

# GENERAL JAGATH JAYASURIYA

Sri Lanka, May 2009: Jagath Jayasuriya is wearing a black beret. On his right is Shavendra Silva (58 division commander) and on Silva's right is Jagath Dias (57 division commander).



"I am prepared to investigate allegations, specific allegations... I don't want to sweep anything under the rug."

JAGATH JAYASURIYA (2011)<sup>1</sup>

## MILITARY CAREER

Security Force Commander Jaffna

Commander 52 Division

**7 AUGUST<sup>2</sup> – 15 JULY 2009:** Commander, Vanni Security Force HQ, (also known as "Joseph Camp") with overall command of offensives in the final war during 2008-9 in the Vanni region of Northern Sri Lanka.

**15 JULY** Appointed 19th Commander of the Sri Lankan Army. Promoted to Lieutenant General.

As Army Commander, Jagath Jayasuriya appoints a 5 member initial fact finding inquiry to look into (a) civilian casualties in the final phase of the civil war and (b) to investigate the Channel 4 TV station video of executions of naked bound Tamils by soldiers<sup>3</sup>. The inquiry exonerated the military in terms of its overall conduct of the war<sup>4</sup> but never reported back on the allegations of summary excutions<sup>5</sup>.

**NOTE**  
This is Jagath Jayasuriya commissioning an inquiry into his own conduct as commander. Moreover at least 4 of the 5 members of the inquiry into the war were themselves actively involved in its conduct and therefore had serious conflicts of interest.

Appointed Chief of Defence Staff of the Sri Lankan Army<sup>6</sup>.

Promoted to General.

Allegations that Jagath Jayasuriya in his role as Chief of Defence Staff attempted to mobilise the military to interfere in the January 2015 presidential elections under the guise of providing security. A memo is leaked, reportedly signed by Jagath Jayasuriya in December 2014, laying the ground for the army to step in for security duty during the electioneering<sup>7</sup>. There is no comment in response from Jayasuriya.

**JUNE**  
Jagath Jayasuriya retires from the Sri Lankan Army.

**JULY**  
Media reports allege Jagath Jayasuriya is denied a US visa<sup>8</sup> because of his role in the civil war.

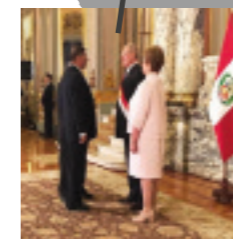
## DIPLOMATIC APPOINTMENTS



Jagath Jayasuriya is accredited to Suriname and met the Minister of Defence in June 2016<sup>9</sup>.



Jagath Jayasuriya presented his credentials in Colombia on 16 Feb 2017<sup>10</sup>.



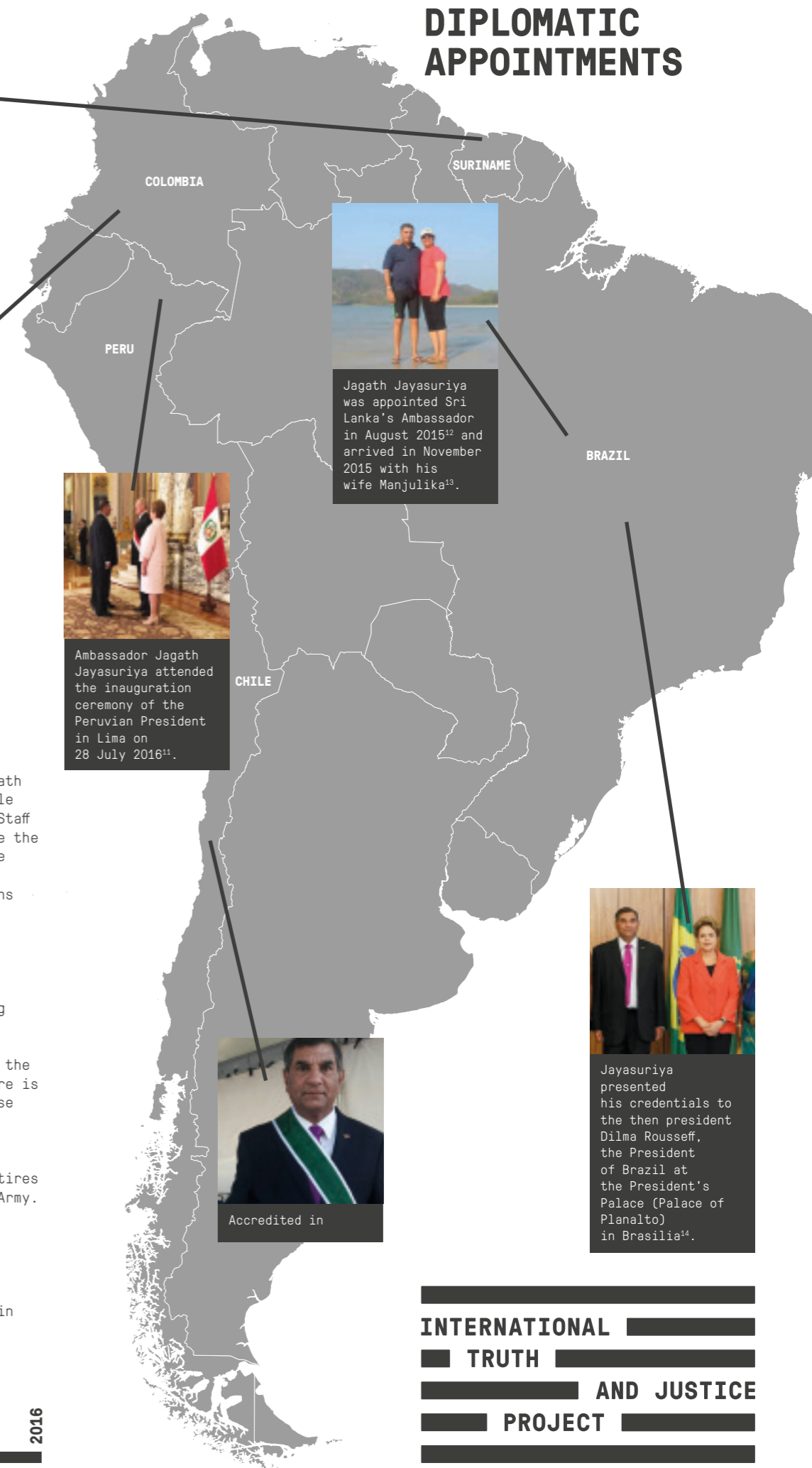
Ambassador Jagath Jayasuriya attended the inauguration ceremony of the Peruvian President in Lima on 28 July 2016<sup>11</sup>.



Jagath Jayasuriya was appointed Sri Lanka's Ambassador in August 2015<sup>12</sup> and arrived in November 2015 with his wife Manjulika<sup>13</sup>.



Jayasuriya presented his credentials to the then president Dilma Rousseff, the President of Brazil at the President's Palace (Palace of Planalto) in Brasilia<sup>14</sup>.



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# COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY

“To his credit, General Jagath Jayasuriya has been actively engaged in the overall military planning and operations in the Vanni”.

OFFICIAL WEBSITE, SRI LANKAN ARMY<sup>15</sup>

## TIME FRAME

The allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity made against General Jagath Jayasuriya relate to the period of 7 August 2007 to 14 July 2009 when he was the Commander of the Vanni Security Force in the Vanni Region of Northern Sri Lanka<sup>16</sup>.

## HIS ROLE

As the Vanni Security Force Commander, Jagath Jayasuriya had overall command of offensives in the final stages of the Sri Lankan conflict in 2008-2009 in the area known as the Vanni and was responsible for coordinating the attacks in the final war zone<sup>17</sup>.

“As the Security Forces Commander Vanni, the entire northern operation was conducted in the tactical area of responsibility that came under my command. I was actively involved in the ground operations executing the directives from Army Headquarters and the Ministry of Defence from the very inception of the north humanitarian operations, starting from Mannar in 2007, right up to the very end, May 18, 2009”.

JAGATH JAYASURIYA<sup>18</sup>

“I was based in Vavuniya and saw the entire picture of war, practically of course the General Officer Commanding will know exactly what they

did, but overall I know and was responsible for the conduct of the whole thing...”.

JAGATH JAYASURIYA<sup>19</sup>

## ALLEGED CRIMES

Jagath Jayasuriya is alleged to bear individual criminal responsibility as commander for the following war crimes and crimes against humanity that were committed by the military units under his command during the conflict:

- Torture and sexual violence in Joseph Camp.
- Extensive and serious violations of international humanitarian law including attacks on protected persons and objects and murder.
- Disappearances and extrajudicial killings at the end of the war (“White Flag” surrenders).

Civilians were subjected to indiscriminate shelling attacks, enforced displacement, shortage of water, food and medical materials and adequate shelter. Divisions directly subordinated to Jagath Jayasuriya were key to executing the Vanni offensive.

## ARMY CHAIN OF COMMAND (JUNE 2008 – MAY 2009)

**COMMANDER IN CHIEF**  
President Mahinda Rajapaksa  
(Head of the Executive Branch)

**SECRETARY OF DEFENCE**  
Gotabaya Rajapaksa  
(President's Brother)

**ARMY COMMANDER**  
General Sarath Fonseka  
(Highest Ranking Army Officer)

### SECURITY FORCE COMMANDERS:

1. Vavuniya, Major General Jagath Jayasuriya<sup>20</sup>

2. Jaffna, Maj Gen MCMP Samarasinghe

Division Commanders  
Brigade Commanders  
Company Commanders  
Platoon Commanders  
Section Commanders

<sup>1</sup> Sri Lanka offers to probe 'specific' war crime claims. Lanka Business Online, 2 June 2011. [AFP story], <http://www.lankabusinessonline.com/sri-lanka-offers-to-probe-specific-war-crime-claims/>

<sup>2</sup> Transcript-Lieutenant General Jagath Jayasuriya, LLRC Archives, 08 September 2010, <http://www.llrcarchive.org/2010/09/lieutenant-general-jagath-jayasuriya/>

<sup>3</sup> Sri Lanka execution video: new war crimes claims, 30 November 2010, Channel 4 TV, <https://www.channel4.com/news/sri-lanka-execution-video-new-war-crimes-claims>

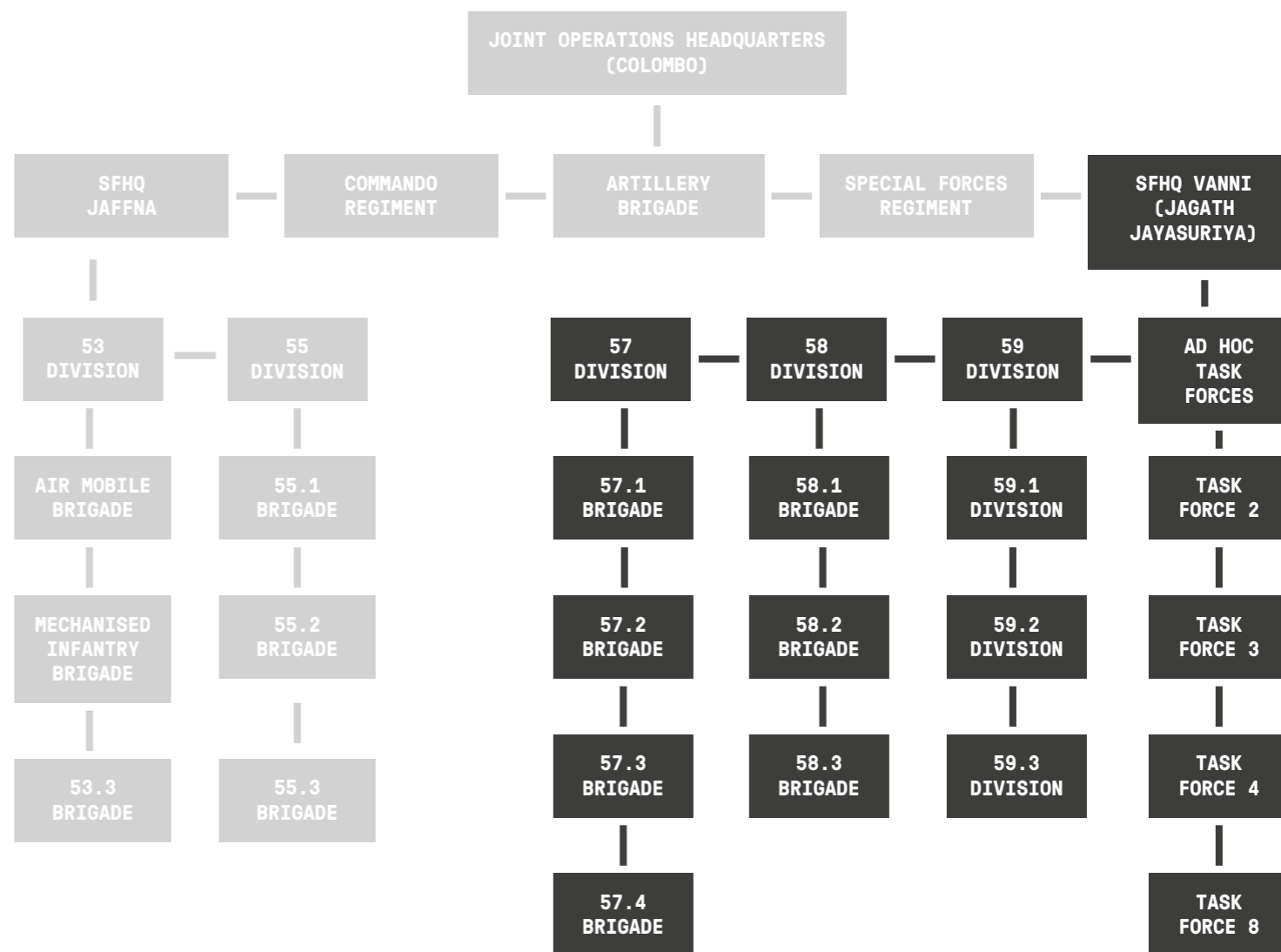
<sup>4</sup> Full Report of the Army Board on LLRC Observations Released, [http://www.army.lk/docimages/image/LLRC\\_2013.pdf](http://www.army.lk/docimages/image/LLRC_2013.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Army Court of Inquiry on Channel 4 Allegations Referred to in the LLRC Report Submits Its Findings to the Commander of the Army, Sri Lanka Army website, <http://www.army.lk/news/army-court-inquiry-channel-4-allegations-referred-llrc-report-submits-its-findings-commander-0>

<sup>6</sup> Website of the Office of Chief of Defence Staff, Sri Lankan Army, [http://www.ocs.lk/general\\_jagath\\_jayasuriya.php](http://www.ocs.lk/general_jagath_jayasuriya.php)

<sup>7</sup> Exclusive: Gota Picks Jagath Jayasuriya For 'Dirty Work' At Election, 8 January 2015, Colombo Telegraph, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/exclusive-gota-picks-jagath-jayasuriya-for-dirty-work-at-election/>

<sup>8</sup> (i) The Daily Mirror of Sri Lanka, No US visa for Gen. Jagath Jayasuriya, 4 July 2015, <http://www.dailymirror.lk/78369/no-us-visa-for-gen-egagath-jayasuriya>



Note this is not the only report of Sri Lankan military officers being denied visas: US Wants Lankan Troops Investigated; Former Army Commander Says 53, 57 Divisions Seem Blacklisted, Colombo Telegraph, 23 August 2013, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/us-wants-lankan-troops-investigated-former-army-commander-says-53-57-divisions-seem-blacklisted/>

<sup>9</sup> Surinam y Sri Lanka acuerdan posturas de cara a una alianza militar, 1 June 2016, <http://www.infodefensa.com/latam/2016/06/01/noticia-surinam-lanka-acuerdan-establecer-cooperacion-militar.html>

<sup>10</sup> (i) Ambassador Gen. Jagath Jayasuriya presents credentials, 22 February 2017, From Sri Lankan Government official news portal, <http://www.news.lk/news/political-current-affairs/item/15993-ambassador-gen-jagath-jayasuriya-presents-credentials>  
(ii) Presidente Santos y Canciller Holguin recibieron credenciales de 28 embajadores, Febrero 18, 2017, at <http://www.radiosantafe.com/2017/02/18/presidente-santos-y-canciller-holguin-recibieron-credenciales-de-28-embajadores/>  
(iii) Jayasuriya briefs Colombia on developments in Sri Lanka, 22 February 2017 <http://colombogazette.com/2017/02/22/jayasuriya-briefs-colombia-on-developments-in-sri-lanka/>

<sup>11</sup> AMBASSADOR GENERAL JAGATH JAYASURIYA ATTENDS THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY OF THE NEW PRESIDENT OF PERU ON 28 JULY 2016, 13 August 2016, Embassy of Sri Lanka, Brazil, <http://www.slembassybrazil.org/press-release/ambassador-general-jagath-jayasuriya-attends-the-inauguration-ceremony-of-the-new-president-of-peru-on-28-july-2016.html>

<sup>12</sup> (i) Nine new ambassadors appointed, 24 June 2015, Adaderana site, at <http://www.adaderana.lk/news/31373/nine-new-ambassadors-appointed>

# THE SRI LANKA ARMY'S ORDER OF BATTLE IN THE VANNI (ACCORDING TO UN REPORT)<sup>21</sup>

ambassadors-appointed  
(ii) Accredited from 7 August 2015 according to the "Order of precedence of the Heads of Mission accredited to the Brazilian government", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil, at <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/en/protocol?id=9611>  
(iii) Embassy of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Brasilia, Brazil, according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, Sri Lanka, <http://www.mfa.gov.lk/index.php/en/missions/83-brazil/355-embassy-of-the-democratic-socialist-republic-of-sri-lanka-brasilia-brazil>

<sup>13</sup> (i) War crimes suspect Jagath Jayasuriya takes up diplomatic post in Brazil, 8 November 2015, Tamil Guardian, <http://tamilguardian.com/content/war-crimes-suspect-jagath-jayasuriya-takes-diplomatic-post-brazil>  
(ii) Photo from: CORREIO BRAZILIENSE, 9 November 2016, [http://www.juliodossantosbaptista.com/juli\\_p/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016-CorreioJulia-dos-santos-Baptista.pdf](http://www.juliodossantosbaptista.com/juli_p/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016-CorreioJulia-dos-santos-Baptista.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> General Jayasuriya briefs Brazil on political process, 7 November 2015, Colombo Gazette, <http://colombogazette.com/2015/11/07/general-jayasuriya-briefs-brazil-on-political-process/>

<sup>15</sup> President Promotes Army Commander to Four Star General, <http://www.army.lk/news/president-promotes-army-commander-four-star-general>

<sup>16</sup> Transcript-Lieutenant General Jagath Jayasuriya, LLRC Archives, 08 September 2010, <http://www.llrcarchive.org/2010/09/lieutenant-general-jagath-jayasuriya/>

<sup>17</sup> Transcript-Lieutenant General Jagath Jayasuriya, Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Island of Impunity, ICEP, Annex II, 16.35, <https://www.piac.asn.au/project-highlight/international-crimes-evidence-project/>

<sup>19</sup> Transcript-Lieutenant General Jagath Jayasuriya, ibid

<sup>20</sup> Jagath Jayasuriya also commanded ad hoc units called task forces. Task Forces 2, 3, 4 and 8, that were under the command authority of SFHQ Vanni were heavily involved in the final weeks of the conflict.

<sup>21</sup> OISL, p. 27.