

# The (UN) Changing Character of War

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## Conference Report

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## Overview

Four partner organizations — the Centre for International and Defence Policy at Queen’s University, the Canadian Army Doctrine and Training Centre, the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, and NATO Defense College — have worked together for over a decade to bring together academics and practitioners from around the world to explore important security and defence themes. The Kingston Consortium on International Security (KCIS), through its annual conference and curated digital content, informs debate and advances knowledge in the field of international security and defence, providing in-depth analysis, with perspectives from universities, government, the armed forces, NGOs, and the private sector.

Over recent years it has become painfully evident that a new era is upon us. We stand at an inflection point in history, From the challenges to the current rules based international system to its potential impacts on partnerships, globalization, and the environment; from new contests for influence in regions stretching from the Arctic to Europe and all across Asia; from the [un]changing character of warfare of major combat operations in Europe to multi-domain operations, including land, maritime, air, space, and cyber, across the Indo-Pacific. Each of these focus and friction points offer opportunities for the development of new strategy, policy, and security and defence. KCIS 2023’s theme was ‘the [un]Changing Character of War.’”

The aim of the conference was to identify and analyze the impacts of recent major shifts in the international security environment on the changing character of war, with a particular emphasis on the current flashpoints observed in the Indo Pacific, Central Europe, as well as the impact upon human

security. Though broad in its interest, this conference sought to bring together scholars and practitioners to spotlight those issues that resonate across all domains related to security and defence in this new era.

## Key Insights

**Human Security** – How governments and military forces deal with human security will depend upon the character of war, along with the causes and motives of each new conflict. The lack of a common definition for the term or idea of human security, however, makes it difficult for international organizations and a broad range of national organizations to effectively interact at solving human security problems. Currently, although there is room for improvement, Human Rights Law and International Human Law are the best tools for providing guidance regarding human security until a more universal understanding can be developed.

**Grey Zone or Hybrid Warfare**<sup>1</sup> – Trying to determine whether an action is representative of grey zone or hybrid warfare will be based on how it relates to the expression of war. There is a need to differentiate between grey zone conflict as an assisting function in a conventional war and grey zone conflict as an overarching strategy of war. Cyber has become the new domain of hybrid war by leveraging the risks created by the extensive use of Artificial Intelligence, by its very character cyber warfare uses a borderless operational domain giving the aggressor almost complete access to the targeted population.

**Women, Peace and Security**<sup>2</sup> – The predominating tendencies in war all impact and influence the WPS agenda. WPS calls for on-the-ground conflict responses to make gender equality and the needs of women and girls an integral part of their efforts during conflict, intervention, and post-conflict situations. We should think about prevention in a way that thinks the important role women play in understanding their unique vulnerabilities. Questions to consider are (1) what women have the ability to discuss their conditions, (2) which women are we listening to and (3) whose statements are acted upon militarily and politically. If all lives, regardless of gender and age, are deemed to have equal value, then perhaps decision makers will give greater weight than they currently are to the ways and means of enhancing the security of women and girls during conflict, intervention, and post-conflict situations.

**Ukraine Russia War** – The Ukraine Russia War has its own character different from many previous wars yet at the same time similar, but ultimately having its own unique appearance. We are seeing a return to conditions like those during World War I where the defence is becoming stronger than the offense, highlighting that need to balance mass and quality. The war in Ukraine has also reinforced that the military industrial complex a country starts with is the one that they will go to war with, there is a need to reestablish defense industry capacity and procurement capabilities if a state is to be able to sustain long term high intensity operations. Looking forward, the plans for a

ceasefire are unknown but Ukraine's transition from war to peace needs to be accounted for

**Technology and War** – The disposition of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is, and will be, shaped by modern and evolving technologies. Today, technological development has reduced the opportunities for war, but new technologies have facilitated new forms of conflict. If we are to fully leverage new high technology, we need to adapt to the processes that are demanded by the technology we seek to use, we need to buy outcomes not capabilities, and need to focus on buying software rather than hardware. It will be advantageous to make responsible use of AI as it would be irresponsible to not use it because of the advantages it offers but we also need to be able to counter it if necessary.

**War's Nature and Character** – While war's nature remains the same, still exhibiting violence, hatred and enmity, its tendencies, disposition and, ultimately, character are ever-changing, influencing policy and shaping war's ends, ways and means. There will be greater restrictions on wars of choice as they will be both more expensive and more difficult to win. Therefore, it is likely that the next war will not be the type of war we *want*. Based on the recent past there are two possibilities for future war, taking over a failing state's security or supporting their own efforts to do it themselves. In the end perhaps the character of war is a matter of perception: is the character of war changing or is the perception of the character of war changing?

Day 1: Wednesday, 20 September 2023

## Challenge to the Conference

This was presented by Stéphanie Martel, Centre for International & Defence Policy, who started off with the observation that a main driving force behind war is the desire to assert control over land. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this has been extended to the cyber domain where many actors also seek to assert control. Currently, this is perhaps best illustrated by the war in Ukraine. The hope then, is to find ways to prevent war, which starts with a better understanding of war, both its nature and its character. Today, international security is at a tipping point, again illustrated by the war in Ukraine, with foreign interference by several foreign governments and other actors, in the internal affairs of a number of western countries, including Canada. International security is also threatened by a variety of domestic threats, war and violence are not just a foreign phenomenon, far-right extremism is just one such threat. War then, is a fundamental part of life, however, it is ever evolving. In part, this change is due to war's extension into other domains, such as cyber that is facilitated by ever more capable technology, particularly information technology. These changes fuel power politics and their associated wicked problems.

The challenge to the conference was to think about the causes of conflict and consider how to mitigate or better prevent war. Further, to consider ways people can cooperate to prevent war through the development of new relationships and new rules that shape those relationships.

## Opening Keynote

**The Hon. Rebecca Patterson**, *Senator for Ontario*, started off her keynote presentation with the observation that as long as there have been people there has been war. During the 18th and 19th centuries, conflict was dominated by state war, leading to tenuous peace as European powers competed to develop their empires. Today the conflict in Ukraine highlights the challenge authoritarianism presents to international security. This in turn leads to the challenge of determining how best to include and address human security in the complex security environment. The UN defines human security as identifying and addressing challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of all people.<sup>3</sup> If there are no people, there can be no state.

Based on the seven elements of human security (economic, personal, health, political, environmental, food and community), and her own experience, Senator Patterson focused on health. Health security is representative of the issues facing human security, as it crosses all demographic boundaries, its necessity for a healthy society in which to collectively function, and as demonstrated recently by the COVID pandemic, health recognizes no political boundaries. Despite health's universal importance, it is ripe for exploitation and radicalization because there is a lack of confidence in health care and government's efforts to manage the pandemic. Yet, for Canada there is still hope as Canadians view health care as a Canadian value.

One way to help achieve health security is through the re-imagining of the whole of government approach to security. To do so will require that health security become a priority managed and sustained by all levels of government over time, that aims to breakdown the silos that are the barriers to necessary change. A starting point for this consideration is accounting for governance rather than government, as government is too often focused on self-interest rather than helping others.

A new whole of state approach is required. Looking first at the Canadian Armed Forces, it is a defence and security tool of the Canadian government, yet it is called on to fill other roles that are no less important for protecting health and human security. There is clearly the need for a civilian emergency response agency that is responsive to the federal government that coordinates a whole of government approach within the federal government and with the provinces and Non-Governmental Organizations. In the end, state security is the foundation of human security. Regarding the character of war, perhaps it is a matter of perception: is the character of war changing or is the perception of it changing?

During the follow-on Question and Answer Session much of the discussion focused on the functioning of government in general, the role of the Senate more specifically, and in particular the role of a Senator. The discussion helped highlight the intersection of domestic politics with international politics and that to be effective internationally, we also must be domestically.

## Panel 1:

### Understanding Military Roles and Human (In)Security in War Torn Areas

This opening panel discussed opportunities and challenges for militaries to formally operationalize a human security framework to increase the efficacy of interventions in the context of complex security environments. The moderator, **Sarah-Jane Meharg**, *Dallaire Centre of Excellence for Peace and Security*, identified a particular challenge for this panel of considering how human security can strengthen state security in the complex security environment.

**Clare Hutchinson**, *RedHed Consultancy*, highlighted how human security has no commonly recognized and used definition, with NATO having one definition and the UN another. There needs to be a common definition for human security and the term security, and the definitions must be linked to security, not development, as is the case with the UN definition. Part of the challenge is that political leaders and their supporting bureaucracies speak a different language from the military. Canada has the ability, the necessity, and the capability to lead in the area of human security.

When it comes to human security, **Rachel Grimes**, *ACT NATO*, argued that it is the military that neutralizes threats and can focus on both the threats and civilians. She believes, therefore, that it is just as important for the military to think about human terrain as well as the threats it can and will face. Equally important is addressing policy development and implementation for policies relating to human security. Civilian assessment needs to be part of the military estimate when considering human security.

**David Lambert**, *Lambert Consulting*, also noted the lack of a common definition which makes it difficult for international organizations and a broad range of national organizations to effectively interact at solving human security problems. When considering how to operationalize human security, there is a framework to assist militaries with this operationalization. To do this, one approach would be to place UN Human Security Model into the cultural context of any particular security situation. Security forces can then use operational design to place it into the campaign plan so the military can apply a comprehensive approach using appropriate tactical tasks that the military should be familiar with. Ultimately, for military forces the primary focus is the protection of civilians.

After the opening presentation by the panelists, they were first asked what purpose does a common clear definition of human security provide? Clare Hutchinson responded that trying to come up with a common definition will be difficult because the military wants a clear definition while the politicians do not, because no formal definition gives them space in which to politically maneuver. Furthermore, there is disagreement about a common definition due to national differences and national interests. Rachel Grimes argued that although there is room for improvement, Human

Rights Law and International Human Law go a considerable way to providing guidance regarding human security. What is needed is better development of policies that can be more effectively operationalized. David Lambert argued a definition is important as it helps with identifying military limitations thereby ensuring policies and strategies aimed at enforcing human security will likely be more successful.

Questions then turned to how to enforce or increase human security. As to whether the focus of security operations was to prevent conflict, protect civilians or both, David Lambert argued there needed to be a change in mindset aside from policy or doctrine, if there is to be an improvement in human security. Clare Hutchinson responded that human security is not new and in fact we do it quite well, we just do not do enough of it. She also returned to definitions stating there is a need to re-examine how we define Armed Conflict and Emergency Crisis. Rachel Grimes used the war in Ukraine as an example of deliberately targeting civilians noting how it is part of the Russian way of war, illustrating how kinetic effects on humans have cognitive effects on both soldiers and victims.

The panel then turned to addressing how best to link government intentions with respect to human security to military actions. Rachel Grimes argued that policy regarding human security needs to be written with the assistance of military advisor, while Clare Hutchinson believes there needs to be more combined military/political committees. David Lambert noted there are many policies, but what is missing are the descriptive links to military execution.

Next the panel turned to responsibilities for human security, first looking at the dynamic between state security and human security. Rachel Grimes observed that state security is policy, while it is soldiers who deal with human security as part of the human terrain. Clare Hutchinson made the argument that the responsibility to protect is a state responsibility and when the state can't or won't, then there needs to be an international response. David Lambert concluded that human security requires state security which in turn requires human security. The challenge of how human security should be addressed by non-state actors was raised. The panel made several observations including that non-state actors also have a responsibility to protect as well as state actors, both diplomacy and sanctions are mechanisms to guide and shape compliance, and finally, there is intervention by a third party such as NGOs.

The final question considered the concern outside of the West, that human security is a trojan horse for Western intervention, that it is seen as interventionist, even imperialist. The panel acknowledged the challenge of moral relativism and the colonial past; however, it was pointed out that human security is not just a Western concept, others in fact have supported a variety of international human security conventions. In terms of dealing with it on the ground in real time, it is a matter of dealing with areas of mutual understanding and leaving others alone. Ultimately, if it is the right thing to do, and a state does not want it, then it may be a matter of not whether we intervene, but how.

## Panel 2:

### Evolving Forms of Hybrid Warfare and Below the Threshold Conflict

This panel looked at how the nature of international security and conflicts remains the same. States are involved in military and economic competitions, armed conflicts still seem inevitable, security dilemmas and strategic competition is unceasing. However, the methods are no longer always the same. Conflicts are simultaneously fought in both conventional and innovative ways. Some adaptive techniques make use of Hybrid Warfare and Below the Threshold Conflict to achieve their aims.

**Marc Ozawa**, *NATO Defense College*, looked at Russia's total global hybrid war. Hybrid war has been pervasive in Russian discourse for some time but has also expanded to global view and most recently to also being total. The war in Ukraine has not changed this approach in terms of the areas of Russian hybrid aggression, rather what has changed is the intensity and risk associated with it. Russian conceptions of hybrid warfare include active measures consisting mainly of information warfare and covert warfare which are not new in Russian military thinking, what has changed is the use of technology to further enable active measures. Russian hybrid warfare also includes strategic confrontation, and the concept has evolved from simple hybrid warfare to total global hybrid warfare.

The Russian conception of hybrid warfare is illustrated by Gerasimov's "Total Confrontation" Spectrum that progresses seamlessly through a number of areas including kinetic, through economic, to cyber and even cultural confrontation that is often ignored. Examples of the changing intensification and frequency of hybrid confrontation with Russia in Europe include the weaponization of energy, leveraging of commodities notably Ukrainian grain, nuclear threats and the environment, illustrated by the dam attack in Ukraine. He concluded by noting that the NATO focus on conventional war is good, hybrid confrontation is not going anywhere soon and will most likely be what NATO members encounter soon.

The NATO and the EU response to the Russian hybrid war threat, **Dumitru Minzarari**, *Baltic Defense College* argued, was the adoption of hybrid war policies in the 2015-2016 period that he believes was a strategically justified move. It was through the mechanism of policy that the EU and NATO signaled to Russia a willingness to respond to, and resource a response to, the threat of Russia hybrid warfare. This in turn creates the challenge of trying to develop an effective response, that is made even more difficult when considering the definition of hybrid warfare used by the EU that includes, "the mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods."

Further challenges include the fact that a number of NATO officials believe there is little operational value in the concept of hybrid warfare. There is the question of how the concept of hybrid warfare, which lies below the threshold of conventional war and may avoid armed attacks, relates to Article

5 and any obligation to collective defence. There is a need to differentiate between hybrid warfare as an assisting function in a conventional war and hybrid warfare as an overarching strategy of war. He concludes that Russian hybrid warfare uses the information domain of war that is enabled by technological development, in particular the internet and global communication. By its very character it uses a borderless operational domain giving the aggressor almost complete access to the targeted population. He therefore believes it would be more accurate to describe Russian hybrid war as population centric war.

**Marta Kepe**, *RAND Corporation*, highlighted how Grey Zone/Hybrid warfare has been around for quite some time, however, it appears to be a recent phenomenon due to short attention spans and the normalization of relations with Russia after the Cold War. Cyber has become the new domain of hybrid war by leveraging the risks created by the extensive use of Artificial Intelligence. For Russia, hybrid measures, or means, are an economy of force effort to achieve the effects they want in an economical way.

The methods being used date back to Imperial Russia when the government targeted domestic opponents and conducted information operations outside of Russia against opponents of the Russian government. The Soviets conducted similar operations against both domestic and foreign opponents, and in turn Russia has adopted Soviet methods but with a few differences. Russia has leveraged information technology to a greater degree, increased openness both inside and outside of Russia, and the ease of travel, again both inside and outside of Russia, to conduct hybrid warfare. Another difference is that the Russian measures have been more subtle than those used by the Soviets, however, they have also been much harsher.

Yet Russia never stopped conducting some form of Grey Zone/Hybrid warfare and with Russia using up its conventional military capability it will turn increasingly to Grey Zone/Hybrid methods. Russian actions have highlighted infrastructure vulnerability and the need to build resilience within the military. What would be ideal is the development of resilience in the whole of society. Two steps that could be taken towards this would be the strengthening of networks and the ability of civilian infrastructure to backup military infrastructure when necessary.

When considering how we view the world, **Howard G. Coombs**, *CIDP, Royal Military College*, argues that mental models are important tools for shaping this view. Since the Napoleonic period, conflict has been viewed as linear progression from peace through low intensity conflict to full-scale war. It was viewed in such a manner because states created military capability to deal with the threat of major war, and because states were viewed as the ones responsible for the legitimate use of force. Since the end of Cold War and specifically since the beginning of this century this view has been challenged by the contemporary global security environment.

One model to address the dangers faced in the current global security environment is that of gray



zone conflict. Gray zone conflict has three main characteristics or principles: its activities seek to avoid a response by military forces, its actions are opaque making it difficult to determine what threat those actions actual posed, and it leverages technology for maximum effect and to focus targeting. One way to reimage the linear progression of conflict is to see it now as a competition continuum based on three states of interaction with other states or with non-state actors. At one end there is cooperation and at the other end there is armed conflict. In the middle is competition below armed conflict that would include such elements as observed in a gray-zone conflict.

One model for assisting with an understanding of what is happening in the competition continuum, is the Canadian “Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept” that considers a matrix of competition. This matrix attempts to model the level of coerciveness and persuasiveness of activities in relationship to overt state involvement or varying degrees of a lack of involvement, all over time, all with a view to gaining a better understanding of the complex operating environment in which Grey Zone and Hybrid activities take place.

The first question, following the presentation, asked if Russian hybrid war was driven by internal competition in the Russian political system? The panel replied that efforts of various Russian agencies are not always coordinated. It is sometimes also the case that there is a strategic objective, and the agencies compete to achieve it in order to get more resources if they are successful. The next question asked was if BRICS was part of the gray zone? Howard Coombs replied that it depends on their intent and purpose which speaks to the second characteristic of gray zone conflict. Dumitru Minzarari commented the hybrid conflict or warfare, and gray zone conflict are synonymous, hybrid conflict or warfare is more commonly used in Europe while gray zone conflict in more common in North America. He went on to state that BRICS is not part of the gray zone.

The next, and final, question was in two parts, asking how long Russia can sustain hybrid or gray zone conflict and who else uses it. The panel started off by stating it is happening in the Indo-Pacific, the challenge however, is identifying it, trying to determine or isolate an incident and trying to determine its intent. Both Russia and China are the main countries using hybrid or gray zone conflict as both have developed the capabilities, knowledge and tools, to execute it effectively. With respect to Russia, it is more than economics, it is energy influence focused on Europe while attempting to leverage military capability in Africa. China is using both economics and information to influence other states, particularly in Africa.

Russia can probably continue activities in Ukraine for the next two to five years. Although countries energy dependance on Russia is dropping, this is not having the desired economic impact on Russia because the increasing price of energy has resulted in Russia getting more money. In addition, Russia has found alternative customers to Europe, most notably China and India. For Russia the biggest question, regarding staying power in Ukraine, is artillery production.

### Panel 3:

## Women, Peace and Security in Conflict Zones

Women, Peace and Security (WPS) calls for on-the-ground conflict responses to make gender equality and the needs of women and girls an integral part of their efforts during conflict, intervention, and post-conflict situations. This in turn promotes a more durable and lasting peace.

With regard to WPS and its institutionalization within NATO, **Stéfanie von Hlatky**, *Queen's University*, said that NATO has the policy, training, funding, and engagement of leadership in WPS indicative of institutionalization. WPS requires a long-term view that is understandably difficult for those who are trying to execute it. The military interprets the policy and then executes it based on their knowledge and experience.

**Lieutenant-Colonel Melanie Lake**, *Assistant to Canada's Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security*, highlighted that different states view security differently and that the forum provided by WPS can help with bridging these differences. She also noted that insecurity is not just a foreign problem but also a challenge domestically. To highlight this, she noted that “peace and security” is a foreign concept for indigenous Canadians.

Concurrently, traditional security threats, exemplified by the war in Ukraine, and China's aggressive foreign policy, are alarming. Insecurity is on the rise whether it is the environment, the potential threat posed by Artificial Intelligence, violent extremism, disinformation or misinformation. There is a gender dimension to all conflict. Russia, as an example, is leveraging a very narrow image of masculinity in support of its invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine on the other hand has increased gender integration. This example argues that battlefield success hinges on inclusion that enhances morality and trust.

The four pillars of the UN WPS agenda, participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery were stressed by **Yolande Bouka**, *Queen's University*. The international community tends to go through cycles of receiving information, that causes surprise, followed by outrage, that leads to advocacy resulting in mobilization to draft documents, often in an ad hoc manner, concluding with congratulations. If we examined how women and girls suffer differently in conflict zones, we would rethink this cycle. We should think about prevention in a way that thinks about world systems and the significant role women play in withstanding the vulnerabilities they suffer. This can be done by considering the hierarchies of women's communication capabilities in different structures by considering which women are talking, which women we are listening to, and which women's voices are acted upon.

Focusing on prevention, climate change and the importance of the value of lives are areas that require particular attention. Regarding climate change, consumption patterns are destroying the

environment, climate change is now commonly accepted as a threat multiplier. More attention needs to be paid to leading emitting nations, particularly as lead consumers of fossil fuels and their disproportionate impact on the environment. When it comes to defence and security it should be kept in mind that the military is one of the biggest consumers of fossil fuels and in turn is a major emitter of carbon. If all lives are deemed to have equal value different decisions will be made, if black and brown lives are valued the same as white lives, then perhaps the policies and decision made about what measure to take in a security situation may be different.

Research by **Yannick Veilleux-Lepage**, *Royal Military College*, and his colleagues, demonstrates how polarization of the far right is not just a male phenomenon but also a female one with the same implied security challenges. The focus of their study was two digital platforms, Stormfront.org an alternative far right hate site focused on white supremacy, Neo-Naziism and anti-Semitism, and secondly, Telegram used extensively by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, specifically a Turkish language chatroom called Women Dawah. The study focused on women's forums within these sites, and discovered, firstly, that moderators took great efforts to keep the forums gender segregated. Ideology was important to both groups and peer support was also an important focus for both groups.

For the broader group, these forums are important tools for recruiting, enabling them to on ramp people into the organization. Although ideology can be important, women-only forums can be important in and of themselves to women's radicalization, helping to ensure their continued involvement by giving them a safe space within the movement in which to grow and evolve. This point is important if there is a desire to off ramp women from such organizations.

After the presentations discussion started by considering the reaction of other states to Canada's approach to WPS. First, it was recognized that Canada still has a lot to learn. That said, WPS needs to be used as an opportunity to share experiences. From this, leadership engagement can invigorate key issues so Canadian engagement can prompt the discussion about WPS and its implications. In Canada, with respect to WPS, there is a strong relationship between the military and civilian government that can in turn be translated into other security and defence forums.

The discussion then turned to how, through WPS, to approach the creation of alliances. It starts by creating relationships based on a collective understanding such as WPS. A good example is the leadership role Canada has played with respect to WPS within NATO. WPS creates common interests that can absorb individual differences which enable the creation of alliances. The discussion touched on the fact WPS has been much easier to address than gender security, which has been a much more difficult conversation. With WPS, the focus tends to be on military effects that can help overcome concerns about human rights. However, the creation of alliances leveraging WPS can be challenged by authoritarian backlash.

The discussion finally turned to the concern about reduced funding of WPS. It can have an impact if it happens at a critical time, however, this can result in more creative ways to use funding in support of WPS initiatives. Attempts to renegotiate a WPS agenda in times of crisis can be negated through existing WPS policy. Furthermore, when WPS is an institutionalized agenda, as it is in NATO, it is better able to weather funding cuts.

## Keynote Address

The end of day keynote was presented by **Charlotte McGlade**, *International Programs, Canadian Red Cross*, who called for principled human action with a focus on the prevention and alleviation of human suffering. Security and defence agencies and humanitarian agencies work in the same space and often at the same time, and they are both invited in by the host government. Furthermore, the national and military agenda often runs in parallel with the humanitarian agenda. It is important, therefore, if we are to collectively enable the prevention and alleviation of human suffering, that we talk to one another.

She went on to stress the importance of the protected humanitarian space to the Red Cross and the Red Crescent for their operations, that are guided by neutrality and impartiality. The protection of this humanitarian space by defence and security forces and agencies lead to interaction with the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. For this interaction to be effective and for Red Cross and the Red Crescent operations to remain neutral and impartial requires civil-military coordination, an understanding that humanitarian agencies need to be the primary responders, and that security and political perspectives should not impact on humanitarian actions. The purpose of military operations is to establish peace and security and assist with the longer-term political settlement, allowing humanitarian organizations to focus on those in need.

Humanitarian agencies must approach all groups the same if they wish to maintain a neutral status. They are in a humanitarian crisis to help, not pick sides, so they can maintain access to those in need. This neutral and impartial status requires consistent negotiation with all sides. Rules and laws limiting humanitarian assistance for political reasons do not help those in need, which is why humanitarian space needs to be recognized and supported. Opening and maintaining a dialogue is important to principled human action with a focus on the prevention and alleviation of human suffering.

Discussion started with a two-part question, how do humanitarian agencies reconcile dealing with “terrorist” organizations, and how do they deal with moral harm to humanitarian workers. Charlotte McGlade responded that they were working on determining how to work with “terrorist” organizations, that it was a work in progress. Regarding the second part of the question, there is moral strain on humanitarian workers, however, often the drive to provide humanitarian assistance overcomes this. The discussion then turned to whether humanitarian groups create situations to

force the military to create humanitarian space. Each organization is different, however, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent do not do this, but they will use humanitarian space when it is created. Humanitarian diplomacy can be key to moving humanitarian assistance and usually succeeds if perceived as neutral and impartial in providing it. This raised the question of how to deal with accusations of aid bias, real or perceived. The solution is a mix of humanitarian diplomacy and assessments shared with all sides to obtain compromise. Humanitarian diplomacy and humanitarian operations are supported by legal teams, policy advocates, information and intelligence gathering, all supported by 192 Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies internationally creating a robust network.

Day 2: Thursday, 21 September 2023

## Opening Keynote (Second Day)

The second day started with a keynote by **Brigadier-General John W. Errington**, *Strategic Joint Staff, Canadian Armed Forces*, who began by noting that Western Nations and allies benefitted from the peace dividend at the end of the Cold War and as part of this, their militaries shrunk. There was a slow reaction to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, except by Ukraine. He then posited that western intervention in Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where the West entered in force for a decade or so, withdrew only to see state collapse left in its wake, was not the way to enable state or international security and stability. The Russian invasion brought a return of conventional war allowing the West to assess Russian capability.

Canada also reduced its military capability cashing in on the peace dividend. Recently, COVID and domestic issues have focused Canada, but it has shown itself to be not as agile as Ukraine has been. Funding limits for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have resulted in limited battlefield capability, despite this, the CAF has a history of military support to Ukraine starting in 2014. The post-Cold War view of Russia as a waning power has changed, China as Russia's partner, or Russia as China's partner is/are challenging the idea of a unipolar world. The new environment, particularly the war in Ukraine, challenges Western ideas regarding the importance of military mass. The expansion and development of new capabilities, however, will take time.

The most important thing is the will to fight. Ukraine has, and is, demonstrating this with whole of society mobilization. The response in the west has been the creation of the Ukraine Defence Group consisting of 50 countries providing various forms of support to Ukraine involving 250 different fleets of equipment along with all the support challenges those fleets entail. The Security Assistance Group-Ukraine, centered around U.S. Army 18 Airborne Corps, synchronizes the training and logistics in support of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Other actions include the development and refinement of NATO regional defence plans and the enlargement of NATO with the addition of Finland and Sweden.

Canada is providing what support it can to Ukraine. OPERATION UNIFER, Canada's efforts to provide training to the Ukrainian Armed Forces, has trained 38,000 Ukrainian personnel. The Royal Canadian Air Force has flown 450 air missions out of the UK to provide 12 million pounds (about 5443104 kg) of equipment to Ukraine. Canada is also bolstering its cyber defence to ensure 24/7 coverage. Looking ahead Canada will need to balance support for Ukraine while looking at domestic and CAF renewal.

Russia is feeling the effects of sustained combat; however, it remains a potent force with the world's largest nuclear arsenal. Looking ahead it will target grain stores and shipping, and during the winter it will target the Ukrainian power grid. Over the next three to six months there will be wave of mobilization, but conscripts will likely be poorly trained and equipped. The plans for a ceasefire are unknown but it needs to be planned for, Ukraine will need to look at rebuilding its institutions and how it will transition from war to peace.

For the West in general, and NATO in particular, there is a need to reexamine munition stockpiles and production. The war in Ukraine has reinforced that the military industrial complex a country starts with is the one that they will go to war with. He concluded with two possibilities for the future, taking over a failing state's security or supporting their own efforts to do it themselves. The host nation should own the ways and objectives of its own peace and security while friendly states support them, including assisting with the provision of means, letting the host nation find its own way.

Follow on discussion started with a look at tactical medical care. Brigadier-General Errington stated we cannot take peacetime training and apply it to wartime. One thing that will need to be done is speed up Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) training. Discussion then turned to the issue of corruption, with the example that the UN model has failed twice in Haiti. Brigadier-General Errington stated that corruption is a reality in many countries. With respect to Haiti there is an attempt to create security through policing yet there is no judicial system which will make long term security almost impossible. Efforts need to be optimized, instead of five countries providing drones, it would be better if each of those countries focused on finding a solution for one unique problem.

#### Panel 4:

### Strategic Insights and Observations from the Ukraine-Russia War

This virtual panel provided real-time insights from USAWC researchers and shed light on prominent issues related to Russia's attack against Ukraine. **Robert Hamilton**, *Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College*, started the discussion looking at the development, planning and adjustment of both Ukraine's and Russia's strategy. Russia has contracted its war aims to something more achievable while Ukraine has expanded its war aims. Russia's ends have not changed, they remain the same, to

keep Ukraine in Russia's orbit. Russian messaging is focused on the West rather than on Ukraine. The initial way Russia sought to achieve its ends was by the seizure of Kyiv and the installment of a new government, the means to achieve this was using conventional forces to seize the capital. Russia had correctly determined Ukraine center of gravity as Kyiv and Zelensky, and they expected a rapid success like what Russia achieved in Crimea.

The plan was not a military plan but one from the Kremlin, when this failed, the plan was rewritten focusing on eastern Ukraine with a view to seizing the East and stabilizing it. The way to achieve this focused on increased attacks on Ukraine's civilian population. The means to achieve this was through an expanded workforce base, in part based on conscription and missile attacks on civilian targets.

When this failed to achieve Russian objectives, the plan was again revised with no change to ends sought. The ways were stabilizing gains to date, then counter-offensive and attacks on grain supplies to then freeze the conflict. The means by which to accomplish this was increased use of drones and diplomacy. The center of gravity had now changed with the focus of Russian actions on Western will.

Initially, the Ukrainian end was survival. Ukraine had two key moments early in the war that set the course for Ukraine strategy. First, President Zelensky informing President Biden, "I don't need a ride, I need ammo." The second key moment was video footage early in the war of the Ukrainian leadership together in Kyiv. Ukraine's Territorial Defense Force was critical in blunting the initial Russia offensive, a large part of this was Territorial Defense Force messaging to the West, through these information operations.

Once Ukraine's survival was no longer in doubt, the ends changed from wanting a ceasefire to retaking newly seized territory. The center of gravity throughout was the Russian ground forces. With continued Ukrainian success came a change in the ends sought, to removing Russian forces from all Ukrainian territory including Crimea and Ukrainian admittance to NATO. The ways this is to be achieved is by breaking the will of Russian ground forces, isolating Crimea, launching a counter-offensive, and long range, symbolic, drone strikes against Russia territory while avoiding civilian targets. The center of gravity now being targeted is Russian will. He concluded by emphasizing both countries had changed their strategy, with Russia better aligning ends, ways and means while Ukraine's ends had moved from survival to reclaiming territory taken since 2014.

Next, **Antulio Echeverria**, *Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College*, considered what could be learned about deterrence from the Ukraine/Russia War. He started off by addressing why NATO's attempt at deterrence, by denial and punishment, failed. First, there was miscalculation or overconfidence on Russia's part in that Putin believed his plan would work despite NATO "knowing" the Russian plan to invade Ukraine. Next, time was working against Putin, Kyiv was sliding out of

Russia's orbit and moving towards NATO and the EU, while other measures to prevent this slide, like hybrid warfare, had failed. Third, was the lack of will in the West, illustrated using sanctions, that were not a significant threat, rather than the serious threat of the use of military force. Additionally, Russia is perhaps a special case as Russia is often willing to pay a higher cost than the West thinks it is willing to pay. Furthermore, NATO overlooked Russian grand strategy that sees Ukraine as just one more step in a westward expansion. Finally, deterrence failed because of NATO's inconsistency in applying deterrence considering NATO's mixed signals to Russia in recent years.

He noted the west tended to default to deterrence by punishment rather than the historically more successful deterrence by denial, thus challenging extended deterrence. It does this for two reasons. First, it tends to be out of position to implement deterrence by denial, as it is often surprised by the actions of adversaries. Second, is an attempt to manage the escalation of risk. Deterrence by punishment, however, is becoming less effective due to better anti-access/area denial (A2AD) capabilities being possessed by adversaries and them having better fiscal and/or economic countermeasures. The challenges are highlighted in INDOPACOM with respect to the Chinese. Chinese missile belts for A2AD are continually getting both thicker and deeper, as a result the West is losing the window of opportunity to increase its forces in the region without risk.

A new way forward could be based on NATO's experience with Ukraine at integrated deterrence through integrated defense whereby NATO helps close the gaps with indigenous forces. Total Defense by Ukraine, including Ukrainian SOF activities, combined with NATO intelligence frustrated Putin's first strategy to seize Ukraine, aided in no small part by Russian mistakes. To make integrated defense work it needs to be funded and training needs to be provided to reduce uneven performance, increase ethical behavior, and to strengthen loyalty to Kyiv.

In the near term there is a need to formalize intelligence sharing policies and reestablish the defense industry capacity to sustain long term high intensity operations. In the mid' term there is a requirement to establish integrated air-land defense systems across borders complimented by combined and joint training in the use of these systems. Probably most importantly, there is a call for a resolution to the Alliance question of whether Ukraine will belong to NATO and/or the EU or be an armed neutral.

Lastly, **John Deni**, *Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College*, opened with the observation that U.S. strategy since the Cold War has viewed working with allies as an integral part of U.S. strategy, beginning with the Clinton administration, as it enhances U.S. domestic and international legitimacy. His study examined allied support to Ukraine focused on Europe and what it meant for U.S. strategy. When looking at allied strategy regarding Ukraine's fight against Russia most European allies lack a formal strategy, they have a less formal but no less important strategic rationale. Strategic rationales ranged from fear of being next, to preventing a diminished rules-based order, to strategically defeat Russia, to a cultural affinity with Ukraine, to simply a sense of responsibility.



The NATO command and control system was available but not used, instead U.S. 18 Airborne Corps was used. This resulted in coordinated efforts in a spider web fashion, whereby NATO provided a framework for cooperation. Regarding material assistance, most allies are at the end of their ability to give more. Although civilian political leadership wants to give more the military can be reluctant, arguing they may need it or are fearful it will not be replaced and there is an unwillingness to put their economy on a wartime footing. There are numerous training efforts underway that are coordinated but standardization is wanting, while there is only limited collective training and then only at lower levels. Logistical assistance is well coordinated particularly with respect to access, basing authority and overflight rights, however, operational security is an ongoing concern. Lastly, there is a lack of robust measures of effectiveness. One of the main measures used is Ukrainian battlefield success as well as anecdotal feedback loops based on a variety of personal/professional connections.

Implications for U.S. strategy and operations include a risk of escalation with forward leaning allied activities. There is also a risk of burden-shirking by some allies for many reasons. Key U.S. capabilities are critical in the short term and if the U.S. was to be drawn into an Indo-Pacific crisis, allies would be challenged to fill the gap with Ukraine. Finally, in the longer term there is the question of whether European allies can replace U.S. capabilities and capacities.

After the presentations discussion started off by considering what would happen if Ukrainian territory was left under Russian occupation, what happens about things like war crimes. From a NATO perspective it has deterred a worst-case scenario although there remain concerns about Russian sabotage in NATO countries. This has implications for the Indo-Pacific raising the question of whether China can be deterred without something like NATO. Next discussion turned to the will of the Russian military and people, and whether it can be undermined. For Putin it is an existential war and all he must do is outlast the West's will to support Ukraine. Ukraine is better at the info war than Russia, part of this is demographics with 40-year-old Ukrainians facing off against 70-year-old Russians. Internal to Russia, this is a life-or-death struggle for Putin, while it is not a life-or-death struggle for the Russia defense sector. Lastly, still focused inside Russia, revolutions in Russia are executed by elites, not the people.

A question was asked about how the 2024 U.S. Presidential election was impacting Russian and Ukrainian strategy as well as impacting support for Ukraine. Currently in the U.S. there is still bipartisan support for Ukraine. The bigger challenge than the election itself is American public opinion, a case needs to be made to the American people as to why they should continue to support Ukraine. This was followed by the related question of how we sustain public support and the alliance in support of Ukraine against Russia and what role does the idea of the international rules base order play in decision making. The view in many places is that there is a U.S. hegemonic order rather than an international rules base order. China sees the world in bipolar terms while Russia sees it in terms of a multi-polar order. The West needs to argue that smaller countries have more

autonomy in a rules-based order than they would in either a bipolar or multi-polar world order where smaller countries will need to be aligned with one of the world powers.

#### Panel 5:

### Technology and the New Wars

In the twenty-first century, technological development has reduced the opportunities for war, but new technologies have facilitated new forms of conflict. These developments affected our understanding of war's character and its interaction with the state. The moderator, **Rebecca Jensen**, *Royal Danish Defence College*, noted that after the topic of Special Operations Forces, new technology was the topic of greatest interest in the areas of defense and security.

Presentations started with **Leah West**, *Carleton University*, considering the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in war and conflict, recognizing the tension between privacy and precaution. She used the example of Facial Recognition Technology (FRT), noting that in the future it may be able to recognize intentions and would therefore be able, in theory, to identify both known and unknown threats. The biggest issue is a person's right to privacy, however privacy is not absolute, it is framed by the privacy principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, adequate safeguards, and remedies.

There are two main bodies of law to consider when examining the tension between privacy and precaution, International Humanitarian Law that applies during a period of conflict, and International Human Rights Law that always applies. Both laws should be used together as they have a common foundation. Furthermore, application is contextual making interpretation dynamic and therefore difficult. Some of the factors that would need to be considered are things like control of territory, control of the population and the level of violence, to name just a few. Putting FRT in the context of the three-block war concept, there could be a humanitarian situation occurring in Block 1 so FRT would be permitted, Block 2 could be a stability operation meaning FRT would be limited, and Block 3 could be embroiled in violence resulting in FRT being restricted.

There are several policy considerations when it comes to technology such as FRT. Under what circumstances may it be used? Who may use FRT? What data may be taken? What data is taken connected to? What are the consequences for the misuse of FRT and what measures will be in place to counter the misuse of it? Navigating the murky waters of this tension and the complexity of practice requires that everything feasible is done based on common sense.

**Dave Anderson**, *Mithraic Solutions Inc.*, considered the character of war, and started with the observation that the next war will not be the type of war that we want. In addition, there is a restriction on wars of choice because they will be both more expensive and more difficult to win. It is worth noting the direction the last Commandant of the United States Marine Corps took the Corps by creating smaller, more disposable forces, because of the range of reach against bigger

expensive forces. Other future trends are cloud based secret communication and data networks for the UK and U.S. by 2025 and Canada, perhaps, by 2035. Our biggest challenge is that the rules-based order was set up by the west for the west, push back from other countries, therefore, should not be a surprise.

With respect to technology and new war, **Kristen Csenkey**, *Balsillie School of International Affairs*, argued there is a need to understand the new technology if we are to understand the impact and consequences it will have on outcomes. We are seeing a nexus of digitization, terrain, people, and technology actors that result in several considerations for the future security environment, in particular environmental considerations, issues of planetary connectedness and energy impact, scarcity and alternatives. There is also a need to address the governance of new technology through regulation and/or standardization, preferably both, and to achieve this will require both cooperation and coordination of efforts. Both modernization and digitization matter because of the geopolitical implications of large-scale planetary challenges that go beyond the current war in Ukraine.

**Colonel Catherine Marchetti**, *7 Wing (Space) - 3 Canadian Space Division*, outlined the three ages of space. The First Space Age took place during the Cold War and was based on a few platforms that were focused on exploration, all of which were national assets. After the Cold War we entered the Second Space Age when global orbit and travel became the norm through things like the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station. It also saw the first direct use of satellites to support a war during the Gulf War, 1990-1991. The Third Space Age started around 2010 when private enterprises took the lead in launching space-based platforms leading to the space around earth being extremely congested. This makes a challenging space security situation even more challenging, along with the additional challenge of ever-increasing counter space technology. In addition, there are few laws governing current and future space activities

Already, space is experiencing grey zone conflict posturing. Addressing this threat requires space domain awareness to know what the threats may be and to avoid them as they manifest themselves. It also requires resilience because the initiation of space warfare is likely to be a surprise, so we will need to be able to survive the initial strike if we are to leverage the opportunity for enhanced capability that space offers. The ability to replace lost capability will be critical, however, it will be challenging and may take considerable time, particularly if we are ill-prepared.

The first question the panel asked was whether we are getting better at adapting organizations and doctrine. The panel responded that we need to adapt to the processes demanded by the technology we seek to use. We must be adaptable, and as part of that, we need to buy outcomes not capabilities and focus on software, not hardware. Some processes do work and the key to their success is integration, agility is essential to adopting what is needed and integrating it when it is needed. Currently we are collecting immense amounts of data, the question is, how is it being used? There is considerable risk of misuse. Artificial Intelligence (AI) needs to be leveraged to enable rapid and

accurate decision-making.

The discussion then turned to the weaponization of civilian technology. International Humanitarian Law provides reasonable guidelines about weaponization. It used to be military technology that had a dual use, now civilian technology has the dual use and can be used by the military. We need to make responsible use of AI as it would be irresponsible to not use it because of the advantages it offers. We need to both leverage it as well as being able to counter it if necessary.

Next the 3 Block War model was considered but from the perspective of reversing how FRT was used so the humanitarian situation occurring in Block 1 would restrict the use of FRT, Block 2 as a stability operation would remain limited, while Block 3 embroiled in violence, would result in FRT being permitted. It could be reversed, however the risks involved would be much greater, the key, regardless, would be controlling the level of violence. Discussion then turned to the impact of AI and big data on security. There are three elements to consider when examining the security implication of AI and big data and they are the interaction among the data, the decision-makers, and those effected. Both big data and AI can speed up the decision action cycle (OODA Loop) to provide one a significant advantage to get inside the opposition's decision action cycle.<sup>4</sup>

The authority and accountability of autonomous systems was raised as a concern. There are three different circumstances for considering authority and accountability of autonomous systems: in the decision-making loop, on the loop, and over the loop. Over is problematic, there needs to be a human in the loop somewhere. Regardless of whoever authorizes the mission should be held accountable.

Discussion finally turned to gender perspectives on technology, particularly regarding what can be done with respect to male bias. Technology is created by people with biases in design, build and use. Technologies is therefore imbued with the biases of people. We need to know and understand that source of the data being used in AI because data has the potential to pollute the AI. Things to consider are what data you are using, how is the AI being trained, what questions do you ask the AI, and how do you use the results from AI. The last consideration is the biggest concern.

## Closing Keynote

The closing keynote of the conference was presented by **General Wayne Eyre**, *Chief of Defence Staff, Canadian Armed Forces*, who believes the character of war is changing. The threat is real, and the rules based international order is under threat. We are living in a time of change that is in a non-stop crisis with challenges from several competitors. The last thirty years of the unipolar moment is now over, how we respond to change will shape the future.

Both Russia and China pose a geopolitical threat. Russian's invasion of Ukraine poses one such

challenge and despite Russia's mediocre performance in this conflict it is still a menace to global stability. As a result, NATO is focused on Ukraine and is orienting itself around the events taking place there. China is causing instability in the Indo-Pacific with the view that it will take its rightful place in the International Order. China is now more aggressive than in the recent past and President Xi Jinping is quite comfortable assuming risk such that China's national interest is more important than following rules. The challenge to the West is all the greater as it struggles to understand Russia's and China's ultimate motives and intentions.

The Arctic is now warming quicker than elsewhere resulting in greater access to the Arctic and in turn greater interest in the Arctic. China and Russia, particularly the latter, have both taken a keen interest in the Arctic. Their interest is such that China now has a better understanding of the Arctic floor than Canada does, while Russia is mimicking China's Chinese Sea approach in the Arctic. Both China and Russia are investing in the global south while both Iran and North Korea continue to challenge the international order.

Climate change domestically challenges defense readiness in the form of assisting with the response to floods and wildfires, while internationally climate change is driving human migration. At the same time, societal challenges are aggravated by demographic change as poorer countries get younger and richer countries get older. This is compounded by technology that is disrupting societal cohesion, while at the same time technology is evolving rapidly, an evolution in which China is often in the lead.

Although the nature of war remains the same, it is still deadly, full of fear and destruction. Its character, however, is in a period of change. Evolving high technology plays a key role in this change exemplified by the power of social media, the introduction of hypersonic missiles, and the integration of many technologies together heightens their impact exponentially. We are seeing a return to the power of the defence over the offence, as illustrated by the war in Ukraine and its similarities to World War One. The increased proliferation of A2AD systems is another example of the increasing strength of the defence.

Although on the one hand the war in Ukraine seems to take the security environment back in time, it also takes us forward as the first digital war, demonstrating the effects of improved information management. Now if something can be seen, which is potentially easier with drones, it can be targeted, and if it can be targeted it can be killed. The war in Ukraine is also highlighting that there needs to be balance between mass and quality, and that there is a need for more, cheaper systems.

This raises the question of how do we address these challenges? First, we cannot hold on to the status quo. Second, we need to be less risk adverse and more creative. Third, this leads to innovation which is necessary for adaptation. Failure is a harsh teacher.

Discussion started off focused on change in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). The first question asked what is the biggest challenge for retention and recruitment? General Eyre responded that the biggest challenges the CAF faced are the evolving culture and reconstitution. He acknowledged that the traditional recruiting pool is shrinking, and to address this, at least in part, recruiting is now open to landed immigrants. Attrition, on the other hand, is normal, but it is focused on middle-level leadership.

Discussion then turned to the progress of cultural change within the CAF. A close eye is being kept on retention and attraction figures to help determine its impact, complimented by surveys. General Eyre acknowledged that it will not be easy. In his view, it will not take generations but nor will it happen overnight. He also admitted that the CAF will make mistakes as it attempts to change, but he said the CAF will learn from those mistakes. There is a need to change the culture of exclusion and an increased willingness to accept risk, while maintaining the positive aspects of CAF culture.

Operations then became the focus for discussion. When asked how sustainable a commitment of 2,200 personnel in Latvia was, General Eyre stated that it will be the Army's main effort. He said it was accepted that the Army would be challenged to do anything else. To mitigate the personnel impact the deployment needs to be as challenging and exciting as possible. The Reserves will also play a significant role in ensuring the deployment reaches its goal of 2,200 deployed personnel.

Regarding engagement with non-aligned countries, General Eyre stated the CAF would look to capacity building and training to create engagement opportunities, including ship visits and small unit exchanges. With respect to the deteriorating relationship with India, the CAF would look to maintaining the military-to-military engagement. Asked about the broader relationship with east Asia, General Eyre said there was a need to foster relationships while avoiding greater power war through deterrence. The Rules Based International Order will die a slow death of a thousand cuts and, he stated, we need to push back at each one. That said, there is a need for dialogue with Russia and China because they are not going away, however, it needs to be done from a position of strength.

Turning to capability development, General Eyre was asked if Canada should adopt a model like the U.S. process for procuring high tech equipment. The challenge with such a model is the risk of costly failure, but an even bigger challenge is not knowing what we need. With respect to professional military education, he was asked if there are any changes that should be made to the Joint Command and Staff Program and the National Security Program, both delivered by the Canadian Force Command and Staff College. He responded that they should address the understanding of war by studying the works of Clausewitz, Sun Tzu and Thucydides and examining new technology. There should also be thought given to providing a richer menu of electives.

## Conclusion

A number of participants, including General Wayne Eyre, quoted Clausewitz, as a philosopher of conflict, at various points during the conference, particularly with respect to the nature of war. Clausewitz viewed the nature of war, if left to its own devices, as pure absolute violence, it is the purpose of war, not its nature that makes it an act of policy, and in turn policy influences operations do the degree war's violent nature will allow.<sup>5</sup> War, therefore, is not an autonomous act of violence but rather an instrument of policy. The way wars vary, their character, changes based on their motives and causes.<sup>6</sup> War evolves, adapting its characteristics to each new war.<sup>7</sup> For Clausewitz, the predominating tendencies or nature of war are; violence, hatred and enmity, which is concerned with the people engaged in war, followed by probability and chance which are the concern of armies and commanders, and lastly the subordination of war to politics and policy, the concern of government.<sup>8</sup> War's nature is violent, interactive between opposing wills, and driven by politics, its character is constantly changing. As warfare evolves and becomes increasingly complex, it is essential to critically examine and adapt understanding of the evolving character of war to ensure that international actions are relevant and timely.

In this vein, the Kingston Consortium on International Security Conference 2023 highlighted how governments and military forces deal with human security will depend upon the character of war, along with the causes and motives of each new conflict. In the context of the conference panels, it was evident that trying to determine whether an action is representative of Grey Zone or Hybrid warfare will be based on how it relates to the expression of war. The predominating tendencies in war all impact and influence the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The Ukraine Russia War has its own character different from many previous wars yet also like a number of previous wars but having its own unique appearance. The disposition of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is, and will be, shaped by modern and evolving technologies. While war's nature remains the same, still exhibiting violence, hatred and enmity, its tendencies, disposition and character are every changing, influencing policy and shaping war's ends, ways and means.

## Endnotes

1. Hybrid conflict or warfare, and gray zone conflict are synonymous, hybrid conflict or warfare is more commonly used in Europe while gray zone conflict is more common in North America. Gray zone conflict has three main characteristics or principles: its activities seek to avoid a response by military forces, its actions are opaque making it difficult to determine what threat those actions actually posed, and it leverages technology for maximum effect and to focus targeting.

2. Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

3. United Nations, UN General Assembly Resolution 66/290, Security Council Resolution 632, 10 September 2012 (New York: United Nations, 2012).

4. In September 2023 *Defense News* released an article titled “Beyond ChatGPT: Experts say generative AI should write — but not execute — battle plans”: <https://breakingdefense.com/2023/09/beyond-chatgpt-experts-say-generative-ai-should-write-but-not-execute-battle-plans/>

5. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 87.

6. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 88.

7. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 89; Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, translated by O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 18; and Hew Strachan and Sibylle Scheipers, *The Changing Character of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11.

8. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 89 and Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, translated by O.J. Matthijs Jolles (New York: Random House, Inc., 1943), 18.