



USI ANNUAL UN FORUM 2024

#UAUF24

CHANGING CHARACTER OF CONFLICTS CHALLENGES TO PEACE OPERATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

27 - 28 NOVEMBER 2024

UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION OF INDIA, NEW DELHI



ICRC

THE ORGANISERS OF THE SEMINAR

The USI¹ is India's oldest and premium tri-service think tank founded in 1870, for 'Furtherance of knowledge in the art, science and literature of the National Security in general and of the Defence Services in particular'. USI is unique in the sense that it brings strategic community and policymakers on one platform for informed debates and reflection on evolving strategic affairs in a global backdrop.

The work of the ICRC² is based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols, its Statutes – and those of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Since 1863, its objective has been protection and assistance for victims of armed conflicts. The ICRC is an impartial, neutral, and independent organization with a humanitarian mission to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflicts.

CUNPK³ was raised in 2000, at the USI, with an aim to train Indian Peacekeepers deputed for UNPO Missions. It is the nodal agency for UN pre-deployment training, which conducts tailor made UNPO courses for all services, Central Armed Police Forces, and officers from Friendly Foreign Countries. The Centre is a joint venture of MEA, MoD, and the Service Headquarters. CUNPK is a member of International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centre and Association of Asia Pacific Peacekeeping Training Centres.

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Modern conflicts have evolved significantly over recent decades, shaped by technology, changing geopolitical dynamics, and shifting social values. These conflicts have become increasingly complex, urbanised, asymmetric, and protracted. Threats of AI based autonomous systems, mis - and disinformation, and the presence of non-state actors, including private military and security companies, continue to change the conflicts and the nature and scale of risks to civilians in conflict. It has far-reaching consequences, and are challenging traditional methods of peacekeeping and the applicability of international humanitarian legal frameworks.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is designed to regulate the behaviour of parties in armed conflicts. It consists of a set of rules and principles that seek to limit the effects of the conflict and protect those who are not or are no longer taking part in hostilities. The UNPOs are deployed in an increasing volatile and violent environment with a mandate to protect civilians. The environment increases the likelihood of the peacekeepers being called upon to use force - raising question about relevance and application of IHL, cardinal principles and its set of rules.

In contemporary armed conflicts, the lines between combatants and civilians are often blurred; and require restraints on the parts of UN peacekeepers. Many peacekeepers' lives are lost in the line of duty, and the perpetrators go scot-free. Accountability for the crimes committed against civilians and peacekeepers has emerged as a critical aspect of ensuring their safety and security. To create a people-centric peace operation environment, increasingly, women peacekeepers are considered as an essential part of a mission, as they play a crucial role in contributing to peace and security in conflict zones.

At the same time, Climate change is not only transforming and redefining the global security and development landscape, but also acting as crisis multiplier. With ever worsening climate emergencies, record heat, and growing competition over dwindling resources, people are forced to move, thereby increasing their vulnerabilities and insecurities. Organized crime, violent extremist and terrorist groups find fertile ground in such environments.

During the next two days, the experts in the Seminar will discuss these issues.

1. <https://www.usiofindia.org/>

2. <https://www.icrc.org/en/who-we-are/mandate>

3. <https://indianarmy.nic.in/KnowYourArmy/know-your-army-main/centre-for-united-nations-peacekeeping--cunpk-, -new-delhi, -india-operations-un-mission>

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE - 27 NOVEMBER 2024

9.00 – 9.30	Registration and tea	
9.30 – 10.30	Opening Session	
9.30 – 9.35	Welcome Remarks	Maj Gen PK Goswami (Retd), DDG, USI
9.35 – 9.45	Opening Address	Maj Gen BK Sharma (Retd), DG, USI
	<i>Video recorded message from Mr Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under Secretary General, Dept of Peace Operation, UN</i>	
9.50 – 10.05	Keynote Address	Lt Gen Rakesh Kapoor, AVSM, VSM, DCOAS (IS & C)
10.10 – 10.20	Special Address	Ruchira Kamboj, India's Former Permanent Representative to the United Nations
10.20 – 10.30	Special Address	Mr Kedir Awol Omar, Head of Regional Delegation, ICRC
10.30 – 10.55	Tea/Coffee break	
11.00 – 12.30	Session 1 – Changing Character of Armed Conflict	
	Chair: Maj Gen BK Sharma (Retd) , DG, USI	
	<i>Evolving Multi-dimensional Conflicts – Trends – Maj Gen Alok Deb (Retd), Distinguished Fellow, USI</i>	
	<i>Impact of Technology on Conflicts – Maj Gen (Dr) Pawan Anand (Retd), Director ANBI, USI</i>	
	<i>Impact of Environmental and Climate Emergencies on Conflicts – Ingvild Brodtkorb, Research Fellow, NUPI</i>	
	<i>IHL and Changing Character of Conflicts – Dr Andrei Kozik, Regional Legal Advisor for South Asia, ICRC</i>	
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch Break	
14.00 – 15.30	Session 2 – Evolving Conflicts – Challenges to Peace Operations and International Humanitarian Law	
	Chair: Dr Andrei Kozik , Regional Legal Advisor for South Asia, ICRC	
	<i>IHL and Peace Operations – Kath Stewart, FAS Coordinator, Bangkok</i>	
	<i>Role of the UNSC in Making IHL Work – Prof Bharat Desai, Director, Institute for Advance Studies in International Law, and Prof of International Law, JNU.</i>	
	<i>UN Peace Operations and future challenges – Ms Annika Hilding Norberg, Head Peace Operations and Peacebuilding, GCSP</i>	
15.30	Tea/Coffee Break	

DAY TWO - 28 NOVEMBER 2024

9.00 – 9.30	Plenary session	
09.00 – 09.05	Welcome Remarks: Maj Gen PK Goswami (Retd), DDG, USI	
09.05 – 09.20	Opening Address – Amb Asoke Mukerji, India's Former Permanent Representative to the United Nations	
	<i>Video recorded message from Mr Alexandre Zhouev, Asst Secretary General, Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Dept of Peace Operation, UN</i>	
09.20 – 09.30	Special Address – Mr Shombi Sharp, UN Resident Coordinator in India	
9.30–11.00	Session 3 – Break Out Sessions (Simultaneously conducted for 90 minutes each)	
	(A) Protection of Civilians and Peacekeepers	
	Chair – Maj Gen M P Bhagat (Retd), Former Commander of India's UN contingent in Somalia and Deputy Military Adviser, UNDPKO	
	<i>Threat to Civilians and Peacekeepers in Intra- State Conflicts – Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai (Retd), Former Deputy HoM and Deputy Force Commander, UNIFIL.</i>	
	<i>Institutional Measures to Protect the Protectors – Brig Narender Singh, Former Regional Commander, South Sudan.</i>	
	<i>IHL and Protection of Civilians – Meher Dev, Legal Advisor, ICRC, New Delhi</i>	

(B) Climate Change and UN Peace Operations	
	Chair – Lt Gen S Tinaikar (Retd) , Former Force Commander, UNMISS (South Sudan)
	<i>Climate Change and Security: Indian Perspective – Dr Dhanshree Jairam, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal</i>
	<i>Climate-Related Peace and Security Risks – Ingvild Brodtkorb, Research Fellow, NUPI</i>
(C) Women in UN Peace Operations – Key to a lasting Peace	
	Chair – Ms Susan Ferguson , Country Representative, UN Women India
	<i>Role of Women Peacekeepers and Challenges – Col (Dr) KK Sharma (Retd), Visiting Fellow USI</i>
	<i>Advancing Women in Peace and Security – key UN Enablers – Ms Annika Hilding Norberg, Head Peace Operations and Peacebuilding, GCSP</i>
	<i>Field Experiences of Women Peacekeepers – Major Navita Kashyap, Former Peacekeeper UNISFA (Abyei)</i>
11.00 – 11.30	Tea/Coffee break
11.30 – 11.45	Key takeaways of breakout sessions (All moderators) – Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai (Retd), Former Deputy HoM and Deputy Force Commander, UNIFIL.
11.45 – 13.15	Session 4 – Analysing the Future: Challenges and Future of UN Peace Operations
	Chair: Lt Gen JS Lidder (Retd) , Former Force Commander, UNMIS and Deputy SRSG (P), Sudan
	Opening Remarks by Benoit Pyllyser, Director Challenges Forum (virtual)
	<i>Future of Peacekeeping, New Models and Related Capabilities – Prof Ai Kihara-Hunt, Director, Research Center for Sustainable Peace, University of Tokyo (virtual)</i>
	<i>Leveraging Pact of the Future & New Agenda for Peace for Future Peace Operations – Ms Annika Hilding Norberg, Head Peace Operations and Peacebuilding, GCSP</i>
	<i>People-Centric Operations – as a Precursor to Successful Operations – Col (Dr) KK Sharma (Retd), Visiting Fellow USI of India</i>
	<i>IHL and Conflicts: Restraints and Behaviour – Sandeep Bali, Head of Prevention, ICRC</i>
13.15 – 14.00	Closing Session
	Valedictory Address – Ms Uma Sekhar, Additional secretary (L&T), MEA
	Closing Remarks – Lt Gen Satish Nambiar (Retd) , Former Force Commander and Head of Mission United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR)
	Vote of Thanks
14.00 onward	Lunch



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