Therefore Sri Lankan intention of CHOGM 2013 is to attain inward development in sustainable manner.

When observing the Sri Lankan context with the CHOGM it can be seen that Sri Lanka has gain significant development in several fields. For further understanding it can be stated that this development is twofold,

□ Sudden Development  
Long term Development

With the CHOGM, infrastructure of the country came to a higher standard. As examples the roads were renovated and the standards of the existing roads were lifted up. Further the constructions of the new roads and highways were expedited as preparations of the event. New vehicles were imported to the country. All the conventional halls were renovated. Moreover the main cities were landscaped and made them in a charming and attractive way. This can be stated as the sudden developments which took place in Sri Lanka as results of the international event CHOGM 2013. These development activities were undertaken using incentives which Sri Lankan government received from the Commonwealth as a result of practicing diplomacy with fellow countries and commonwealth.

Development in the tourism industry is a long term development which Sri Lanka attains through hosting this event. This happens in many ways. Mainly with the event, Sri Lanka was identified as a safe destination to tour and a positive image of the country was created. Moreover the official websites and all the official communications were done using essence of Sri Lanka as a tourist destination. This positioned the idea of “small miracle” not only in the minds of delegates but also in the minds of fellow countrymen. Moreover this promotes Sri Lankan tourism through viral marketing, which is most powerful communication tool.

Investments which came to the country with the CHOGM has also helped to the development of the country in the long run. Many investors and businessmen who participated in the CHOGM event saw the opportunities in Sri Lanka and many investors launched new projects. These definitely help to the development of the country. Furthermore, people to people contacts, mutual relationships with countries, understanding in youth and relationships with entrepreneurs were created while hosting CHOGM, by using effective diplomacy. By using formal and informal diplomacy Sri Lanka was able to negotiate several bilateral issues during CHOGM. Illegal fishing dispute between Sri Lanka and India, Human right issues can be given as examples. Negotiating and solving such issues are important for the development of a country which Sri Lanka did while hosting CHOGM.

Image and the identity of a country are two factors which are important for developing a country. Reason behind this is, international events will help a country in many ways such as in tourism, to win international markets, and for building strong relationships with countries and etc. All these directly effect to thrive the development of a country. In CHOGM 2013 Sri Lanka has practiced this promptly. For the official logo Sri Lanka has used a water lily which is the national flower. When comparing with previous logos of previous meetings it is clear, this gives the identity of the hosting country. Moreover from the inauguration ceremony to the end of the proceedings of CHOGM 2013 Sri Lanka practiced cultural diplomacy extensively. This is done in the means of cultural presentations, dress code of task force, decorations and etc. This also helps Sri Lanka to build its identity and image in the world and to promote it not only within commonwealth countries but also throughout the world.

## Conclusion

According to the research findings and discussion it is undoubtedly to say that Sri Lanka has gained the development through CHOGM as sudden and long term outcomes. Therefore in conclusion the procreated hypothesis of the research is proven that is “Countries are able to gain development through international events’

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